**HOPE AND FEAR**



7.167. And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed that He would, until **the Day of Resurrection,** send forth against them those who would afflict them with the most evil of suffering. Your Lord is indeed swift in retribution (when it is due), and He is indeed **the All-Forgiving, the All-Compassionate** (especially toward those who turn to Him in repentance and His believing servants).(1)



39.53. Say: "(**God gives you hope**): ‘O My servants who have been wasteful (of their God-given opportunities and faculties) against (the good of) their own souls! Do not despair of God's Mercy. Surely God forgives all sins. He is indeed the All-Forgiving, the All-Compassionate. ' "(2)



80.37. Everyone on that Day has concerns of his own enough to make him heedless (of anything else).(3)

**HADITH**

232. Anas, **may Allah be pleased with him**, said, “I heard the **Messenger of Allah**, peace and blessings be upon him, say, ‘Allah the Almighty says, “O son of Adam! I will forgive you as long as you call on Me and have hope in Me, no matter what you do. Son of Adam, I do not care if your wrong actions reach to the clouds of heaven and then you ask Me for **forgiveness**, I will forgive you. Son of Adam, if you were to come with sins equivalent in weight to the whole earth and then meet Me having not associated anything with Me, I would come to you with the same amount of forgiveness.’” (Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Da’awat, 98).(4)

 218. Abu Dharr, **may Allah be pleased with him**, reported that the **Prophet**, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Allah the Mighty and Exalted, says, ‘Anyone who comes with a good action will have ten like it or more. If anyone comes with a wrong action, the repayment of a wrong action is a wrong action like it or I will forgive him. If anyone approaches Me by a hand-span, I come to him an arm-span. If anyone approaches Me by an arm-span, I come to him two arm spans. If anyone approaches Me walking, I come to him running. If anyone meets Me with mistakes equivalent in weight to the whole earth, having not associated anything with Me, I will meet him with the same amount of forgiveness.” (Sahih **Muslim**, Dhikr, 22).(5)

214. Abu Barza Nadla ibn Ubayd al-Aslami, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that **the Messenger of Allah**, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “A servant will remain standing until he is asked about his life and how he spent it, his knowledge and how he acted regarding it, his property and how he acquired it and spent it, and his body and how he wore it out.” (Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 1).(6)

**Two Assurances and Two Fears**

**Question: It is narrated in a Prophetic saying that God said the following: “I will not give my servant two fears or two assurances at the same time.” Many of us live in comfortable and luxurious conditions, so what will our situation be in light of this saying?**

**“Fear” and “hope”** are two great blessings that God has given us or will do so in the future. Using these two blessings in a measured way as a vehicle to reach God is another blessing, indeed a greater blessing.

This question carries an implied assumption that there exists an association between one’s sense of security and a life of comfort and possibly luxury while fear is connected with leading a life in poverty and destitution. At first glance, this may readily provide a partial explanation, but it would be wrong to assume that this is an exhaustive commentary. Another way to understand this hadith could be as follows:

“I will not give my servant two assurances at the same time.” If a person is living carefree and in indulgence in the world, is not concerned about the next life, and has no worries about the destruction of his soul and **spiritual life**, and if that person has no fear of the losing his subtle qualities, no fear of the death of his feelings and the extinction of his spiritual faculties and thus lives without fear, that person cannot be without fear in the next world.

If a person lives with fear in this world-fear in the sense mentioned above-and is always anxious both in his words and actions, saying, “O my Lord! If it were not for Your benevolence, I could not protect my faith; if not for Your grace, I could not protect my subtle points; if not for Your generosity, I could not survive; if not for Your **Compassion and Mercy**, I cannot enter Heaven. If not for the Beloved, the Mercy of the World, I would not have found my way and would have remained in depravity.” If he can always exist in this fear and frequently take himself to account, control himself, and take the opportunity to renew himself, in the next world-God willing-there will be no fear for him.

However, there is an indispensible truth in the way this question is phrased, and it is not far from the meaning expressed in the hadith. If a person acts without concern and fear as if he came to this world only to live, and if he never feels any anxiety, then that person should be concerned about himself. In fact, even if this does not happen often, he should worry about living only in comfort and languor and feel shame for it. The following example clarifies the matter a little more: As related in sound narrations, Umar b. Abdulaziz would sometimes repeat the verse, “When the chains are around their necks, and fetters (around their legs). They will be dragged,” (40:71) and would fall on the floor. In addition, he would read this verse many times and pass out: “You consumed in your worldly life your (share of) pure, wholesome things, and enjoyed them fully (without considering the due of the Hereafter, and so have taken in the world the reward of all your good deeds). So this Day, you are recompensed with the punishment of abasement because of your scornful arrogance on the earth against all right, and because of your transgressing (the bounds set by God)” (46:29).

Yes, it is very normal for a **believer** with a sound heart to have such a concern, and actually this fear is the result of profound contemplations. But God may have also given this world in terms of substantial health to a person as He gave to Abdurrahman ibn Awf and Uthman ibn Affan, two giant **believers**. In that case, believers should make use of their wealth for the sake of lofty purposes and serve humanity for the sake of God. It is not necessary to give away possessions entirely; it is better to give in measured terms to those who are in need. A part of the assets should be retained so that they can be invested and wealth multiplied; thus, in the end one can donate a greater amount. Let it suffice that our intentions are pure, that we know this wealth is a trust from God and that we are ready to give it away when our Lord wants it.

This should be a benchmark against which we frequently check the level of our hearts. Can we comfortably say, deep within our consciences, that we are ready to give every time we hear the command and suggestions by Our Lord? Can we say, “Yes, **O My Lord**, I am ready to give!”? If we can do this, in other words, if the state of our heart is not attached to the possessions we have, then an increase in wealth can bear no negative impact upon us, and our property will not be the cause of any worry concerning the Hereafter, if God so wills. On the other hand, if a person insists on living heedlessly, having no belief or spiritual quest, simply, yet unwisely seeking to please the never-pleased carnal self-may God forbid-such a person will be bogged down in the swamp, headfirst. Let these two points not be confused.(7)

**The Horizon Of Hope**

With strong conviction and high **hope**, poised to move forward; with firm resolve, our will ready as a taut bow-string is ready in sweet imagination of paradise-like scenes of tomorrow, whose beauty we experience in spirit-we speak of the future once more, alert to its being near. It is as if the dark clouds-clouds that have been covering our foundations built of a deep spirituality, and our shining past built of ivory and pearl, crystal and coral, and our culture woven with threads of satin and silk, and gold and silver-the dark clouds are moving away and an attractive, enchanting world is gliding across the horizon. The scenes appearing to us, as yet afar, produce such thrills of pleasure in our souls that we feel as if the happy, promised time had all but arrived.

Realities mixed with imagining, we feel we are half way to the peaceful union of the modern with the traditional, the scientific with the religious and spiritual, the reason with the heart, the experienced with the revealed, and the military power with sense, justice and right. We are travelling toward this goal and feel as if we heard lyrical melodies that harmonized the past and the future. With the hope that the day will certainly come when souls conceive of nothing but goodness and fairness, when feelings overflow with love and compassion and eyes become more generous than clouds in pouring tears of mercy, when the soil fully awakens to life and the earth becomes as safe and comfortable as a nest, when human beings compete with spiritual beings in **goodness** and virtue-we try to meet in cheerful faith all the requirements of travelling to those horizons where we shall taste life once again as it should be.

We are hopeful because all the preparations made, the efforts exerted, and the hardships endured, are like melodies of the happy future world in whose warmth the past and the future will be embraced and the present time will unburden itself to its faithful, blessed friends, and we will sing joyful songs of the lost paradise regained.

We are hopeful because things begin to voice the wise purpose in their creation; the sun, the moon and stars begin to discourse about the past; worlds far beyond our own send smiles ahead to those expected happy days, and the preparations of a coming celebration are observed everywhere. Hoping to God that an adverse wind does not rise up to pull everything down; that space, this island of time, where souls, deeper in spirit than their actions, whose beliefs and actions are louder than their words, whose hearts and minds are set upon eternity, alight and depart, will be the island where mankind have been longing to dwell since the beginning of their worldly existence, the island which will transport them to eternity from its harbours and quays and platforms.

It is truly so. If we stir up things around us just a little, they will, as a part of history, begin to speak and sing the praises of the future. We may liken our moment in time to a clock waiting to be wound up. In appearance quite still or ‘out of order’ it is ready to work with the slight effort of winding. This moment of time too is about to move, like an athlete at the starting-pistol. Indeed, may we not say that it has already started-to be united with its roots in the past and to search for new horizons in the future. Its movement is a rhythmical one directed by wisdom and promising spring times, one after another; from it are heard sounds of profound resonance and music sublime.

The basic dynamics of this movement are belief and hope, while its future lies in Prophetic resolve to persevere without leaving room for any kind of deficiencies in reasoning or understanding or feeling. It is God, and only He, Who will produce the result, and it is an offence to Him to strike attitudes that imply that our hands determine and produce the result. If we reflect upon the present situation and the unimaginable effects of the dynamics we have from yesterday to the present, we could not help but be amazed by seeing how great rewards are given for the least of efforts. Ponder the fact that, although the values belonging to us have been unfairly chewed up between the teeth of time, still they have been able to reach the coastlines of our century and we can re-achieve them as the indispensable elements of our civilization and culture. We find them still as fresh as the first day and use them as either keys with which to open the long-locked doors of hearts, or the doors of castles on the way to conveying civilization to all parts of the world, or as torches of learning with which to illuminate the world. They are still so powerful and enchanting that while some of them introduce us into the world of Ibn Khaidun or Biruni or Zahrawi or Shafi’i and Abu Hanifa, some others bring us roses from the gardens of spiritual masters like Ibrahim Adham, ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, Shah Naqhsband, Shaykh Uftada and Shaykh Ghalib, and still others take us to the evergreen summits of Iqbal, Baqi, Fuduli, Sa’di, Nizami, Nawa’i and Rumi.

With its natural environment unpolluted and in good order and harmony, its lovely towns and villages re-planned and re-designed, and its population equipped with such human values and virtues as belief, love, **knowledge**, mutual loyalty and high morals, this world would be a place fit for joyful, sincere-hearted people to dwell in; a place where rivers of love and other sublime feelings flow; where works of the finest artistry appear side by side with those of the sciences into which religion has breathed a new life; a place where families dwell whose members are attached to one another with love, respect and compassion. Those destined to live in this world will find it a paradise-like place cleansed of all kinds of impurity and foulness, and purified of all kinds of misery and dissipation, where angelic souls fly around and all are for each and each is for all.

This world will convey meanings from the other world, and plains and mountains will radiate peace and contentment. Emotions will be much deeper and fed by eternity. In this world whose material is woven of belief, morals, **knowledge** and love, life will be more beneficial and nothing wasted.

We are now on the way to this world of love, peace and vitality. Our final destination is He, the One to Whom we have devoted our hearts. We are walking toward Him along the way He has established. With our trust placed in Him and relying on His favours, our struggle is to reach Him. He will produce the result, Who never breaks His Word and always fulfils His promise. So why be hopeless? Why speak of thorns in the garden of roses?

We are servants chained at His doorway. He always makes us understand our servanthood. Our aim is to be able to perform the duty of thanksgiving for His making Himself known to us. We always seek refuge in His Court. He will surely admit those who, after long journeying, knock at the door of His Court. He will surely admit them to the final union.(8)

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