

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرِّ الْغِفَارِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
 اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيهَا يَرَوِيهِ عَنْ رَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنَّهُ قَالَ:
 يَا عِبَادِي إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الظُّلْمَ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَجَعَلْتُهُ بَيْنَكُمْ
 مُحَرَّمًا فَلَا تَظَالَمُوا. يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ ضَالٌّ إِلَّا مَنْ هَدَيْتُهُ
 فَاسْتَهْدُونِي أَهْدِكُمْ. يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ جَائِعٌ إِلَّا مَنْ
 أَطْعَمْتُهُ فَاسْتَطْعِمُونِي أَطْعِمْكُمْ. يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ عَارٍ إِلَّا
 مَنْ كَسَوْتُهُ فَاسْتَكْسُونِي أَكْسِكُمْ. يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّكُمْ مُخْطِئُونَ
 بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَأَنَا أَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا فَاسْتَغْفِرُونِي
 أَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ. يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَبْلُغُوا ضُرِّي فَتَضُرُّونِي
 وَلَنْ تَبْلُغُوا نَفْعِي فَتَنْفَعُونِي. يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ

وَأَخْرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجَنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَىٰ اتَّقَىٰ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ
وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا. يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ
أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَخْرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجَنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَىٰ أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ
رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي شَيْئًا.
يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَخْرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجَنَّكُمْ قَامُوا فِي
صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ فَسَأَلُونِي فَأَعْطَيْتُ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مَسْأَلَتَهُ مَا نَقَصَ
ذَلِكَ مِنِّي إِلَّا كَمَا يَنْقُصُ الْمَخِيطُ إِذَا أُدْخِلَ الْبَحْرَ.
يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ أَحْصَيْهَا لَكُمْ ثُمَّ أَوْفَيْكُمْ بِهَا
فَمَنْ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا
يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ - رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

It was relayed on the authority of Abu Dhar al-Ghifari, (رضي الله عنه), that the Prophet, (ﷺ), said, of what he related from his Lord, magnified and exalted be He, Who said: "O My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another. O My servants, all of you are liable to err except for those whom I guide on the right path, therefore seek guidance from Me so that I should direct you to the right path. O My servants, all of you are hungry (needy) except for those whom I feed, therefore seek food from Me so that I may feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except for those whom I provide garments, therefore seek clothing from Me so that I should clothe you. O My servants, you sin by night and by day and I am there to pardon your sins, therefore seek forgiveness from Me so that I should grant you pardon. O My servants, you can neither do Me any harm nor can you do Me any good. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of Jinns become as pious as the most pious heart of any one amongst you, it will not add anything to My Power or Kingdom. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of Jinns become as wicked as the most wicked heart of anyone amongst you, it will not decrease anything from My Power or Kingdom. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of Jinns gather together on a sector of land and all ask of Me and if I were to give everyone of them what they asked, that will not in any way decrease what I have anymore than a needle decreases what is in the ocean when it is put into it. O My servants, these deeds of yours which I am recording for you I shall reward you for them, so he who finds good should praise Allah and he who finds other than that should not blame anyone but himself." [Muslim]

Background

This hadith stresses on the prohibition of all forms of injustice and oppression in Islam. It commands its followers to practice justice which is one of the main objectives of the Shariah. It also encourages Muslims to seek guidance from Allah by means of supplication (du'a) and relying on Allah alone (Tawakul).

Even though we are commanded to do our best efforts in carrying out our daily activities, one should not be materialistic and rely on his efforts alone. It is only with Allah's permission and support and His tawfiq that our efforts becomes successful. Hence, this hadith confirms certain aspects of al-qadar which have been pointed out before and the choice is Allah's Glory, the all-Gracious and Powerful.

Lessons

As also mentioned in many verses of the Qur'an, Allah subhana wa ta'ala affirms His absolute justice and negates that He has never committed any kind of injustice towards anyone. Some verses of the holy Qur'an in this regards are:

In Surah Fussilat (41), Ayah 46 : "Your Lord is not at all unjust to His slaves"

In Surah al-Zukhruf (43), Ayah 76 : "No wise shall We be unjust to them but it is they who have been unjust to themselves"

In Surah Ghafir (40), Ayah 31 : "And Allah wills no injustice for His slaves"

In Surah al-Imran (3), Ayah 108 : "...and Allah wills no injustice to the world"

In Surah al-Nisa (4), Ayah 40 : "Surely Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom"

In Surah al-Kahf (18), Ayah 49 : "...and your Lord treats no one with injustice"

The forbidden injustices include all forms. The first, the highest level and the most extreme form of injustice is al-shirk or associating partners with Allah. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Verily joining others in worship with Allah is a great form of injustice indeed" [Surah Luqman (31) : Ayah 13]

The second form is unjust towards one ownself such as committing sins. The third form is dhulm or unjust towards others whether human beings or other creatures.

It is a must that a Muslim should avoid injustice as it displeases Allah subhana wa ta'ala and leads to His severe punishment.

Ibn Taymiyyah points out that good and bad may be related to one's worldly life or one's religion. The guidance and forgiveness that are mentioned in the hadith are related to one's religion. Food and clothing are related to one's worldly needs. These are examples of what every one of us needs.

The hadith shows us that humans are always in great need for Allah. We need Allah for everything because we are poor and needy. Allah is the only One Who does not need anybody. He does not need anything from us. He is the Almighty and the Most Powerful. So a Muslim should show his or her need to Allah all the time and should seek Allah's support and Tawfiq in whatever he or she does. That is why we are ordered to do a lot of dhikr all the time because it expresses our needs to Allah subhana wa ta'ala.

It is by the help of Allah that we are able to do things. We are able to move and walk. We are able to sleep and wake up and do all our activities. All our internal bodily systems such as breathing, blood circulation and digestion and so on depend and work on Allah's Will. If any of these functions stop working, no one can bring it back to normal except Allah. So we should always be grateful to Allah subhana wa ta'ala.

Most people remember Allah only when there is a problem. For example, when one of our bodily functions does not work properly (e.g. an injured muscle, a broken finger, etc.), it is only then that we remember the bounties of Allah and what He provided us. But we should not wait until a problem occurs

to be grateful to Allah. We have to be grateful to Him all the time and thank Him for all His Ni'mah on us. This will increase our iman because the more we show our needs to Allah, the more we feel the bounty of Allah. People who are not grateful to Allah are considered arrogant because they do not recognize the bounties of Allah given to them.

Guidance is a great mercy and ni'mah from Allah the Almighty. It is very important for every Muslim to know that the most valuable thing that we have in our life is this guidance. Allah has guided us to the right path or iman and we have to be grateful to Him. This guidance in the form of the Qur'an was revealed to us by Allah through His Messenger, Muhammad, (ﷺ). So we should stick to its guidance and follow its teachings as a guide for us in everything we do in our lives. Our efforts alone cannot guide us. Even though we have our own will and choice, they are not independent. They are under Allah's will and choice and belong to Him. We have aql (mind) but again it is created by Allah. We also have fitrah or the natural disposition but it is also created by Allah and belongs to Him. All these things are created by Allah. Allah showed us the right way to follow and be guided and warn us against Shaitan who is our greatest enemy and cause of our wrongdoings and misguidance. Allah also showed us how to deal with our own desires which He created in us. He told us that we should not be misled by these desires. We have to use them in the right ways.

When it comes to the issue of misguidance, we must know that it is not from the choice of Allah because He does not want us to be misguided. It is from our own will and choice. When someone is misguided it is his or her own attitude and behavior and it is he or she who chooses it to be like that. For example, takabur (arrogance) is one source of misguidance but it is a person's character and attitude which affect the heart and cause misguidance. So when a person chooses to be misguided he or she will be so by his or her own will and not by Allah's misguidance. Allah's misguidance comes later as punishment for the person who chooses to be misguided. But if the person is misguided because of external factors, which is out of his hands, he will be excused. For example, if the person did not receive the message of Islam at all or he received it but not in a clear way, then he will be excused for that misguidance. People who live in periods between two prophets (Ahlul Fatrah) are considered as being in excusable situations because they could not receive the messages of Allah at that period of time.

At the end of the hadith it is mentioned and stressed that whoever finds good record he should be thankful to Allah and praise Him for that, and anyone who finds other than that, which means bad record, he should not blame anyone except himself. This is a clear statement that shows the personal responsibility of one's actions. It is the person's own will and choice and not Allah's. Allah is al-A'dil or Just. He never does injustice to His servants. In the Qur'an, we can find many verses that explain how people blame themselves during the Day of Judgment for not following the right path. It is the people themselves who chose to be misguided and hence they cannot blame any one else but themselves. This is also an important aspect of al-qadar that should be understood.

According to the scholars there are four types of guidance:

1. Guidance needed for the welfare of the worldly life. This type is general guidance for all living beings. They include Muslims and non-Muslims, animals and also other creatures. All are guided by Allah for their worldly well-being.
2. Guidance which benefits mankind in the religious sense. This type is beneficial for life in the Hereafter.
3. Guidance in terms of placing faith and guidance into the heart of a person. This can be done only by Allah, as mentioned in Surah al-Kahf, Ayah 117.
4. Guidance in the Hereafter as stated in Surah Yunus, Ayah 9. This fourth guidance is a result of the second guidance. Those who follow the message of Allah are guided to the right path and will be guided in the Hereafter.

The door of Taubah or repentance is open for all. The acceptance of our repentance is always available. Islam is a practical religion. It acknowledges our weaknesses. People are always subject to wrongdoings. They may neglect or delay performing obligations (wajib) or they may even indulge in sins (ma'asi') but Allah subhana wa ta'ala is Oft-Forgiving and His door is open to all wrongdoers.

We are given the chance to repent and come back to Allah. This is a mercy from Allah. If we truly repent to Allah, our sins will be forgiven and even the bad records will be changed into good ones. Allah is telling us that He is Forgiving, Merciful and Compassionate. He requires us to come to Him and seek His forgiveness. We should know that the door of Allah is open to us all the time. If we do something wrong at night, we should come back to Him in the morning and if we do something wrong in the morning, we should come to seek His forgiveness during the night. We are always encouraged to do istighfar, which means to remember Allah and praise Him by reciting His Dhikr. We should maintain this istighfar regularly, for example, during the morning and evening times. It is also recommended to recite these adhkar after the salah and in some other specific times. We are encouraged to read these dhikr in our hearts.

The hadith shows the generosity of Almighty Allah. Allah gives His servants a lot of bounties and favours. The more they ask Him, the more He gives them His Ni'mah and countless Bounties. He wants us to ask Him more and seek His help and support. This is different from human beings because humans do not like to be asked frequently. The more you ask a human, the more they hate you and eventually will turn away from you. But the more we ask Allah the more He gives us. He wants us to come closer to Him and show Him our needs and humbleness. He will be pleased by our frequent taubah and repentance. This is also a kind of ibadah which is required to be practiced.

The early scholars (al-Salaf) used to ask Allah a lot and always seek His help in everything, even when a part of their shoe is cut they ask Allah to repair it for them. This shows that they were totally relying on Allah subhana wa ta'ala in their lives. We should also depend on Allah alone. We should not depend on our material aspects such as money and wealth as they cannot do anything for us. It is Allah alone Who deserves to be relied on. So every Muslim should be closer to Allah and seek His help and support. This will give us strength in our faith and iman. It will also give us more barakah (blessings) in our deeds and actions as explained in many verses of the Qur'an.

Istighfar is also one way to acquire good rizq or wealth because when we do istighfar we will get barakah in our rizq. It is this barakah or blessing of Allah which makes our wealth more beneficial regardless of how much money we earn. Some people earn a lot of money but there is no barakah in their wealth because they do not do istighfar nor are they grateful to Allah. People should show their need and humbleness to Allah who is the Master and Sustainer of the world.

Conclusion

The hadith shows us the proper relationship between mankind and Allah. It shows us the many attributes of Allah such as being Merciful, Forgiving, Powerful and Compassionate. In contrast, we as human beings are poor, needy and weak. We are in continuous need for Allah, our creator and sustainer. We need His Guidance, Help and Support. That is why in every raka'ah of our salah we are required to recite Umu al-Kitab or Surah al-Fatihah. We recite it at least 17 times everyday. It reminds us of our extreme need for our Lord and His Guidance and Support. Also this will strengthen our faith and iman.

In many verses of the Qur'an and in the hadiths of the Prophet, (ﷺ), it is explained the importance of showing our need and humbleness to Allah and the worthiness of frequent taubah or repentance to Him. He will listen to us and will accept our supplication and repentance. He will be pleased by our du'a and

prayers. He will shower on us His Mercy and Blessings and that is what we continuously need. We want to be guided, supported and forgiven. We seek the pleasure of Allah and it is the most important thing that a Muslim may achieve in life. Those who achieve it are described as Fa'izun or the most successful people.