

CONCEPT OF SUCCESS

-- Zaheda Mahmood

The concept of success varies with individuals and nations. For some people, success means to achieve some particular aim and object, whereas, for others it may be the acquisition of something different. But, for all believers this concept should be one and the same, and that is to achieve Allah's pleasure, which is mentioned in the Holy Quran as "**Fauzan Azeema**": "**The supreme success**".

In Surah Al-Toubah, verse number 72, it is said: "*Allah has promised to the believers - men and women - gardens under which rivers flow to dwell there in forever and beautiful mansions in gardens of paradise. But the greatest Bliss is the pleasure of Allah, which is the Supreme success*".

And in Surah Al-Mai'dah, verse number 119, Allah Almighty says: "*This is the Day on which the truthful will be benefited from their truth. There are the Gardens under which river flows (in Paradise). They shall abide there in forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him - That is the great success.*"

From the translation of the above mentioned verses it is obvious that the real success is not something that belongs to this materialistic world or its achievements, but rather it is the success of the Hereafter where one will be saved from the torment of hell fire and made to enter the Paradise by the Grace of Allah Almighty. Now, we will see how this great success can be achieved. The answer is very simple, and that is by adopting the straight path shown to us by Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) as it is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

Translation: *And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (PBUH), he has indeed achieved a great success.* (Surah Al-Ahzab, verse number 71)

Thus our success lies in obeying Allah Almighty and His Messenger Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH). The Holy Quran is a complete code of life. Along with it, innumerable traditions of our Prophet (PBUH) and the teachings of Huzoor Mahdi Maud (PBUH) are there to guide us to the Straight path in every walk of life till the Day of Judgment. Not a single field is left untouched. The only need is to gain the knowledge of these and to work upon them accordingly if we want to be successful. We all know that we are mortals and death is an inevitable reality for all of us, whereas, the life of the Hereafter is eternal. So, it is wise to prefer the eternal to the transitory. That is why we have been instructed to prepare for the eternal life of the Hereafter. The people who deny the conception of the life after death will be in great distress as the Holy Quran states:

"When death comes to one of them, he says, "My Lord! Send me back so that I may do good in that which I have left behind."

Thus they would wish to be given a chance but in vain. To live a life according to Quran and Sunnat not only is good for the Hereafter, but also makes this world for the individual a place full of peace and harmony.

Virtues always stand against evils. We have been ordained to adopt the virtues and to avoid vices. Here in this short essay, it is not possible to discuss all do's and don't's, but we will try to see the main cause of all evils that nullifies even the good deeds. Huzoor Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH) has said:

“The root cause of all evils is the love for this world.”

In the light of this tradition it is said that the main motivation of all virtues is to erase out the love of this world from our hearts and make it clean for the love of Allah. The longing for this worldly life gives rise to all sorts of self-centered passions like greed, selfishness, jealousy, pride, conceit and hatred, etc.

Once on being asked by Hazrat Ali (RZ) as to what is world, Huzoor Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH) said: “It is your ‘nafs’ (i.e., selfish and sensuous desires). When you overcome these, then there is no world for you. There are a number of verses in the Holy Quran where the materialistic life of this world is condemned emphatically. Threats of punishments have been mentioned in the Holy Quran for those who prefer the life of this world, whereas glad tidings of rewards are described for them who prefer the life of the Hereafter and strive for it also. In 18th and 19th verses of Surah Bani-Israel, Almighty Allah says:

“Whosoever wishes the transitory enjoyments of this world, we readily grant him what We Will for whom We like, then afterwards, We have appointed hell for him. He will burn there in, disgraced and rejected. And whosoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it also with the necessary effort due for it, while he is a believer too then such are the ones whose striving shall be appreciated and rewarded by Allah.”

Similarly, in Surah Nazi'at, we have been warned:

“Then, as for him who rebelled. And chose the life of the world, Lo! hell will be his home. But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, Lo! the Garden will be his home. (verses 37-41)

Hence, effort should be made to please Allah alone by submitting oneself to the will of Almighty. It is said that even the little acts of an individual, if done for the sake of Allah, will be rewarded by Him, for example: even putting a morsel in the mouth of one's wife (According to a tradition). On the other hand, his deeds will be rejected, though very big, if performed for the sake of this world (either for material gain or to show others his fame).

It reminds us of the tradition: “On the Day of resurrection human folk would be brought forth

according to their intentions.” (Ibn e Maaja) It means that he will be dealt according to his intentions. In another tradition, Huzoor Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH) said: “On the Day of Judgment, some groups with the good deeds equivalent to the mountains would come, but they would be condemned to the Hell. The Holy companions asked: “O’ Prophet (PBUH) of Allah, had they offered prayers regularly?” The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Yes, they used to pray regularly, observed fast, and used to be awoken in the nights for prayers, but they desired the material world.” According to Hazrath Mahdi (AHS), any work done for the sake of Allah only is righteous and good; otherwise it is merely a waste.

Hence, it should be kept in mind that even doing good deeds can’t be of any use in the Hereafter for those who prefer the life of this world as Almighty Allah says in Surah Hud:

“Whosoever desires the life of this world and its glitter, to them we shall pay in full wages of their deeds therein and they will have no diminution. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter, but Fire, and vain are the deeds they did therein, and is of no affect that which they used to do.”

When Huzoor Mahdi Maud (AHS) was explaining this verse of Surah Hud mentioned above, an officer came to Huzoor (AHS) and told that this verse is meant for the infidels (disbelievers). Huzoor Mahdi Maud (AHS) said, that whoever has these qualities is, in fact, a disbeliever (kafir). Then the officer said that this quality is present in King, Ghazi, and the scholars as well. Huzoor Mahdi (AHS) explained that Almighty Allah has said, “ whoever” and so we also say ‘whoever’ and we do not specify any name. Then he said, “This quality is possessed by me”. Huzoor (AHS) asked, “You recite the Kalima of Rasool-Allah (PBUH), how can you have this quality (desire of the world)? But when that officer repeated it the third time, Huzoor Mahdi (AHS) said, “If you have this quality and you admit it also, then you are a disbeliever (kafir) according to Allah’s orders.”

In this way, the desire and love for this world seems to be such a heinous crime that may lead even to infidelity (kufr) and becomes the main obstacle that comes in the way of achieving the real success. That is why it must be rooted out from our hearts and whatever good we do, we should do it sincerely to seek Allah’s pleasure alone as it is narrated by Abu Umamah, that Huzoor Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH) has said: “Verily, Allah accepts only such deeds which have exclusively been done to seek His pleasure.” (Nisa’i)

May Allah keep us always on the straight path and make us His sincere slaves. (Ameen.)