

ALI 340: Elements of Effective Communication

Session Two

Imam Ali (a) was asked, 'From all that Allah has created what is the most beautiful?' He replied 'Speech'

Then he was asked, 'From all that Allah has created what is the most ugly?' He replied 'Speech'

He said, 'Through speech faces will be brightened, and through speech faces will be blackened.'

Mizanul Hikmah, H#17526

Agenda

- The Holy Quran
- Inner nature of human beings
 - 1) Love of Self
 - 2) Love of Society
- Differences between human beings

The Holy Quran

No-one sits with the Quran
except that he receives an increase
and a decrease
an increase in guidance
and a decrease in blindness.

Nahjul Balagha, Khutba 176

Inner Nature of human beings

فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۖ
لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۗ

The nature made by Allah
in which He has made mankind,
there is no altering of Allah's creation

Sura Rum, 30:30

Understanding the Fitrat

An inner inclination and understanding that is not taught. It is present and can be strengthened or weakened.

Laws and recommendations of Islam are aligned with the Fitrat. The **تكوين** of the human being and the **تشریح** for him work together in harmony to help him on the journey towards perfection.

External influences, listening to the Nafse Ammarah and Shaytan, lack of knowledge and understanding, all contribute to moving away from the Fitrat.

Human beings can only be at peace when they live according to the demands of their Fitrat.

Some Inclinations within the Fitrat

1) Love of self

Love of self is a means for protection of the self. It propels the human being to seek good for himself. It makes him dislike all that is against his growth and perfection.

All other 'loves' stem from this love; love of wealth, comfort, happiness, honor . . . It makes the human being want to seek a better life for himself.

لَا يَسْأَمُ الْإِنْسَانُ مِنْ دُعَاءِ الْخَيْرِ
وَإِنْ مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَيَئُوسٌ قَنُوطٌ

Man is never tired of praying for good
and if evil touch him
then he is despairing, hopeless.

Sura Fussilat, 41:49

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا
إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا

Surely man is created greedy
Being greatly grieved when evil afflicts him
And grudging when good befalls him

Sura al-Ma'arij, 70:19-21

2) Love of society

The human being is a social animal. He needs people, needs to communicate with them, and have good relationships with them. Sociability is an inherent trait.

Sociability of the human being should balance the love of self in the human being.

Social spheres include; family, relatives, neighbors, community, society.

Differences between human beings

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِ
فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا

Say: Every one acts according to his character
but your Lord best knows
who is best guided in the path.

Sura Israa, 17:84

Character of human beings depend on:

- Genetic inheritance
- Education and training
- Social influences
- Past experiences
- Habits formed

Maturity of the Mind

A Muslim's mind is not perfect unless it has ten qualities :

- a) Good is expected from him
- b) others are secure from his evil
- c) sees the little good from others as great
- d) considers his great goodness as little
- e) is not annoyed by people who ask their needs from him
- f) is not tired of seeking knowledge
- g) poverty in the way of God is more beloved to him than wealth
- h) humiliation in the way of God is more beloved to him than dignity with the enemy
- i) anonymity is more desirable to him than fame ;

Then he said; the tenth and what is the tenth ! He was asked: what is it? He replied :

- j) he does not see anybody unless say : He is better and more pious than me . (Imam Ali Ridha (a), Biharul Anwar, Vol.78, pg 336)