

Pride: A Barrier To Paradise

Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Naasir as-Sa'dee
Source: Bahjatul-Quloobul-Abraar, Pgs. 156-158

From 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood (radee-Allaahu `anhu) who related that Allaah's Messenger (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Whoever has an atom's worth of kibr (pride) in his heart will not enter Paradise."

So a man said: What about a person who loves (i.e. takes pride in) wearing beautiful clothes and beautiful shoes? So he (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) replied:

"Indeed Allaah is beautiful and loves beauty. Kibr (pride) is to reject the truth, and to despise the people." (Saheeh Muslim, 1/65)

So Allaah - the Most High - informs us that the Hellfire is the abode of those who have kibr (pride and arrogance). And we learn from the (above) hadeeth that:

"Whoever has an atom's worth of kibr (pride) in his heart will not enter Paradise."

So this is a proof that kibr (pride) necessitates entry into the Hellfire and prevents entry into Paradise. And this comprehensive explanation that the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) mentioned has clarified the meaning of kibr (pride) in the dearest possible manner. So he divided kibr into two types:

[1] Pride against the truth: This is to reject the truth and not to accept it. So anyone who rejects the truth is proud and arrogant - in accordance with what he rejects of the truth. So it is obligatory upon everyone to humble themselves to the truth which Allaah sent His Messenger with, and which He sent down in His Book. As for those whose pride and arrogance prevents them from totally complying with the Messengers (i.e. having Eemaan or faith in them and their message) - then they are kuffaar (unbelievers) who will dwell in the Hellfire for eternity. Since when the truth comes to them via the Messengers, who explain to them the signs and clear proofs, they reject it and are prevented from accepting it, due to the kibr that they harbour in their hearts. Allaah the Most High - said:

"Verily, those who dispute about the aayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allaah, without any authority having come to them, there is nothing else in their breasts except pride [to accept you (Muhammad) as a Messenger of Allaah and to obey you]." (40:56)

As for those whose arrogance and pride prevent them from complying with parts of the truth - because it opposes their personal opinions or their whims and desires - then such people are not kuffaar (unbelievers), but such an action necessitates them being punished in accordance with what they have of kibr. This is why the Scholars are agreed that whenever the Sunnah (guidance and way) of Allaah's Messenger (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) has been explained to anyone, then it is not lawful for him to turn away from it to the saying of someone else, whoever and whatever status he may have.

So it is obligatory upon the seeker of knowledge to give complete and absolute precedence to the saying of Allaah and the saying of His Messenger (sall-Allaahu

`alayhi wa sallam) over and above the saying of anyone else, and that he should make that the basis to which he returns, and the foundation upon which he builds; following the guidance of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam), striving hard to understand what is intended from it, and following this, both inwardly and outwardly. When a person conforms to this great principle, then he has indeed reached goodness and excellence, and all his errors will be forgiven to him; since his overall objective is to follow that which has been prescribed upon him. So his errors are excused due to his striving his best to recognise and comply with the truth - and this is humbling oneself to the truth.

[2] Pride towards people: This type is to despise the people, and to look down upon them. This attitude arises when a person is amazed with his own self, thinks highly of himself, and thinks he is better than others. So this causes him to have kibr towards the creation, despise them, mock them, and to degrade them through both speech and action. Allaah's Messenger (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) said:

"It is enough evil for a person to despise his brother Muslim."
(Saheeh Muslim, 2564)

This is why the man asked:

"What about a person who loves (i.e. takes pride in) wearing beautiful clothes and shoes?"

Because he feared that this was the kibr which would be under the threat of punishment. So the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) explained to him that this was not from kibr; since this person was one who complied with the truth, and was humble towards people, and that this was from the beauty that Allaah loves, for indeed Allaah - the Most High is beautiful in His Dhaat (Self), Sifaat (Attributes) and Af'aal (Actions), and He loves both outer and inner beauty.

As regards outer beauty, then it includes cleanliness of the body, clothes and place. As regards to inner beauty, then it is beautifying the character. This is why the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) used to supplicate:

"O Allaah! Guide me to having beautiful manners and characteristics; no one can guide me to beautifying them except You. And turn away from me all evil actions and characteristics, no one can turn them away from me except You."
(An-Nasaa'ee, 861. authenticated by al-Albaanee in Sifat-us-Salaah, P. 93)

And Allaah knows best.