

Ten Real and Tangible Effects of Spiritual Awakening and How It Changes Life

The Effects of Spiritual Awakening: How Does the Awakening of the Heart Change Lifestyle?

In previous lessons, we mentioned the nature of awakening (*Yaqzah*) and the signs of the awakening of the heart; however, this awakening only gains meaning when it moves beyond the stage of awareness and feeling and is seen in everyday behavior, choices, and reactions. If spiritual awakening does not manifest in your lifestyle—in how you face adversity, forgive others, bounce back from mistakes, and view death—then it has not moved beyond the surface. For this reason, the Quran always places faith alongside action: "They believed and did righteous deeds" [1]. Examining the effects of spiritual awakening is an important criterion for understanding the extent of the penetration of heartfelt faith into external behavior and life, showing how deeply awakening has taken root in our souls.

The awakening of the heart activates the capacities of the supra-rational dimension, that is, the very part of our being that directs the path of life and increases the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. When this part awakens, emotions become more cohesive and organized, and the will leans toward decisions that are more in harmony with the truth of existence and the purpose of creation. Spiritual awakening shifts one's perspective from the level of mere acquired knowledge to innate *ma'rifa*, creating a fresh understanding of events.

Awakening should make suffering and affliction more bearable, reduce the intensity of anger and resentment, speed up repentance, and highlight the value of life. These transformations occur when awakening passes from the inside and manifests in behavior and action. A vigilant heart is calmer and more steadfast in the face of events that break others; it sees suffering as an opportunity for growth, does not harbor resentment, and does not view death as a threat, but rather as part of the journey and a catalyst for awareness.

In this lesson, the goal is not to redefine awakening, but to describe the effects of spiritual awakening; these effects show that awakening has passed the stage of understanding and reached practical experience.

The Effects of Spiritual Awakening on Emotions and States of the Heart

Before external manifestation, the effects of spiritual awakening are seen in the quality of emotions. When the heart is tied to the unseen realm, it no longer sees the world as limited to a lifespan of a few decades, and this perspective changes the weight of events and makes heavy emotions bearable. Inner awakening regulates emotions and reduces irrational fluctuations. Examining the effects of spiritual awakening in the emotional dimension shows how far the inward self has distanced itself from heedlessness.

-Redefining Suffering and Affliction

With the awakening of the heart, a person's view of suffering is no longer one of a dead end. Pain exists, but it does not become the end point. The aware heart, when facing events rooted in estimative, imaginal, vegetative, animal, or

intellective matters—such as illness, loss of loved ones, accidents, or livelihood problems—stands firm and does not collapse, backed by the understanding of "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return" [2]. For such a person, this statement is not a mere slogan or verbal repetition; rather, it is a reminder of their true place in the universe. This eternal perspective does not allow incidents and problems to threaten their identity. The patience of an awakened heart is an active patience, neither denying the hardship and suffering nor surrendering to it, but consciously navigating through the hardships and turning them into an opportunity to grow and gain strength.

-Freedom from Resentment and Lightening of the Heart

Resentment lingers when a person considers this world to be everything. The awakened heart knows the world is a short passageway and does not allow small events to gain excessive importance. Imam Sadiq (Peace be upon him) says: "The resentment of a believer lasts only a moment" [3]. A sound heart does not hold onto grudges. The active supra-rational part prevents estimation and imagination from solidifying negative emotions. This freedom from resentment is one of the most obvious effects of spiritual awakening in the realm of emotions.

-Healthy Confrontation with Doubt and Uncertainty

An aware heart does not hide doubt; rather, it sees it as an opportunity for growth. Just as physical illness requires consulting a specialist, ideological doubt must also be examined. This is the difference between an awakened heart and a heedless heart; a heedless heart buries doubt inside to achieve momentary peace, but an awakened heart thinks about resolving the root of all its doubts to

move healthily on the path of growth. This healthy confrontation with doubt is one of the effects of spiritual awakening.

-Conscious Passage through Trials and Crises

Someone who knows the womb-like essence of the world sees hardships as part of the soul's birth process into a higher life. The vigilant heart analyzes events during trials from the outside, not from within the pressures of estimation and imagination; for this reason, crises do not cause them permanent turmoil. They experience hardship and trial, but see it as a factor for growth, not a sign of injustice.

-Belief in Death and the Easing of Existential Fears

Belief in death is one of the deepest effects of spiritual awakening. Death is frightening from the perspective of a heedless heart, but the awakened heart sees it as a reminder of the path and a bridge to a vaster and truer world. This perspective reduces fears, transforms choices, and highlights opportunities. Remembering death protects the heart from heedlessness and creates the necessary preparation for a person to enter the intermediate realm (*Barzakh*) with real provisions.

- A Sensitive Heart and Swift Recognition of Slips

A religious appearance or scientific and social status is not the criterion for awakening. Someone in the guise of science or religion might have a heedless and dormant heart. Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) says: "The awakening of the eye is of no use when the heart is heedless" [4]. The awakened heart detects a slip early

and corrects the path. Such a heart places emotions in their proper place and does not let suffering, offense, or doubt exceed their natural limits.

The Effects of Spiritual Awakening on Behavior and External Actions

True awakening will, sooner or later, impact behavior and lifestyle. The awakened heart and supra-rational dimension direct the will and change the quality of choices. This change is seen in relationships, decisions, thoughts, and lifestyle. Below we review manifestations of this transformation.

-Spending in the Way of God (*Infaq*) and Detachment from the World

Infaq is one of the effects of spiritual awakening. When giving, a heedless heart fears a decrease in wealth and the possibility of poverty; however, the living and awakened heart does not see the future as limited to this world. This eternal perspective frees the hand to give easily. As Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) says: "He who is certain of a good return gives generously" [5]. A believer does not experience fear and hesitation when giving charity because they believe that nothing is lost through giving, but rather it returns multiplied [6].

-Life Management and Stopping Time Waste

One of the signs of awakening is paying attention to the value of life. A vigilant heart does not spend time on fruitless matters, trivial conflicts, unimportant competitions, or empty entertainment. They know that every moment of life will be questioned; therefore, they do not lose it easily. Paying attention to the value of moments is one of the greatest effects of spiritual awakening.

-Avoiding Obsessions and Freedom from Repetitive Thoughts

Obsession usually stems from a hidden negligence. An aware heart differentiates between what is important and what is unimportant, and does not let trivial matters and repetitive, fruitless thoughts occupy its mind. However, a person with mental or behavioral obsession is asleep and does not know how much precious time they waste by entertaining devilish estimation. One of the effects of spiritual awakening is avoiding obsession, and paying attention to the value of life is one of the factors in breaking free from it.

-Balanced Social Ethics and Fair Behavior

One of the arenas where the awakening of the heart shows itself is in social relationships. In dealing with others, an awakened heart does not have harsh reactions, hasty judgments, or unnecessary sensitivities. Humility, benevolence, fairness, and tolerance are not forced behaviors for them, but form spontaneously because an awakened and aware person has moved past the "limited self" and holds a broader view of the universe and themselves. The awakening of the heart does not merely mean having strong spiritual states; rather, the awakened person also participates in the field of social relationships more lightly, calmly, and fairly.

The Effects of Spiritual Awakening on Worldview and *Ma'rifa*

In addition to emotion and behavior, the awakening of the heart also transforms a person's worldview and perspective on existence. Awakening in this section is the root of transformations in the dimensions of emotion and behavior. In this section, we will examine the effects of spiritual awakening in the realm of *ma'rifa* and cognition.

-Activation of the Supra-Rational Dimension

Among the five existential dimensions—namely sensate, imaginal, estimative, intellective, and supra-rational—awakening must occur in the supra-rational part; meaning, the Soul Child, which has been breathed into us by Allah, must be revived. Without the awakening of this dimension, even attending the classes of the greatest scholars, philosophers, and mystics, and studying the deepest books will not awaken us because the problem is not solved merely by studying. Awakening is an inner movement that must happen in the heart. The awakening of the supra-rational aspect enables us to correctly identify the path and move from the surface of knowledge to the depth of truth.

-Inner Awakening and a New Relationship with Angels

In the view of a neglectful person, angels belong to history, but the awakened heart considers them to be present and active beings. The Quran says: "The angels descend upon them, saying: 'Do not fear, nor be grieved'" [7]. This descent is not for a specific group; angels come to everyone and bring good promises to everyone. But the problem is that the hearts of some people are asleep and disconnected from eternity and the unseen realm. The awakened and ready heart hears unseen guidance. Negligence makes a person deaf, but awakening makes them capable of hearing.

-Inner Awakening and a New Perspective on Knowledge

Awakening is not related to education and literacy levels. How many illiterate commoners are among the awakened, and how many educated elites are asleep and among the neglectful. Beneficial knowledge is accompanied by awakening; otherwise, it becomes a tool for justification. An awakened heart does not place a

gap between knowing and acting, and does not use knowledge as a tool for seeking superiority or negligence.

In this lesson, we examined the effects of spiritual awakening in the three arenas of emotions, behavior, and worldview, and showed how the awakening of the heart transforms from an inner state into a lifestyle. An awakened heart is calmer in suffering, behaves more fairly in relationships, acts more accurately in decisions, and has a deeper view of the world. Such a heart does not harbor resentment, moves past obsessions, recognizes the value of life, and establishes a new relationship with death, angels, and the truth of the universe. Unlike some emerging mystical movements that view inner awakening merely as an emotional experience, true awakening is a comprehensive transformation in human life.

References

[1]. 5:9; 19:96; 29:58

[2]. Quran, 2: 156

[3]. "The resentment of a believer lasts only for the moment he is in it; then he parts from his brother and feels nothing against him. But the resentment of a disbeliever lasts his whole lifetime." -Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 72, p. 244.

[4]. Muhammad Al-Tamimi al-Amudi, *Ghurar Al-Hikam Wa Durar Al-Kalim (Exalted Aphorisms and Pearls of Speech a Collection of Aphorisms of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib)*. Trans. Tahir Ridha Jaffer. Qom: Ansariyan Publications, 2012, p. 1225.

[5]. *Nahjul Balagha*, hadith 138.

[6]. "The example of those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah is that of a grain that sprouts into seven ears, each bearing one hundred grains. And Allah multiplies 'the reward even more' to whoever He wills. For Allah is All-Bountiful, All-Knowing." (Quran, 2:261)

[7]. "Surely those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then remain steadfast, the angels descend upon them, [saying,] 'Do not fear, nor grieve. Rather, rejoice in the good news of Heaven, which you have been promised.'" (Quran, 41:30)