

Ilm Essentials

Purification of the Heart

Lesson 4

Diseases of the Heart

Anger

Defining Anger

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- Anger (ghadab) is that which swells within a person
 - ▣ Until it overwhelms them and is released
- It is a flame from the fire of Hell
 - ▣ Which rises above all good
 - Devouring it and leaving nothing in its place
- It is an extreme which pulls one from the middle path of Islām
 - ▣ When the outer (islām) and inner (īmān) are harmonized
 - Result is ihsān
 - ▣ Just like when anger and mercy are harmonized
 - Result is wisdom (hikmah)

Causes of Anger

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- Anger is a response when one is threatened
 - ▣ Threat to food, shelter or life
 - This anger is beneficial when tempered
 - Otherwise we would have a lawless society
 - ▣ Threat to dignity and honor
 - “The believer does not humiliate himself” (Ahmad)
 - Can be beneficial, when for the right reasons
 - ▣ Threat to values
 - Angry when someone puts a Quran on the floor
 - Speaks poorly of the military
 - ▣ Threat to self-respect / self-worth
 - Angry when someone is rude to your child
 - Acts inappropriately with your spouse

Dangers of Anger

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- Reciprocity with Allah
 - ▣ If you cover the sins of another
 - Allah covers your sins
 - ▣ If you make the path to knowledge easy for another
 - Allah makes the path to Jannah easy for you
 - ▣ If you want to avoid the anger of Allah
 - Avoid becoming angry yourself
 - “The Merciful One shows mercy to those who are themselves merciful. So show mercy to whatever is on earth, then He who is in heaven will show mercy to you” (Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī)
- When a man once asked the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) for advice
 - ▣ He said “Do not become angry”
 - When asked what to do after that
 - He replied with the same twice

Nuance of Anger

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- Training anger
 - ▣ Goal is not to abolish anger
 - Without it, many injustices would go unchecked
 - Even the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would become angry, such that his face would redden
- Anger needs to be controlled and measured
 - ▣ Only acceptable at the right time, in the right place, for the right reasons and in the right amount
- Necessary when the rights of Allah are breached
 - ▣ Which includes the rights of people
 - But should not be used for one's own rights

Treatment for Anger

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- Anger is an excess of emotion and power
 - ▣ Often tied to other excesses
 - Try to moderate your food
 - “The worst vessel the son of Ādam fills is his stomach” (Tirmidhī)
 - As well as your sleep and speech
 - Many times anger is released through the tongue
 - More people vent their anger verbally than physically
- Learn to let things go
 - ▣ Entails developing the “crossing guard” within yourself

Treatment for Anger

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- The greatest example of balance was the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)
 - ▣ Emulate him as much as possible
 - He worshipped and he slept
 - He ate and he fasted
 - He was social and he was private
- Follow his advice for anger
 - ▣ Change positions
 - Anger is an impulse which is strongest when it first strikes
 - ▣ “Cool off”
 - Both literally and figuratively
 - Anger often manifests in the face
 - Fire is extinguished by water

Treatment for Anger

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- Anger stems from a lack of spiritual strength
 - ▣ “The strong man is not the one who is physically strong, but the one who controls his anger” (Bukhāri and Muslim)
 - Focus on feeding the soul
- Recognize that anger is tempered by mercy
 - ▣ We see this with Allah and His messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)
 - “Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully” (Bukhāri)

Treatment for Anger

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- Work on humbling yourself and avoiding arrogance
 - ▣ People get angry because they are full of themselves
 - Any slight against them becomes a big deal
- Reflect on the forbearance of the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)
 - ▣ Despite being emotionally, verbally and physically abused, he rarely became angry
- Restrain your anger in hopes that Allah will do the same on the Final Day

Diseases of the Heart

Arrogance

Defining Arrogance

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- Arrogance (takabbur) is to consider oneself great or big
 - ▣ To consider oneself important and above others
- It is a false notion that man brings about
 - ▣ Regarding himself and his accomplishments
- Its signs are that one refers to himself often
 - ▣ Either explicitly or implicitly
 - Or is pleased when others speak about him
 - What happens when you remove the “I” from I

Defining Arrogance

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- Can come about by
 - ▣ One deeming himself superior to others
 - Especially dangerous for the scholars
 - As well as those who are making strides in the dīn
 - ▣ Or by showing scorn or disdain for others
 - Thereby lowering others and raising oneself
- Its hallmark is self-justification
 - ▣ Always coming up with a reason or excuse

Verses Regarding Arrogance

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- “I will divert My signs from those who show arrogance without right” (Quran 7:146)
- “Allah does not love the arrogant and boasting ones” (Quran 31:18)
- “He does not love those who wax arrogant” (Quran 16:23)

Dangers of Arrogance

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- Kibr is akin to shirk
 - ▣ Because it is reserved for Allah alone
 - Allah is al-Mutakabbir (Proud)
- And this is why even an iota of it restricts one from Jannah
 - ▣ Just as iota of shirk restricts one
 - “No one will enter Paradise who has an atom’s weight of arrogance in his heart” (Muslim)

Dangers of Arrogance

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- Causes one to compete with Allah
 - ▣ Because “Allah is the greatest”
- Leads to a “self-contentment”
 - ▣ The idea that I am doing a good job
 - Which causes stagnancy and laziness
- Cuts one off from good counsel and taking advice
 - ▣ Because everyone is below you
 - You know better than everyone else

Dangers of Arrogance

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- Causes one to feel like he deserves special treatment
 - ▣ And when one receives special treatment
 - Its not enough or done properly
- Leads to vanity, boasting and showing off

Types of Arrogance

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- ❑ Superiority based on what was given to you
 - ▣ Lineage, wealth, intelligence, beauty, etc.
 - “Surely the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-fearing of you” (Quran 49:13)
 - Reminds us we all make our own way
- ❑ Superiority based on what one earns
 - ▣ Knowledge, notoriety, income, etc.
- ❑ Superiority based on delusion
 - ▣ We feel like we are better or more deserving than others

Treatment for Arrogance

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- Reflect on our origin
 - ▣ All of us were created from a drop of despised fluid
 - And even today we are walking around carrying impurity
 - ▣ And before that we were “un-remembered”
- Most of what we have achieved is due to others
- Reflect on our temporary state
 - ▣ There is nothing about us that is permanent
 - Nor that actually comes from ourselves
 - It is all from Allah

Treatment for Arrogance

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- ❑ Recognize that honor is given by Allah
 - ▣ And only to those who lower themselves
 - ▣ Those who raise themselves up
 - Allah brings them crashing down
- ❑ Recognize that actions are judged by their final states/outcomes
 - ▣ No one knows what the future holds
- ❑ Realize that people's states and stations are often hidden from others
 - ▣ The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was sometimes confused with his ashāb

Questions and Discussion

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