



# The Misery of Envy (Hassad) Its Origin, Causes and Treatment

#### Introduction: The Growth of Envy under the Western Civilization

It has been observed that wherever the Western civilization has influence, in the Western world or the Muslim World, there is the development of a set of institutions, including social media and large-scale advertising, that create an atmosphere of materialism, in which people feel envious and inadequate, triggering anxiety, sadness and anger. Teachers, doctors and parents alike feel helpless against the rising tide of envy that is afflicting young men and women, as they are miserable over rivalry regarding beauty, status, position, educational achievements and material possessions.

As early on in the dominance of the Western civilization as 1930, in the "The Conquest of Happiness," the Western philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell cautioned, "Of all the characteristics of ordinary human nature envy is the most unfortunate... Whoever wishes to increase human happiness must wish to increase admiration and to diminish envy." Since 1930 thousands of Western psychological studies have shown a surge in envy, particularly amongst the young. However, Western civilization is helpless because it itself is the cause of rising envy, through its commitment to utilitarianism, as a basis for human happiness.

#### Western Utilitarianism is the Origin of Envy, Not Happiness

After separating religion from life through its miserable experience with the Church, the West characterized life as benefit and making utilitarianism the criterion for actions. In his book "Utilitarianism," the Western philosopher John Stuart Mill said, "Virtue, according to the utilitarian conception, is a good of this description. There was no original desire of it, or motive to it, save its conduciveness to pleasure, and especially to protection from pain." However, utilitarianism itself brought new miseries to the Western world, as well as wherever the influence of utilitarianism is strong.

Utilitarianism is the Western conception of life that defines the meaning of happiness as being related to material benefit, hedonism and materialism. Utilitarianism is the origin of increased envy through rivalry in worldly gains, whether in regards to wealth, knowledge, beauty or status. Adopting utilitarianism gave rise to strong feelings of envy, failure, inadequacy, resentment, guilt, despair and self-blame. As Western utilitarianism is itself the cause of envy, its treatment is not to be found within Western civilization. The treatment is not to be found in any branch of Western thinking, such as the foundational models of morals and human behavior within the disciplines of Western psychology, psychoanalysis and psychiatry, because the root is utilitarianism. As the Western mental health care is unable to treat envy effectively, it is then compelled to an excessive dependency on medication to suppress the raging emotions that accompany envy, whether anti-depressants or anxiolytic (anti-anxiety) medication.

However, for the Muslim parent, teacher or doctor, there is no need to seek guidance from the misguided, as the Deen of Islam is a treasure for those who learn from it. The guidance of the Noble Quran and Prophetic Sunnah has identified the various causes of envy, as well as its comprehensive treatment. The Divine Revelation gave rise to centuries of rich scholarship on the subject of envy, within the books of Tasfeer of the Noble Quran, SharH (Explanation) of the aHadeeth and Fiqh related to diseases of the heart (amraaD ul-Qalb). It is the rich Islamic civilization that accurately enlightens humankind regarding the causes of envy, its harm to the envier, its sin and what positive feeling it must be replaced with.

#### The Causes of Envy (Hassad)

Envy (Hassad) means to hope that another person loses the blessing he has been granted. The Islamic civilization further specifies causes of Hassad, including pride, astonishment, rivalry, malice, superiority and enmity.

As for envy through pride (takkabur), the envious man takes pride over the envied man, holding him in contempt for his rise. Allah (swt) said, هُوْ يَا الْقُرْ آنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِنَ الْقَرْ يَتَيْنِ عَظِيمِ (31) "Why has not this Quran sent down to some leading man in either of the two cities? (31) Do they divide the mercy of their Lord?" [TMQ Surah Az-Zukhruf 43:31-32]. It is arrogance that leads to dispute what Allah (swt) has predetermined (qadara) or has imposed as fate (qadaa'). It is the first sin of the heavens, the envy of Iblis, the Shaytan, of Adam (as), when Allah (swt) ordered him to prostrate.

As for envy through astonishment (at'ta'ajab), it is the envy of the one who whispers, 'why him and not me'? Allah (swt) speaks of the astonishment of the kuffar upon seeing Prophets (as) from amongst the men, ﴿اَنَ عَجَيْنَتُمْ أَن جَاءَكُمْ فِكْرٌ مِن رَبِّكُمْ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ الْمِنْذِرَكُمْ وَلِتَتَقُوا وَلَظَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ (الله وَالله عَلَى الله وَالله وَاله وَالله وَ

As for the envy through rivalry (tazaaHum), it is when there are two or more parties competing over one purpose. It is the envy to help in singling out his purpose, by envying the competition. It is the first sin of the earth, when Qabeel (Cain) envied Habeel. It is the envy of two men competing for the same woman in matrimony. It is the jostling between two wives joined in marriage to one man. It is the sibling rivalry between two brothers, jostling for status in the hearts of the parents, leading to envy. It is the envy of the two students for one teacher to gain respect. It is the envy between two doctors in gaining patients to their respective practices. It is even the envy of two alims competing for a following amongst the people, rather than the pleasure of Allah (swt) Alone.

As for superiority (ath'azaz), the envious man greatly dislikes the welfare and good of another, causing him mental anguish. He cannot bear when the person that is envied is bestowed any wealth, power, recognition and honor. So it arises from the instinct of survival, manifesting in the desire for dominance, precedence and superiority. Imam Ghazali said, التعزير المنظم المنالة والمنطبة المنالة والمنطبة المنالة والمنطبة المنالة والمنالة وال

As for enmity ('adaawah), it is the hatred of the one who wishes that the enemy does not have riches and gifts and they go away from him. It includes the envy arising from enmity of the

believers. Allah (swt) said, وَإِذَا نَقُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنًا وَإِذَا خَلُوا عَضُوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ َقُلُ مُوبُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ الْمَدُونِ وَاللّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ َ قُلُ مُوبُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ الْمَدُونِ وَاللّهُ And when they meet you, they say, "We believe." But when they are alone, they bite their fingertips at you in rage. Say, "Die in your rage. Indeed, Allah is Knowing of that within the breasts."" [TMQ Surah Aali Imran 3:118]. Allah said, ﴿ وَنَكُمُ الْحَقُ ﴿ وَنَكُمُ الْحَقُ ﴾ ﴿ وَنَكُمُ الْحَقُ اللّهِ مَا تَبَيّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُ ﴾ (الْحَقَلُ عَنْدِ أَنْفُلِهِم مِن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُ ﴾ (الْحَقُ وَاللّهُ وَلّهُ وَاللّهُ وَ

There are those who afflicted by one cause of envy alone, whilst there are others who are afflicted by all of them. May Allah (swt) secure us in goodness.

#### The Beneficial Knowledge and Beneficial Action Regarding Envy

Envy is a disease of the heart that cannot be cured without knowledge of Islam and acting in the opposite way that envy incites.

Regarding beneficial knowledge, Imam Ghazali says, والعلم النافع لمرض الحسد هو أن تعرف تحقيقا أن العرف والدين بل ينتفع به فيهما ومهما "The beneficial knowledge for the illness of envy is that you know in reality envy is a harm for you in the worlds life and in the Deen and that it there is no harm upon the maHsud (envied) in the worldly life and the Deen, instead he benefits in both of them." Indeed, envy is understood as it is, it will be understood as an enemy and abandoned.

In our Deen, envy consumes the good actions, as if they were wood burnt up by fire. The Prophet said, «إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْحَسَدُ فَإِنَّ الْخَسَدُ يَأْكُلُ الْحَسَدُاتِ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْخَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ فَإِنَّ الْحُسَدُ فَإِنَّ الْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ فَإِنَّ الْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسِدُ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَالَ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ وَالْحَسَدُ و

Allah (swt) determines (qadara) properties and wealth to a person for a certain life-span (ajl) and his Rizq is determined by Allah (swt) Alone. In addition, Allah imposes certain matters and events as fate (qadaa'), that man has no control. It is futile to envy over such matters. Such envy is built on not accepting what Allah (swt) apportioned of wealth and abilities amongst the peoples. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَالَّهُ مِنْ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ﴾ "Or do they envy the people for Allah's bounties?" [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa 4:54] The Prophet (saw) said, الحسد أن يغلب القدر» "Poverty was about to come near kufr and envy was about to overcome predetermination." (Bayhaqi, Shu'b ul Iman). It is indeed futile to dispute with Allah (swt) over His Decision.

The envier even benefits the envied in the Aakhira, gifting him his good deeds. Imam Ghazali said, يالا المحسود ينتفع به في الدين والدنيا فواضح أما منفعته في الدين فهو أنه مظلوم من جهتك لا سيما إذا أخرجك الحسد إلى القول والفعل بالغيبة والقدح فيه وهتك ستره وذكر مساويه فهذه هدايا تهديها إليه أعني أنك بذلك تهدي إليه حسناتك حتى تلقاه يوم القيامة (And as for the envied person benefiting from him in Deen and in this world, it is clear. As for his benefit in religion, he is wronged from your side, especially if envy leads you to words and actions by backbiting, insulting him, exposing him and mentioning his faults. By all of this you will gift him your good deeds until you meet him on the Day of Resurrection deprived, deprived of grace as you were deprived of grace in this world."

As for beneficial action, the envier must force himself to behave correctly in order to rid himself of envy. Imam Ghazali said, وأما العمل النافع فيه فهو أن يحكم الحسد على ما يتقاضاه الحسد من قول وفعل فينبغي النافع فيه فهو أن يحكم الحسد على القدح في محسوده كلف لسانه المدح له والثناء عليه وإن حمله على التكبر عليه ألزم نفسه ألزم نفسه الزيادة في الإنعام عليه ألزم نفسه الزيادة في الإنعام عليه الإنعام عليه الإنعام عليه الإنعام عليه الإنعام عليه المستورة الإنعام عليه وإن بعثه على كف الإنعام عليه الإنعام الإنعام الإنعام عليه الإنعام الإنعام

## The Islamic Ruling Regarding Envy

Envy means to hope that another person loses the blessing he has been granted. Allah (swt) said, ﴿أَمْ يَخْسُدُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَاۤ ءَاتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ﴾ "Or do they envy people for what Allah has given them of His Bounty?" [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa 4:54].

الله Messenger of Allah (saw) said, هُوَ الْ الْعُوا الْ وَكُونُوا الْحُوانَا كَمَا أَمْرَكُمُ "Don't sever relations of kinship, don't bear enmity against one another, don't bear aversion against one another and don't feel envy against the other and live as fellow-brothers as Allah has commanded you." [Muslim]. The Prophet (saw) said, الْخُونُ النَّارَ قَبُلُ الرُّسُتَاقِ بِالْجَهْلِ وَ الْعُلَمَاءُ بِالْحَسِدِ» ("Six persons will enter Hell before accounts are taken each for one sin. A ruler for his oppression, a desert Arab for his tribal partisanship, a rich man for his pride, a trader for his betrayal, a village man for his foolishness and a learned man for his envy." It was narrated that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr said, "It was said to the Messenger of Allah (saw), 'Which of the people is best?' He said, "السَّانِ صَدُوقِ اللِّسَانِ» 'Everyone who is pure of heart and sincere in speech.' They said: 'Sincere in speech, we know what this is, but what is pure of heart?' He (saw) said, "Said فَيْلُ وَلاَ خَلُ وَلاَ خَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلَ وَلاَ خَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ خَلْ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ عَلَ وَلاَ عَلَ وَل

Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمِن شُرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذًا حَسَدَ And from the evil of the envier, when he envies" [TMQ Surah Al-Hassad 113:5].

والحسد مذموم، وصاحبه مغموم، وهو يأكل الحسنات, الحسنات الله العساء، وأول ذنب عصبي به في الأرض، فأما في السماء فحسد إبليس كما تأكل النار الحطب... ويقال: الحسد أول ذنب عصبي الله به في السماء، وأول ذنب عصبي به في الأرض، فأما في السماء فحسد إبليس كما تأكل النار الحطب... ويقال: الحسد أول ذنب عصبي الله به في السماء وأول ذنب عصبي به في الأرض، فأما في الأرض فحسد قابيل لهابيل الهابيل "And envy is reprehensible, whilst the envier is distressed and it eats good deeds as fire eats wood... It is said: envy is the first sin with which Allah was disobeyed in the heavens and the first sin with which He (swt) was disobeyed in the earth. As for the heavens, Iblis envied Adam (as), whilst on the earth Qabeel (Cain) envied Habeel (Able)."

انَّ الله جمع الشرور في ,Imam al-Husayn bin al-Fadl (died 282 AH) commented on the same ayah, إنَّ الله جمع الشرور في "Allah gathered the evils in this verse and concluded them with envy to make known that it is the lowest of natures."

الشيطان هو النهاية في الأشخاص المذمومة، بالشيطان هو النهاية في الأشخاص المذمومة، Satan is the worst of ولهذا السبب ختم الله مجامع الشرور الإنسانية بالحسد، وهو قوله: وَمِن شَرّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ reprehensible persons. For this reason, Allah (swt) concluded the collection of human evils with envy, in His saying: And from the evil of the envier when he envies."

وقيل: إنَّ هذه الآية تابعةٌ في المعنى لما , المعنى لما (104 وعيره) وأنهم لا يودُّون أن ينزل على المؤمنين خيرٌ ، ويودُّون تقدَّم من نَهْي اللهِ عزَّ وجلَّ عن متابعة أقوال اليهود في: رَاعِنَا [البقرة: 104] وغيره، وأنهم لا يودُّون أن ينزل على المؤمنين خيرٌ ، ويودُّون تقدَّم من نَهْي اللهِ عزَّ وجلًا عن متابعة أقوال اليهود في: رَاعِنَا [البقرة: 104] وغيره، وأنهم لا يودُّون أن ينزل على المؤمنين خيرٌ ، ويودُّون أن ينزل على المؤمنين خيرٌ ، ويودُون أن ينزل على المؤمنين أبي أن يودُ ويودُون أن ينزل على المؤمنين أبي أن يودُون أن يودُّ أن ينزل على أبود ألل المؤمنين أل على أبود ألل المؤمنين أله ألم أ

The Hanifi Ottoman Imam, Mehmed Ebüssuûd Efendi, commented on the same ayah saying, هو شرُّ الرذائل وأقبحها "it is beneficial to move on from reprimanding them for the aforementioned, to rebuking them with envy, which is the worst and ugliest of vices."

Indeed, it is forbidden to hope for the loss of the blessing of another, whilst envy leads to other forbidden acts, such as backbiting (gheebah), spreading calumnies (nameemah), lying, cutting relations, withholding rights and even causing physical harm.

## Hassad (envy) is to be Replaced by Ghibtah and Competition over Good Deeds

As for hope that one has the like of something as another has, this is ghibtah and this is allowed. In the language, ghibtah is غير أن يتمنّى زوالَها عنه "For a person to wish for a favor similar to the favored one, without wishing for it to be removed from him." The Prophet (saw) said, «إِنَّ المؤمنَ يغبطُ والمنافقَ يحسِدُ» "A believer has ghibtah but a hypocrite envies." (طبقات الشافعية الكبرى) Tabaqaat Shafiyyah al-Kubra). It is an effort towards further progress and advancement.

As for competition in good actions, Islam encourages such competition amongst the Muslims. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَفِي ذُلِكَ قُلْيَتَافُسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ﴾ "So in this let the competitors, compete." [TMQ Surah Al-Mutafifoon 83:26]. The verb and the noun are of the masdar of munaafisah (competition). Those who compete are like two servants who both try to please their master and hope to be ahead of the other in this matter, whilst their master is generous in his bounty, such that neither competitor is deprived.

«لَا حَسنَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَتَيْن رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَسُلِّطَ عَلَى هَلْكَتِهِ فِي الْحَقّ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْحِكْمَةَ فَهُو , The Prophet (saw) said, هِلَا حَسنَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَتَيْن رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَسُلِّطَ عَلَى هَلْكَتِهِ فِي الْحَقّ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْحِكْمَةَ فَهُو Do not envy except in two cases. The first is a person, whom Allah has "يُقْضَى بِهَا وَيُعَلِّمُهَا» given wealth and he spends it righteously; the second is the one whom Allah has given wisdom (of Deen) and he acts according to it and teaches it to others." [Bukhari]. Abu قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ «مَثَلُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ كَمَثَل أَرْبَعَةِ نَفَر رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا وَعِلْمًا ,Kabshah Al-Anmari narrated فَهُوَ يَعْمَلُ بِعِلْمِهِ فِي مَالِهِ يُنْفِقُهُ فِي حَقِّهِ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ عِلْمًا وَلَمْ يُؤنِّيهِ مَالًا فَهُوَ يَقُولُ لَوْ كَأَنَ لِي مِثْلُ هَذَا عَمِلْتُ فِيهِ مِثْلَ الَّذِي يَعْمَلُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَهُمَا فِي الْأَجْرِ سَوَاءٌ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا وَلَمْ يُؤْتِهِ عِلْمًا فَهُوَ يَخْبِطُ فِي مَالِهِ يُنْفِقُهُ فِي غَيْرٍ حَقَّهِ وَرَجُلٌ لَمْ يُؤْتِهِ اللَّهُ عِلْمًا وَلَا مَالًا فَهُوَ يَقُولُ لَوْ كَانَ لِيَ مِثْلُ هَذَا عَمِلْتُ فِيهِ مِثْلَ الَّذِي يَعْمَلُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَهُمَا فِي الْوِزْرِ "The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, 'The likeness of this Ummah is that of four men: A man to whom Allah gives wealth and knowledge, so he acts according to his knowledge with regard to his wealth, spending it as it should be spent; a man to whom Allah gives knowledge, but he does not give him wealth, so he says, "If I had been given (wealth) like this one, I would have done what (the first man) did." The Messenger of Allah (saw) said. 'These two will be equal in reward. And then there is a man to whom Allah gives wealth but does not give knowledge, so he squanders his wealth and spends it in inappropriate ways; and a man to whom Allah gives neither knowledge nor wealth, and he says: "If I had (wealth) like this one, I would do what (the third man) did." The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, 'They are equal in their burden (of sin)." [Ibn Majah]

Conclusion: The Khilafah Alone Will End the Global Influence of Utilitarianism and its Bitter Fruits, Such as Envy

Allah (swt) said, ﴿ الْمُعْالِمُ النَّعَاشُرُ (1) حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمُقَابِرَ "Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you (1) Until you visit the graveyards." [TMQ Surah At-Takathur 102:1-2]. After the destruction of the Khilafah on 3 March 1924, 28 Rajab 1342 AH, the world is burdened by the Western civilization and its materialistic outlook towards value, morals and purpose. It has led to great misery and suffering for humankind, through narrowing vision to the temporary worldly life. It is the Khilafah (Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood that will generate media, social media and education upon the noblest rivalry for humankind, which is competition for the pleasure of Allah (swt), Whose favors know no limits. Allah (swt) says, ﴿ السَّمُ عَوْرَةٌ مِن رَبِّكُمْ وَجَدَّةٌ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضٍ اللَّهُ وَرُسُلُامِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدِّتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلُامِ وَلَامُ وَلَامِ وَلَامُ وَلَالْمِ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامِ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلُومُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامِ وَلَامُ وَلُومُ وَلُومُ وَلُومُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلُومُ وَلُومُ وَلُومُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَامُ وَلَ

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