

Making peace ensures your heart is pure

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic on Friday, 9 May 2008. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Muhammad, the messenger of God (peace be upon him) was sitting with some of his companions one day and he said "A man from the people of Paradise will enter now. Everyone was waiting for and anticipating the man whom was blessed by God with paradise and protected from the hellfire. A man from the Helpers (ansar) entered, with his beard dripping with water from ablution. Among the attendance there was an energetic and ambitious young man, he was Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn al-As (RA) who was eager to know the secret of that man. Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As followed the man and he pretended that he had fallen-out with his father in order to stay with that man for three days. He exploited those three days to know what was that man doing to get that great reward but he never saw the man get up to pray at night or fast a lot so he asked him about the thing that make him among the people of paradise. The man replied: It is only what you have seen, but I do not hold anything against any Muslim in my heart, and I do not envy anyone for the blessings that God has bestowed on him.' 'Abdullah said: 'This is what raised you to that great status, and this is what we could not achieve.' Do you see how the status of that man was raised till he was among the people of paradise because of the purity of his heart!

See how Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As described this - 'this is what we could not achieve' - as people can't achieve except by fighting their own selves and desires. Indeed only noble souls can overcome reacting to any evil deed that is directed to them and facing it with good - hence they will keep their hearts pure and their chests sound. A pure heart means a heart without grudge, rancour, envy or hatred against anyone. Purity of the heart is a blessing from God almighty we all ask for.

Messenger (pbuh) said: "None of you should come to me with anything about any of my companions for I do not want to go out to you except with a clear heart."

Prophet Joseph has given the best example of forgiveness and purity of heart. After what his brothers did to him (threw him in a well and left him for dead) and when he was in a position of revenge (in charge of food store houses of Egypt) he refused to retaliate or exact revenge. In addition to that he gave them what they asked for, provided them with the best hospitality and he said something we rarely hear from our brothers these days "He said: "This day let no reproach be (cast) on you: God will forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy" (Joseph 92). He pardoned them and asked God to forgive them, more astonishingly, he tried to find an excuse for them "after Satan had sown enmity between me and my brothers" (Joseph 100).

Abu Dujanah (may God be pleased with him) understood this. He was smiling while dying and when he was asked about it he replied: "none of my deeds are more reliable than two, I never talked in what doesn't concern me and my heart was clear towards all Muslims."

Contrast such people with the one who holds something against his Brother in faith and humanity for one word which might be unintentional and the one who understands it in the only bad way whereas he can find 100 good meanings for it!

Contrast such people with the one who opens his hearts and ears for gossip and false news about his friends, brothers and relatives, gets happy for that and believes it as true without investigating. He is really poor as that will get him into the traps of the devil and his heart will be full of hate and grudge towards his Brother in faith and humanity.

Contrast such people with the one who has ill feelings towards everyone, he envies that one, has a grudge against the other, gets angry at the third, has suspicion against the fourth and accuses the fifth so he ends up in permanent enmity with everyone!

It is from the beauty of this life to say to your brother when you shake his hand "oh God, forgive me and my brother" and forgive him from your heart for his mistakes. If you do that then you will find the sweetness of your belief and the joy of brotherhood which God has blessed his slaves with "and remember with gratitude God's favour on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, you became brethren" (Aal-e-Imran/Family of the Father of Mary, mother of Jesus - 103)

Know that purity of your hearts towards other servants of God is a reason for your deeds to be accepted as prophet (pbuh) said: "Deeds are presented [to God] every Monday and Thursday, whereupon God, the mighty, forgives on that day every person who does not associate any [partner] with God, except someone who has rancour between himself and his brother, [for whom] God then says [to the angels], 'Leave these two until they reconcile.'" So look how much good are you missing by having ill feeling towards others.

Purity of the heart is a defining characteristic of the people who will be in paradise as God (SWT) says describing them "And We shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury: (they will be) brothers (joyfully) facing each other on thrones (of dignity)" (Al-Hijr 47) and "And We shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury;- beneath them will be rivers flowing" (Al-Araf 43)

Submission to God (literally Islam in arabic), builds the relation between servants of God (literally muslims in arabic) to form a brotherhood that is bound upon doing good works to earn God's pleasure. The Devil does his best to destroy that bond which works towards common good and so your soul has three days to clear your heart from any ill feelings towards your muslim brother following the advice of the prophet pbuh:

"It is not lawful for a man to desert his brother Muslim for more than three nights. (It is unlawful for them that) when they meet, one of them turns his face away from the other, and the other turns his face from the former, and the better of the two will be the one who greets the other first." [Sahih al Bukhari Bab al Adab, Volume 8, Book 73, Number 100 and Sahih Muslim - on the authority of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari]

We ask God to purify our hearts from dissension, hypocrisy and ill manners. We ask him to unite us and make us from those who love each other for His sake.