

The society of the ignorant imagines that the expectation of gain is really love

Unbelievers use ignorant criteria established by themselves in almost every aspect of life. The common feature of these criteria is that they are all constructed on each individual's obtaining the greatest amount of worldly benefits possible. They do not love one another for their spiritual beauty, depth of soul or moral virtue and see them as blessings; they rather regard them as business objects by which they can secure the maximum gain. For that reason, whenever they make friendships with people, and choose friends or even spouses with whom to spend the rest of their lives, they look at whether they meet those criteria. For some of these people, certain spiritual attributes again based on worldly gain are of great importance. For example, they want other people to be helpful, loyal, mature, tolerant, forgiving, gentle, docile, understanding, reconciliatory and hard-working. Because these are all forms of behavior that will be of advantage to them. They may be irritable themselves, but they do not want other people to create any problems at any price. They will turn a blind eye to and be understanding of that all that person's flaws.



Some people look for character traits such as these in their friendships in order to live comfortably and obtain benefits from other parties. But they do not actually want any of these attributes because they regard them as valuable. Indeed, the other party also exhibits these qualities in order to gain the approval of other people and other worldly benefits, not out of any fear of Allah.

Most of the people who assume the moral values of the society of the ignorant do not adopt any of these spiritual attributes that are based on ignorance. For this vast mass of people, what matters in the friendships they establish with people is their external appearance, wealth and prestige. The main criteria involved are this person having an impressive physical appearance, having a good place in society and doing the kind of work that will cause others to admire them. So long as these are present, the other person's moral qualities are of no importance at all to them. The fact that their selection criteria are limited to these is a small reflection of these people's entire perspectives on life. It is a result of lives lead without the use of reason and conscience, never thinking of the transience of this world, of the eternal nature of the Hereafter or the proximity of death. They live literally like robots programmed by the system of ignorance, according to the prevailing criteria in society, never questioning them and never using their reason. They unthinkingly turn what they see in others into something for themselves. For example, in the same way that they look at the animal's pedigree when buying a horse or wanting to have the best make when buying a car, so they behave according to that same perspective when choosing a friend or a spouse. For example, they will always say that they like someone who owns a very expensive, latest model of car, who is rich and popular and famous, more



than anyone else and will prefer them to anyone else, even if their moral values are exceedingly poor. However, when this wealthy individual suddenly loses all those attributes they no longer feel any closeness to him, even though he still looks exactly the same in appearance. In the same way, they will never have any dealing with someone who is poor, who does an ordinary job that might embarrass them, even if that person is morally highly virtuous.

The fundamental reason for this behavior by the people in question is that rather than love, they look for money, prestige and comfort in their friendships or marriages. Because it is those things, rather than love, that they regard as essential if they are to make a success with those around them. They want the person with whom they will spend the rest

of their lives to literally be a **“money printing machine,”** rather than someone they can find depth in and share loved with. Indeed, the first thing they ask when they meet someone is “what line of work are you in?” When they receive the kind of answer they are looking for, they then immediately say **that they like that person, and even feel a deep affection for them in their hearts.** Occupation is one of the main factors in their being drawn to someone. However, if they later hear that that same person’s **“firm has gone bankrupt,”** they immediately drop them saying: **“It has got nothing to do with that, but for some entirely different reason I have gone off them, and I therefore no longer want to have anything to do with them.”**

So well-known is this perspective of people in the society of the ignorant that it is even made the subject matter of films. If you have a rapid look back over the films you have seen recently, you will notice that “moral virtue” is never the main idea in those films dealing with closeness between two individuals. Because film producers living within that same system know full well what matters they need to concentrate on. If they make a film totally revolving around moral virtue, the people in question will not be in the slightest bit interested in it. Film-makers know that the physical appearance of the people in the screenplay, their wealth, homes, cars, jobs and social prestige need to be kept in the foreground. The people who watch these films will only be interested in the film if it concentrates on those things; and only then will the producers be able to make money.

However, films about personal relations concentrating on criteria such as money, appearance and occupation can attract the hoped-for interest, and as a result it is those films that attract the largest audiences.

In almost all films of this kind, one person inevitably buys gifts such as homes, cars or expensive presents for the other. Similarly, people with this kind of mindset also enjoy films in which someone buys expensive gifts for their family or prepares material surprises for them which will make them happy. The more details compatible with the criteria of the society of the ignorant a film contains, the higher its ratings will be.

However, nobody will like or be influenced by films about the lives of people with no material means, who fail to make displays of love compatible with the criteria of the

society of the ignorant and who regard moral virtues as more important than anything else.

This perspective of the society of the ignorant that we have briefly touched on here is of course a terrible error. The people in question imagine that all these material attributes they attach such importance to will be enough to make them happy. The fact is, however, that they can clearly see the false nature of this perspective in their own lives. Yet since many people do not make proper use of their consciences they continue living by the criteria of the society of the ignorant, despite being aware of the true situation.

The fact that money, physical attributes, occupation, prestige, and expensive and showy homes and cars do not bring happiness is a great opportunity for people, even if they have realized this through personal experience. Allah creates this unhappiness as a blessing for them in order for them to see the truth. As with everyone else, He causes them to feel that they can only experience true love and happiness through faith, love of Allah and by adopting the moral values of which He approves. If they listen to the voices of their consciences then they will enjoy love, happiness, and all forms of blessings and beauty both in this world, and in the Hereafter for eternity.



Otherwise, our Almighty Lord states that people who are passionately attached to the goods of the life of this world will never enjoy any beauty, but will be recompensed with suffering:

Know that the life of this world is merely a game and a diversion and ostentation and a cause of boasting among yourselves and trying to outdo one another in wealth and children: like the plant-growth after rain which delights the cultivators, but then it withers and you see it turning yellow, and then it becomes broken stubble. In the Hereafter there is terrible punishment but also forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure. The life of the dunya is nothing but the enjoyment of delusion. (Surat al-Hadid, 20)

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