



Greed: The Pitfall of powerful individuals

by Abdallah Musa Abdul (penabdul) - www.penabdul.com

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I begin with the Name of Allaah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

Wealth is a necessary requirement for the existence of mankind on the face of earth. Nay, the love for it is inherently built in the psychological make-up of every man. Hardly is there a man that loves poverty or at least glorifies it, everyman wants to live comfortably and to be rich. However, the level of richness, which ranges from contentment to being overtly greedy, depends on individuals. Verily! Man is ungrateful to his Lord; And to that fact he bears witness (by his deeds); And verily, he is violent in the love of wealth." Qur'an 100:6-8

Thus, Allaah Exalted be He, says: "And you love wealth with much love!" Qur'an 89:20 Imam Al-Baghawy in his Tafseer of this verse said (man) loves to amass wealth (in multitudes). This is true for almost everyone except a few whom Allaah has favored with the rare gift of contentment. In another verse, Allaah says: "Beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, Qanatir Al-Muqantarah of gold and silver, branded beautiful horses (Musawwamah), cattle and fertile land. This is the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allaah has the excellent return with Him." Qur'an 3:14.

Consequently, Islam has paid special attention to wealth acquisition and distribution amongst mankind and has set out certain guidelines as to how to go about it. The concept of Halal (lawful, permissible, legitimate) is so embedded in the fabric of any Islamic society that there is hardly a thing that does not pass through the litmus test of it.

Notably, halal (lawful, legitimate, permissible) wealth acquisition is becoming a thing of the past in most human societies and Nigeria is not an exception. Sadly, in such societies it becomes extremely strange and extraordinary when an individual decides not to engage in corrupt practices that bring instant wealth.

Given, the current high profile debate with regard to, the alleged bribery video of the serving governor of Kano state, Nigeria, it is quite surprising that a lot of people are surprised that such things happen. The driving force behind all these is the dark force of greed and lack of gratitude and contentment for what Allaah has done and keeps doing for His creations. As a result of greed and moral decadence, if a highly placed individual who has been entrusted with public



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wealth decides to be trustworthy, he is seen as been backward or under spell. This is the degenerated society that mankind lives in today. Many have succumbed to this societal pressure and their own untamed greed and the result is a disgrace and irreversible regrets.

The sentiment expressed above, has been captured aptly by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in a narration in Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allaah be pleased with him), when he was reported to have said: “If a son of Adam had a valley full of gold, he would desire to have two. Nothing can fill his mouth except the dust (of his grave). Allaah turns with mercy to him who turns to Him in repentance.”

Similarly, in Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said: “By Allaah I do not fear poverty and starvation overtaking you, but I fear that you will have abundant wealth at your disposal as it had been at the disposal of the nations before you. You will then become extremely greedy in accumulating this wealth just as the previous nations had done. This (greed) will be the cause of your ruin and destruction just as it destroyed the people before you”.

In conclusion, it is clear from the above statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that, whoever allows greed to define his journey in life, will be faced with utter ruination and destruction. A lot of people are guilty of abusing the trust given to them; those that have been exposed should serve as a deterrent to those that are yet to be exposed. This should spur us all to repentance before Allaah disgraces us and we will have nothing to be remembered for except an evil legacy. Of central concern therefore, is the rate at which greed is permeating the moral recesses of individuals and societies especially those that have everything at their disposal and need not to add more but yet, are the forerunners of bribery and corruption.

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