

Imam al-Baqir (A.S.) Explains

Any act, no matter how small and minimal, may as a matter of fact act as a long ladder in reaching Allah's (SWT) satisfaction. The same matter can be applied to our peers; a person whom we may have overlooked at all times may in fact be an eminent servant of Allah (SWT). This mentality is one taught by the divine leaders. Accordingly, Imam Baqir(A.S.) has said:

"Verily Allah has hidden three facts in three acts:

- He has hidden His satisfaction in His obedience; thus never undervalue an act of worship, lest His eventual satisfaction may be in that specific worship.
- He has hidden His wrath in His disobedience; thus never underestimate a sin, lest that very sin accompanies his ultimate wrath;
- And finally, He has hidden His chosen people amongst His servants; thus never undervalue any of His servants, lest that person is in fact the selected."

Why does Imam Baqir(A.S.) insist upon making sure "no matter how small, acts of worship are not undervalued?" The fact of the matter is that Allah's (SWT) satisfaction lies in our obedience to Him; the value of an act depends upon its acceptance by Allah (SWT), rather than our understanding of an act's importance.

The concept of "an act being accepted by Allah (SWT)" can be seen in prayers of the Prophets (A.S.) and the Imams (A.S.), where despite their well-known piety and faith, they would constantly ask Allah (SWT) to accept their acts of worship.

For example, while Prophet Ibrahim/Abraham(A.S.) was rebuilding the foundations of the Ka'ba(1) with the help of his son Isma'il/Ishmael(A.S.), he made the following prayer:

"O Lord! Accept this from us; surely you are the Hearing, the Knowing". (2)

The same rule applies to sins, in that one should refrain from undervaluing any sin. Regardless the sin, in an act of sin a person is disobeying the commands of the authority of Allah (SWT). For who knows, that same sin can be a start in the path of Allah's (SWT) dissatisfaction, and as a result lead to an unpleasant ending.

However, Imam Baqir(A.S.) does not limit his words to the acts of worship and sin, rather the Imam continues to discuss our interaction with people. How can one undervalue a brother/sister, while the great servants of Allah (SWT) are hidden amongst the rest of the people? It is noteworthy that this saying does not specify a certain group of people such as the faithful; rather it encompasses all the creatures of Allah (SWT). Islam has not allowed us to judge people by their appearances, unless his/her true character has been revealed; and has not allowed us to ignore others merely because he/she does not have a pleasant appearance to us.

Apparently, the main idea of this Hadith is that no act, whether good or bad, and no person should ever be undervalued. Nevertheless, considering the hard path in life, what view have we acquired toward the acts and people around us?

"Let us wash our eyes; let us watch things differently."

(Reference: Selection taken from "Forty Hadiths", by Sayyid Hashim Rasouli Mahallati)

Footnotes:

1- Ka'ba is the cubic house in Makkah, built by Prophet Ibrahim/Abraham(A.S.) and his son, Isma'il/Ishmael(A.S.) more than 3000 years ago in Makkah, towards which all Muslims face for their Salat and circumambulate in order to perform Hajj rituals.

2- The Holy Quran, (2:127)