

From Juz' 23: Conscious of Creator, care for creation

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّقُوا مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ - وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ - وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْطَعِمُ مَنْ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُ ۗ إِنَّ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

And when they are told, 'Beware of that which is before you and that which is behind you, so that you may receive (His) mercy...'. There does not come to them any sign from among the signs of their Lord but that they have been disregarding it. When they are told, 'Spend out of what Allah has provided you,' the faithless say to the faithful, 'Shall we feed (someone) whom Allah would feed, if He wished? You (the rejectors) are only in manifest error.' (Yāsīn:45-47)

Reflections:

The one who does not care for God, does not truly care for God's. Altruism in action stems from a sense of detachment from our belongings for a greater purpose. A person consciously able to attach his soul to the love of God, detaches from other than Him, thereby giving in His Way becomes easy for him. These profound verses of Sūrah Yāsīn, invite us to reflect on our self-awareness, our commitment to Tawhīd at the theoretical and practical level and the ability to give in the way of Allāh (swt). God Forbid the material-capitalistic systems have cast a veil on our hearts and our ability to truly fathom the reality!

Conscious of Creator and creation: The Merciful Lord has ways through which He channels His Mercy unto His creation. One central avenue is through the awareness and awe of the Almighty. Taqwā being the goal of fasting in the blessed month of Ramaḍān, is not only a sense of consciousness of God, rather it is an intense motivational force within, that propels the human towards serving Him and His creation. One missing Taqwā in life, misses the essential connectivity to the Tawhidi network, where he sees God central and everything connected to Him and through Him. The one who is veiled from this reality, will have signs come to him, but will disregard them to his own peril.

Spending in the way of Allāh (swt) - an option or an obligation?: For the servant, the property at his disposal is not his own, it is a trust. When the human recognizes God's authority and ownership over everything, including his own being; spending what He has been granted in His Way is not an option, rather an obligation. One reason that holds him back is the arbitrary understanding of ownership; where the human disregards God's presence in life, and projects himself as the ultimate owner. In this regard, a disbeliever spending in charity is not being altruistic, rather ego-fulfilling, because there is no God in sight for him, rather the self that 'feels' good and becomes 'god'. Human greed peaks when it comes to the self: imagine the true status of the *Shahīd*, the martyr in the way of Allāh (swt) who not only spends his belongings, even gifts his greatest belonging to Him.

Error in judgement, due to fallacy of argument: Realistically speaking, everything is God's. He has granted, he expects it to be granted to others. When a person is veiled in his greed, and his arrogance speaks, he not only denies the truth, he lives in a false or inverted 'reality'. Even becomes audacious enough to rhetorically ask – while denying his own responsibility – that why does God not fulfill 'his' responsibility of feeding the needy? Such a person deserves nothing but one thing, a Reality check!

To ponder: Where in life do we need a 'Reality check' – where we see the truth, while act in a different way?

References: 'Allāmah Ṭabaṭabei, *Tafsīr al-Mizān*. Āyatullāh Makārim Shirāzī, *Tafsīr Nimuneh*.