

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We seek forgiveness from Allah
We stand witness to Allah that there is no God but Him
That Muhammad (SAWW) is his slave and messenger

Introduction

- Man in today's world moves around seeking and chasing wealth, fame, power and control. However, the primary motive that causes man to seek all these is to attain a state of happiness or contentment
- Contentment, in essence, represents the most important C in our life, much to the contrary of the materialistic world which emphasizes and measures success in the attainment of other C's (car, condominium, credit cards, club etc.)
- The rush to attain these materialistic desires has resulted in a failure of our ethical code. This, coupled with greed, more often than not has led to calamities across the world, most recently seen in the Global Financial Crisis which impinged world economies, casting severe economic and social consequences
- In the perspective of Islam, which teaches mankind the complete and wholesome way to lead his/her life, the journey to attain the pleasure of Allah is seen as the most important factor in life **وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ**
- It is only with the pleasure of Allah that mankind would be able to realize and actualize his other goals, which will then lead him to lead a holistic and balanced life in both this world and the hereafter

A'amal on the Day of A'ashoora

- One of the recommended actions to be performed on this day include walking forward and backward seven times while reciting the phrase that Imam Hussein (as) said on the day of A'ashoora:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Surely we come from Allah and to Him we shall return (2:156)

رِضًا بِقَضَائِهِ وَتَسْلِيمًا لِأَمْرِهِ

Being pleased with His decree, and submitting to His orders

- It is important to understand the purpose behind doing these actions. Imam Hussein (as), in reciting the above verse, highlighted the importance of being pleased with the decree of Allah and submitting completely to His orders.
- It is narrated that the Holy Prophet (sa) mentioned: *A servant's faith in Allah will never become complete until he possesses five traits:*
 1. التوكل على الله - complete **reliance** upon Allah
 2. التفويض الي الله - complete **dependence** upon Allah (what He has decreed)
 3. التسليم لامر الله - complete **submission** to all of the commandments of Allah
 4. الرضا بقضاء الله - **contentment** upon what Allah has decreed
 5. الصبر على بلاء الله - complete **patience** due to the calamities that Allah brings forth

The Holy Prophet (sa) continued: “Verily that person who loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah and gives (to others) for the (sake of) Allah and holds back (giving to others) for the (sake of) Allah is one whose faith is complete” (Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 177)

Contentment of Allah

- The stage of الرضا is greater than the previously mentioned stage. It can be said that at the level of التسليم, a person still had personal wants and desires but he has submitted his presence and essence and gives up his wants (to Allah).
- However at the stage of الرضا - even within a person's own soul, there is no resistance in relation to his wishes and desires; and this is the difference between الرضا and لتسليم.
- The level of الرضا is the stage a person forgets all of his own personal wishes and desires and enters the spiritual presence of the Pure Essence of his Lord. Truly, this is the meaning of the phrase فناء في الله (fanaa fil' llah) *complete annihilation* in the presence of Allah.
- It is narrated that Angel Jibraeel mentioned, in relation to the exegesis of the 'rida' or 'contentment' – “The one who is contented will not be discontented with his Master. And he will not be satisfied with himself serving his master.” [Mizaan al Hikmah tradition # 7301]
- In another narration, Prophet Musa (as) asked Allah (swt), “Point me to a deed that if I perform, I will attain your pleasure.” Allah (swt) replied: “Oh the son of Imran, verily My pleasure is to your dislike.” Prophet Musa (as) lamented and said, “You bless me with the blessing of being one You have talked to yet You will not point to me the deed that

will gain Your pleasure?” With that, Allah (swt) said, “Indeed My pleasure is in you taking pleasure of what I have decreed upon you.” [Mizaan al Hikmah tradition # 7337]

- In yet another narration, Prophet Musa asked Allah (swt) to show him a sign of His pleasure. Allah (swt) revealed to Prophet Musa (as), “*If you see My slave hasten to My obedience, and shun away from evil, then that is a sign of My pleasure.*” [Mizaan al Hikmah tradition # 7329]
- The mere establishment of prayers without the remembrance of Allah is of no value. The Holy Quran says: “*Establish prayers but the remembrance of Allah is better.*”
- In one narration, Iblis said “there are 5 qualities of which I have no authority over man. It is said that the fifth quality is when the slave of Allah is contented with what Allah has set aside for him; in such a situation the slave does not have to worry about his sustenance.” [Sir al asraah fi syarh hadith al mi’raj vol 1 pg 30]
- In the verse of the completion of Islam (5:3), Allah (swt) uses the word ‘rida’ to say that today He is contented with the religion of Islam; but this was only after Imam Ali (as) had been officially appointed to be the successor of the Holy Prophet (sa), signifying that religion would not be completed or the contentment of Allah would not be possible without the successorship or wilayah of Imam Ali (as).

Dua of Imam Hussein on the Day of Arafah

مَاذَا وَجَدَ مَنْ فَقَدَكَ
وَمَا الَّذِي فَقَدَ مَنْ وَجَدَكَ
لَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ رَضِيَ دُونَكَ بَدَلًا ،

What has he found who lost You,
and what has he lost who found You;
Verily he who has substituted you is a loser

In the Holy Quran (Surah Tauba, Verse 72),

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

Allah has promised the believer men and the believer women gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever, and goodly dwellings in garden of

perpetual abode, yet Allah's pleasure is greater than all these, that is the great success.

Note: Of course, entering into Paradise and enjoying its bounties can be a good goal for the believers, **but greater than that is gaining the good pleasure of Allah.** This is the main goal of any believer who has settled the love of Allah in his heart, and has considerably climbed towards the climax of the cognition of Allah (swt).

Other verses from the Holy Quran regarding contentment

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ
لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ

Enter it in peace, that is the day of abiding. There they have all that they desire, and there is more with Us. (50:35)

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ

1. *So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes. (32:17)*

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ

2. *Peace: a word from a Merciful Lord. (36:58)*

وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

3. *Yet Allah's pleasure is greater (9:72)*

- According to commentators of the Holy Quran, even in heaven, there is much more extra gifts and rewards for the believers (50:35 – “And there is more with us”)
- Commentators say that among this extra rewards include:
 - a. That which will refresh the eye;
 - b. Salutations to the inhabitants of heaven;
 - c. When Allah (swt) says “I am contented with you.” The highest climax is when Allah makes known to the dwellers of heaven that He is pleased with them; that should be our ultimate goal in life, to achieve this esteemed and revered station

In another verse of the Holy Quran,

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

But no! By your Lord! they do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any dislike in their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission.

- The opening phrase of this verse (**No, by your Lord**) asserts that the decision of Allah is final and irrevocable. Allah has decreed that the Holy Prophet's judgements, decisions and directions (concerning all material, spiritual, personal and public matters) should be accepted and carried out by his followers; else profession of their faith would not be genuine and sincere.
- **فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ** gives unlimited powers to the Holy Prophet
- **ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا** seals the decisive nature of the Holy Prophet's judgements, decisions and directions. No one has any right whatsoever to disagree with him in thought and action.
- **وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا** implies total surrender to him without any reservation.

Sayings of Imams regarding contentment

Imam Ali (as) says:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي مَرَّضَاتُهُ فِي الطَّلَبِ إِلَيْهِ وَالْإْتِمَاسُ مَا لَدَيْهِ وَسَخَطُهُ فِي تَرْكِ الْإِلْحَاحِ
فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ عَلَيْهِ

Praise be to Allah, Whose contentment is in invoking Him and asking for what He has and Whose discontent is in not insisting on invoking Him.”
(Al-Balad al-Amin, p. 127; Al-Sahifah al-Alawiyah, p. 634.)

Imam Sajjad (as) says:

“Perseverance and contentment with divine destiny are the highest forms of God's worship. Allah will only destine what is beneficial for those who are patient and content with what God destines for them whether they like it or not.”
(MISHKAT UL-ANWAR FI GHURAR AL-AKHBAR on Contentment)

Imam Baqir (as) says that Allah said (on the authority of the Holy Prophet):

“I swear by My Majesty and My Honor that I have not created any creature dearer to Me than a believer (mu'meen). That is why I put My own name (Al Mu'meen) on him.

He should be content with My action. If I deprive him of whatever lies between the East and the West, or if I bestow on him whatever exists between the East and the West. He should be patient with any catastrophes that I descend upon him, and he should be grateful for My blessings.

O' Muhammad! Please record his name among the honest ones near Me.”
(MISHKAT UL-ANWAR FI GHURAR AL-AKHBAR on Contentment)

And the Holy Quran speaks of the name of Allah (Al-Mu'meen):

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god; the King, the Holy, the Giver of peace, the Granter of security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness Glory be to Allah from what they set up (with Him) (59:23)

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

*“One who is **contented** with divine destiny is the one **most aware of Allah**”*

“The most important aspect of obedience to Allah is being content with and being patient with what Allah has decreed whether we like it or not. And when one is content with what Allah has decreed for him, whether he likes it or not, that which is decreed is best for him”

*“God has placed some **good** in whatever He has decreed for a believer with which the believer is content”*

*“**Comfort and convenience lie in contentment and certitude, and sorrow and sadness lie in doubt and anger***

Imam Sadiq (as) near death:

- One of the companions of Imam Sadiq (as) went to see him. The Imam (as) was seriously ill and near death. He saw that the Imam (as) was very weak and he cried.
- Imam Sadiq (as) asked why he cried. He said: “Should I not cry seeing you this way?”
- The Imam (as) said: **“Do not cry. Believers are always receiving what is good for them. Be it they lose a part of their body, or they become the owner of whatever lies between the East and the West, it is good for them.”**

Imam Reza (as) quoted on the authority of the grandfather, the Holy Prophet (sa):

- A group of people went to visit the Holy Prophet (sa) in one of the battles. The Prophet (sa) asked them from which tribe they were. They told him that they were of the believers.
- **The Prophet (sa) then asked them about the degree of their faith.** They replied: “We are patient during times of hardship, we are grateful during times of poverty, **and we are content with what God has destined for us.**”
- The Prophet (sa) said: “Those people are so wise and knowledgeable that **they are nearly in the position of Prophets.**” Then he faced them and said: “Then if you are what you claim to be, do not build what you will not live in; do not collect what you will not eat; and fear God to Whom is your return.”

(MISHKAT UL-ANWAR FI GHURAR AL-AKHBAR on Contentment)

Final comments

The Holy Quran says:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not (2:216)

- ❑ **Note: This verse points to a fundamental principle in the Divine laws of creation and legislation. It develops the spirit of regulation and resignation in man unto these laws.**
- ❑ **It is so that human members, concerning the Divine laws should not take their own distinction and concept as a criterion of judgment, because surely their knowledge is limited in all aspects and comparing with their unknown quantities, it is naught, or as if it were a drop of water in the face of a sea.**

Disclaimer:

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Allah knows best.