

MODULE 4

Class title: Jealousy - part 1 (1st part of a 2 lesson series)

Aim of lesson: To understand the concept of jealousy and its types

Category: Tazkiyah

Class Format: Power Point Presentation

Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(Ta'awwudh) Aoodhubillahi min As Shaytanir Rajeem

(Tasmiyah) Bismillahir Rahm nir Raheem

(Du'a) Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli(Surah

At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28

Slides 1 and 2:

As you can see our topic today is jealousy. What is jealousy in general? Can anybody tell me? Yes?

Student: One person shows anger towards another person at something that person has and he doesn't.

Teacher: Yes. Jealousy or *hasad* – in Arabic - is a serious sickness of the heart and some scholars say it is the root of all diseases of the heart. *Hasad* is among the most destructive emotions or feeling which a person may have towards his fellow human being.

Have you ever heard that phrase “turning green with jealousy”? This emotion is incited when another person has the blessing which you crave for which in turn creates a feeling of anguish in our heart and we become victim of this spiritual disease - jealousy.

When Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was asked who are the best of people? He replied: "the one with a clean heart and truthful tongue." They asked: 'We understand a truthful tongue, but what does a clean heart mean?' he answered: 'It is the heart of one that is pious, pure, and is free of sin, transgressions, hatred and *Hasad*.' [Ibn Majah]

In this class and the next, we will *inshaallah* try to figure out:

- What is jealousy?
- Why do we get jealous in the first place?
- What are its roots and origin?
- Who feeds us the idea of jealousy? Is it our natural, innate behavior to be jealous?

There are two kinds of diseases: one is physical like diarrhea, fever etc while the other is spiritual. Spiritual diseases pollute the heart and mind and are more difficult to get rid of. Thus it

requires vigilance on our part and immediate treatment as soon as symptoms occur otherwise it spreads like cancer or any other fatal physical disease that you know of.

First we need to acknowledge that jealousy is a disease. To burn in agony over someone's blessing is jealousy.

Jealousy is an age old emotion and was incited in the heart of *Iblees* (satan) when he refused to bow before Adam (as). He was jealous that why did Allah (swt) want **him** to show honour to and bow before a lesser being which has not been created from fire? He considered himself superior to Adam (as).

Have you ever heard the story of Cain (*qabeel*) and Abel (*habeel*) which led to the first ever murder committed in history of Mankind?? (Surah Ma'idah Ayat 27 – 32 quoted for reference)

Teacher: Have you heard the story?

Student: They were both supposed to offer a sacrifice to Allah (swt) and *Habeel's* sacrifice was better. Thus, it got accepted by Allah (swt) but *Qabeel's* sacrifice was not accepted which ignited his jealousy and made him kill *Habeel*.

Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَا
وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

And do not covet the thing in which God has made some of you excel others. Unto men is a fortune from that which they have earned, and unto women is a fortune from that which they have earned. [Envy not one another] but ask God of His bounty. Behold! God knows all things. (Surah Al-Nisa 4: verse 32)

It is mentioned in Surah Al Falaq 113: verse 5

“(I seek refuge) from the mischief of the envious one as he practices envy”

Slide 3:

Now the question is what are the usual things that make people jealous?

Student: Looks, other people's accomplishments.

Teacher: Exactly. Prestige or accomplishments.

We are jealous of other peoples' good looks, lovely hair and skin. This is especially true for us girls, unfortunately – rivalry going on in school amongst friends and peers. It is a fact that some

people have been blessed with better looks than others. And unfortunately women tend to get jealous of another woman's good looks.

Slide 4:

Another thing that we tend to be jealous of is wealth. Material things such as a more beautiful house, a fancy car, iPods, iPads and various other "latest" gadgets can cause jealousy.

It is observed that men are generally jealous of material things, better jobs, prestige, fancier homes and cars while women are more jealous of appearance, their children and friendship. Do you agree? Don't you hear mothers boasting "My son's result is better than her daughter's"? Then there are friendships. I hang out with the coolest crowd. I have such a cool social circle – so & so is my friend's dad or my friend is this famous designer. We do this to make others jealous without realizing that we in turn become victims of this disease.

Slide 5:

Then another thing that we tend to be jealous of is clothes. If a friend has a wardrobe full of expensive clothes that makes us indulge in self pity that "why not me?" This leads to jealousy, rivalry and an end to your peace of mind.

Slide 6:

Another thing is popularity which incites jealousy. Is that a reason to be jealous of someone? Does it happen? Some kids at school are more popular than others. Some are in the "IN" group and they know about the latest trends, get invited to parties and are basically part of the "cool crowd". It happens not only in school but in families also. There are certain people whose advice is sought on important occasions such as weddings, engagements etc .They seem to know everything, can talk endlessly on any topic, know all the boutiques and where to get the best bargains, knows how to handle the decorations and everything. So people look up to that person and that person inevitably is more popular due to his extrovert personality.

It happens among siblings also and amongst cousins too. Sometimes you feel that your sister or brother hogs all the attention or that your cousin gets it. How does that make one feel? Put down, left out and jealous. It doesn't happen to all of us all the time but it is not a rare emotion to feel and I am sure all of us have felt it at one time or another in our lives.

Slide 7:

Smartness is another trait that we tend to be jealous of. Some people seem destined to get all A's or are able to come up with the smartest, wittiest answers without much effort. They can be such a pain and tend to incite jealousy.

Now we agree these things are something that we tend to be jealous of. Smartness, popularity, looks, wealth, gadgets and it creates jealousy. When we understand that jealousy is a sickness

which sows its seeds in hearts and if we are not able to diagnose the symptoms in time and are unable to cure it, then it spreads like fire just like any physical disease that we know of. For example in cancer which is a fatal physical disease, bad cells eat up good cells and in the absence of timely treatment, one is eventually destined to die.

In the disease of jealousy if you don't find a cure, what will happen? You won't die but all our good deeds are eaten up by this negative emotion so much so that when a person who burnt in this emotion all through his life finally appears in front of Allah (swt) on the Day of Judgment to account for his deeds, he realizes that he is empty handed... Isn't this fate worse than physical death?

Imagine a trip to a foreign country. How we prepare and wait in advance but what if you reach there and you realize that you have no foreign currency and no one who can help you... what a desperate feeling it is... Now imagine you are standing in front of Allah (swt) at a point of no return, waiting for your result and He asks you to show Him your good deeds but you are empty handed because all your good deeds were eaten up by this wild fire called jealousy. What we need to learn is that how to put out this fire once it starts. It won't be fair to assume that for worldly fires, there are extinguishers but for spiritual fire, we are left on our own? No it is not so.

Slides 8 - 11:

Now how does it initiate?

How does it start? It starts when you start saying phrases like this, how lucky is she! "Why did she get it? Why didn't I get it?" These are phrases that we often find ourselves uttering. "Oh she's so lucky to have such a fabulous house. She's so lucky to have such parents, so liberal, so modern. They never put a curfew on her, oh poor me!"

That happens when we feel we are deprived of something. We think that we are at a loss. Any other phrase you are familiar with?

Student: I wish I was her.

Teacher: Exactly. I wish I had flawless skin like that model. I wish I was a millionaire. Why do I have to go through all this? Why do I have to go to thrift shops? Why me? Poor me poor me... Okay this is all sense of deprivation. You are brooding all the time, thinking about someone else's blessing.

Can you give me an example? It happens to all of us so there is really no shame. We just have to fight it constantly.

Student: When a friend has got the latest version of iPad or a Blackberry.

Teacher: I know... these Black berries and Blue berries are really hot. All these gadgets, Ipad and stuff. Somebody has got the latest version, you feel jealous and are happily indulging in self

pity uttering the above mentioned phrases. Then you have a brain wave and you go to your parents asking for one but they refuse point blank saying that we aren't going to buy you such expensive toys, sorry sweetie maybe next time. And then we are like "My parents are broke. Why do they have to be broke all the time? Why did my father have to lose this job? In this critical junction of my life when I need, really NEED the latest version of Ipad that my friend has???" I can't have decent summer vacations. Everybody is going to Europe. They have seen Disney land so many times why can't I? Why do I have to go to Thailand all the time? I'm so sick of Thailand." So this is poor me, the feeling of self deprivation which is further leading us towards jealousy.

Slide 12:

In the next stage you are locked on to this feeling and can't seem to move on with your life without feeling sorry for yourself a hundred times a day. Sometimes it's the Hardees burger that you haven't tasted yet, sometimes it is someone's looks.

Does it happen that at times you find yourself standing in front of the mirror twisting and turning your nose and saying if my nose was like this or my eyes were like that or my hair shinier...

May be I've exaggerated it a little but we tend to do it to our self but what we need to realize is that the distribution of blessings in this world is not even or unjust. Some are fairer, some are richer etc. Likewise I am also blessed with something so I need to concentrate and utilize those traits instead of overlooking and under estimating them.

Allah (swt) is All Knowing so His decision to bless me with certain traits and not others is fair but we may not realize it at this time. This is difficult to accept but let's say there is a certain shade of lipstick that you like on somebody so you just rush to the cosmetics shop and get that certain shade. Then you apply it and because of your skin color that shade looks totally different on you. Why? Because it wasn't made for your complexion, some other shade would suit you more.

Similarly those who are rich have been given a social responsibility of taking care of the less privileged. Those who are given good looks are not supposed to flaunt it. They have to be responsible in that unlike the general saying that goes "if you've got it flaunt it". You're not supposed to do that. This is a totally western idea which we shouldn't follow.

Everybody has got something so the next time you look in the mirror, do some introspection and figure out what you are blessed with. If I don't look like a certain movie star, does it make me useless?? What am I blessed with? Does it have to be looks all the time? Does it have to be popularity? Don't I have good parents? Don't I go to a good school? Don't I have smartness, height? May be someone has got something at one point of their life and maybe you've got another so when you get logged on to something, change perspective. Don't remain locked on it, move on.

Slide 13:

There are different stages of jealousy. It starts in a very subtle manner and we have already discussed in length that at the initial stage there is a feeling of self deprivation. You overlook your own traits and blessings and when you do that there comes a time when you indulge in self pity and develop inferiority complex. This is the cucumber green phase. Are you doing introspection? This class is all about judging yourself. You have to constantly check that am I at this stage currently or not?? Nobody is going to evaluate you or judge you. You have to do this for your own spiritual well being. If you find yourself at that level, then consider yourself lucky that you are at the stage where you can nip it in the bud. Now is the time to stop or it will move on to the next, more intense level. We shall continue next week as time is up.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *SubhanaRabbikaRabbulIzzati 'ammayasifunwasalamun 'alalmursaleen, walhamdulillahiRabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *AssalamalaikumwarahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*