

## What Is the Importance of Piety? How Does Piety Prevent Us from Becoming Limited?

### What Is the Importance of Piety in Our Daily Lives, and Why Should We Strive to Be Pious?

- Why have we been so strongly urged to observe piety?
- What are the consequences of neglecting piety?
- Have you ever reflected on the importance of piety?

Before we delve into the importance of piety, it is best to begin with a review of what piety actually means. In simple terms, piety (*taqwā*) means refraining from anything that hinders us from attaining the purpose of our creation. In other words, piety is the act of avoiding whatever distances us from God and impedes our nearness and similarity to Him. Interestingly, the very definition of piety clearly reveals its great significance. In fact, on the journey toward infinity, piety functions like a shield that prevents us from becoming limited.

To better grasp the meaning of piety, let us explain it through a tangible example. Suppose we are participating in a car race. Our goal in this race is to reach the finish line at the highest speed possible. In this context, piety means refraining from anything that hinders us from reaching that goal. Therefore, in this race, we must consider factors like: using a high-performance, faultless car with a powerful engine; wearing proper shoes and clothing suitable for driving; being physically and mentally prepared; staying alert; maintaining focus; and having a solid

understanding of the race rules. Failing to observe any of these can divert us from our goal. If we disregard these essential elements—that is, if we act without piety—then even if we have spent considerable effort, training day and night for the race, all that effort will go to waste, and we will fall short of achieving our desired objective.

### **Piety and a Healthy Birth into the Hereafter**

Piety is the means by which we reach our Beloved—Allah—as well as a healthy birth into the Hereafter and eternal bliss. We have been placed in the womb of this world for a limited time, so that we may gather the provisions necessary for our eternal life and ensure a healthy birth into the Hereafter.

As mentioned, piety serves as a shield, protecting us from harmful actions. Observing piety not only helps us avoid sins and evils but also ensures that we maintain the quality of our good deeds and worship, protecting us from Satan's attacks from the right. Thus, we can journey toward God and eternity safely, being born into the Hereafter with a sound heart.

Piety has numerous effects and blessings, and being aware of them further emphasizes its importance. Among these effects are: the acceptance of deeds by God [1], understanding divine *marifa* and acquiring them [2], the ability to discern truth from falsehood and the forgiveness of sins [3], and benefiting from the guidance of the Quran [4]. One of the most important and thought-provoking effects of piety is the acceptance of deeds. Why is it that any action lacking piety is not accepted?

## Piety as a Condition for the Acceptance of Deeds

We mentioned that piety is a condition for the acceptance of our deeds in this world—deeds that are meant to guide us toward the purpose of our creation and determine our eternal destiny. But what exactly is meant by an “accepted deed”?

An accepted deed is one of high quality—an action that cultivates similarity to Allah within us and results in a healthy birth into the Hereafter. In other words, piety protects our deeds from becoming devoid of quality. For instance, acts of goodness and helping others, when accompanied by piety, contribute to our spiritual growth and nearness to God, allowing us to reflect divine names such as *Raḥmān* (the Merciful), *Jawād* (the Generous), and *Karīm* (the Bountiful). Examples of observing piety in such actions include refraining from hypocrisy, arrogance, self-conceit (*‘ujb*), and making others feel indebted. Each of these forms of impiety degrades the quality of our deeds. Therefore, God accepts only the deeds of the pious; because they are shielded by piety and thus their actions are protected from the harms of pride and arrogance. The importance of piety is so great that even seemingly small and simple actions—such as doing a minor task at home, kissing one’s child, spending time with family, or smiling gently at one’s parents—are not considered insignificant when performed with piety. Although such actions may seem simple and small, they cultivate similarity and affinity to the Divine and bring about joy and tranquility. How can an action be considered insignificant when it has been accepted by God? This is why the Noble Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said to Abū Dharr (May God have mercy on him): “O Abū Dharr! Give more importance to deeds accompanied by piety than to deeds alone, for a deed

performed with piety is never diminished. How could an accepted deed ever be diminished? God, the Almighty says: ‘Verily, God accepts only from the pious.’”

In this lesson, we discussed the importance of piety. We stated that the importance of piety is such that observing it in our decisions, relationships, behaviors, and thoughts leads to a healthy birth into the Hereafter and eternal bliss. Piety not only causes us to refrain from sins and moral vices, but it also serves as a shield that protects our good deeds and acts of worship from degradation. Thus, our deeds retain their value, and piety draws us toward the divine names and brings about similarity to Allah. Hence, observing piety is a condition for the acceptance of our deeds—clearly demonstrating both its importance and the necessity of adhering to it.

## References

[1]. Quran, 5:27

[2]. Quran, 2:282

[3]. Quran, 2:29

[4]. Quran, 2:2