

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Class Notes – Lesson 64

وَأَنَّ الْإِيمَانَ يَزِيدُ بِالطَّاعَةِ، وَيَنْقُصُ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ.

وَهُمْ مَعَ ذَلِكَ لَا يُكْفَرُونَ أَهْلَ الْقِبْلَةِ بِمُطْلَقِ الْمَعَاصِي وَالْكَبَائِرِ - كَمَا يَفْعَلُهُ الْخَوَارِجُ - بَلِ الْأُخُوَّةُ الْإِيمَانِيَّةُ ثَابِتَةٌ مَعَ الْمَعَاصِي؛ كَمَا قَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ فِي آيَةِ الْقِصَاصِ: ﴿فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ﴾ [البقرة: ١٧٨] وَقَالَ: ﴿وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقْتُلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَى حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾ [الحجرات: ٩ - ١٠]

They believe that Imaan increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.

However, alongside this, they do not rule the People of the Qiblah as disbelievers because of every sin, or every major sin, (mutlaq al-ma'asi wal-kaba'ir) that they may commit as done by the Khawarij. Rather, brotherhood in Imaan remains even in the presence of sins, as Allah, Glorious is He, says in the verse dealing with retribution: But if someone is absolved by his brother, blood money should be claimed with correctness. [al-Baqarah: 178]

And He says: If two parties of the believers fight, make peace between them. But if one of them attacks the other unjustly, fight the attackers until they revert to Allah's command. If they revert, make peace between them with justice, and be even-handed. Allah loves those who are even-handed. The believers are brothers to one another, so make reconciliation between your brothers. [al-Hujurat: 9-10]

وَأَنَّ الْإِيمَانَ يَزِيدُ بِالطَّاعَةِ، وَيَنْقُصُ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ

They believe that Imaan increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.

- This is a continuation of what was mentioned previously as being from the principles upon which the *aqeedah* of *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* is established upon. From these principles regarding *Imaan*, is that it increases with good deeds and decreases with bad deeds.
- This principle is evidenced in both the Quran and Sunnah. As for the Quran, Allah says regarding the increase of *Imaan*:

﴿وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ إِيمَانًا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ﴾

And whenever a surah is revealed, there are some among them who say: 'Which of you has this increased in faith?' As for those who believe, it has increased them in faith, and they rejoice. [al-

Tawbah:124]

﴿لَيَسْتَفِيدَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَيَزْدَادَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِيمَانًا﴾

So that those who were given the Scripture will be convinced and those who have believed will increase in faith. [al-Muddathir: 31]

- As for the *Sunnah*, the Prophet ﷺ said when advising the women:

«مَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْ نَاقِصَاتٍ عَقْلٍ وَدِينٍ أَذْهَبَ لِلْبَّ الرَّجُلِ الْحَازِمِ مِنْ إِحْدَاكُنَّ»

I have not seen anyone more deficient in intellect and religion who can rob the mind of a resolute man more than one of you. [Bukhari, Muslim]

- If there was no established evidence which affirms the decrease of *Imaan*, then the evidences which affirms its increase are sufficient. This is because affirming that it increases, necessitates that it also decreases. Therefore, every evidence that proves its increase, also proves its decrease.
- The causes (*asbaab*) of the increase and decrease of *Imaan* are four.
 - Knowing about Allah, by His Names and Attributes. The more a person knows Allah, the more their *Imaan* will increase, on the other hand turning away from knowing Allah causes either its decrease or complete departure.
 - Pondering over Allah's universal and legislative *ayaat* (signs). Allah says in this regard:

﴿قُلْ أَنْظَرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُعْجِبُ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

Say: 'Observe what is in the heavens and earth.' But of no avail will be signs or warners to a people who do not believe. [Yunus: 101]

In his explanation, Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen says: 'Whenever a person gains knowledge of the wonders of creation and the profound wisdom that Allah the Almighty has placed in the universe, their *Imaan* in Allah, the Exalted, increases. Likewise, reflecting on Allah's legislative signs (i.e., the *Shari'ah*) increases a person's *Imaan* in Allah, the Exalted. When you look at the legislative signs, which are the laws brought by the Messengers, you find within them wisdom that astonishes the intellect and profound secrets, making you realize that this *Shari'ah* has indeed come from Allah. It is founded upon justice and mercy, and this reflection leads to an increase in *Imaan*.'

On the other hand, turning away from pondering over Allah's signs causes heedlessness and hardness of the heart.

- Various acts of worship and their proper observance. This is because actions are part of *Imaan*, which necessitates that *Imaan* will increase with an increase in good deeds. However, a lack of righteous deeds causes a lack of *Imaan*. This is because when the Prophet ﷺ explained the deficiency of *deen* in women, he said:

قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! كَيْفَ نُقْصَانُ دِينِهَا؟ قَالَ: «أَلَيْسَ إِذَا حَاضَتْ لَمْ تُصَلِّ وَلَمْ تَصُمْ؟»

They said: 'O Messenger of Allah! How is her religion deficient?' He replied: Is it not that when she menstruates, she does not pray or fast? [Bukhari, Muslim]

4. Avoiding acts of disobedience, with the intention of drawing closer to Allah. This will increase the *Imaan* of the person who actively observes this. However, committing acts of disobedience to Allah decreases *Imaan*. Allah says:

﴿كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ﴾

No! Rather, a stain has covered their hearts from what they used to earn. [al-Mutaffifin: 14]

- Two deviant groups opposed *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* regarding the increase and decrease of *Imaan*.

1. **The *Murji'ah*:** They claim that *Imaan* neither increases nor decreases, because deeds (good or bad) are not part of *Imaan*. Therefore, *Imaan* would not increase with their increase, nor would it decrease with their decrease.

To them, *Imaan* is merely affirmation in the heart, and that neither increases nor decreases. Even this assumption of theirs is wrong, because the affirmation in the heart also varies. Is your *Imaan* like that of the Prophet ﷺ or of Abubakr?!

2. **The *Khawarij* and *Mu'tazilah*:** They are referred to as the *Wa'idiyyah* because they always speak of the evidences of *wa'eed* (threat), and rarely speak of the evidences of *wa'd* (promise). They completely remove the *Imaan* of the one who commits a major sin.

وَهُمْ مَعَ ذَلِكَ لَا يُكْفِرُونَ أَهْلَ الْقِبْلَةِ بِمُطْلَقِ الْمَعَاصِي وَالْكَبَائِرِ

However, alongside this, they do not rule the People of the Qiblah as disbelievers because of every sin, or every major sin, (mutlaq al-ma'asi wal-kaba'ir) that they may commit.

- (وَهُمْ مَعَ ذَلِكَ) – ‘**However, alongside this.**’ Meaning, alongside *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*’s belief that *Imaan* comprises of statements and actions.
- (لَا يُكْفِرُونَ أَهْلَ الْقِبْلَةِ بِمُطْلَقِ الْمَعَاصِي وَالْكَبَائِرِ) – ‘**They do not rule the People of the Qiblah as disbelievers because of every sin, or every major sin, that they may commit.**’ The people of the *Qiblah* are the Muslims, even if they are disobedient to Allah, because they all face one *qiblah* (direction) and that is the Ka'bah. Therefore, the people of *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*, do not consider a Muslim as a disbeliever for general disobedience and major sins. Rather they still have the basis of *Imaan*, however, its completion is missing because of their sins.

كَمَا يَفْعَلُهُ الْخَوَارِجُ

As done by the *Khawarij*

- Meaning, the *Khawarij* who claim that the one commits a major sin is a disbeliever, whose *Imaan* has departed completely. This is why they wage wars against the Muslims and consider their blood and their wealth as being lawful.

بَلِ الْأُخُوَّةُ الْإِيمَانِيَّةُ ثَابِتَةٌ مَعَ الْمَعَاصِي

Rather, brotherhood in *Imaan* remains even in the presence of sins.

- Meaning, that the brotherhood among the believers is established, even with their disobedience to Allah. Therefore, the one who commits *zina* is the brother of the one who is chaste, the thief is the brother of the one he stole from, and the murderer is the brother of the murdered.

كَمَا قَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ فِي آيَةِ الْقِصَاصِ: ﴿فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ﴾ [البقرة : ١٧٨]

As Allah, Glorious is He, says in the verse dealing with retribution: But if someone is absolved by his brother, blood money should be claimed with correctness. [al-Baqarah: 178]

- This is part of the *ayah* of *Qisaas* (killing by way of retribution). The word {أَخِيهِ} (his brother) refers to the one who was murdered. Allah referred to the murdered as the brother of the murderer.
- Murder in Islam is a major sin, however it does not remove a person from the fold of Islam, because as per the *ayah*, the brotherhood between them is still established. They remain brother because the basis of *Imaan* is still established between them.

وَقَالَ: ﴿وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ﴾ [الحجرات : ٩ - ١٠]

And He says: If two parties of the believers fight, make peace between them. But if one of them attacks the other unjustly, fight the attackers until they revert to Allah's command. If they revert, make peace between them with justice, and be even-handed. Allah loves those who are even-handed. The believers are brothers to one another, so make reconciliation between your brothers. [al-Hujurat: 9-10]

- This is further evidence that the one who commits a major sin, has not exited from *Imaan*. These two groups of believers were fighting and raising weapons against each other.
- Yet with this, Allah commanded the third group of the believers, not involved in the fighting, to make peace between the warring factions. Allah referred to the reconciling party of believers as brothers to the two warring parties.
- However, do we completely love the one who commits sins, or do we completely hate them? The correct stance is neither this nor that. Rather, we love them according to the extent of their *Imaan*, and we hate them according to their level of disobedience. This is the balanced position.

Review questions

1. What is the *aqeedah* of *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* regarding the increase and decrease of *Imaan*?
2. 'If there was no established evidence which affirms the decrease of *Imaan* ...' – Complete the statement and briefly explain it.
3. What are some of the causes (*asbaab*) of the increase and decrease of *Imaan*?
4. What is the *aqeedah* of *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* regarding the one who commits major sins?
5. How does the *ayah* of *qisaas* (retribution) In Surat al-Baqarah prove that brotherhood in *Imaan* remains even in the presence of sins?