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**Al-Ghazali's Ihyā 'ulum al-din 'Revival of
the Religious Sciences'.**

**BOOK 29 Warning against arrogance, self-
amazement**

An adapted and abridged translation by Thaqib Mahmood

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The Condemnation of Arrogance

Allah condemns arrogance in His Book, criticising proud individuals. He states: {From My message shall cause to turn away all those who, without any right, behave haughtily on earth ...}. He also says: {.. It is in this way that God sets a seal on every arrogant, self-exalting heart.} And: {And they prayed [to God] that the truth be made to triumph. And [thus it is:] every arrogant enemy of the truth shall be undone [in the life to come] ...}. Additionally, Allah declares: {.. He does not love those who are given to arrogance. He also says: {..} Verily, they who are too proud to worship Me will enter hell, abased!}.

Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said: 'He shall not enter paradise who has in his heart an amount of pride equal to a mustard seed's weight. Nor shall anyone who has in his heart an amount of faith (iman) equal to a mustard seed's weight enter hell.' He, peace be upon him, also said: Allah, exalted is He, states: "Pride is My cloak and majesty is My cover; anyone who contends with Me over either of these I will unreservedly cast into hell."

He, peace be upon him, also narrated that both paradise and hell argued: hell declared, "I am filled with the proud and transgressors," while paradise questioned, "Why is it that only the weak, the oppressed, and the incapable among people enter me?" Allah then addressed paradise, saying, "You are My mercy; through you I show mercy to whomever I will from among My servants."

He told hell: "You are merely My punishment; through you I punish whomever I will. Each of you—paradise and hell—receives its due." He, peace be upon him, also said: The inhabitants of hell are those who are excessively argumentative, gather wealth but do not spend it, or are proud. The inhabitants of paradise are those regarded as weak by others. Abū Bakr as-Siddiq said: 'No one should show contempt for any Muslim, for even the one considered low among Muslims is regarded as important before Allah.'

Key Points - The Condemnation of Arrogance

1. Entering paradise requires humility; even a pride or faith as small as a mustard seed can determine one's fate.
2. Allah's pride and majesty are beyond contestation; challenging them leads to punishment.
3. Paradise and hell debate their roles: hell is filled with the proud and transgressors, while paradise is for the weak and oppressed, emphasising Allah's mercy.

4. The inhabitants of hell are those who argue excessively, hoard wealth without spending, or are proud.
5. The inhabitants of paradise are often considered weak by others, highlighting humility as a virtue.
6. Even the least regarded Muslim holds significance before Allah, underscoring the importance of humility and respect among Muslims.

Condemnation of Haughtiness and the Merit of Humbleness

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: 'Allah will not look at a man who drags his garment out of pride.' He also mentioned: 'A man pleased with himself as he strutted in his outer garment, so Allah caused him to sink into the ground until the Day of Judgement.'

He said: 'Allah will not look at the one who drags his cloak out of pride.' He also explained: 'Allah elevates a servant's honour through forgiveness, and whoever humbles himself before Allah, Allah will raise his rank.'

Furthermore, Allah revealed to Musa that He accepts only the prayer of those who humble themselves before His majesty, do not elevate themselves above others, fear Him, remember Him daily, and refrain from worldly desires for His sake. Al-Fudayl b. 'Iyad said humbleness is submitting to and accepting the truth from anyone, whether a youth or the most ignorant. al-Hasan al-Basri said humbleness is leaving your home and seeing every Muslim as better than yourself.

Muhammad ibn Wasi' called his son and asked, 'Do you know who you are? I bought your mother as a slave for 200 silver coins. May Allah not elevate such a man among Muslims.' Ibrahim al-Nakha' said, 'The time you become the faqih of Küfa is dark.' A man prayed for Abd Allah in al-Mubarak, saying, "May Allah grant you your hopes," but he responded: 'Hope follows gnosis; why not pray for that?'

Key points- Condemnation of Haughtiness and Merit of Humbleness

1. Allah disapproves of a man who drags his garment out of pride, and such a person may sink into the ground until the Day of Judgment.
2. Honour from Allah is achieved through forgiving others, and humility before Allah raises one's rank.
3. Allah accepts only the prayers of those who humble themselves before Him, avoiding arrogance and worldly desires.
4. Humbleness involves submitting to and accepting the truth, regardless of who delivers it.

5. True humility is seen in leaving one's home and considering every Muslim better than oneself.
6. Examples from Islamic figures emphasise humility and the importance of recognising one's status and faults.
7. Hope in spiritual matters is linked to knowledge ('ma'rifa'), not wishful thinking alone.

The Reality and Defect of Arrogance

Pride has two parts: inward (soul) and outward (actions). Inner pride is a trait of the soul, while outward pride shows through limbs. Pride mainly relates to the inner trait, with actions as external signs. It requires someone to compare to and a reason to show it, differentiating it from conceit. Pride is only visible when one perceives themselves superior to others.

They must assign themselves a rank and see others beneath it. Once established, pride arises within them, manifesting as glory ('izza) and presumptuousness (ta'azzum). Commenting on the verse {... in their hearts is nothing but pride ...}, 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas said: "That is a glory they haven't attained," equating pride with glory.

Furthermore, such glory must accompany both inward and outward actions (haughtiness), which are its consequences. These are numerous but known. The flaw of pride is terrible and dangerous. Even virtuous individuals like 'ubbad', 'ulama', ascetics ('zuhhad'), and commoners are hardly immune from it.

The flaw is terrifying because the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'He will not enter paradise who has even an atom's weight of pride in his heart.' Pride blocks entry to paradise by hindering qualities of a true believer. The worst pride is that which prevents seeking knowledge or accepting truth. This explains why the Qur'anic verses condemn arrogance. Allah says: {Enter the gates of hell, to stay therein—what a dreadful place for those who harbour false pride}. {Verily, those too proud to worship Me will cast themselves into hell in shame!} {People who refuse to believe in the hereafter will deny this truth}. {I will turn away from My message all those who are arrogant without cause on earth}.

Key points- The Reality and Defect of Arrogance

1. Pride is divided into inward (soul trait) and outward (actions).
2. Pride is primarily an inner trait, expressed externally through actions.
3. Pride requires a person to compare themselves to others, perceiving superiority.

4. It involves assigning oneself a certain rank and placing others beneath it.
5. Pride manifests within the soul through convictions and is also known as glory ('izza) and presumptuousness (ta'azzum).
6. Pride is linked to a desire for praise, which it seeks to fulfil.
7. It is often accompanied by outward actions (haughtiness), with numerous consequences.
8. The flaw and danger of pride are significant; even virtuous individuals can be affected.
9. The Prophet warned that even a small amount of pride can prevent entry into paradise.
10. Pride acts as a barrier to spiritual and moral growth, such as seeking knowledge or accepting truth.
11. Qur'anic verses condemn pride and arrogance, warning of hell for those who harbour false pride.