

Things That Need To Be Thought About

H A R U N Y A H Y A

From the beginning of the book, we referred to the importance of thinking, the gains it brings man and that thought is a very important faculty that separates man from other creatures. We also mentioned the causes that prevent thinking. The main purpose in all this was to encourage people to think and to help them see the purpose of their creation and honor Allah's endless knowledge and might.

In the following pages, we will try to describe what a person believing in Allah would think about the things he meets during the day, what lessons he would draw from the events he witnesses, how he should thank and come closer to Allah by seeing his Lord's art and knowledge in everything.

Certainly what will be mentioned here covers only a very small part of a man's thinking capacity. Man has the ability to think every moment (not hour, minute, or second but moment) of his life. The scope of man's thought is so broad that it is almost not possible to put any constraints or limits on it. The purpose of what will be told below is only to open a door for people who do not make use of their faculty of thinking as is appropriate.

It should be born in mind that only people who reflect can understand and assume a different position than others. The situation of those who cannot see the miraculous events around them and cannot reflect has been related in the verses of Allah as follows:

The likeness of those who disbelieve is that of someone who yells out to something which cannot hear – it is nothing but a cry and a call. Deaf – dumb – blind. They do not use their intellects. (Surat al-Baqara: 171)

...They have hearts they do not understand with. They have eyes they do not see with. They have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf: 179)

Do you suppose that most of them hear or understand? They are just like cattle. Indeed they are even more astray! (Surat al-Furqan: 44)

Those who are able to see Allah's signs, the miraculous aspects of the beings and events He creates, and who, therefore, can understand, are people who reflect. Such people can derive conclusions from everything, big or small, they see around them.

WHEN ONE WAKES UP IN THE MORNING...

There is no need for special conditions for someone to start thinking. From the moment we wake up in the morning, plenty of opportunities for thought lie before us.

A long day lies before us when we wake up in the morning. Most of the time, we do not feel tired or sleepless, we are ready to start everything over again. Thinking this, one remembers a verse of Allah:

It is He who made the night a cloak for you and sleep a rest, and He made the day a time for rising. (Surat al-Furqan: 47)

Washing the face and taking a shower, we pull ourselves together and come more fully to our senses. Now we are ready to think on many useful issues. There are many concerns much more important than what we will have for breakfast or what time we have to leave home, and we first have to think about them.

First of all, our being able to wake up in the morning is a great miracle. Despite having lost consciousness entirely, in the morning we recover consciousness and our personalities. The heart beats, we are able to breathe, talk and see. In fact, when we go to sleep, there is no guarantee that these favors will be returned to us in the morning. Nor have we met any disasters during the night. For example, the absent-mindedness of a neighbor could cause a gas leakage and great explosion during the night could have woken us. A catastrophe could have occurred in the region where we lived and we could have lost our lives.

We could have had other problems with our bodies; for example, we could have woken up with severe pains in the kidneys or with a headache. Yet, none of these happened and we have woken up safe and sound. Thinking on all of this, we thank Allah for His mercy and protection.

Starting a new day in good health means Allah's giving us another chance to achieve more for the hereafter.

Therefore, the best attitude to take is that we will spend our day in such a way as to please Allah. Man should, prior to everything else, make plans for this and keep his mind occupied with thoughts of that sort. The starting point for pleasing Allah is to ask Him for help about this matter. The prayer of the prophet Sulayman sets a good example for the believers:

My Lord, keep me thankful for the blessing You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and keep me acting rightly, pleasing You, and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous slaves. (Surat an-Naml: 19)

DURING THE DAY

In the face of all events he comes across throughout the day, a believer always thinks of Allah's verses, and tries to have an understanding of the subtleties in events.

He reacts to each favor or trial with the good character of which Allah will approve. For a person who believes, the place he is in has little importance. Whether at school, at work, or shopping, by reflecting on the fact that Allah creates everything, he tries to see, the hidden purpose in events and the beauties that He creates, and he leads a life abiding by the verses of his Lord. This attitude of believers is related in the Qur'an as follows:

There are men who proclaim His glory morning and evening, not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the establishment of salat (regular Prayer) **and the payment of zakat (regular Charity); fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil – so that Allah can reward them for the best of what they did and give them more from His unbounded favor. Allah provides for anyone He wills without reckoning. (Surat an-Nur: 37-38)**

WHAT DIFFICULTIES SOMEONE MEETS AT WORK MAKE HIM THINK

Man may encounter various difficulties throughout the day. However, whatever difficulty he encounters, he needs to put his trust in Allah and think as such: "Allah tests us with everything we do and we think about in the life of this world. This is a very important reality of which we should not lose sight even for a moment. Therefore, if we meet a difficulty in anything that we do or think that things do not proceed on the right track, we should never forget that all these events are set against us to test our conduct."

These thoughts which cross one's mind are true of all major or minor events one encounters during the day. For instance, we may make extra payments due to a misunderstanding or carelessness, we may lose a file on the computer on which we spent hours due to a powercut, a young student may fail in a university exam although he studied very hard, our days may pass waiting in queues about some work in progress due to bureaucratic procedures, work may go wrong because of missing documents, one may miss the plane or the bus on the way to somewhere one must reach very urgently... There are numerous such incidents which everyone may, and almost certainly will, come across in his lifetime and consider a difficulty and "trouble".

In all these incidents, a person with faith immediately thinks that Allah is testing his conduct and patience, and that it is senseless for a man who will die and give account in the hereafter to be carried away by such incidents and lose time by worrying about them. He knows that there is good behind all these events. He never says "Alas" to any happening and asks Allah to facilitate his work and turn everything to good purpose.

And when relief follows difficulty, we realize that this is an answer to our prayer to Allah, that Allah is the Hearer of prayers and He responds to them, and we give thanks to Allah.

Living through the day thinking these thoughts, one never becomes hopeless, worries, feels sorry, or is left desperate, no matter what one encounters. We know that Allah has created all of these for a good and that there is a blessing in them. Moreover, we think like this not only in major events that may befall us but, as we have mentioned, also in all of the details, big or small, we meet in our daily life.

Think of a man who cannot settle an important matter as he wishes, and who encounters serious problems just when he is about to reach his goal. This person suddenly becomes angry, feels unhappy and distressed and, in short, develops all sorts of negative feelings. However, someone who thinks that there is good in everything, tries to find the hidden purpose in this event which Allah shows him. He thinks that Allah may have brought to his attention that he must take more definite measures regarding this issue. He takes all the essential measures and gives thanks to Allah saying, "maybe this helped to prevent more serious harm."

Someone who misses the bus while trying to reach an appointment may think, "perhaps my being late and not being on this bus have saved me from an accident or another harm". These are only a few examples. One may also think, "there might be many other such hidden purposes". These kinds of examples can be multiplied within a man's life. The important thing is that our plans may not always be resolved according to our wishes. We may suddenly find ourselves in a completely different situation than we had planned. In such circumstances, someone who behaves resignedly and looks for good in the particular event he faces, prospers. Allah states in His verse:

It may be that you hate something when it is good for you and it may be that you love something when it is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know. (Surat al-Baqara: 216)

As Allah states in His verse, we cannot know but Allah knows. Therefore, it is Allah Who knows what is good and bad for us. What falls to man is merely to take Allah, Full of Kindness and Most Merciful, for a friend and submit to Allah with full submission.

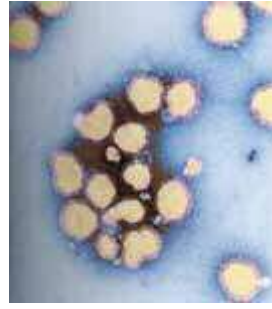
WHAT ILLNESSES MAKE ONE THINK ABOUT

Man is a being who has many weaknesses and who has to make continual effort to deal with his incompleteness. Illnesses expose man's weakness most explicitly. Therefore, when a friend, or we ourselves, become sick, we have to think about the hidden purpose in it. When we think, we see that even the flu, which is considered a simple illness, offers lessons from which we can take warning. When we catch such an illness, we think the following that firstly, the main cause of flu is a virus so tiny as to be invisible to the naked eye. However, such a tiny organism is enough to cause a man of 60-70 kg to lose his strength, and make him so exhausted as to prevent him walking or talking. Most of the time, the pills we take or the meals we eat do not do any good. The only thing we can do is rest and wait. In the body, a war takes place in which we cannot intervene. We are tied hand and foot by a tiny organism. In such a situation, what we should first remember is the following verse of Allah, in which prophet Ibrahim says:

He Who created me and guides me;
He Who gives me food and gives me drink;
And when I am ill, it is He Who heals me;
He Who will cause my death, then give me life;
He Who I sincerely hope will forgive my mistakes on the Day of Reckoning.
My Lord, give me right judgement and unite me with the righteous.
(Surat Ash-Shu'ara': 79-83)

A person who catches any type of illness should compare his attitude in good health to his attitude during his sickness and think about it. He should realize his modest state in times of illness, how strongly he understood that he is in need of Allah, and, for instance, on his way to an operation, how sincerely and strongly he prayed to Allah.

When we witness someone else's illness, we should immediately give thanks to Allah when we remember our own good health. When a believer sees a man with a crippled leg, he should think about what a major and important favor his own leg is to him. He understands that his being able to walk wherever he wants, as soon as he rises in the morning, and to run when necessary or take care of himself without being in need of anyone else, are each great favors of Allah. As he thinks and makes such comparisons, he grasps better the value of the blessings he has been granted.



A virus invisible to the naked eye can cause a large human body to be confined to bed.

SOME FACTS ONE REACHES BY DEEP THINKING

Have you ever thought that everything is created for man only?

When someone who believes in Allah investigates the systems and all the animate and inanimate beings present in the universe with an attentive eye, he sees that all are created for man. He understands that nothing has come into existence by chance but Allah creates everything in the most precise way for man's use.

Man, for example, can breathe effortlessly all the time. The air he inhales neither burns his nasal passages nor makes him dizzy nor causes headaches. The proportion of the gases in air is designed with the amounts that are most suitable for the human body. Someone who thinks of these remembers another very crucial point: if the oxygen concentration in the atmosphere were a little more or a little less than at present, in both cases life would vanish. He then remembers what a hard time he has in breathing in airless places. As a believing person continues to think on this subject, he constantly gives thanks to his Lord. This is because he sees that the atmosphere of the earth could well be designed, as it is on many other planets, so as to make it difficult to breathe. Yet, it is not so and the atmosphere of the earth is created in perfect balance and order in such a way as to enable billions of people to breathe effortlessly.

Someone who keeps thinking about the planet on which he lives, thinks how important water, which Allah creates, is for human life. The following comes to mind: people, in general, understand the importance of water only when they are deprived of it for a long time. Water, however, is a substance which we need every moment of our lives. For instance, a considerable portion of our body cells and of the blood that reaches every point in our body consists of water. Were it not so, the fluidity of blood would decrease and its flow in the veins would become very difficult. The fluidity of water is important not only for our bodies but also for plants. Thus, water reaches the furthest end of the leaf by passing through its thread-like vessels.

The great quantity of water in the seas makes our earth habitable. If the proportion of sea to land on the earth were smaller, then lands would turn into deserts and life would be impossible.

A conscientious person who thinks about these matters is completely convinced that the establishment of such a perfect balance on the earth is surely not a coincidence. Seeing and thinking about all these shows that a Creator Who is exalted and the owner of eternal power created everything for a purpose.

Moreover, he also remembers that the examples on which he has been reflecting are very limited in number. Indeed, it is impossible to count the examples regarding the delicate balances on earth. Yet a man who reflects can readily see the order, perfection and balance that prevail in every corner of the universe, and thus reach the conclusion that Allah has created everything for man. Allah states this in the Qur'an thus:



The planet and the whole universe in which we live

bear all the properties necessary for our lives.
Someone who thinks about this will see clearly that
Allah created the whole universe for us.

**And He has made everything in the heavens
and everything on the earth subservient to
you. It is all from Him. There are certainly
Signs in that for people who reflect.
(Surat al-Jathiyya: 13)**

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