Weakness of Faith

Ali Mollah, MD

Doa'ful Iman - Weakness of Faith:

*Bismillah Ar Rahman Ar Raheem*

 All praise belongs to Allah, we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our own souls and from our evil deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomever Allah leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah alone, with no partner or associate, and I bear witness that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is His slave and Messenger.

   “O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except as Muslims.” Al Imran 3:102

O you who believe! The message is clearly directed to us as believers. It is not a general statement but addressed specifically to the believers and hence the emphasis – O you who believe – Fear Allah.  Fear Allah as He should be feared and die not but as Muslims.  This ayah from the Surah Al Imran (3:102) states a simple and straightforward message that forms the basis of our Iman i.e. having Taqwa.  .

The word Taqwa, having the fear of Allah, has been mentioned in the Qur'an 251 times as an indication of the importance of the subject and the dimension that the concept of Taqwa – the fear of Allah swt.

Today as Muslims - both in America and beyond our Iman is weak and this fear that we should have for the creator today is displaced by the fear for the created. The created, people, wealth ... We fear people, we fear poverty, we fear humiliation, we fear death and we fear and fear everything but Allah swt as He should be feared- the most prominent fear and only fear that we should have is deficient.  This overpowering fear of created things rather than for The Creator of all has subjected us (as a collective Ummah) to one humiliation after another with subsequent loss of our pride, our dignity, and our self-respect.

  As the Messenger of Allah Ta'ala prophesied:

"It is expected that nations will call other nations to share against you, as the feasters call each other to eat from the food in front of them in a large wooden plate. One of the companions asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, will this be because of our small number on that day?' And the Prophet said, 'No. Your number will be great. But you will be without substance, like the foam on the face of a river; and Allah will remove from the breasts of your enemies the fear of you; and Allah will throw wahn into your hearts.' One of the companions asked, 'What is wahn, O Allah's Apostle?' And the Prophet responded, "Wahn is to love this life, and to hate death!'

 Wahn results from the weakness of Iman or the lack of Taqwa and there is literally no English translation for this Arabic word wahn. There is no concept of wahn and it does not exist. So when we love this life and hate death we suffer from a sickness in our hearts, a sickness in our Iman. This weakness of Iman is what I would like to share with you today.

 The phenomenon of weak faith has become so widespread among Muslims today. So often we feel this hardness in our heart, in that we do not find any joy in worship, reading Qur’an does not move us and we fall into sin so easily. It is unfortunate that this entity of weakness often goes by our entire existence without us being consciously aware of its destructive nature – and how it is detrimental to the spiritual and the moral aspects of our lives. As Muslims this is not acceptable.  We need to recognize and acknowledge this weakness and make a sincere effort to channel this weakness to become our strength to serve Allah swt and His cause.

 What causes weakness of faith:

 Three broad categories include

 1.Failing to seek knowledge on a constant basis.

 Many of us have abandoned reading the Qur’an and Hadith on a daily basis and when we do we seldom reflect on its message or seek guidance.  Our minds are not focused on the virtue of its message.  We starve ourselves in the knowledge of deen by allowing our attention to be diverted by feasting on daily talk shows on TV, or other forms of destructive activities for the passing of time. We miss out on that breeze of Iman that softens hearts.

2 Living in an environment surrounded with sin is conducive to weakening the faith.

In this environment temptation exists, continuously at every point. We need to guard our prayers and our Iman. We are not as Allah conscious as we ought to be, we allow ourselves to be swayed and distracted by temptations. We have been devoid of a faith-filled environment for too long. We’ve become de-sensitised and lost sight of the world of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). We are oblivious to the good as taught by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).  -- Moral and spiritual values that elevate man are replaced by the worldly pleasures of today’s society.  We fail to protect our families and ourselves from acts of disobedience and often we accept them as the norm.

And seldom do we turn to Allah swt in repentance (taw bah). This is our ignorance, our weakness.

And last but not the least,

3. Preoccupation with our worldly life, while neglecting the hereafter.

Our day to day activities centre around our material world - our business, our work, our money, our bills, the sizes of our homes, our cars, and so on. These take preference both in our minds and speech. This preoccupation with the world enslaves our hearts.

We have allowed the diseases of the heart to flourish such as vanity, pride, fame, glory. We tend to get lost in these illusions, fooled by the worldly glamour and fail to illuminate our hearts with Allah’s Noor.

We remain pre-occupied with our worldly life.

 Allah says in

**Surah Al Hijr 15:3**



**“Leave them to eat and enjoy, and let them be preoccupied with (false) hope. They will come to know!”**

 And Allah swt created us only for His *Ubudiya,* for His worship alone, as His slaves but today we have become slaves to this *duniya*, this world, slaves of our desires and ambitions, slaves to wealth.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *“He is doomed, the slave of the dinar and the slave of the dirham”* (Reported by al-Bukhari, no. 2730),

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further said: “*Every nation has its fitnah (trial or temptation), and the fitnah of my Ummah is wealth.*” (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 2336). So this eagerness to acquire wealth weakens Iman. This is what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) meant when he said: “*Two hungry wolves sent against the sheep do not do more damage than what a man’s eagerness for wealth does to his religion.*” (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, no. 2376). That is it leaves him injured or dead as far as his Iman is concerned.

We must analyse and reflect where we are in terms of our knowledge, our environment, our desires, our hopes and dreams and our level of Iman.

 A weak Iman is a disease of the heart.  And like all diseases this too has its symptoms.

**I am going to mention those symptoms that are more apparent, and perhaps we can list these and perform a self- assessment of our Iman.**

Performing prayers devoid of feeling, performance without the keenness to earn reward, performance without humility and obedience indicate a weak Iman. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that “*Allah does not accept the dua’ of one whose heart is heedless of Him.*” (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, no. 3479).

Lack of zeal and   enthusiasm in prayer and other acts of worship such that we are able to perform yet we tend to procrastinate on. For instance Hajj, often many of us are able to perform Hajj, yet we delay it, or fail to go for Jihad when we have the strength to do so, give Zakat when we have the means to do so and even pray in congregation when we are able to do so. All these are traits of weakness of faith.  This lax attitude is in contrast to what Allah swt describes in

**Surah Al Anbiya 21:90**

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**“… They used to hasten on to do good deeds, and they used to call on Us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before Us.”**

And where are we in terms of our acts of worship?

3.Not being moved by the ayah of the Qur’an is yet another sign of the Weakness of Iman.

We hear and read the words of the Quran but seldom relate to its meanings. The promises of Paradise or its warnings of Hell do not touch our hearts.  Its commands and prohibitions, its descriptions of the Day of Resurrection are not taken into the seriousness that it involves. The one who is weak in faith gets bored when he hears the Qur’an being recited, and cannot continue reading it. Whenever he opens the mus-haf, he soon closes it again.

 Not remembering Him often or making dua’, such that dhikr or remembrance of Allah swt becomes difficult, and when we raises his hands to make dua’, we quickly lower them again. A difference between those of faith and the hypocrites is that of remembrance of Allah swt.

Allah swt has described the hypocrites in

Surah Al Nisa 4:142



 **“… and they do not remember Allah but little.”**

Another example.

5.Falling into sin and commit haraam deeds with ease.

Without any hesitation or reservation we fall into sins.  Persisting in our sins to the extent that the sins become a part and a habit for us.  And where we commit sins openly?  The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) “All of my Ummah will be fine except for those who commit sin openly, an example of which is a man who does something at night, and when morning comes and Allah has concealed his sin, he says, ‘O So-and-so, I did such and such yesterday.’ His Lord had covered his sin all night, but he has uncovered what Allah had concealed.” (Reported by al-Bukhari,). Sinning without ease and with no remorse or repentance for it.

Physically this weakness manifests as anxiety, mood swings and depressions that weighs a man down. Irritability sets in and he has no tolerance. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described faith when he said, “Iman is patience and tolerance”

The heart that harbours love for fame, desire for leadership without understanding the serious responsibility involved, stinginess and greed, malicious enjoyments of the failures of others can not share abundance of Iman in the same heart.

Two important aspects that affect us not just on an individual basis but collectively as an Ummah are:

1.      Not feeling any responsibility to work for Islam

2.      Lack of concerns for Muslims.

Islam and spreading of its message is our duty. The attitude of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who as soon as they entered this religion felt this responsibility right away, for example, al-Tufayl ibn ‘Amr (may Allah be pleased with him), who became Muslim and went to call his people to Islam straight away. He was only a new Muslim but he felt that he had to go back and call his people to Islam, and he went and did this.  Today after being committed to Islam for several years we still hold ourselves back for fear, for thoughts of being considered old fashioned “ out of the loop ”, for rejection and being able to Fit In. It comes from the sickness of the heart.

Lack of concern for the welfare of a brother Muslims is lack of faith. Whether it be by making dua’, giving charity or helping them. A person with weak Iman has a distant attitude towards the oppression, suppression and disasters suffered by his Muslim brothers in any part of the world, be it Palestine, India, Bosnia, Iraq and others.  And is content merely with his own safety because this world is everything to him. This is the result of weak faith. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The believer’s position in relation to his fellow believers is like that of the head to the body; the believer feels the pain of his fellow believers as the body reacts to the pain suffered by the head.” (*Musnad Ahmad*, 5/340).

Do we feel the pain, the torment, and the oppression?   Do we feel the hunger, the sense of loss and the hurt?

Do we feel angry when the limits set by Allah are violated?

We don’t feel this anger because the flame of zeal has been extinguished in his heart.  One no longer takes action to stop evil, or guides evildoers to do good deeds, or denounce wrongdoing. We seldom get angry for the sake of Allah. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described this heart ravaged by weakness in the Hadith: “The heart will be subjected to trial after trial, and there will appear a black stain on any heart that is affected, which will spread until the heart is completely black and sealed, as it were, so that it will not recognize any good deed or denounce any evil, except whatever suits its own desires.” (Reported by Muslim, no. 144).

 InshaAllah we shall talk about strengthening our Iman in the next Khutbah.

*Innalláha Wa malaaikata yusallúna Alan nabi. Yá ay yuhal latheena ámanu sallú alayhi wasalli mú Tas leema.*

*Alláhumma salli alá Muhammad, wa ala áli Muhammad, kama salayta ala Ibrahim, wa ala ali Ibrahim, innaka hameedun majeed Alláhumma barik ala Muhammad, wa ala áli Muhammad, Kama barakta ala Ibrahim, wa ala ali ibrahim. Innaka hameedun majeed.*

 Strengthening our Iman.

 We need to value that we are Muslims. No other creation has been as blessed as us, and no other creation is shielded by Allah’s Mercy as we Muslims are. Allah swt bestowed us with His best blessings and made us the Ummah of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him).  He granted this special favor, this high honor and privilege to us.  He guides whom He wills.

 Allah swt mentions in Surah Noor 24;46



……..and Allah guides whom He wills to a way that is straight.

 For us to strengthen our Iman we must

1.      Reflect on our relationship with Allah swt and His commandments

2.      Reflect internally as believers

3.      Reflect externally in our community

Reflecting on our relationship with Allah swt.

 There is none that can increase our Iman except Allah swt.  He alone shares that personal relationship between a slave and Himself.  Can we claim that we love Allah swt and His Prophet SAW in the manner where we can taste the sweetness of faith?

 We need to turn to Him in sincerity and humility and ask.  Sincerely pray for Iman -making dua to Allah swt to renew and strengthen our faith with each prayer.

 Allah's messenger Rasool Allah SAW taught us that Faith is never static. It increases and decreases, or waxes and wanes. It is our responsibility to assess where our faith is, and make it our duty to constantly work towards improving it.

  Allah mentions in Surah Al Fath – 48:4

  

It is He Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the Believers, that they may add faith to their faith;- for to Allah belong the Forces of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is Full of Knowledge and Wisdom;

 Faith increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.

We should make every effort to obey Him and avoid disobedience. By doing this Allah swt will make it easy for us to strengthen our Iman.

 Allah swt already blessed with His guidance through the example of Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and the Quran. We need to implement those obligations and strive to increase our Iman.  So how can we strengthen our Iman? We should begin…………..

 1. With our daily prayers, not for a day but a sincere commitment and duty to Allah swt make it the part of our daily lives. Praying as if you are seeing Allah swt in front of you and pray as if this is the last one of your life.

 Confide in Allah and humble oneself before Him. The more we humble ourselves before Allah, the closer we become to Him. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The closest the slave can be to Allah is when he is prostrating to Him, so make lots of dua’ then.” (Reported by Muslim, 482)

 2.  Reading the Quran, even if it takes 10 minutes a day.  We should make an effort to read and ponder the meaning of the Qur’an. There is no doubt that it contains a powerful and effective cure.

 Allah says Surah Al Isra17: 82:



 We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe:

3. Remembering Allah swt often.  Even though our hands are occupied keep that heart attached to your Lord.  Take the opportunity to remember at home with family or in the halaqa here.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “No people sit together remembering Allah, but the angels surround them, mercy envelops them, tranquility descends upon them, and Allah mentions them to those who are in His presence.” (*Saheeh Muslim*,)

**Reflect internally as believers**

 Are our deeds in accordance with Allah swt?  And will he accept these deeds.  Do I find the time to do good?

 The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked his Sahaabah: “Who among you got up fasting this morning?” Abu Bakr said, “I did.” He asked, “Who among you has attended a funeral today?” Abu Bakr said, “I have.” He asked, “Who among you has fed a needy person today?” Abu Bakr said, “I have.” He asked, “Who among you has visited a sick person today?” Abu Bakr said, “I have.” The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “No man does all of that but he will enter Paradise.” (Reported by Muslim)

 We need to self-evaluate on a constant basis.

  Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “Take account of yourselves before you are called to account.”

 Evaluate internally in terms of our lives, our deeds and our end.  Do acts such that our end is a good one and where Allah swt is pleased with us.  As The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:“Remember often the destroyer of pleasure, meaning death.”

**Reflect externally in our community**

We need to get involved in our community.  We need to be known as Muslims and take part in all our community activities and for those in need.  As Muslims we need to unite as people, make dawah and reach out with the message of Islam.  It is our responsibility to share this message of Islam with non-believers.

We need to attach our hearts with the believers and express enmity with those that our enemies of Islam. We need to be loyal and sincere to Islam and we need to care for our brothers in Islam and any and every way we can, even if it is by dua or sharing of your wealth or voicing your opinion.  We need to think beyond ourselves and think collectively as an Ummah.

O Allah, we ask You by Your beautiful Names and magnificent Attributes to renew the faith in our hearts. O Allah, make faith appear beautiful to us and adorn our hearts with it, and make kufr, sin and disobedience abhorrent to us. Make us of those who are rightly guided. Glorified be the Lord of Might above what they ascribe to Him. Peace be upon the Messengers and praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

*Al hamdilillahi rabbil alameen irRahman irRaheem, Malik al yawm ad-deen. Wassalatu Wasallam ala Sayyidina Muhammad bin Abdullah Khatamul Anbiya wal Mursaleen.*