Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All-Knower, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Allâh’s Beautiful Name: Al-‘Aziz:

In the following pages we shall be dealing with the sixth of Allah’s Beautiful Divine Names, “Al-‘Aziz”, which is often repeated at the end of Quranic Verses:

“And He is Al-‘Aziz (the All-Mighty), the All-Wise”

I have previously made clear that it is not enough to believe that Allah exists. You have to believe in His existence, His Oneness (in His Divine Self, Attributes and Acts), and His Perfection. In fact, your belief in Allah’s Perfection enables you to know His Beautiful Names and Attributes.

Narrated Abu Hurairah that Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), said:

“Verily, Allah has ninety-nine Names, one hundred but one. Whosoever knows each and every one of them enters Paradise.”

[narrated by Al-Boukhari]

The word “knows” in the above Hadith means that you should know each and every one of Allah’s Beautiful Divine Names and Attributes, that you should know their exact meanings, that you should know how to react towards each and every one of them, and that you should know the denotations and connotations of each and every one of them. Therefore, our topic in the following pages is going to be about Allah’s Beautiful Divine Name “Al-‘Aziz”.

This Divine Name, “Al-‘Aziz”, occurs in a great many Quranic Verses, such as Jesus’ words,

“If You punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, verily, You, only You, are Al-‘Aziz (the All-Mighty), the All-Wise.”

[V: 118]

If the end of the above Quranic Verse were:

“…and if you forgive them, verily You, only You, are the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.”

Does this end suit the beginning of the Verse? The answer is: the Verse is ended as follows:

“…and if You forgive them, verily, You, only You, are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”

This is because if a human being, no matter how high his social rank or position might be, forgives a person’s mistake, he might be blamed or asked: “Why did you forgive that person’s mistake?”, “Why did you not punish him?”, or “Why were you so lenient with him?”. But when Allah, All-Mighty, forgives, He is never blamed or
asked why, for He, Glory to Him, is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise:

“If You punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, verily, You, only You, are Al-‘Aziz (the All-Mighty), the All-Wise.”

That is the first Verse in our study. The second Verse is:

“And His (Alone) is the Majesty in the heavens and the earth, and He (Alone) is Al-‘Aziz (the All-Mighty), the All-Wise.”

[XLV; 37]

And the third Verse is:

“They (the hypocrites) say: ‘If we return to Medina, indeed the mightier will expel from it the less mighty.’ But ‘Izah (might, honor and power) belongs to Allah, to His Messenger and to the believers, but the hypocrites know not.”

[LXIII; 8]

A fourth Verse is:

“Glorified is your Lord, the Lord of ‘Izah (Might, Honor, and Power)! (He is Free) from what they attribute to Him.”

[XXXVII; 180]

In the fifth Verse Satan says to the Lord, All-Mighty

“(I swear by) by Your ‘Izah (Might, Honor, and Power) that I will surely mislead them (mankind) all.”

[XXXVIII; 82]

In fact, Allah’s Divine Name “Al-‘Aziz” occurs in a great many Verses of the Holy Quran, some of which are mentioned above. But what does this Name mean from the linguistic point of view?

First Meaning: “Al-‘Aziz” is He the like of Whom is none and equal to Whom is none. He is Unique and nothing is like Him. This Name is attributed only to Allah, the One and Only, the like of Whom there is nothing and equal to Whom is nothing. This is the first meaning.

Second Meaning: “Al-‘Aziz” is the One Who overpowers and is never overpowered. If a person is overpowered, he is by no means ‘Aziz (i.e. mighty or honorable) but rather weak and humble. The one who overpowers him is likely to over-humiliate him. In other words, “Al-‘Aziz” is one of Allah’s Beautiful Names, which means “the One Who overpowers and is never overpowered”. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says,

“And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not.”

[XII; 21]

In a Divine Hadith, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“You (O My slave) will (something) and I will (something). If you surrender to Me concerning what I will, I fulfill what you will; but if you do not surrender to Me concerning what I will, I tire you out with what you will, and then there will never be except what I will.”

And in His Holy Quran He, Glory to Him, says
“And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not.”

If all people knew that Allah has full power over all things, they would obey Him, they would rely on Him, they would trust in Him, they would turn to Him with love and devotion, and they would turn away from others than Him.

Third Meaning: “Al-‘Aziz” is the Mighty and Forceful, as derived from the Arabic word “‘Azza”, which means “reinforces and makes stronger”. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“When We sent to them two Messengers, they belied them both; so We ‘Azzazna (reinforced them) with a third. And they (the Messengers) said: ‘Verily, we have been sent to you as Messengers.”

Therefore, the first meaning of Allah’s Beautiful Name “Al-‘Aziz” is: the One the like of Whom is nothing, rival to Whom is none, and equal to Whom is nothing. This Name is one of Allah’s Names of Tanzeeh (i.e. Names that denote His being free from any anthropomorphic elements). The second meaning is: the One Who overpowers and is never overpowered. This Name belongs to Names of As-Sifat (i.e. Names that are Attributes of Allah, All-Mighty). The third meaning is: the All-Mighty, the All-Powerful. This Name also belongs to Names of As-Sifat as mentioned above.

There is also a very delicate fourth meaning, which believers need to understand most of all, namely that “Al-‘Aziz” is: the One Who grants power and honor to His slaves. This Name belongs to Names of “Al-Af’al” (i.e. Names that denote Allah’s Acts). To this effect, the Quranic Verse goes:

“Say: ‘O Allah, Owner of the Kingdom! You grant the kingdom to whom You will, and You take away the kingdom from whom You will. You endue with honor whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is the good. Verily, You are Powerful over all things.”

When the last of the Arab kings of ancient Spain left Spain, he cried sadly. His mother, whose name was ‘A’ishah, addressed him sarcastically, “Cry like women for a lost kingdom that you could not preserve like men!” So what is man’s value if Allah forsakes him?! Allah, All-Mighty, says

“See you not that whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and all living creatures, and many of mankind, prostrate themselves to Allah. But there are many (men) on whom the punishment is justified; and whomsoever Allah disgraces none can ever honor him. Verily, Allah does what He wills.”

A great part of your life has to do with your honor and dignity. Therefore, if you are with Allah, the All-Mighty, He will certainly grant you honor and dignity:

Make to your Lord all your honor,
It will be deeply rooted and firmly established.
But if you seek honor from those who die,
Your honor will similarly die.

Such are the linguistic meanings of Allah’s Beautiful Divine Name “Al-‘Aziz”. But there is another more beautiful and delicate meaning: “Al-‘Aziz” is the One Who is too Rare, Who is so badly needed, and Who is too difficult to reach. Something, a metal for example, might be too rare, but, at the same time, it is not so badly
needed. Such a thing is not called in Arabic “‘Aziz”. We call something “‘Aziz” if it has three qualities: It is too rare; it is so badly needed; and it is too difficult to reach. Something else, like air for example, might be so badly needed, but it is not rare. Water is so badly needed but it is not rare in most places.

Therefore, “Al-‘Aziz” is something that is too rare, so badly needed and too difficult to reach. Such qualities, however, have to do with perfection and non-perfection. In other words, the more available a certain thing is, the less ‘Aziz it is; the less badly needed it is, the less ‘Aziz it is; and the easier to reach it is, the less ‘Aziz it is. Now, if something becomes so rare that it becomes only one, i.e. unique, it becomes the most ‘Aziz, which is a paramount quality of perfection and is given only to Allah, Alone, Who is the One and Only Creator, Who is so badly needed by all things and Who is too difficult to reach. Therefore, Allah, Alone, deserves to be called “Al-‘Aziz” in Arabic.

A certain person might be needed by some, or even most, people. The more needed he is, the more ‘Aziz he is. But no human being is needed by all other people everywhere. A certain man might live in the kingdom of a certain king, nevertheless, he does not need the king because he lives in a tent in a remote place with his sheep that give him food and other things that he needs.

Therefore, the more badly needed a certain thing is, the more ‘Aziz it is. Moreover, perfection of this quality is attained when everything needs such thing for everything. I might need a doctor when I am ill, for example, but I do not need him for my sleep: I need a bed for my sleep. I might need a certain teacher if my son is weak in mathematics, but a teacher is not needed by all people and all things, living and non-living: people, animals, plants, objects, substances, atoms, galaxies, …etc. In other words, no one, except Allah, Alone, is needed by all things for all things. That is why He, Glory to Him, is “Al-‘Aziz”.

Just deliberate what the words “everything for everything” mean. Hence, Allah, Alone, is “Al-‘Aziz” because existence and survival of all things depend on Him. For example, matter, which is made up of a nucleus around which electrons move in orbits, would never have existed unless Allah, All-Mighty, had granted it its own existence and enabled it to survive: “Be!”, and it is; “Perish!”, and it perishes. Allah, All-Mighty, says

“Allah: there is no god but Him, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.”

In other words, existence and survival of all things are in Allah’s Hand, for He is the Source of life and survival for all things.

Therefore, we should not say that Allah is so badly needed but rather we should say that everything needs Him so badly for everything. The retina, for example, has more than 130,000,000 light receptors located in ten layers. Vision nerves are more than 900,000 ones. What is that substance whose composition changes whenever infringed by light, and in so doing it generates an electric current that is carried to the brain where it is perceived?! You are in bad need of Allah, All-Mighty, for your sight, hearing, speaking, thinking, moving, and living, for your brain, arteries, veins, and each and every single part of your body. Without Allah’s Grace everything becomes nothing. You survive by Allah: your bones and muscles, nerves and organs, all work by His Divine Grace. Without Allah’s Grace, man, and everything else, can not possibly exist or survive. Yes, indeed, everything needs Him for everything.

Hence, the first quality of Allah’s Perfection as being ‘Aziz is that He is One and Only so that everything needs Him so badly for everything, that He is too difficult to reach, none could ever encompass Him in knowledge, not even Prophets, for no one knows Allah except Allah, Himself. You can only reach Him as a created slave of His; therefore, you should comply to His Commands and do deeds of righteousness if you desire to reach Him and be intimate to Him. This is the only way to reach Him and be intimate to Him.

A young man got engaged to the daughter of a religious scholar. Her name was “Wisal” (i.e. communion). The scholar addressed the young man: “My daughter’s dowry is that you should attend the lectures that I deliver in my council.” The young man attended the scholar’s lectures and was so involved in them that he forgot his fiancée, the scholar’s daughter, who sent him a message: “You have forgotten me!” He replied: “O Wisal! You were the cause of the communion (i.e. my association with Allah), so do not be the cause of disunion (dissociation with Him)!”

You can never reach Him except as a slave of His. Therefore, you should be devoted to Him and do deeds
of righteousness, you should constantly remember Him and be conscious of Him, and you should serve His other slaves, your fellow humans, and do good to them. Yes, indeed. It is possible to reach Him as a slave, but it is impossible to encompass Him in knowledge or perception, for even holy Prophets and Messengers, most righteous and pure as they are, fail to do so. This is because none can know Allah, All-Mighty, except Allah, Himself.

If you ask yourself: “What does “Al-Aziz” mean?”, it means the Unique, the One and Only, Whom everything needs for everything, Who is impossible to be encompassed either by ones mental conception or sensual perception. It is possible to reach Him only by being a slave to Him.

Some scholars say that “Al-'Aziz” is He, All-Mighty, in the oceans of Whose Majesty the minds get drowned, Whose Graces and Blessings can not be properly enumerated or conceived, Whose Perfection and Beauty can not be described by human tongues. Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), summed up the whole thing as follows:

**Narrsted Abu Hurairah on authority of ‘A’ishah:** “I missed Allah’s Messenger from my bed one day. I searched for him, and my hand touched the soles of his feet while he was on the floor prostrating himself to the Lord, invoking: ‘O Allah! I seek refuge in Your Contentment from Your Wrath, in Your Forgiveness from Your Punishment; and I seek refuge with You from You. I can not praise you enough, for You are as You praised Yourself.’”

[narrated by Muslim in His “Sahih” Book of Hadith]

I swear By Allah! It is an indisputable fact that he who knows Allah belittles all others but Him. If you know Allah, it is impossible that you humble yourself to any other human being or creature. If you know Allah, you see no might or honor except with Him, you see no power except His, you see no wisdom except His. That is why Allah, Most Gracious, in a Divine Hadith, says:

**“O son of Adam! Seek Me, for if you find Me, you find everything, but if you miss Me, you miss everything; and I am more beloved to you than everything.”**

If your eyes saw of Our Beauty that which they saw,
You would not turn away from Us to other ones.
And if your ears heard the Beauty of Our Speech,
You would take off the cloak of pride and come to Us.
And if you tasted of (Our) Love even a little,
You would excuse those who died of Our Love.
And if only a breeze from near Us blew to you,
You would die of alienation and eagerness to Our Nearness

Yes, indeed! Allah is Al-'Aziz (the All-Mighty).

Those who naively fancy that by a couple of Rak’as of prayer and a couple of pounds they can enter Paradise are mere idiots, for the price of Paradise is much dearer. In this context, it has been rightly said: “He who seeks to marry a beautiful lady should be generous enough to pay her dowry.”:

**Narrsted Abu Hurairah that Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), said:** “He who is afraid sets off at nightfall; and he who sets off at nightfall reaches his destination. Verily, Allah’s Commodity is priceless! Verily, Allah’s commodity is Paradise!”

[narrated by Al-Tirmithi]

Allah, Most Gracious, says

**“By no means shall you attain piety unless you spend (in Allah’s Cause) of that which you love; and whatever of good you spend: Allah knows it well.”**

[III: 92]
Your precious time and power should be spent in Allah’s Cause, your wealth that you have worked hard to earn should be spent in Allah’s Cause: “Verily, Allah's Commodity is priceless! Allah is All-Mighty! Very simply and naturally, Allah is All-Mighty.

Now, in the light of the above-mentioned definition the question is: Who is “‘Aziz” (i.e. mighty and honorable)? The answer is: Allah’s holy Prophets and Messengers are! This is because all mankind are in need of them and of their righteous work. Allah’s Messenger, Muhammad, (PBUH), is “‘aziz (i.e. mighty and honorable) simply because Allah, All-Mighty, has endowed him with His Divine Secret and His Divine Knowledge; and He granted him Prophecy. Allah’s Messenger is the way to Allah and the gate that leads to Him. In other words, Prophets and Messengers are mighty and honorable because Allah, All-Mighty, has made them the gates to His Divine Mercy, Grace, Bounty, and Light. That is why when you attain the Prophet's pleasure, you attain Allah’s Pleasure; and that is why Allah, Most Gracious, associated His Prophet’s name with His own Name. Therefore, the holy Prophet is ‘Aziz (mighty and honorable) because all people are in bad need of him for both their secular and religious affairs.

A king is ‘Aziz (mighty and honorable): If he has all matters under his control, and if all of his subjects, young and old, venerable and disreputable, go to him for their affairs. In other words, the more needed you are, more ‘Aziz (the mightier and more honorable) you are. If a true believer is badly needed, he is ‘Aziz (mighty and honorable), nevertheless, he is modest. But if a disbeliever is badly needed, he is arrogant and tyrannical.

The venerable Imam and scholar Al-Hassan Al-Basri was one day asked: “How did you attain such an eminence?” Before I give his reply, I would like to whisper these words, from the depth of my heart, to my dear readers: If you know Allah and obey Him, it is impossible for you to humble yourself to anyone else. This is because Allah, All-Mighty, All-Majestic, says

“But honor, might and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger and believers, but the hypocrites know not”

[LXIII: 8]

How come that you be with Allah, Al-‘Aziz (the All-Mighty), yet you humble yourself to others than Him. That is impossible! Don’t you invoke at dawn prayer everyday: “Glory to You, O Allah! Your friends are never humble; and Your enemies are never honorable.”?

All true believers, who know Allah, All-Mighty, All-Majestic, stick to His Divine Commands, and set their affairs aright with Him, receive special Divine Care and Treatment from Him. Through such special Divine Treatment and Care they are made to feel that they are so dear and beloved to Him. To this effect, Allah addresses His Messenger, (PBUH),

“So wait patiently for your Lord’s Decision, for verily, you are under Our Eyes (Divine Care, Love and Protection).”

[LI: 48]

Very often you beseech Allah, Most Gracious, and He answers you, you pray to Him and He repels evil from you, you invoke Him and He casts love for you in the hearts of other people, you supplicate Him and He softens the hearts of your enemies for you, you call to Him and He responds to you, you beg Him and He gives you, and you swear by Him and He verifies your oath.

We go back to the above question that was put forward to Al-Hassan Al-Basri, the venerable Imam and scholar: “How did you attain such an eminence among people?!” His answer was: “Because of two things: I do not need them but they need my knowledge.”

You are by no means ‘Aziz (mighty and honorable) if you are greedy. This is because when you are greedy you are humble and submissive; when you aspire to the things that people have, you become humble, despised and disrespected. But if you aspire to what Allah has, He loves you:

Never ask of a human anything,
But ask the One, Whose Gates are never closed.
Allah is angered if you refrain from asking Him,
But a human is angered if he is asked.

If you ask a human being for something, he gets angry with you, but the Almighty Lord: if you refrain from asking Him, He gets angry with you. That is why Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), says

“A believer should never humble himself.” They asked, “How does he humble himself?” He, (PBUH) replied, “By seeking burdens that he fails to bear.”

[narrated by Al-Tirmithi]

Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), also says

“Seek things with self-respect, for all matters run according to Divine Foreordainment.”

And one day, he, (PBUH), addressed a man who was humbling himself before the others

“Raise up your head, O brother!” Then he, (PBUH), added: “He (the man) has deadened our religion for us!”

One day, Imam Abu Hanifah entered upon Ja’far Al-Mansour for a certain matter. Ja’far was very pleased to receive such a venerable scholar in his palace and said: “O Abu Hanifah! Why don’t you always come to visit us! It is a great honor for us to receive you! You are most welcome!” Abu Hanifah said, “O Commander of the Faithful! Why should I visit you?! I don’t have anything with you for which I fear you! Does anyone visit you unless they have something with you for which they fear you?! I have nothing with you for which I visit you!” This means that the less aspirant you are after what other people have, the more honored Allah makes you; and the more you prostrate yourself in veneration to Allah, the more honored He makes you.

A Caliph once wanted to have a scholar brought to him for religious counsel. The Caliph’s men went to Imam Malik, the venerable Imam and scholar, saying, “O Malik! The Caliph wants you to come to him.” Malik replied, “I do not need him! If he needs me, let him come to me!” Then he added: “Knowledge is sought (come to)! It does not go to anyone!” When the Caliph, whose name was Haroun Ar-Rasheed, was informed about what Imam Malik had said, he said, “He speaks the truth! I shall go to him!” When the Caliph went to see Imam Malik, the latter said, “Let him sit behind and wait until it is his turn to see me!” By the way, Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), used to sit behind, just like anyone else, and did not have a throne or a special place to sit in. One day, when an Arabian came to see Allah’s Messenger, who was sitting with his venerable Companions, he could not recognize who was Allah’s Messenger, and, therefore, he asked, “Who is Muhammad from among you?!” What modesty! He, (PBUH), never distinguished himself in sitting from his Companions! However, when it was the Caliph’s turn to see the Imam, he came to him and sat on a chair. But the Imam addressed him: “He who humbles himself to Allah, Allah honors him. And he who displays arrogance, He (Allah) humiliates him.” The Caliph, Haroun Ar-Rasheed, stood up, saying, “Take away this chair!” and sat down on the floor. If a scholar desires to be ‘Aziz (honored and mighty), he should never aspire to what people have, he should renounce their world, and he should have a job by which he earns a decent living.

Someone asked: “How can I get to Allah?!” It was wisely said to him: “If you know Allah, you will certainly know how to get to Him!” This is because if you know Allah, you know, through your natural disposition, how to please Him, how to get to Him, how to stick to His Divine Commands, how to sacrifice yourself for Him, and how to prefer Him to anyone or anything else. He asked: “How can I get to Allah?!”; and he was answered: “If you know Him, you will certainly know how to get to Him!” He asked: “I don’t understand what you mean. How can I worship someone I do not know?” He was answered: “How come that you disobey Him (Allah) after you have known Him?!” You disobey Him!

You disobey the Lord while you claim to love Him!
Such is indeed an amazing claim!
If your love were true, you would obey Him.
Verily, he who loves someone does obey him.

A man was once asked: "When did you get to know Allah?" He replied: "(I swear) by Allah! I have never disobeyed Him ever since I knew Him!"

Once again, I would like to whisper to my dear reader: I swear by Allah, the One and Only God! Even if you acquire knowledge of all of the jinn and humans whereby you attain respect and honor among people, but fail to obey Allah, this means that you do not know Him, you do not know Him, you do not know Him!

It has been wisely said: He who does not have enough piety that prevents him from disobeying Allah in his privacy, Allah does not care about anything good he does. Also, do not think of the size of sin, but rather think of Him against Whom you have transgressed by committing such sin. Once you disobey Allah, this means that you do not know Him.

If we imagine someone who has the highest university degree in religious studies, who has written more than a hundred books, and who occupies an important religious position: if a woman enters upon him and he keeps gazing at her beauty, this means that he does not know Allah at all. On the other hand, even a naïve illiterate porter, who can neither read nor write, but has only heard Allah’s Words,

“Tell the believing men to lower down their gaze and protect their private parts. That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do.”

[XXIV; 30]

and, therefore, lowers down his gaze at seeing such a woman for fear of Allah, this means that he knows Allah very well. That is because Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), says

“It suffices man in knowledge that he fears Allah; and it suffices man in ignorance that he boasts of his work.”

[narrated by Ad-Darimi]

Keep these words in your mind: Once you disobey Allah, this means that you do not know Him!

It was asked: What are the qualities that a true believer should have towards this Name? Allah, All-Mighty, is “‘Aziz”, but what should a believer’s attitude towards this Divine Name be?

The answer is: Once a true believer knows Allah, “Al-‘Aziz”, he should never believe that any creature has the right to be over-esteemed or over-dignified. It is true that as a human being a true believer should be so polite and well-behaved towards other fellow humans, but he should by no means believe that any one of such fellow humans, or anyone else, except Allah, All-Mighty, Alone, has the right to be over-esteemed or over-dignified. In other words, a true believer should belittle everyone and everything compared to Allah, All-Mighty. He should by no means over-venerate anyone but Allah, Creator of all things and Lord of all worlds. He should by no means humble himself to anyone but Him. To this effect, Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), says

“He who humbles himself to a wealthy person loses two thirds of his religion.”

But why? The answer is: because belief in Allah, All-Mighty, is something that is deeply rooted in the heart, confessed by the tongue, and verified by work. In other words, belief in Allah consists of three parts: ideology, verbal confession, and action. Therefore, if you over-estimate a wealthy person for his wealth, you are apt to over-dignify him, humble yourself to him and even praise him for merits that he does not really have, and, hence, you lose two thirds of your belief, i.e. verbal confession – when you praise him - and action - when you humble yourself to him. Your act of over-esteeming or over-dignifying anyone besides Allah, Lord of all worlds, reflects weakness of belief in Him, All-Mighty. That is why Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), says

“A true believer attains honor by standing up the night (in prayer to Allah) and dignity by being in no need of people.”

A true believer has more dignity and self-esteem than the people of a whole town. In this context, Allah,
Glory to Him, says

“But honor, might and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger and believers.”

A true believer sees that he is a mere slave of Allah's and that Allah shall by no means let him down; shouldn't he, therefore, have more dignity and self-esteem than anyone else?!

There is a golden rule: If man knows how Great and All-Mighty the Creator is, he belittles all creatures; but if he fails to know how Great and All-Mighty the Creator is, he over-estems creatures. In other words, over-estimation of the Creator leads to under-estimation of the created, and vice versa. For example, someone may threaten: “I shall do so and so! I can do so and so!” Such a person does not know at all who Allah is. And if you, as a true believer, praise and glorify such a person, this means that you do not know at all who Allah is. This is because if Allah, All-Mighty, causes blood to clot in one of the arteries of his brain, he will soon be completely paralyzed; and if Allah, Glory to Him, causes blood to clot in one of the arteries of his heart, he will soon die. In fact, the more elevated man's belief in Allah, Most Gracious, is, the more sincerely and devotedly he turns to Him. To this effect, Allah, All-High, says

“So We leave those who expect not their meeting with Us in their transgression, wandering blindly in distraction.”

[X: 11]

If you believe that Allah, only Allah, is the One Who grants you honor and dignity, and if you believe that even if all mankind gather together to raise you up in rank without His Divine Leave, they will never be able to do so, and if you believe that if Allah, All-Mighty, raises you up in rank, none could ever degrade or humiliate you, you would never ask anyone but Allah to grant you honor and dignity, and you would do that by turning to Him with true love and sincere devotion and by showing complete obedience to Him.

It has been rightly said: Even if all mankind gathered together to grant someone honor, might or glory more than the honor and glory that he attains by showing enough obedience and devotion to Allah, they would never be able to do so. In other words, you can never attain honor, dignity, or glory except by showing adequate obedience to Allah, All-Mighty. If you desire to be granted honor, glory and dignity, you have to magnify and dignify Allah’s Religion. Similarly, if all mankind gathered together to grant someone disgrace or humiliation more than that he incurs by sins and wrong-doing, they would never be able to do so. That is to say, there is only one thing that brings you honor or dishonor, explicitly, obedience or disobedience. The more you obey Allah, All-Mighty, the more honored you are; and the more negligent or disobedient you are towards Allah’s Commands, the more insignificant you are to Him, and, hence, the more disgraceful and lowly you are. In this context, it should be noticed that Muslims today are negligent towards their Lord’s Commands and are, therefore, insignificant to Him.

In this context, it might be wrongly thought that those millions of Muslims of today are true believers or true Muslims. It should be noticed that a true Muslim has certain essential qualities. Those who are negligent as regards the Salat (prayer), those who are dishonest and untrustworthy, those who transgress against the rights of others by way of injustice or tyranny, and those who commit sins and misdeeds, are by no means true Muslims. In fact, two things sum up the status quo of Muslims of today: They are heedless and careless towards Allah’s Commands, and therefore, they are insignificant to Him.

Individually, however, if you stick to Allah’s Commands and be committed to His Religion, and if you put your trust in Him, Allah grants you special Divine Care and Treatment. But if the whole Muslim nation disobeys Allah, All-Mighty, He must necessarily punish them, for He, All-Majestic, says

“If he who knows Me disobeys Me, I set on him those who do not know Me.”

A prominent man went to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage) accompanied by tens of servants who kept pushing other pilgrims away from him while he was going round the Ka’bah. Anyway, he completed his Hajj rituals and returned to his country. The narrator of the story said: After some years, I came across a miserable poor man with shabby clothes, begging people for money on one of the bridges of the city of Baghdad. The man looked
much like the above-mentioned rich prominent man. When I came forward to look closer at him, he humbly asked, “Why are you looking at me?” I said in amazement, “You look like someone whom I met on the Hajj one day,” and gave him the man’s name. Very sadly, he said: “It is me!” In great amazement, I enquired, “What made you in this miserable condition?!” Very regretfully, he replied, “I displayed arrogance in the place where people should be humble and deservedly incurred, therefore, such horrible punishment.” This story teaches us that going round, Allah’s House, the Holy Ka’bah, or standing before the Lord, All-Mighty, in the Hajj or in prayer should by no means be done arrogantly or boastfully. Nay! It should be done with utmost humbleness and submission to the Lord, All-Mighty. In other words, that man showed arrogance where people are supposed to show humbleness and submission. Therefore, Allah, All-Mighty, punished him by placing him in a humble position in places where people are usually respected.

The above-mentioned story teaches us that the more arrogant and self-conceited man is, the more insignificant and lowly he is in Allah’s Sight. Keep away from two evil qualities: arrogance and injustice. That is because Allah, All-Mighty, easily forgives tens of sins and misdeeds, except two unforgivable sins whereby sinners incur perdition: arrogance and injustice. Keep away from two evil things: polytheism, which reflects arrogance, and doing evil to other fellow humans, which is the token of injustice and tyranny.

But we still have a problem, or at least something that I consider as a problem: How does Allah, All-Mighty, All-Majestic, say

“Whosoever desires honor and glory (should know that): to Allah, Alone, do belong all honor and glory. To Him do ascend all the goodly words; and the righteous work increases them (good words) in sublimity (and makes them accepted by Allah). And those who plot evil things: theirs shall be severe Torment; and the plotting of such shall be unsuccessful.”

[XXXV; 10]

while in another Verse He, Glorified and Exalted, says

“But honor, might and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger and believers, but the hypocrites know not.”

The first Verse makes clear that all honor and glory belong to Allah, Alone, while the second shows that not only Allah, All-Mighty, but also His Messenger, (PBUH), and true believers can have honor and glory. In other words, there seems to be a kind of contradiction between both Quranic Verses. In fact, there is no contradiction at all. When Allah, All-Mighty, says

“But honor, might and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger and believers”

He means to say that He, All-Mighty, is the Owner of honor and glory: If you seek them by being obedient, dutiful and devoted to Him, He bestows upon you honor and glory and makes you honorable and glorious. But if you seek honor and glory from other sources than Allah, All-Mighty, you shall never be honorable or glorified. Nay! You shall be dishonored and degraded unless you obey Allah, All-Mighty, seek His Good Pleasure and Generous Recompense, strive for His Cause, stick to His Divine Commands, commit yourself to His Religion, and turn to Him with true love and sincere devotion.

The story of the holy Prophet, Joseph, (PBUH), is known to everybody. He stayed in the palace of Egypt’s king as a slave, who had to obey his master’s orders. Then, he was put in prison for some time. And then, he became Egypt’s king. One day, while he was in procession, one of the slaves, who had previously been with Joseph and known him very well cried out: “Praised is He (Allah), Who has made slaves kings by their obedience to Him, and Who has made kings slaves by their disobedience to Him!” Perhaps he meant by the second part of his utterance Pharaoh’s wife, who tried to seduce Joseph to indecent work and then unjustly accused him of trying to do so, for she became as humble and lowly as a slave when the truth was later unveiled.

Every now and then, we hear of people who built up for themselves the highest ranks of might, honor and glory. But since they built up such might, glory and honor on a sinful basis of disobedience to Allah, All-Mighty,
He caused them to be the lowest of the low, while the holy Prophet Joseph, (PBUH), who said

“I take refuge with Allah! Truly, he (your husband) is my master! He made my living good (So I shall never betray him)! Verily, the wrong-doers shall never prosper.”

[II; 23]

Allah made him Egypt’s king in the end. So contemplate and deliberate!!

I swear by Allah! I have been told an old incredible story, which I would never believe unless its narrator were still alive. A young man had a small bookshop in one of the quarters of Damascus. He was seduced to indecent work by a loose woman, so he closed his shop and followed her. While he was following her to her place, he remembered that he had previously performed the Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca and thought to himself: “No! I shall not spoil my pilgrimage to Mecca because of that evil woman!” He stopped and went back home. In other words, he feared Allah and obeyed Him. The next day, a notable neighbor came to him asking: “Are you married?” “No, I’m not.” The young man replied. The neighbor said: “I have a suitable wife for you. Send your family to see her for you.” The young man thought that there was something wrong with the neighbor’s daughter so that he offered her to him to marry. Later on, however, the young man sent his family to see her for him. She was a very beautiful young girl. A few months later, the young man and the neighbor’s daughter got married. The neighbor, who became the young man’s father-in-law, made him his partner in business; and the young husband closed his small bookshop and joined his father-in-law in his business. After some time, the wife’s father passed away, but the man is still alive and has become one of the big businessmen in town. This reminds us of Joseph’s words when the king’s wife tried to seduce him to indecent work:

“I take refuge with Allah! Truly, he (your husband) is my master! He made my living good (So I shall never betray him)! Verily, the wrong-doers shall never prosper.”

If man quits something for the sake of Allah, All-Mighty, Allah recompenses him something better in both his religion and life. Yes, indeed! Anything that you forsake for the Cause of Allah, surely, Allah recompenses you something better in both your life and religion. Don’t you like to be honorable?! Don’t you wish to be glorious?! Don’t you like to be respected?! Then, obey Allah, All-Mighty, Most Gracious, as much as you can! This is because the more you obey Allah, Most Bounteous, the more honorable He makes you; and the more you disobey Him, the more lowly and dishonorable He makes you. The more heedless and negligent towards His Divine Commands you are, the more insignificant and lowly you are to Him. The more committed and devoted you are towards Him and His Religion, the more honorable and glorious He makes you.

Those who go to Medina to visit the Prophet’s Mosque there know exactly what my words mean, for no other human being has been granted more honor and glory by Allah, All-Mighty, than Allah’s Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad, (PBUH). Even kings and presidents seem so humble when they enter the Prophet’s Mosque and stand before his sacred tomb. It is he, (PBUH), who addressed moderately a humble slave that came to him shivering of reverence and magnification:

“Take it easy! I am but the son of a (simple ordinary) woman who was from (the tribe of) Quraish and who used to eat Al-Qadeed [dried meat (simple modest kind of food)] in Mecca.”

A great many people come to Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH), from all parts of the word. Once they draw nearer to his tomb, they can not help weeping although he, (PBUH), has been dead for more than 1400 years. What is the secret of such love and reverence? Is there on earth a person upon whom Allah, All-Mighty, bestow ed honor, reverence and dignity more than Allah’s Messenger, (PBUH)? Take the Prophet’s venerable Companions as live parables. Abu Bakr As-Sideeq, may Allah be pleased with him, had poor neighbors whose sheep he used to milk. When he became Caliph upon the Prophet’s death, his poor neighbors were very sad because they thought that his becoming ruler of all Muslims would prevent him from helping them by milking their sheep for them. But the next day after he became Caliph, there was a knock on the door of his poor neighbors. The mother bade her daughter to open the door. “Who is it?” The mother asked. The daughter soon replied: “It is the man who milks our sheep for us.” What modesty! In fact, no one of the Prophet’s venerable Companions was
granted more honor and dignity than Abu Bakr As-Sideeq, may Allah be pleased with him.

In short, it is a Divine Law of positive proportion: The more you obey and glorify Allah, All-Mighty, the more honorable and dignified He makes you; and the more you disobey Him and say: “Don’t be so strict! Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful! Our religion is a religion of facilitation and ease! Don’t be so conformist! Do whatever you like and fear nothing!”, the more disgraceful and lowly He makes you. In other words, the more negligent and careless towards Allah’s Divine Commands, He degrades you and makes you humble and unrespectable.

Those who used to admonish people: the great Imams, such as Abu Hanifah and Ash-Shafi‘i, and before them the Prophet’s venerable Companions, are unforgettable, their names are on all tongues and their good fame is everywhere. In other words, they glorified Allah, All-Mighty, so He, Glory to Him, made their good names always remembered.

Similarly, the holy Prophet and Messenger, Moses, (PBUH), was granted utmost honor and glory, while Pharaoh was made to drown and perish in utmost humiliation. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, Most Gracious, says

“And We took the children of Israel across the sea, and Pharaoh with his hosts followed them in oppression and enmity, till when drowning overtook him (Pharaoh), he said: ‘I believe that there is no god but He (Allah), in Whom the children of Israel believe; and I am one of the Muslims (those who submit themselves to Allah’s Will).’”

[X; 90]

And He, Glory to Him, speaks the truth as He says

“And whomsoever Allah disgraces none can ever honor him. Verily, Allah does whatever He wills.”

[XXII; 18]

Also, Abraham’s people plotted evil against him, but Allah, All-Mighty, says:

“We said: ‘O fire! Be you coolness and safety for Abraham!’”

[XXI; 69]

Such is real honor; and such is real glory: Allah’s Honor and Glory to Abraham, Moses and Joseph, (PBUH)! Also, Allah’s Messenger Muhammad, (PBUH): Allah has granted no other human being more honor and glory than him. This applies to Abu Bakr and Omar, who said: “I was ‘Umar (a young pre-mature person named Omar), then I became Omar (i.e. a full-grown mature person named Omar), and then I became Commander of the Faithful!” He, may Allah be pleased with him, was committed to Allah’s Book, so Allah granted him honor and glory. The same thing applies to the venerable Companions ‘Uthman and Ali, may Allah be pleased with them.

On the opposite side are such bad people as Abu Jahl. How was his end? What was his reputation like? What was his esteem like? Another example of evil people was Abu Lahab. Such tyrannical disbelievers: what happened to them? As for ‘Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl, when he showed repentance to Allah, All-Mighty, Allah accepted his repentance, and he became one of the venerable Companions of the Prophet, (PBUH), despite his former hostility and evil stance against the Prophet, (PBUH).

In short, each and every human being loves and strives for existence, safety of such existence, perfection of such existence, continuity of such existence. One great part of your existence is to be honored, dignified and glorified, and to be free from any kind of humbleness or humiliation; and nothing could ever bring you more humbleness and humiliation than sins and misdeeds.

A righteous virtuous abstinent modest person is honorable and dignified; but when a person transgresses against other people’s chastity or looks maliciously at their women, he becomes humble and dishonored. This is because true faith is abstention from evil ambitions and unlawful things.

True faith is abstinence, modesty and abstention from other people’s possessions and from doing evil to their reputation. That is why lowering down of one’s gaze as regards unlawful women is necessary for a true
believer, who is immune from following his desires and caprices. The more he lowers down his gaze at unlawful women, the more honor and dignity Allah grants him, and the happier and more contented with his wife and family he is. This is because happiness and contentment are in Allah's Hand; and He grants them to both man and his wife if they are believers and obedient to Him. In other words, Allah, Most Gracious, makes them live a happy contented married life if they obey Him in their relationship with each other.

In fact, Honor and dignity are a common demand, for each and every human being desires to be honorable and dignified. But honor and dignity are attained only by obedience to Allah, All-Mighty, and His Messenger, (PBUH). In this context, I would like to advise the young: Abstain from unlawful things, and you will be granted lawful things. Never think of committing sins or misdeeds, and you will be successful and happy with your married life, Allah will grant you a way out of all troubles, and He will provide you with a decent living and give you a respectable and honorable social position.

When some people die, only one or two people go in their funeral because of their being insignificant sinful wrong-doers. But when a venerable scholar dies, a million people go in his funeral. This is because Allah, All-Mighty, grants him a special honor, dignity and respect. But why does Allah grant him such honor, dignity and respect? Because he magnifies and sticks to Allah's Commands. In other words, if you magnify and show enough respect and commitment to Allah's Commands, He, Glory to Him, will grant you honor, dignity and respect.

Such are undisputable facts, dear reader; and whosoever seeks honor and dignity from others than Allah, he attains only dishonor and lowliness. In other words, if man takes Allah, All-Mighty, for a Friend and Guardian, he will certainly prosper in this present world and the world to come. To this effect, Allah, Glory to Him, says

“And incline not toward those who do wrong lest the Fire should touch you; and you have no protectors others than Allah, nor would you then be helped.”

[XI; 113]

If you incline to a deviant person, if you think that he is powerful, if you think that he has full command over this world, if you think that if you obey him you will have a lot of good, and if you incline to him and forget Allah, All-Mighty, you will receive nothing but humiliation and degradation from such person:

Sometimes, a person seeks honor from some important relative, but he suddenly finds out that such important relative has let him down. He goes to him for help, but he neglects him, saying, “Sorry! I can't violate laws at all! I can't help you!” Such is the punishment of those who incline to others than Allah, All-Mighty. That is why Allah's Messenger, (PBUH), says

“Seek to achieve your needs by self-respect, for things are run by (Allah's) Divine Decree.”

To the same effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“Whatsoever of mercy Allah may grant to mankind none can withhold it; and whatsoever He may withhold none can grant it thereafter. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”

[XXXV; 2]

In fact, events and incidents that can be narrated concerning the issue of honor and dishonor are countless, for each and every one, through one's relatives and friends as well as the people around him, knows thousands of stories. Such young man, who committed himself to Allah's Commands, was granted honor and dignity in this present world and the world to come. He abstained from looking at unlawful or indecent women, so Allah granted him a chaste pure woman:

“And for him who fears the standing before his Lord there are two Gardens (of Paradise)”

[LV; 46]

Most interpreters of the Holy Quran hold that the two Gardens (of Paradise) mentioned in the above Verse
are: “A Garden in this present world and another in the Hereafter - in the present world before the Hereafter.”

In this context, Allah, All-Mighty, also says

“So wait patiently (O Muhammad) for the Decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under Our Eyes (Our Divine Care and Protection), and glorify the Praises of your Lord when you get up from sleep.”

[LII; 48]

It is very nice to wrap up this lecture about Allah’s Beautiful Divine Name “Al-‘Aziz” with the following Prophetic Hadith, which may be the last Hadith in this lecture:

“Whosoever seeks to achieve something by (committing) a sinful deed is too far from that which he desires and too near to that which he fears.”

In other words, if you desire to achieve anything by committing a sin or misdeed, you have to know for sure that such thing is unattainable for you; and if you desire to achieve anything by showing obedience and commitment to Allah’s Commands and Religion, you have to know for sure that it is very close and easily attainable for you:

“Whosoever seeks to achieve something by (committing) a sinful deed is too far from that which he desires and too near to that which he fears.”

In business and trade: be honest and trustworthy, you gain a lot of profits, and you are considered as honest and trustworthy in the sight of Allah, All-Mighty. If you are a lawyer, be honest, and you will have a lot of income, and not only Allah but also other fellow humans will consider you as honest and trustworthy. Those who disobey Allah for the sake of the perishable pleasures and enjoyments of this present world are mere idiots who do not know Allah, All-Mighty, Most Gracious, and who will lose the never-ending pleasures and enjoyments of the Hereafter. In this context, Allah, Glory and Praise are all His, says

“He (Allah) will help you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has indeed achieved a great achievement.”

[XXXIII; 71]

This is because Allah’s Promise in True:

“And after the Truth, what else can there be except error.”

[X; 32]

It should be known that Allah has promised true believers to protect them, He has promised to defend them, He has promised to provide them with good sustenance, He has promised to grant them honor and dignity. Here is the evidence:

“But honor, power and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger and believers, but the hypocrites know not.”

[LXIII: 8]

This Quranic Verse shows beyond a shadow of doubt that honor, power, glory and dignity are all in Allah’s Hands. So, if you seek them, you have to be with Allah:

Be with Allah, and you will see Allah with you.
And leave all others (than Him) and beware of being greedy.
If He gives you, who can ever prevent Him?!
And who can ever give (you anything) if He withholds from you.

Translation : Khaled Al-Athmeh
Auditing :