

Obstacles to Devoted Love for the Prophet's Household: Their Effect on Our Destiny

What Is the Root of Neglect for the Household of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Them)? Why Must We Combat the Obstacles to Devoted Love for the Household of the Prophet?

Now that we have become familiar with the concept of devoted love for the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them), understood the difference between the concepts of *Mawaddah* (devoted love) and *Mahabbah* (general affection/love), and examined the consequences and losses arising from mistaking these two concepts, it is beneficial to also recognize the obstacles to devoted love. These obstacles not only make the path to true happiness and peace difficult by distancing us from our origin and roots but also deprive us of the bliss and well-being that can only be attained through companionship with and the guidance of an infallible expert. Although, perhaps, just as we have failed to recognize the profound difference between *Mawaddah* and *Mahabbah* and have comforted ourselves for years, even centuries, with the illusion of having *Mahabbah* for the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them), we may easily overlook the role of obstacles that have quietly infiltrated the fabric of our lives, depriving us of the source of Divine Beneficence and Mercy, and of becoming like Allah.

Sometimes, attachment to circumstances, places, times, or even to what we possess or lack makes the veil of habit so pronounced and heavy that we hardly notice the loss of the blessed mentor or the neglect of the great purpose hidden

behind these habits. This leads us to forget our true human reality and to give central importance to this world, which is meant only to be a place for acquiring tools and preparing us for eternal life.

In this article, we intend to examine the obstacles to devoted love that lead to neglect, abandonment, and even the loss of the infallible expert upon whom our worldly and eternal bliss is tied. We will also seek a way to return to the embrace of our heavenly family and the right path of movement.

Tyranny and Arrogance: Obstacles to Devoted Love for the Household of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Them)

Throughout history, we have witnessed and continue to witness the rule of tyrants and oppressive rulers who believe their success lies in keeping humanity distant from its true essence. Through deceit and suppression, they seek to create a gap between us and our heavenly family. This is natural because in a world where Divine Mercy, justice, happiness, and tranquility are paramount, there is no room for the self-serving desires and tyranny of rulers or the enslavement of people. Therefore, the best tactic to perpetuate this oppression is to attempt to divert us from our origin and true selves, and to sever the connection that can lead us to realize our ultimate goal and purpose. This role has been played by oppressive rulers who hide the truth from people, as well as by modern cultural movements that occupy youth with the superficialities of life. As a result, many of us, despite being exposed to religious teachings, remain strangers to our eternal selves because we have neglected the connection with the one who can bring us bliss and lead us to the purpose of our creation.

It is for this reason that despite living in a religious society, we still feel a void and lack happiness and inner peace. In reality, we are missing something whose absence we feel, but due to our attachment to the world and preoccupation with the needs and perfections of our material and lower faculties, we are not even able to identify it. In fact, by separating ourselves from our true selves and our heavenly family, we have experienced an internal alienation and have settled for limited and fleeting perfections such as sensory pleasures, vegetative growth, animal survival and well-being, or at most, intellective advancement. However, the consequence of being distanced from our role model, guide, and true family is not easily compensated for, and in reality, it has deprived us of the opportunity for infinite growth. This loss is the result of submitting to the rule of arrogance and indifference toward the governance of tyrants who have seen their growth and survival in our separation from the Infallibles.

Ignorance and Lack of Awareness: Obstacles to Devoted Love for the Household of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Them)

Usually, ignorance and unawareness in material and worldly matters quickly reveal their effects in our lives. Obtaining a degree or choosing a job that has no impact on our growth, fulfilling our needs, or achieving tranquility; selecting a place to live that leads to micro or macro tensions and disorder in our lives; or an unaware marriage that causes us to lose peace instead of finding it, all eventually manifest their consequences.

We see the blows and damages resulting from our ignorance in each of these matters. However, we are oblivious to the irreparable damages inflicted upon us due to a lack of knowledge about our true selves and the purpose of our creation. It is like someone who is aware of the smallest defects in their vehicle but, due to unawareness, is moving on a road that, instead of bringing them closer to their destination, takes them further away moment by moment.

When reaching the purpose of creation and gaining similarity to Allah are defined solely by having an effective and efficient connection with the Infallible, the severance or absence of this connection will certainly lead to our confusion and bewilderment on the path. In fact, by forgetting our bond with the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them), at best, we become entangled in limited worldly rationality. We are oblivious to the fact that a rationality detached from its source and lacking a connection to its infinite origin is merely like a lamp that brightens only a few steps ahead and cannot brighten the true path of life for us.

Consequently, this ignorance not only prevents us from a healthy birth into eternity but also leads to the overlooking of the sacrifices made by the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them) to bring us to the truth of religion, the human way of life, and the eternal life that lies before us.

Worldliness: A Factor Preventing the Attainment of Devoted Love for the Infallible Imam

All the points we have discussed so far play a role in our failure to reach the status of supporting the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them) and are considered obstacles to devoted love. However, among the various factors,

perhaps the role of being preoccupied with the world and indulging in its dazzling pleasures and attractions can be considered greater or more prominent than other obstacles to devoted love.

Naturally, achieving anything valuable has its price. Now, the question arises: Is there any factor more important than a human being, and any goal more significant than their attainment of bliss? The point is that the key to achieving this bliss lies only in the hands of someone who is not only aware of us, our existential structure, the purpose intended for us, and the path of this journey, but is also a perfect manifestation of Allah, or the Absolute Perfection. However, our understanding of the importance of the bond and connection with the Infallible, in the first place, requires our correct understanding of our true selves and the non-forgetting of the origin from which our existence is derived.

Unfortunately, attachment to the world, getting used to its sweet and pleasant indulgences, forbidden (*haram*) earnings, and a lack of control over the inputs of the soul have changed our infinite-seeking nature and have entangled us in the most superficial and lowest needs. As a result, instead of rising high, we have become satisfied with crawling in the dust of worldly desires and ambitions. In fact, engaging with our base desires and perfections has occupied us to such an extent that we are deprived of the pleasure of having an Infallible Imam, do not realize the loss caused by his absence, and are unwilling to pay the price for supporting him. Yet, our freedom is defined by returning to an eternal perspective and re-establishing our connection with the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them).

When we understand that our truth is not limited to our physical bodies and material desires, our life's horizon changes, and we see ourselves aligned with the purpose for which we were created. This perspective gives meaning to our suffering and direction to our efforts, leading us to a transaction whose profit is evident in both this world and the hereafter. It will not only lead to our salvation but also to the salvation of humanity. This is because, in this state, we will become the forerunners for the arrival of someone who, with his all-encompassing kindness, will bring all aspects of our being from the lowest to the highest levels. In fact, when attaining eternal bliss is achieved through a connection with the infallible expert and by following his teachings and practices, anything that hinders our connection to the Infallible will be like hell for us.

In this lesson, we examined the obstacles to devoted love and stated that just as tyrants and the arrogant prevent us from knowing our true essence, ignorance and attachment to the world and its desires also play a significant role in our failure to understand our relationship with the infallible Imam and the importance of supporting him. Therefore, they are considered obstacles to devoted love for the Household of the Prophet (Peace be upon them).