

Fruits for the Week

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JEALOUSY

Abu Hurairah reported that Allah's messenger said: "***Be aware of jealousy for verily it destroys good deeds the way fire destroys wood.***" (Abu Dawud)

Jealousy and envy are among the most destructive emotions or feelings a man may have. They lead him in his times of weakness to take the property of others unjustly or to refuse to help others when they are in need of help. It causes him to wish evil on others and to be happy when misfortune befalls them. Jealousy may also drive him to go beyond his means and squander his wealth in order to live like the wealthy. Jealousy also involves *kufr* (disbelief in Allah) to a certain degree, because it causes the jealous individual to feel that Allah has not been fair with him. He feels he deserves more than what Allah has given him and forgets all the mercies Allah has given him.

Allah has deliberately given some people more wealth, intelligence, beauty, strength, children, etc., than others (An-Nahl:71), but he has forbidden us from desiring what others have. "*Do not wish for what we have favored some of you over others.*" (An-Nisa':32). Because of these favors of Allah are tests of faith. The more favors, the more tests. The material things of this life do not make superior to another in Allah's judgment. True superiority lies in faith in Allah. Allah said: "*Surely the most*

noble of you to Allah is the most God-fearing."(Al-Hujurat:13)

In order to discourage envy, the Prophet said: "*Do not look to those above you. Look to those below you, as it will more likely remind you of Allah's favours bestowed on you.*" This is in relation to the material things of this life as the Prophet on another occasion said: "*If one of you looks at someone more wealthy and better built than him, he should also look at someone of a lower standard than himself.*" However, in spiritual matters we should look at those superior to us as it will encourage us to become more righteous.

The Prophet warned us to avoid envy as much as possible by comparing it to fire burning up wood completely because envy and jealousy totally destroy whatever few good deeds we have done. The main message of the above Hadith is that believing Muslims should be content with what Allah has destined for them. This does not mean that the believer does not try to improve his situation. He or she should do their best in whatever circumstances they may be in. But, having done that, the believer should accept whatever Allah destines for him. Wallahu A'lam.

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