



SELF PRAISE

العجب

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 1

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be reminded that all talents and gifts are from Allah (SWT)
- Know that praising oneself is a consequence of pride and is a big sin
- Understand that the feeling superior to others is not a desirable trait
- Understand the negative social consequences of self-pride

Self-Praise

Class Scenario

The teacher entered the classroom and started giving out the test results. The test had been really difficult. "Hayder has scored full marks," she said, "20 out of 20. Well done, Hayder!"

"Wow! That's great!" cried out all the children. They clapped.

Hayder stood up and said, "Thank you teacher." Then he added, "al ḥamdu lillāh".

"Well done, Hayder!". The teacher continued:

All our talents are gifts from Allah(SWT). So let's all say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

"All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds."

GIFTS FROM ALLAH (SWT)

It is Allah (SWT) who has gifted us with eyes to enjoy the blue skies, sunshine, green trees, beautiful birds and creatures! We have a nose to smell flowers and a tongue to taste all the yummy foods and also be able to talk. Our ears enable us to hear and our five senses help us observe and feel our surroundings. We have a body with bones, muscles and flesh to move and work. All these are gifts from Allah(SWT). Above all, He has given us a brain to command all our thinking and actions.

All our talents and gifts are from Allah(SWT). We should say thank you to Him all the time—many times each day! It is Allah (SWT) who has provided us with parents, siblings and friends. He has showered us with so many gifts that we simply cannot count His blessings!

It is natural to feel happy and excited when someone praises our work, or admires our performance and ability. There is nothing wrong with feeling good about this, but we must always remember to thank Allah(SWT) in our heart. It is He who gave us the intelligence and the physical ability to enjoy this talent. We should never think we deserved it or earned it, and we should definitely never act arrogantly.



WHAT IS PRIDE?

Pride is something that makes a person think highly of themselves. It is when a person thinks they are better than others around themselves, and that they have something others do not.

PRIDE IS A SIN

Satan spent thousands of years worshipping Allah (SWT). He was so good that he was allowed to be close to Allah (SWT), among the angels. When Allah(SWT) made Adam (as) and told all in the heaven to prostrate to Adam (as), they all prostrated, except Satan. He refused. He said proudly that he was better than Adam (as) because he had been made from fire and Adam (as) was made from clay.

Satan sinned because of his pride. He considered himself better than Adam (as) and had disobeyed Allah's command. This was the first ever sin committed due to pride. Because of this, Satan was not only thrown out of heaven but he will go to hell and burn there forever!

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an

“And when we said to the angels ‘Prostrate, they all prostrated except Iblis. He refused and was rude with pride; and so he became one of the unbelievers.’”

BOASTING

ⁱPraising ourselves or boasting is a result of pride. Sometimes, because we are proud of a certain talent we think we might have, or a good action we have performed, we cannot help but talk about it to others. We say things like: ‘I’m so good at this!’, or ‘look what I have!’ or ‘I’m better than everyone at this’ or ‘I’m the best looking!’ All these statements are examples of boasting or being praising oneself.

When a person praises themselves, it has a couple of bad effects

- It increases their pride
- It spoils their actions. If they had done something good like prayed an extra prayer, once they praise themselves, Allah (SWT) reduces or takes away the reward for that good action.
- It makes them low in the eyes of Allah because Allah (SWT) does not like those who boast
- It makes people around them not like them. No one likes a boaster. Rather, people like those who are humble

A Story

One day, Prophet Muḥammad was sitting with his companions when a poor man in tattered clothes walked in. He saw an empty spot and sat there. It so happened that this spot was next to a rich man. When the rich man saw this person sit next to him, he gathered his clothes, pulled them up and created a distance between himself and the poor man. It seemed the rich man was feeling uneasy. The prophet noticed this and asked the rich man as to why he acted in such a manner. Did he think that by touching the poor man, he would lose his wealth?

The rich man apologised, and offered to share half his wealth with the poor man he had insulted. The poor man refused the offer. He said:

“I fear the wealth I am offered, may make me also proud. I may become arrogant and belittle my Muslim brothers in the same way this rich man has treated me today.”

The poor man was wise. He did not wish to be in a position that might make him proud or arrogant. He earned the respect of all those who were present there.

OVERCOMING PRIDE

If we do ever feel proud, there are a few things to help us beat this feeling:

- If we are proud of things we are good at, we should also remember that there are some things we are not good at, and so we should not feel too proud
- If we are proud of something good we have done, we should not forget that we have also done bad things, and so we should not feel too proud
- If we feel we are better than someone at something, we should remember that they might be better than us at other things, so we should not act like we are better than them
- If after all this, we still feel proud, we should make sure not to act on it. This means we should not:
 - Act arrogantly towards anyone
 - Praise ourselves
 - Put others down

Review Questions

Q1. We can overcome pride by:

- a. Praising ourselves more
- b. Criticising others
- c. Remembering some of our bad actions

Q2. Praising ourselves or boasting is a result of:

- a. Pride
- b. Humbleness
- c. Self-confidence

REFERENCES:

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