



Synopsis of Friday Sermon

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IONA
REPENTANCE
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Synopsis of Friday Sermon

The Arrogance of Power

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُفٍ * إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ أَلُّجُوعِي

“Nay! Verily, man will transgress the limits. Because he sees himself self-sufficient.

Indeed, to your Lord is the return.” (al-‘Alaq, 96:6-8)

The Holy Qur’an offers timeless guidance that transcends geographical and temporal boundaries. Among its teachings are the ayat of surah Al-‘Alaq (96), particularly ayat 6-8. *“Nay! Verily, man will transgress the limits. Because he sees himself self-sufficient. Indeed, to your Lord is the return.”*

These ayat provide a profound reflection on the nature of human arrogance and its consequences. They emphasize the dangers of becoming heedless of the Creator when one acquires power, wealth, or influence. In this sermon, we will explore the meaning of these ayat and relate them to historical and political events including the Zionist political ideology that illustrate the destructive potential of unchecked arrogance.

The ayat under discussion investigation highlight a central theme in Islamic teachings: the tendency of human beings to become arrogant when they perceive themselves as self-sufficient, forgetting their dependence on Allah. The Qur’an warns against this arrogance and reminds us that ultimately, all will return to Allah for judgment.

The concept of arrogance, particularly in the context of power and authority is frequently discussed in the Qur’an. The ayat from surah Al-‘Alaq’s serve as a reminder that power and wealth can lead to transgression when individuals or societies start believing in their own self-sufficiency, dismissing the idea of accountability to a higher power. This is a dangerous mindset, as it often results in tyranny, oppression, and injustice, which are condemned in Islam.

The Arabic word "taghā" used in these ayat is often translated as "transgresses" or "exceeds bounds." It signifies crossing the limits set by Allah (SWT), which is usually associated with the acquisition of power, wealth, and influence. When people believe that they are beyond reproach, they often engage in unjust behaviors, believing that they will not be held accountable for their actions. The Qur’an reminds us that despite these delusions, every person will ultimately return to Allah (SWT) and face the consequences of their actions.

Before we delve into Historical Examples of Arrogance that lead to downfall, let us examine the arrogance of power of Iblis (satan).

The story of Iblis stands as a profound lesson on the dangers of arrogance and the misuse of power. Iblis, once a devout servant of Allah, fell from grace due to his refusal to obey a divine command.

His story is a reminder of how pride and arrogance can lead to one's downfall, transforming a position of honor into one of disgrace and enmity towards the divine.

The Creation of Adam and the Command to Prostrate

The story of Iblis is closely tied to the creation of the first human, Adam (peace be upon him). Allah, in

His wisdom, created Adam and commanded the angels to prostrate before him as a sign of respect. This command was not an act of worship towards Adam, but rather an act of obedience to Allah's command, recognizing the honor Allah had bestowed upon Adam.

In surah Al-Baqarah, Allah mentions:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

“And when We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate before Adam’; so they prostrated, except for Iblis. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.” (al-Baqarah, 2:34)

The Arrogance of Iblis

Iblis was not an angel but a jinn, a creation of Allah made from smokeless fire. He had risen to a position of high esteem among the angels due to his piety and devotion. However, when commanded to prostrate to Adam, Iblis refused out of pride. Allah questioned Iblis,

قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ

“(Allah) said, ‘What prevented you from prostrating (to Adam) when I commanded you.’” (al-‘Araf, 7:12)

He arrogantly questioned the command of Allah, saying:

قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِن طِينٍ

“He said, ‘I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay.’” (al-‘Araf, 7:12)

This statement encapsulates the essence of arrogance—the belief that one is inherently superior to others based on qualities such as lineage, race, or personal achievements.

Iblis believed that his creation from fire made him superior to Adam, who was created from clay.

The argument "I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay," is an example of flawed reasoning and arrogance that does not hold up in the divine perspective.

Iblis uses this statement as a justification for refusing to bow to Adam, as commanded by Allah. Although Iblis' argument might seem logically coherent from a material or worldly perspective, it fundamentally fails in the context of God's divine wisdom and commandments. Iblis' refusal was not a demonstration of logic but a direct act of disobedience to Allah's command.

Iblis' claim that fire is superior to clay is a flawed premise. Superiority in the sight of Allah is not based on the material substance from which a being is created. Instead, it is based on piety (*taqwa*), obedience, and righteousness. The Qur'an asserts, *“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you”* (al-Hujurat, 49:13). By this standard, Adam's obedience and humility would make him superior, not the material of his creation.

The belief held by some among the Jews that they are inherently superior to non-Jews, particularly Arabs, due to their identity as the “Chosen People” can indeed be seen as an example of arrogance and pride similar to that of Iblis (satan). This comparison is rooted in the idea that both Iblis and those who hold such a belief are basing their sense of superiority on a misunderstanding of divine favor and a misplacement of value on attributes that do not align with the true criteria for righteousness in the sight of God.

The term “Chosen People” in the Jewish tradition does not imply inherent superiority over others but rather signifies a unique responsibility and covenant with God. The Jewish people were chosen to carry the message of monotheism and to serve as a light to the nations. However, this “chosenness” is not a guarantee of superiority but a call to higher moral and spiritual responsibility.

If the “chosen people” concept is interpreted as a basis for inherent superiority over other races or peoples, it becomes a form of arrogance. Just as Iblis falsely believed that his creation from fire made him superior to Adam, those who believe they are superior due to being “chosen” are similarly misplacing the basis of true worth in the eyes of God.

The Qur'an informs of a divine forewarning of the transgressions and arrogance of the Children of Israel, referring to times in history when they would deviate from God's commands and act with pride and oppression.

وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ فِي الْكِتَابِ لَتُفْسِدُنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَتَعْلُنَّ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا

“And We have decreed to the Children of Israel in the Scripture that, ‘You will surely cause corruption on the earth twice, and you will surely reach (a degree of) great arrogance.’” (al-Isra’, 17:4)

We may draw a parallel between the arrogance mentioned in this ayah and modern-day political movements, including Zionism.

The ayah speaks of “great arrogance,” which can be understood as excessive pride or a sense of superiority leading to unjust actions. One can see parallels between this description and the modern Zionist movement, particularly in how it has manifested in the treatment of Palestinians and the occupation of lands. They argue that the actions of the Zionist state reflect a sense of entitlement and disregard for the rights of others, which could be seen as a form of the "mighty arrogance" mentioned in the ayah.

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظٍ * أَن رَّءَاهُ اسْتَعْزَىٰ

“Nay! Verily, man will transgress the limits. Because he sees himself self-sufficient.” (al-‘Alaq, 96:6.7)

This Qur’anic warning is not just a general observation about human nature but can be applied to specific historical and contemporary situations.

Throughout history, numerous examples illustrate the Qur’anic warning about the dangers of arrogance and self-sufficiency.

One of the most well-known examples of arrogance and tyranny in the Qur’an is that of Pharaoh (*Fir’aun*) during the time of Prophet Musa (Moses).

Despite his power and wealth, Pharaoh met a tragic end, as recounted in the Qur’an, illustrating the fate of those who transgress the limits set by Allah (SWT). His downfall serves as a reminder that no matter how powerful one may seem, all are ultimately accountable to Allah.

History is replete with the rise and fall of great empires that, at their peak, believed in their own invincibility. The Roman Empire, for instance, was one of the most powerful empires in history, dominating vast territories across Europe, Africa, and Asia. However, as it grew more powerful, it also grew more corrupt and arrogant.

The empire’s leaders became increasingly self-indulgent, neglecting the needs of their people and engaging in unjust practices. This arrogance and moral decay ultimately led to the empire's decline and eventual collapse.

The Ottoman Empire, too, which was one of the longest-lasting empires in history, provides another example. At its zenith, the empire was a beacon of Islamic civilization, known for its military power and heroism, architectural achievements, and cultural contributions. However, over time, internal corruption, power struggles, and a departure from the principles of justice and humility contributed to its downfall. The once great empire, which had once upheld Islamic values, fell victim to the arrogance and self-sufficiency that these Qur’anic ayat warn against.

The 20th century saw the rise of totalitarian regimes such as Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler and the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin. Both regimes were characterized by an extreme concentration of power in the hands of a few, who believed themselves to be above the law and immune to accountability.

Hitler's belief in his own superiority and his vision of a racially pure empire led to some of the most horrific atrocities in human history, including the Holocaust. Similarly, Stalin's regime was marked by widespread expulsions, forced labor camps, and the suppression of dissent. Both leaders ultimately met their demise, and their regimes collapsed, leaving behind a legacy of suffering and destruction.

From the perspective of the Zionist leaders, the creation of Israel was seen as a triumphant return to their ancestral homeland. However, this triumph came at the cost of the Palestinian people, who were expelled from their homes, subjected to military occupation, and denied their basic rights. The belief in the self-sufficiency and invulnerability of the Zionist project has led to policies and actions that many view as transgressive and unjust. The political, economic, and media influence that Zionist organizations have amassed has had a significant impact on the policies of Western countries, particularly in relation to the Middle East.

The influence of Zionist lobbying groups in Western countries, particularly the United States, has grown significantly over the past several decades. Organizations such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) carry considerable power in shaping U.S. foreign policy. AIPAC's influence is evident in the unwavering support that the United States has provided to Israel, including military aid, diplomatic

backing, and political support in international forums like the United Nations.

Political and Economic Power

In the political arena, Zionist influence has been bipartisan, with both Democratic and Republican parties expressing strong support for Israel. This influence extends beyond foreign policy; it also shapes domestic policies related to anti-Semitism, immigration, and minority rights. The ability of Zionist organizations to mobilize resources, lobby politicians, and influence public opinion has been a key factor in the sustained support that Israel enjoys in Western capitals.

Economic power is another crucial aspect of Zionist influence. Jewish communities in Western countries, particularly in the United States, have been successful in establishing themselves in key sectors such as finance, media, and technology. This economic success has translated into political leverage, allowing Zionist organizations to fund political campaigns, support pro-Israel candidates, and shape public discourse.

The media has played a significant role in promoting a pro-Israel narrative in Western societies. Many of the major news outlets in the United States and Europe have been criticized for their biased coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, often portraying Israel as a victim and Palestinians as aggressors. This media bias has contributed to the perpetuation of stereotypes and has shaped public perceptions of the conflict, making it difficult for alternative narratives to gain traction.

Impact on International Relations

The Zionist influence in Western countries has had a profound impact on international relations, particularly in the Middle East. The unwavering support for Israel has led to strained relations between Western countries and the Arab and Muslim world. The United States, in particular, has been seen as a biased mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, leading to a loss of credibility in the eyes of many in the region.

Moreover, the Zionist influence has contributed to the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The lack of pressure on Israel to comply with international law, particularly regarding settlements in the West Bank and the status of Jerusalem, has made it difficult to achieve a lasting peace agreement. The perceived double standards in the application of international law have further fueled anti-Western sentiments in the region.

Leaders who become too delighted with their own power often forget the principles of justice, fairness, and accountability.

The Arrogance of Power

The current state of Zionist power can be seen as a manifestation of the arrogance described in the Qur'an.

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظِرٌ * أَن رَّءَاهُ اسْتَعْزَىٰ

“Nay! Verily, man will transgress the limits. Because he sees himself self-sufficient.” (al-‘Alaq, 96:6,7)

With substantial military, economic, and political support, particularly from Western powers, Israel has been able to assert its dominance in the region. This has often led to actions that disregard international law and human rights, such as the expansion of illegal settlements, the blockade of Gaza, and the disproportionate use of force against Palestinians.

The continued occupation and oppression of Palestinians have led to widespread condemnation and resistance. The cycle of violence and retribution only serves to perpetuate conflict and instability in the region.

The sense of self-sufficiency and impunity that Israel enjoys is evident in its policies and rhetoric. They may provide temporary gains, but it cannot ensure lasting peace and security.

The belief that military might and strategic alliances can ensure long-term security has led to the marginalization and dehumanization of the Palestinian people. This transgression of moral and ethical boundaries is precisely what the Quran warns against in Ayat Al-‘Alaq. “Nay! Verily, man will transgress the limits. Because he sees himself self-sufficient.”

The same fate that befell arrogant nations and empires will befall the cruel and arrogant Zionist regime - a fate inscribed in the Book of Destiny.

A Call for Humility

"Nay! Verily, man will transgress the limits. Because he sees himself self-sufficient. Indeed, to your Lord is the return." (al-'Alaq, 96:6-8)

The Qur'anic ayat call for humility and a recognition of our dependence on Allah (SWT). They remind us that true power and justice belong to Allah alone. In the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, these ayat can be seen as a call for both sides to recognize their shared humanity and the need for a just and equitable resolution to the conflict.

For the Zionist leaders and their supporters, this means acknowledging the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people and taking steps towards a fair and lasting peace. For the Palestinian people, it means continuing their struggle for justice with the understanding that ultimate victory lies with Allah (SWT).

On a personal level, these ayat remind us to remain humble and aware of our dependence on Allah in all aspects of life. Whether we achieve success in our careers, accumulate wealth, or gain influence, we must remember that these are blessings from Allah and not solely the result of our own efforts. This awareness should inspire us to use our resources and influence for the betterment of others, rather than for selfish gain.

The Quranic ayat from Ayat Al-'Alaq (96:6-8) offer profound insights into the dangers of arrogance and self-sufficiency. By reflecting on historical and political events, we can see how these ayat have played out in the real world, leading to the downfall of individuals, empires, and regimes that became too consumed by their own power. These ayat serve as a timeless reminder of the importance of humility, justice, and accountability to Allah (SWT) in all aspects of life. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, we must remain vigilant against the temptations of arrogance and strive to live in accordance with the principles of the Qur'an.

When individuals or groups attain power, there is a tendency to believe that they are beyond reproach and immune to consequences. This mindset leads to actions that exceed moral and ethical bounds, resulting in oppression and injustice. The ayat remind us that despite the temporary power one may hold, ultimate accountability lies with Allah (SWT).

Beware of Arrogance (kibr)

Arrogance is a grave sin in Islam, and it leads to downfall and misguidance. The story of Iblis serves as a cautionary account for humanity. It teaches us the dangers of arrogance and the importance of humility. Arrogance blinds us to the truth, leading us to reject what is right and just. It can cause us to disregard the commands of Allah, leading to our own downfall.

Arrogance, or *kibr* in Arabic, is strongly condemned in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) emphasized the dangers of arrogance on several occasions.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - " لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ كِبْرٍ وَلَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ إِيْمَانٍ " .

It was narrated that Abdullah (RAA) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'No one will enter Paradise who has even a mustard-seed's weight of arrogance in his heart, and no one will enter Hell who has even a mustard-seed's weight of faith in his heart.'" (Ibn Majah)

This hadith emphasizes the importance of purifying our hearts from arrogance and pride. We must recognize that all blessings and abilities come from Allah (SWT), and it is only by His grace that we succeed. By remaining humble and obedient to Allah, we can avoid the fate of Iblis and attain His pleasure and mercy.

The Qur'an repeatedly warns against pride and arrogance, emphasizing humility and submission to God's will. Iblis' arrogance blinded him to the reality that obedience to Allah's command is paramount, regardless of his perception of his own superiority.

We must not lose sight of our purpose in this world. The purpose of human creation is to worship and serve Allah (SWT) (Adh-Dhariyat, 51:56).

The physical composition of a being (fire or clay) does not determine its value or purpose. What matters is fulfilling the purpose for which one was created. Iblis' focus on the material aspect of creation shows a misunderstanding of the broader spiritual purpose and the significance of obedience to Allah.

Trust in Divine Will

We must trust in the Divine Will. Allah's decisions and commands are rooted in His infinite wisdom. It is not for created beings to question the rationale behind His commands. Iblis' logic failed because it did not take into account the ultimate authority and wisdom of Allah, and instead, Iblis attempted to impose his own reasoning over the divine command.

The arrogance of Iblis serves as a powerful reminder of the destructive potential of pride and the misuse of power. It teaches us that true honor and success lie in humility and obedience to Allah. As we navigate our lives, we must strive to remain humble, recognizing that our worth is not in our own hands, but in the hands of Allah. By learning from the story of Iblis, we can avoid the pitfalls of arrogance and remain on the straight path towards success in this life and the hereafter.

End.