

Harmfulness of Jealousy, Greed and Covetousness

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One of the undesirable evil attributes is jealousy that can be discussed in several categories:

- 1 – Meaning of jealousy and its difference from envy
- 2 – Kinds of jealousy
- 3 – Its censure and prohibition and whether the prohibition covers all kinds of jealousy or it is limited to some of this kinds?
- 4 – Signs of jealousy.
- 5 – Harms of jealousy from the viewpoint of an individual a society and the religion.
- 6 – Causes leading to jealousy.
- .7 – Remedy of this dangerous disease

Meaning for jealousy and its difference from envy

The meaning of jealousy is that man desires that a blessing may be removed from his faithful brother though he knows that the said comfort is befitting him and hence the title. But envy means: to desire the comfort possessed by others without a wish that blessing may go away from others. In other words, an envious person ones not want a halt the progress of others but

makes effort to equal others. Perhaps this attitude can be divided into five kinds:

Kinds of Jealousy: That man desires that the comfort enjoyed by his fellow Muslim brother may be taken away from the his even if thereby he himself does not get any benefit. This is the worst kind of jealousy.

B: man wants that others bounty may be removed from him and may be given to him.

C: Sometimes man does not want that someone's ease may be taken away from him but wants the same ease for himself and since it does not reach him he entertains a desire for the other man's down fall and possibly, if he gets such strength, he removes the said ease from the other person .

D: In the beginning one does not want that the other man should lose his bounty but since he does not have the ability to reach it he desires the downfall of the other person, but without an intention to seize the other persons bounty even if he is able to do so. As he considers himself religiously responsible and duty bound.

E: His heart would feel happy if the other prosperity vanishes but, at the same, he is also angry

with his own heart due to such wish and also condemns scolds it. It can be said that, possibly, the ayats and traditions apply to all the aforesaid kinds. But the .fifth kind, from both logical and traditional viewpoint, deserves demarcation

Condemnation and Prohibition of Jealousy

Ayats and Traditions censuring and banning jealousy are many. For example we suffice to quote the following few:

- 1 – Many of the followers of the book wish that they could turn you back into unbelievers after your Faith, out of envy from themselves.
- 2 – Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His Grace? But indeed We have give to Ibrahim’s children the Book and the wisdom, and we have given them a grand kingdom.
- 3 – If good befalls you, it grieves them, and if am evil afflicts you, they rejoice at it; and if you are patient and guard yourselves, their scheme will not injure you in any way; surely Allah comprehends what they do.
- 4 –And do not convert that by which Allah has made some of you excel others.
- 5 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Indeed envy and jealousy burn down Faith just as fire burns down timber.
- 6 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Jealousy, self-centeredness and egos are calamities for Faith.
- 7 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: When the Arc of Noah settled on ground, Satan approached him Nooh –AS and said: No one has as much right as you have on me, because, it was a result of your prayer that this criminal group of people has vanished and I feel happy. I recommend you two attributes if you keep away from them you will benefit: 1 – Keep distance from jealousy, because it was due to jealousy that I have been driven out of the divine out of the divine .position court. Be away from envy calamity which has afflicted humanity was because of envy

Signs of Jealousy

Obviously everybody imagines himself to be better and thinks that his thoughts and manners are better and as mentioned in the Holy Quran: Man is evidence against himself, through he puts forth his excuses.

Yet, along with this description the infallible and pure progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) have mentioned some signs. Here is an example: it has been narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that Luqman told to his son: A jealous man has three signs: 1: While not facing him he

.backbites him, 2: When in front of him praises and feels happy himself

Harms of Jealousy

Jealousy is the fountainhead of many individual and social evils some of them being.

A: It can be said that jealousy is a kind of criminal motives observed in the world and if an investigation is made in the real factors behind murders, thefts, excesses etc we shall find that a significant number of them is based on jealousy and, perhaps, that is why jealousy has been compared with a spark of fire which can endanger both individuals and societies. We see in narrations that:

A: 1 Jealousy can be close to blasphemy or disbelief and it is likely that jealousy may turn off the life and future of man. In other words, sometimes destinies of a family and a community change due to jealousy and in history, such happenings are found like the events of the sons of Adam and the sons of Ya'qoob (a.s.).

B: A jealous person spends away all or most of his energy, be it physical or mental, which otherwise could help in the progress of the society. By losing it a jealous man spoils both his personal as well as the collective assets, of the society.

C: Over and above all this, jealousy leaves very undesirable effects on the body of man and his health. Usually jealous persons are seen to be almost ill and restless both physically and mentally because, today it has been established that many physical illnesses are due to nervous causes or psychics causes. In today's field of medicine we see detailed discussions under the title of illnesses related to physical ???

Now pay attention to the following narrations:

1 – Ali (a.s.) said: Less jealousy, more health.

2 – Ali (a.s.) said: It is surprising that jealous people are totally careless about their physique.

3 – Also we read: Liar has no virility and a jealous no rest.

4 – So also: The jealous is in grief and the miser is rebuked.

5 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: A miser cannot have peace nor a jealous pleasure.

6 – Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) said: One who does not suppress jealousy makes his body his own grave.

D: Jealousy drives away man's religion, that is, man, through jealousy, does things that drive away his religion. Hence we read that jealousy is a calamity for religion.

Sometimes it so happens that a man whom God has given a bounty becomes an enemy of either God or of that bounty and consequently becomes an unbeliever, for example, Habel. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Verily there are enemies of the Divine bounties. It was asked

who is an enemy of Gods bounty? He replied: One who became jealous of those whom god has given bounty.

It has been mentioned in some Qudsi hadiths: In fact a jealous person is my enemy and he becomes angry against my decision. He is not happy with distribution among my servants.

.In summary, we should seek whether of the Lord from this wicked vice

Causes of Jealousy

May be all of these three or anyone or all of these three things causes jealousy:

1 – Sometimes it so happens that due to dirt in heart or internal blindness man is unable to look at Gods servants whom He has given bounties. So Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: Jealousy and ill will is due to darkness in heart and blindness of soul which gets rooted due to denial of Divine bounties and these two vices blind-heartedness and fault-finding in Divine distribution are two wings of kufr blasphemy and hence it was due to jealousy that the son of Adam drowned down in a perpetual regret and fell into a ruin from which he never gets freed...

2 – Enmity between two persons often becomes the cause of jealousy.

3 – And sometimes longing for power, desire for position and pride and self-centredness become the cause of jealousy. Hence the Holy Quran Quotes the Al Kafirs of Quraysh saying: and they say: Why was not this Quran revealed to a man of importance in the two towns?

Valeed and Habeeb of Mecca and Ta'if

. Yet at another place it says: They said: You are naught but mortals like ourselves.

And as regards the third, it mentions: What! Shall we believe in tow mortals like ourselves ...

and if you obey a mortal like yourselves, then most surely you will be losers.

In any case, we must strive so that the causes and reasons of it are removed and this is easier .than, trying afterwards, to get rid of jealousy

Remedy for this Dangerous disease

The best procedure of removing this dangerous disease is:

First: Keep in mind the individual, social and otherworldly harms of it.

Second: Seek its practical remedy and remove it from heart by discipline.

Third: Man must think for a while whether he can, through jealousy, grab a bounty from others where as the fact is that whatever God Almighty has decided is bound to reach him. So he

says: And there is measure with him of everything.

.And in respect of the other says: For every term there is an appointment

Greed and its harms

One of the vices which degrade man and make him world-worshipper is greed. Many times it so happens that man, due to greed, sells out his personality and his religion also and makes himself disgraceful in the society.

In this discussion, first of all, let us understand what is greed?

Secondly, what are its signs?

Thirdly, what are its individual, social collective and spiritual harms.

Fourthly, what is its remedy?

1 – Greed: means to keep an eye on others wealth. This in itself is a branch of worldly love. So many are people who do not have enough bread to eat and yet they never look at the wealth of others, and like the proverb, keep their cheek rosy by slapping it. Also there are millionaires and are still greedy. In this matter we read in narrations:

No richness can equal the content or needlessness of the heart.

In another hadith we read: Keep away from greed as greed is sure poverty

2 – Signs of Greed: Man talks flatteringly with the wealthy and the powerful and lowers himself before them and sometimes he presents himself as a slave and as asserted by the Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.): Greed is a permanent slavery or a greedy man is bound by disgrace.

3 – Harms of Greed: Greed lowers the value of man in the sight of God and in the society. How disgraceful it is for a man for whom the Lord Almighty has used names like or vicegrent.

Or says about him: And surely we have honoured the children of Adam.

Makes himself downgraded and looks greedily at the wealth or status of others. Society knows such persons and people do not give any respect to them. They are like mosquitoes being swept away in the direction of the wind. In the words of Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.): No thing destroys religion like novice and no thing corrupts human personality like greed.

Contrary to it there are also some people who are not wealthy from the worldly viewpoint and yet they are respected by the society as the society knows that they do not entertain any tined of greed and that they represent the type who, in the words of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): If anybody wants to become the richest man he should pay more attention to what is in the hand of God and not what is in the possession of other Imam Sadiq (a.s.) also says: One who rests content at what God has provided for him is the richest of all men.

Greediness is of no value from the religious point of view. Here we draw your attention to some hadiths about it:

A: Saadaan says: I asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.): What strengthens the Faith of man? He replied: Piety. And what drives man out of religion? He said: Greed.

B: And Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Be pious and save yourselves from showing yourselves as needy and know that the one who lowers himself before the officer of a tyrant king or in front of his opponent in the matter of religion for seeking material benefits of this transient world, God makes him valueless in the eyes of the society and considers him as His enemy.

C: Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) has, reportedly, said: One who approached a wealthy man just for the sake of his wealth and thereby, gives him respect loses two-third of his religion.

4 – Cure for this Dreadful Illness: Man should look at its harms. He should notice where did greed lead the people who fell prey to a greed for status or lust for riches. Man must also read history and ponder over it and take note that people like Ibne Saad or ulemas who were greedy approached the courts of kings and consequently fell in the eyes of the society. In this way man can easily remove this dirty vice from himself. One should also think deeply into the might of the Lord of the worlds only one God and believe that He has power over everything. He must not show his needs to anyone except only one God until he becomes needless except that of Almighty Allah and frees himself from the slavery of any human being and reaches perfection of spirit.

Covetousness and its harms

One of the branches of materialism is covetousness. It sometimes shows itself in the form of greed for status and sometimes in the form of eagerness to hoard wealth and sometimes it takes the shape of passions and desires. The root of this attribute too, like all other human attributes, is desirable, but it also, like other things must be kept under control so as to benefit from it.

In this connection the Holy Quran says: Surely man is created of a hasty temperament; being greatly grieved when evil afflicts him, and niggardly when good befalls him, except those who pray.

In this verse Lord Almighty mentions man as greedy except those who have permanent closeness to God and this man, if he does not keep himself under control becomes so greedy and covetous that he does not become contented even if the entire world is given away to him.

In the same reference the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.) have given admonition to man through impressive examples and parables. Here are some:- 1 – It is reported from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): If the son of Adam had two valleys full of gold, in fact, he would remain in search of a third one and nothing but dust can fill the belly of the son of Adam and God forgives everyone who repents.

2 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: In truth, it has been revealed from the Heavens that if the son of

Adam had in his possession two valleys of gold and silver he will nevertheless seek a third one.

O son of Adam: In fact your belly is a river among rivers and a forest among forests which do not get filled but by dust.

3 – Imam Baqir (a.s.) has been quoted like this: The parable of a covetous person is that of a silk worm. The more it creates silk around himself the more its way out gets away until it dies in frustration.

In conclusion, the infallible Imams (a.s.) through such words of wisdom want mankind to understand that they should not follow this attribute of covetousness greed for worldly wealth and status because following it is fatal for them

The way of remedying this dangerous disease

First our certainty trust regarding the attributes of Almighty Allah must be strengthened and we should know that he is Razzaaq Provider and He has guaranteed provision for all the creatures.

It is mentioned in the Holy Quran: And there is no animal in the earth but on Allah is the sustenance of it. In another verse He says: and whoever is careful of his duty to Allah, we will make for him an outlet, and give him sustenance from he thinks not. Secondly a covetous person must think over the fact that the aim of his covetousness and greed is accumulation of wealth and that this wealth remains here but he himself passes away from here. Yet it is for him to give an account of that wealth before the Lord in the Hereafter. Thirdly, we should read with care the narrations in this regard so that the wise and precious words of wisdom from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and his pure and infallible family may prove effective for us. For example:

1 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) has said: Among the causes of dryness of eyes and toughness of heart are covetousness for obtaining provision and insistence on sin.

2 – Someone asked Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.): Which is the biggest disgrace? He said: Greed for the material world.

3 – It is recorded from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) The son of Adam becomes old, yet his two attributes remain: one aged and another lengthy ambitions.

Fourthly, The more a man becomes covetous the more he deprives himself of peace of mind and falls in more grief and anger and burns in the internal fire. raging in his own heart.

One of the branches of worldly love is a lengthy ambition

This attribute is though desirable yet it also requires to be controlled with conditions and planning. Religious leaders have given many admonitions in this regard to their followers. Here are some of them:-

- 1 – Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) said: Beware: My biggest worry about you is in two matters: 1 – Following your desires and 2 – Lengthy ambitions because slavery of desires prevents you from truth and entertaining lengthy ambitions results in unmindfulness of the Hereafter life after death.
- 2 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Indeed the welfare of a nation is in piety and Faith and its destruction is in greed and long ambitions.
- 3 – Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) is reported to have said: In truth, if one sees the speed with which .ones death approaches him he will abhor long ambitions and will give up worldly love

Result of high ambitions

It is reported from Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.): The result of long ambitions is evil deeds of man.
He has also said: One who lengthens his ambitions worsens his deeds.
Perhaps it can also be said that: wickedness in our deeds reveals the lengthiness of our .ambitions

Remedy for This illness

First man must look at the speed with which his death is approaching him and then study history to know what kind of ambitions people had entertained and took all of them only to graves.

Thirdly, he should plan for its remedy and should see towards the events of the family members of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) so that he may clean himself in the light of their .guidance

One of the branches of worldly love is stinginess

Stinginess is a vice that moves man away from the Lord of the worlds and makes him valueless in the eyes of society and the nation.

As a proof we divide the discussion of this lesson in four parts for contemplation:

- 1 – Meaning of stinginess and a miser
 - 2 – Verses and narrations condemning miserliness
 - 3 – Individual and collective harms of misery.
 - 4 – Remedy for stinginess and some events of the misers
- Miser according to dictionary is keeping or holding up wealth in conditions requiring its

donation and bestowing and sometimes a man is called miser who does not help when asked for it even though he is able to help the needy.

From the viewpoint of Shariat one is called a miser when he does not fulfil his duties. It is said in a narration: Miser is one who shows stinginess in spending as per Gods orders.

It is narrated from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): One who pays up the poor tax from his wealth and helps people in times of trouble is not a miser. Misery is really in one who does not pay zakat and not the one who helps his community in trying times. But possibly, it can be said that help is a common usage and what is mentioned in the narrations is describing some particular thing. Hence some other meaning is also conveyed in some hadiths. For instance Imam Sadiq (a.s.) has been quoted as saying: Bakhael miser is one who shows stinginess in saying salaam

Some rivayats have explained its complete applicability. Just as the latter narration does.

In this connection there are many verses and narrations. For example:

We read in the Holy Quran: and let not those deem, who are niggardly in giving away that which Allah has granted them out of his Grace, that it is good for them; nay, it is worse for them; they shall have that whereof they were niggardly made to cleave to their necks on the resurrection day.

2 – Those who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide what Allah has given them out of His Grace; and we have prepared for unbelievers a disgraceful chastisement.

3 – If you control the treasures of the Mercy of my Lord, then you would withhold them from fear of spending, and man is niggardly And now we read in narrations:

1 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Allah has said paradise is forbidden to one who shows favours and the one who is niggardly.

2 – Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: Three things destroys people: 1 – Misery and jealousy sprouted from misunderstanding about God, 2 – Following desires and 3 – Self-conceit and self-centredness.

1 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Misery and jealousy and faith can never stay together in man's heart

4 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: A generous yet sinful youth is dearer to God than an old and jealous men

5 – According to traditions the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) was one engaged in circumambulation of the Holy Kaaba when he saw a man who was clinging to the cover cloth of the Holy Kaaba and was seeking bath from God for forgiving him because of the holiness of the Kaaba. The

Holy Prophet asked him: What is your sin?

The man replied: O Messenger of god: My sin is too serious to be mentioned.

The Messenger: Woe unto you! Is your sin great or the earth?

Man: My sin is greater.

Prophet: Is your sin bigger or the mountains?

Man: My sin is bigger than mountains.

Messenger: In your sin big or the sea?

Man: My sin is bigger than them.

Messenger: Is your sin larger or the sky?

Man: My sin is larger.

Messenger: Is your sin greater or the Throne of the Lord Almighty?

Man: My sin.

Messenger: Is your sin great or God Himself?

Then the Holy Prophet said: Now tell me what is your sin?

The man said: I am a wealthy man. When a needy beggar approaches me I feel as if a flame of fire is about to burn me.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Keep distance from me. Do not burn me with your blazing fire. By the Lord who has appointed me! If you die with this vice of misery, God will hurl you into Hell even if you pray for a thousand years between these Holy places of Rukn and Maqaam and even if rivers of tears flow from your weeping eyes. Woe unto you! Have you not read in the Holy Quran: And whoever is niggardly is niggardly against his own soul. So also says the Lord: And whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is .that are the successful ones

Harms of Niggardliness

A miser man, from a psychic angle, always remains restless and all of his worry is about hoarding wealth. Sometimes he also indulges in evil and unlawful activities just for earning money. Hence Amirul Mo-mineen is reported to have said:

Niggardliness is the root of all evils, it is a bridle that drives man toward every evil.

And Ali (a.s.) also said: A miser has no rest nor a niggardly person can be joy good taste.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): A generous man is near God, society and paradise whereas a stingy person is away from God and society but near Hell. However, religious losses of niggardliness are obvious as it prevents man from fulfilling his religious and desirable duties .and as a result he becomes the subject of the verses and narrations condemning misery

Remedy for this mental illness

The remedy is that man must be aware of the individual, collective and religious harms of this illness. He should also read with attention on the verses, narrations and historical events of people who had this ailment like Qaroon, Mansoor Duwaaniqi and ... and should take admonition from them so that he may improve