

Time - A Precious Gift

The gift of time is a very precious favour of Allāh. Our existence and everything around us is dependent on time. It is through time that we have the opportunity to benefit from all the blessings of this world and the Hereafter. However, do we truly appreciate and value this great blessing?

'Time is precious.' This is a phrase which we have heard many times. While this phrase is reality, unfortunately, most of us do not value this great gift and blessing. The Messenger of Allāh (sallallāhu alayhi wasallam) said, "There are two blessings in which many people are at loss; health and free time." (Al-Bukhāri)

Time Never Stops

Time does not wait for anyone. Once time passes, it will never return. How many seconds, minutes, hours, days, months and years have passed? When has this time ever stopped or even paused for a slight moment? Have we ever been able to retrieve any of that time?

Hasan Al-Basri (rahmatullāhi alayhi) once said, "O son of Ādam! You are but (a collection of) days: when a day passes, a part of you passes." (Hilyatul Awliyā)

Hence, we should make the most of this great blessing of time. We should value and utilise it in good deeds, spend each second with care and not waste a single moment.

Rewarding, Futile or Sinful?

The actions we engage in, are of three types;

- (1) Rewarding actions - good deeds which please Allāh,
- (2) Futile actions - actions which bring no benefit in this world or the hereafter,
- (3) Sinful actions - actions which bring the displeasure of Allāh.

Engaging in good deeds is the best way of utilising our time. For example; reciting the Qur'ān, performing salāh, dhikr (remembrance) of Allāh, participating in deeni gatherings etc.

However, in the society we live in, much of our time is spent in futile activities or - even worse - sinful actions. The use of social media, sports entertainment, playing games etc. are all actions which snatch away our time and give us no benefit of this world or the hereafter. Rather, in many cases, they result in displeasing Allāh. A true believer will always refrain from such activities.

The Prophet (sallallāhu alayhi wasallam) said, "It is from the excellence of an individual's Islam that he leaves lā ya'ni (those things which do not benefit him)." (Tirmidhi)

Our Pious Predecessors

It is from amongst the sayings of Imām Shāfi'ee (rahmatullāhi alayhi), "Time is a sword. If you do not cut it (by utilising it in good deeds), it will definitely cut you." (Madārij al-Sālikeen)

Shaykh Jurjāni (rahmatullāhi alayhi) would eat dried barley parchment instead of eating bread with curry. He explained, "When I calculated the time it took to eat bread with curry compared to swallowing dried barley parchment, I realised that I could recite Subhānallāh seventy times! For this reason, for forty years, I have been eating dried barley parchment!"

Therefore, we should value time greatly and spend each moment in gaining the pleasure of Allāh. Let us always remain vigilant and check whether our actions are rewarding, futile or sinful.