



UTTERANCES OF HUZOOR GHAUS-E-AZAM

Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh
The Practice of Pious Restraint

Pious restraint is the practice of approaching everything with caution, and refraining from undertaking anything without permission from the Sacred Law. If a proposed action is found to be in accordance with the Sacred Law, or a potential acquisition is found to be compatible therewith, well and good. If such is not the case, however, it is necessary to abstain.

Pious restraint falls into three distinct categories, on three different levels:

1. The pious restraint of the common people, which means taking care to abstain from that which is strictly unlawful and that which is of dubious legality.
2. The pious restraint of the elite, which means taking care to abstain from everything that excites the lustful appetite of the lower self and the passions.
3. The pious restraint of the elite of the elite, which means taking care to abstain from everything that involves their self-will.

If a person fails to pay due attention to the subtle details of pious restraint, he will not receive the precious gifts that it can bring. Abstinance is the beginning of pious restraint, just as moderation is the road to contentment.

Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported as saying, "The foundation of religion is pious restraint and its destruction is greed. Anyone who hovers around a forbidden zone is liable to drop into it, just as an animal grazing next to a corn field is liable to stretch its mouth towards it, so the crops are hardly safe from the animal."

It is reported that Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) once said, "We used to avoid seventy doors of the permissible for fear of falling into sin," while Hazrat Umar Farooq (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) once said, "We used to abstain from nine tenths of the lawful for fear of falling into the unlawful."

They acted like this as a precaution against getting too close to what is unlawful, heeding the words of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "Every king has a forbidden zone and Allah's forbidden zone is that of His unlawful things. Anyone who hovers around that zone is liable to fall into it."

For pious restraint to be complete, the practitioner must cultivate the following habits, imposing them on his lower self as a matter of strict duty:

- Keeping the tongue from backbiting, in compliance with the words of Allah Ta'ala:
"And do not backbite one another." [*Surah 49, Verse 12*]

- Refrain from mockery on account of His words:

"Let not some men among you scoff at other men. Perhaps they may be better than those who scoff." [*Surah 49, Verse 11*]

- Keeping the eyes modestly downcast in the presence of forbidden objects, in accordance with His words:

“Order the Muslim men to lower down their sights.” [*Surah 24, Verse 30*]

- Speaking with a truthful tongue, in obedience to His words:

“And when you speak, observe justice.” [*Surah 6, Verse 152*]

In other words you must mean what you say.

- He must acknowledge the gracious favour of Allah Ta'ala, s as not to take pride in himself, in keeping with His words:

“Allah has conferred a favour upon you in that He has guided you to Islam.” [*Surah 49, Verse 17*]

- He must spend his wealth to further the cause of the Truth, not on the promotion of falsehood, in accordance with His words:

“And those who when they expend neither exceed the limit nor they are straitened and remain in between the two on the middle path.” [*Surah 25, Verse 67*]

That is to say, they do not spend on sinful disobedience, nor do they withhold from worshipful obedience.

- He must not seek high and mighty status and grandeur for himself, on account of His words:

“This home of the Hereafter, We assign it to those who desire not exaltation in the earth, nor disorder.” [*Surah 28, Verse 83*]

- Regular observance of the five daily ritual prayers at their prescribed times, in compliance with His words:

“Watch over all your prayers and (especially) the middle prayer and stand before Allah with true devotion.” [*Surah 2, Verse 238*]

- Adherence to the Sunnah of the Beloved Rasool (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), in obedience to His words:

“And this is My straight path, so follow it.” [*Surah 6, Verse 153*]

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the Taufeeq to practice upon the words of Huzoor Ghaus-e-Azam (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) and to inculcate pious restraint within ourselves, Ameen.

[*Compiled from Qalaa'id Al Jawaahir and Futuh Al Ghaib*]