

Ilm Essentials

Purification of the Heart

Lesson 3

Diseases of the Heart

Ostentation

Defining Ostentation

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- Riyā' is to perform an action in order for others to see or notice
 - ▣ Essence is preoccupation with others instead of Allah
 - Hadīth about being naked on the Final Day
- The worst of its forms is to perform worship to gain a place with others
 - ▣ Termed “the lesser shirk”
 - “I do not fear that you worship the sun, the stars and the moon, but I fear your worshipping other than Allah, through ostentation” (Ibn Mājah)
- The least of its forms is to perform an act to avoid the scorn of others

Defining Ostentation

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- One of its signs is an increase in worship in front of others
 - ▣ Compared to when alone
 - For example sitting after the salāh for 10 minutes
- Should not be confused with righteous action due to the blessings of a gathering or place
- Another sign is increasing action when praised
 - ▣ And decreasing when not
 - “When a believer hears someone praising him, his īmān increases” (Hadīth)
 - Fine-line between īmān increasing, compared to pride

Causes of Ostentation

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- ❑ One of its causes is believing that others can benefit and harm
 - ▣ This is why there are so many reminders in the Quran and hadīth that only Allah benefits and harms
 - “Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask of Allah. If you seek help, seek help from Allah. Know that if the entire ummah were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would only benefit you with something that Allah has already prescribed for you
 - And if the entire ummah were to gather together to harm you, it would only harm you with something that Allah has already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the ink has dried” (Tirmidhī)

Causes of Ostentation

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- Someone has a hard time getting a job
 - ▣ Tends to blame religion
 - Which is essentially blaming Allah
- How many “compromises” do we make for the sake of work or education or to have a house
 - ▣ Yet all of this is ephemeral
 - At some point you won’t be able to do that work
 - And those people will have no need for you
- But that person who connects with Allah
 - ▣ Allah creates a place for him in eternity

Causes of Ostentation

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- ❑ Imām Abū Hanīfah preferred jail to giving religious verdicts for anyone other than Allah
- ❑ Imām Ahmad was publically beaten over and over again
- ❑ Scholars today recommend being independent in order to properly do the work of dīn

Dangers of Ostentation

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- Especially dangerous for those doing the work of dīn
 - ▣ A worshipper can limit his worship in public
 - And then spend time in the dark of night
 - ▣ But the person trying to benefit others
 - He must come out into the light
 - Where the hooks of ostentation are constantly grabbing
- One may read something beneficial
 - ▣ Without anyone present
 - But then thinks “Next time he says this, I will reply with that”
 - Thereby showing off and wielding knowledge like a sword

Dangers of Ostentation

- “The first of people against whom judgment will be pronounced on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who died a martyr. He will be brought and Allah will make known to him His favors and he will recognize them. The Almighty will say, ‘And what did you do about them?’ He will say, ‘I fought for You until I died a martyr’
 - ▣ He will say, ‘You have lied. You did but fight that it might be said, ‘He is courageous.’ And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hellfire
- Another will be a man who has studied religious knowledge and has taught it and who used to recite the Quran. He will be brought and Allah will make known to him His favors and he will recognize them. The Almighty will say, ‘And what did you do about them?’ He will say, ‘I studied and I taught it and I recited the Quran for Your sake’
 - ▣ He will say, ‘You have lied. You did but study that it might be said, ‘He is learned.’ And you recited the Quran that it might be said, ‘He is a reciter.’ And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hellfire

Dangers of Ostentation

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- Another will be a man whom Allah had made rich and to whom He had given all kinds of wealth. He will be brought and Allah will make known to him His favors and he will recognize them. The Almighty will say,
 - ▣ ‘And what did you do about them?’ He will say, ‘I left no path in which You like money to be spent without spending in it for Your sake’
 - He will say, ‘You have lied. You did but do so that it might be said, ‘He is open-handed.’ And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hellfire”
(Muslim)

Treatment for Ostentation

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- Its cure is found in recognizing the true source of things
 - ▣ Remembering that Allah is the “fā’il haqīqī”
 - Mūsā and the stick
 - Example of a dog and a stone
- Once you realize all benefit and harm comes from Allah
 - ▣ You will strive to please Allah through obedience
 - And thereby attain benefit
 - ▣ And by leaving disobedience
 - And thereby avoid harm
 - ▣ Why is it that we will come close to a lion in the zoo
 - Because we know he can no longer harm

Treatment for Ostentation

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- Also in recognizing its harms
 - ▣ Eventually every false person is shown for who he is
 - Certainly this person will be exposed on the Final Day
 - ▣ Just as we dislike fakes and copies
 - People will also turn away once they realize the truth
- And increasing one's private actions
 - ▣ At least try to match them one for one
 - "Those who spend their wealth by night and by day, secretly and openly" (Quran 22:74)

Treatment for Ostentation

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- Also by being consistent in one's daily dhikr
 - ▣ Because the more one remembers Allah, the more they forget about others
 - And if we can keep Allah “in front” of us, we will always act sincerely for His sake
 - “Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you” (Tirmidhī)
 - Who saved the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) when he was sitting under the tree
- So should we abandon good acts out of fear of ostentation
 - ▣ Better to continue to act, while striving toward sincerity

Diseases of the Heart

Heedlessness

Defining Heedlessness

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- Heedlessness, or ghaflah, is a severe lack of attention to what is important and permanent
 - ▣ Focusing instead on the unimportant and temporary
- Entails being easily fooled
 - ▣ In this case by the life of this world
- And turning away from the unseen
 - ▣ Allah, the angels writing out deeds, the reality of the grave, the Final Day and Paradise and Hellfire

Dangers of Heedlessness

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- When one is heedless when driving
 - ▣ Akin to being intoxicated
- Leads to a misallocation of resources
 - ▣ We have time, wealth, energy, etc.
 - All of which is to be used for the Hereafter
 - How many people have homes better kept than the masjid
 - How many know the hadīth about preferring our brothers
 - Yet we spend on ourselves, forgetting others

Dangers of Heedlessness

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- Leads to a lack of accountability
 - ▣ If you are focused on this world
 - All you have to do is act accordingly
 - Means you can pile up debt and not worry about it following you
 - Walk away from an underwater mortgage
 - ▣ If you don't believe you will ever be taken to task
 - You will do whatever is in your own interest
 - Wars, mass murder, embezzlement, etc.

Dangers of Heedlessness

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- “Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you”
 - ▣ Causes a person to seek those things Allah gives
 - From other than Allah
 - Can lead to shirk, or lesser forms of shirk
 - ▣ Missionaries will often entice people with schools, hospitals, food, etc.
- Causes nations to believe they need others to be protected
 - ▣ IMF loans
 - ▣ Caving in to ensure money and subsidies from other nations

Dangers of Heedlessness

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- ❑ End result is not seeing things as they truly are
 - ▣ So hijāb is looked upon as oppression
 - ▣ The beard as being backwards
 - ▣ Holding fast to traditional values as anti-modern
 - Or unwilling to assimilate
 - ▣ Holding fast to the sharīah as “extreme”
- ❑ “Show me the truth as truth, and give me the ability to follow it
 - ▣ And show me falsehood as falsehood, and give me the ability to avoid it” (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr)

Dangers of Heedlessness

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- Turning away from the blessings of Allah
 - ▣ Man thinks he earns through his own
 - Which is why we all want our kids to become professionals
 - How will they support themselves through ilm
- Ignoring the warning signs
 - ▣ Earthquakes, tsunamis, etc.
 - ▣ Rare, incurable diseases
 - ▣ Sudden death
- “And do not obey the one who We have made his heart heedless of Our remembrance” (Quran 18:28)

Treating Heedlessness

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- Recognize the nature of man
 - ▣ The word “insān” is derived from letters which means to forget
 - ▣ Means we need constant reminders
 - Which is why we have the Quran
 - To be recited over and over again
 - And the sayings of the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)
 - And why dhikr is to be repeated over and over again
 - Each time trying to bring the full meaning into the heart

Treating Heedlessness

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- ❑ Strive to keep good company
 - ❑ Because they will remind you of Allah
 - And of what is important
 - ❑ Won't indulge your desire for idle talk
- ❑ Spend time in istighfār daily
 - ❑ Serves as a taking account of oneself
 - Much like the merchant at the end of the day
- ❑ Reflect on death
 - ❑ Because it is the door which takes one to the real
- ❑ Daily recitation of Quran
 - ❑ With reflection
- ❑ Final cure will come with death
 - ❑ If we don't cure ourselves before then

Questions and Discussion

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