



Tazkiyyah – The Purification of Heart (A)

Tazkiyyah is the process of purification of the heart/self. In the Quran, Allah (SWT) has sworn multiple times, which show the importance of His claim/statement which comes after swearing. And mostly, after swearing, He talked about the tazkiyyah. As in Surah Ash-Shams after swearing, He said,

“Successful is he, who purifies himself and destroyed is he who destroys himself”.
[Surah Ash-Shams: 9-10]

Scholars use two words for purification, one is tazkiyyah and the other is tasfeeya. There is a slight difference between the two of them. Tasfeeya means to clean. When a person starts sinning and sins are just on the surface of his heart, then tasfeeya can clean his heart by just stopping him from the sins, but if a person is very much sinful that his sins have penetrated to his heart then to eradicate the sins from his heart, tazkiyyah is required.

Allah (SWT) says,

“Successful is he, who purifies himself; And remembers the name of his Lord and prays.”
[Surah Al-A’la: 14-15]

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said that, “there is a piece of flesh in your body if that is good, everything is good, but if that is bad then everything is bad” then he said, “it is your heart”.

One of the scholars, Ibn al Qayyim said, “that your heart is like a cooking pot and the tongue is a spoon that takes out the stuff which is cooking inside”.

Center of Consciousness

- Our spiritual heart resides in our physical heart. Allah (SWT) has used the word Qalb in Quran on different places. E.g. Allah (SWT) says,
“They have hearts wherewith they understand not”. ***[Surah Al-Araf: 179]***
- In many heart transplants, not only the organ transplanted in another body but also some of the emotions associated with that heart transplanted to the recipient by the donor.
- Our hearts start beating before even our brain function is established. Just as the brain sends a message to the heart, the heart also sends messages to the brain.
- Our heart also holds memories.
- Also sometimes, we make decisions based on our heart.
- Across different cultures, A heart is known to have different metaphors. e.g He stole my heart. So a heart can be metaphorically stolen. Etc.

Quranic Concept of Heart

Allah (SWT) says in the Quran,

“The Day where neither wealth nor sons will benefit. Except him who brings to Allah a sound (clean) heart”. [Surah Ash-Shua’ra: 88-89]

Allah (SWT) wants us to purify us from inside because, from this hidden delve of our heart, our actions emerge.

Types of People

There are three types of people that Allah (SWT) mentions in Surah Baqarah. In the first 5 ayahs of Surah Baqarah, Allah (SWT) talks about the believers and in the next two ayahs 6 & 7, Allah (SWT) talks about the disbelievers and then in next 13 ayahs, Allah (SWT) talks about the 3rd category of people and introduce them in a way, ***“In their heart is a disease and Allah has increased their disease.”*** These ayahs are regarding hypocrites.

Allah (SWT) wants our heart to be Qalb-e-Saleem that’s why he mentioned 13 ayahs in Surah Baqarah about the hypocrites thus emphasizing the importance to remove the diseases from our hearts.

Blind Hearts

Allah (SWT) says in Quran,

“Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the chests that grow blind”. [Surah Al-Hajj: 46]

When one loses Baseerah (the ability to see what things they are) then it means their hearts have grown blind and one can have blind eyes in a way that he forgets that this life is temporary, and he has to be resurrected one day. He forgets about the absolute facts of life. One of the absolute facts of life is death. Sometimes, eyesight stays alright, but hearts get blind.

When a person commits a sin, a black spot emerges on his heart. And if a person keeps doing it, the whole heart will turn black and dark. Similarly, if a person starts doing good deeds, a white spot will undo a black spot on his heart and in the same way his whole heart will turn into a white and shiny heart if he keeps doing good deeds.

The Heart's Nourishment

“Those who believed, and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah, Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest”. [Surah Ar-Rad: 28]

So, if our heart is looking for purifying and contentment, the best thing is to start with the remembering Allah (SWT).

Two Major Diseases of Heart

Although there are hundreds of diseases of heart two of them are considered as major diseases which can corrupt our hearts while other diseases are considered as the by-product of these diseases.

1. Shubuhaat / Doubts
2. Shahawaat / Base desires

Shubuhaat / Doubts

Doubts about Islam, Allah (SWT), whether we will get our rizaq (living) or not, doubts regarding the future. Because if our heart is in doubts, it can never be nafs-ul-mutmaeena. It makes one's heart very restless. If one has doubts about Allah (SWT), then his faith goes away and if faith goes then everything goes away.

Shahawaat / Base Desires

There are two basic desires of human beings.

1. To feed themselves
2. To have relations with other human beings

When lust or greed take over these desires then one can transgress the limits of Allah (SWT).

Properties of People of Heaven & Hell

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: “Do you know the things which most commonly brings people into Paradise? It is fear of Allah (SWT) and good character. Do you know what most commonly brings people into Hell? It is the two hollow things: the mouth and the private parts.” **[Tirmidhi, 4832]**

People who purify themselves always have good character (Husn-e-Khulq). Taqwa (piety) and good character are the qualities of the people of paradise. While people of hell have obnoxious tongue and they are indulging in vulgarity.

Selling the Deen

“Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter. Their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 86]

For example, anger. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has promised the house in paradise to those who control their anger. Those who don't control their anger and take the temporary pleasure of this life, lose the gifts of akhirah.

Reality of Dunya

“If I were to give everyone what they requested, that would not decrease what I have, any more that a needle decreases the sea if put into it.” [Sahih Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah]

The Prophet Mohammad (SWT) said, “If the world was equivalent to a wing of a Mosquito in the sight of Allah, He would not give a disbeliever a single drop to drink from it.” ***[Jami At-Tirmidhi]***

This world has no reality in comparison to the hereafter.

Allah (SWT) said in the Quran,

“But No! You prefer the life of this world. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.” [Surah al-Ala: 16-7]

As an Ummah, we have corrupted ourselves as well. Our outer look is very attractive but from inside we are corrupted. Unless, we won't perform tazkiyyah of ourselves and as an Ummah, corruption and looting will increase day by day and also, we will fall as an Ummah.

Process of Change

“Verily! Allah will not change the condition of a people as long as they do not change what is within themselves”. [Surah Ar-Rad: 11]

Gandhi said, “Be the change you want to see in the world. So, the process of change starts from our own self”.

The first command to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) given by Allah (SWT) was ***“Iqra means Read”***. The second command was ***“O you who wrapped up in a garment, stand up to pray in the night”***. Then another command, ***“O you who wrapped up in a garment, stand up and warn people.”*** So, first do it by yourself, build your connection with Allah (SWT) and then warn or give Dawah to other people.