**Signs of a hypocrite**

When there is s serious disease outbreak, warnings are given out. And people are given any means possible and they are reminded over and over again that you need to be careful, this is a dangerous disease. If you have the following symptoms, go see a physician. And there are alerts everywhere. I remember recently, because I used to travel a lot, when the bird flu and swine flu was going around, at airports they had free hand sanitizers and extra alerts and if you are sneezing, don’t travel and this and that. Depending on how serious a disease is, the more panicked a society gets and rightfully so. And if the disease is life threatening then it’s more serious. Sometimes schools are shut down, and people don’t go to work, and even if they don’t have those symptoms/ if they don’t actually have that disease but they have even the most minor instances of that symptom, people start thinking maybe they have it. And they start citing with caution. They get extra careful because *I don’t want to take any chances, you know, maybe this is just a cold or maybe this is that crazy deadly disease that they are talking about all the time all over the place.* And obviously this is a natural response in any society.

I wanted to introduce this khutbah this way because I want to talk to you about a disease and this is a disease believers should be reminded of all the time. And it’s a serious disease.

You know in medical terminology like they say some of the most serious conditions you can have is a heart condition. Well, the disease I want to talk to you about is actually a heart disease and the Quranic term for it is “Nifaaq”. You commonly may have heard the term ‘hypocrisy”. Hypocrisy—it’s a disease and it’s a very serious disease.

For any disease you have pathology. First of all what are the consequences? So what if somebody has hypocrisy? How bad can it be? What are the consequences of this disease? Well first let’s take a quick look at the consequences.

Allah (SWT) tells us in the Quran, “**The hypocrites, they are in the lowest pit of Hellfire.”**

The lower the hellfire gets, the tougher it gets. The lowest pit possible in Hellfire is reserved for al-munaafiqoon—the hypocrites.

Then on top of that, how serious this disease is and how if somebody reaches the terminal stages? You know when there are the early stages of a disease you can go get treatment but if it gets to a point of no return, if the disease reaches a point of no return then you can’t be helped. No matter how good the treatment, no matter how expensive the hospital or the doctor or how advanced the equipment this person can’t be helped.

A good friend of mine is a physician. He actually works in the ER; he sees a lot of like people close to death. So one time they had this young man who got into a car accident, he belonged to a very wealthy family. Non-Muslims. They came by private jet from all over the country and they are trying to tell them *we don’t care how much money it takes, you need to save his life*. And he got to a certain point where basically he was practically dead and he said no amount of money can save him now. That’s beyond us now. This is beyond the attempt of human beings. Now I want to bring that parallel back to hypocrisy.

What is the cure? What is the remedy? You know one of the great gifts in this Deen is that the Messenger (SAW) would make dua for a person. You know how sometimes you go to the imaam; you ask him could you please make dua for me? Or you go ask the elder could you make dua for me. When somebody is travelling you say could you make dua for me because the dua of the traveler is accepted. When somebody is going to Hajj you make sure you call them and say make sure you make dua for me. And they ask you any special dua you want me to make for you because I am going there?

Now imagine if the Messenger (SAW) himself is making dua for someone. I would think that would count for a lot. But Allah tells His Messenger (SAW) twice in the Quran:

**It is all the same for them whether you ask forgiveness for them or do not ask forgiveness for them; never will Allah forgive them.** (Quran; Surah al-Munaafiqoon, ayah 6)

These people have reached a point of no return in their hypocrisy. It would be the same for them whether you made istaghfar for them or you didn’t make istaghfar for them. Meaning if you asked Allah to forgive them, Allah is telling His Messenger (SAW) if you asked Allah to forgive them or you never asked, it wouldn’t make a difference. Allah wouldn’t forgive them. Allah would not forgive these people. How serious is this disease even the Messengers (SAW) dua doesn’t make a difference!

And in another place in the Quran Allah says, **“If you should ask forgiveness for them seventy times - never will Allah forgive them.”** (Quran; Surah at-Tawbah, ayah 80)

That’s a pretty serious disease! And look at the mercy of our Messenger (SAW)! When the ayah is revealed, he said then I will ask more than seventy times. He is that concerned for his ummah. But nonetheless the declaration of Allah in its absolute form that these people are beyond help even if the Messenger himself was going to make dua specifically for them, even that wouldn’t be enough. This is how serious the disease is!

When somebody realizes that’s a serious disease, the next thing they want to know is *do I have it or not*. *Do I have this sickness or not?* *And what do I need to look for*? In any disease, you look for symptoms. You look for signs in yourself. And these symptoms are not for you to look in anybody else first. Where are you supposed to look? For yourself.

The only person who doesn’t look into themselves is the person who is sure that they can never catch it. They could never possibly get this sickness. It doesn’t catch people like them, it catches others. But the thing about Nifaaq is, the Messenger (SAW) himself gave us a principle about our attitude towards hypocrisy. He said, **“Nobody feels safe from it except a hypocrite and nobody is afraid of it except the believer”**. So if a person thinks they don’t have it, that’s a pretty good sign that they do. If a person is really sure that they have no ounce of hypocrisy in them that in itself seals the deal that they in fact do have hypocrisy. And another benefit of this hadith is that you stop being concerned about the hypocrisy of others. You become more than anything else concerned about the hypocrisy of yourself. And if you find yourself concerned with the hypocrisy of others that in itself is a pretty serious sign. That’s a pretty major sign that you are not as concerned as you need to be about yourself. And I am not as concerned as I need to be about myself.

Some ulema count more than 70 signs, some count more than a hundred signs, and some of the more restricted lists I have seen are like 30 signs of a munaafiq, forty signs of a munaafiq. If I gave you forty signs of a munaafiq chances are you won’t even remember two. So what I have decided to do in this khutbah is to at least leave you with no more than six. And if you can remember three or four of them, Insha’Allah it’s of benefit. Four of them, they come from a hadith of the Prophet (SAW) and two of them come from a couple of ayaat in the Quran. Actually the same ayah in Surat at-Taubah. The ones I want to share with you.

So I will start off with you the hadith of Prophet (SAW). In other narration of this hadith there are four, in one narration there are three signs of a hypocrite. So let’s just try and remember them Insha’Allah for our own benefit.

He says “**Whenever he speaks, he lies”.** Ifhe speaks there is some element of a lie in it. Whether this lie is to impress someone or to get out of trouble or to make someone happy or out of fear. You know people lie for different reasons.

You get late to work; your boss says why are you late. The real reason is you overslept but you don’t want to tell him that so you say traffic was pretty bad. You think that’s not a big deal. It is a little lie, not a big deal.

You are at home playing video game or browsing something and your dad walks by and he says what are you doing, you alt-tab immediately “aaah…homework”. It’s a little lie; not a big deal. Doesn’t hurt much.

When he speaks he doesn’t think twice that the fact I am lying is something major. It’s not something small. When you lie a lot, you know what happens? It’s not a big deal to you anymore. You don’t even realize that you are doing it. It just becomes part of your speech. You don’t even think twice about it.

Somebody is calling you on the phone and you don’t want to talk to them. You would rather finish watching the movie so you let them go to voicemail then you send them a text message “in a meeting, will call you back later”. Small small lies! Not a big deal! You would think it’s not a big deal.

But as far as this hadith of the prophet (SAW) is concerned, these little things, they can add up. And they can turn into a sign of hypocrisy.

Now there are some instances in which obviously there are exceptions. There are exceptions in which even the Messenger (SAW) has advised us to make the exception and this is when there is no harm. One instance I want to share with you—Your wife made a meal for you. You take the first bite and it’s the taste of death. And she asks you immediately “how is it”. At that point it’s not okay for you to say “it reminds me of the Day of Judgment”. You just say it’s good, Alhamdulillah. You can stay safe. The safest answer in that situation is to say ‘Alhamdulillah” because that could go either way. The idea is that you don’t have to lie but you can avoid hurting people’s feelings in certain situations. But you know yourself very very well. When is it that you are using lying as a shield and when is it you are doing it for something good. You know that very well yourself. But this hadith is talking about people that are trying to protect themselves. They are trying to save their own skin. They are trying to get away from some obligation or get out of trouble or make someone happy for unfair reasons. **Whenever he speaks, he lies** is the first (sign).

He says the second sign of a hypocrite**—When he is argued/ debated/ disagreed with, he explodes.** We get into disagreements all the time. You can get into disagreements about little things or big things. People get into disagreement about which phone service is better or which new device is a better product. Should you go pc or should you go Mac. Should you buy Japanese, American or German? But when you get into any discussion, any argument, whether it may have to do with something trivial or it may have to do with business or family, it may have to do with how you spend your time, whatever it may be if it takes very little for you to explode and become overly angry, this in itself is a sign of hypocrisy. **When he is argued/ debated/ disagreed with, he explodes.** Literally explodes.

People are afraid to talk to him because he is like a walking time bomb. He could explode at any time. People know about this person—*this guy or that one, he has got a temper or she has got a temper. I try to avoid talking to them because you never know when it’s going to go off. I wouldn’t want to be on their bad side.*

This is a second sign. And here specifically I want to highlight something. If you study the attitude of hypocrites in the time of prophet (SAW), you learn some things. And one of things you learn is, you know when they would get the most offended? When something was said to them that was supposed to be good advice. The hypocrite thinks of good advice as an insult. So when good advice is been given, the hypocrite thinks *this guy is judging me,* *he is trying to criticize me in public, he is trying to humiliate me, I am not going to take that from him.* Instead of taking it as good advice, the first thought that goes in the mind of a hypocrite is *why is he talking to me like that! Who are you to talk to me like that? Why should I take your advice? Who do you think you are?* Those are the defenses that go up inside of the mind of a hypocrite. And this kind of a paranoia that Allah talks about often in the Quran especially in Surat al-Munaafiqoon would be I am talking about somebody who lies or somebody who explodes in anger. Maybe one of you knows me and you are thinking *why is he looking at me like that? Is he giving this khutbah about me? Because I think it’s about me because he keeps giving me that dirty look*. I am not giving any of you a dirty look but if you have that paranoia, there is a problem. That in itself is an indication. Now there is two ways of thinking about that. I want to be clear for you. On the one hand if you are paranoid that I know you, and I am onto you and I am talking to you specifically, that’s a problem. But if you take the advice that’s been given, I for myself and for you and you say *you know what? What he is saying applies to me too and I should take it into consideration.* Now that’s a good thing. That’s a good thing. So the second (sign) is **when he is argued/ debated/ disagreed with, he explodes.**

He (SAW) says the third sign—**Whenever he is entrusted with something, he violates that trust.** You are trusted to do your job right. You are trusted to show up on time and leave on time. You are trusted to take a 30 minute break from work. You are trusted to pay the money back at a certain time. You are trusted to give your employees check on time. You are trusted with things around the house, you are trusted with things at your work, at your business, you are trusted with things within the family, you are trusted with things.

There is a trust between a student and a teacher. There is a trust between an employer and employee. But as soon as you see nobody is watching over my back, you *decide I don’t have to take it that seriously’. ‘Yes, I have been entrusted with it, but since nobody is watching over me all the time*..The moment the security camera is off or my boss is not there*, maybe today instead of a 30 minute break how about a 45 minute break? No big deal. Nobody is going to know. Nobody is going to find out*. You know why they have punch clocks in offices, right? Because people can’t be trusted. If we really were Muslims, and all the employees in the company were true Muslims, we wouldn’t have punch clocks. There wouldn’t be any need to keep record—when did you come in, when did you go cause people keep their word. When they are trusted with something, they do it. But unfortunately we are not living in times like that. When something is asked of you and you are entrusted with something, you don’t take it seriously. And that’s a major sign of hypocrisy.

And finally **He makes a promise; he goes back on his promise.** One thing is to be trusted with something; the other is you go out of your way and tell someone you are going to do something. You promise them. Now going back on the promise means two things; 1, it means he doesn’t fulfill it; this person makes a promise ‘I will see you’ but doesn’t see you. ‘I will call you’ but doesn’t call you. ‘I will show up’ but he doesn’t show up etc. This is a problem. The second part of that is *‘I never promised you, what are you talking about?/ no no I don’t owe you anything/ I didn’t promise you that/ you must have heard me wrong.’* Right? You conveniently forget or you make sure the other person must have made a mistake because you couldn’t possibly have made that kind of an obligation or that kind of a commitment.

Four serious signs of a hypocrite in this one hadith of the prophet (SAW). Actually the beginning of this hadith is “these four things, whoever has them then you know they are a hypocrite”.

And this is not for you to find in somebody else. Once again I remind you don’t be thinking in your head *‘you know I can think of this one guy, he could really use this khutbah. Cause I think he has got all four.’* You are not supposed to be thinking about anybody else. You are supposed to be thinking about yourself. The moment you are thinking about anybody else, know that that’s a bigger problem than all of these because you are not concerned about yourself.

So, whenever he speaks, he lies. When he is argued with, he explodes. When he is entrusted with something, he violates that trust. And when he promises, he goes back on the promise. Four signs.

And now we will talk about the two signs I wanted to mention to you from the Quran.

Allah (SWT) says, **“They don’t even come to the prayer except that they are lazy.”** In this ayah there is so many gems, so many treasures in this part of the ayah. Allah didn’t even say they establish the prayer. You know about the believers what Allah says all the time? They establish the prayer. He says they (munaafiqoon) don’t even come to the prayer except that they are lazy. What the ayah is telling us is that even the hypocrite comes to the prayer but what Allah is criticizing is not that he comes to the prayer but he comes to it lazily. The way in which he comes to the prayer is lazily, *‘omg! Salat time again! / It’s cold! I got to do wudhu again! I just put my socks on*’. You know, it’s like a nuisance for you. It is like its getting in your way. You have other things to do with your schedule and it’s kind of this unscheduled stop in your day. And some of you are not used to praying. Some of you don’t pray regularly and you end up by the qadr of Allah in the company of others who are regular in their prayer and you are together hanging out and somebody says ‘its salat time’ and the first feeling that goes through you is discomfort*, ‘omg! I gotta pray now with these guys because if I don’t pray they are going to be like ‘why you are not praying’*. And there is this laziness that takes over you on the inside. That’s a pretty serious sign of the munaafiq.

We are supposed to be zealous towards the prayer and the attitude Allah gives us, you know if you think of your day like a calendar. Allah (SWT) says the prayer has been declared over the believers as a law that keeps their time. In other words the calendar of a Muslim is based on the salah*. ‘I will see you at ASR time/ I will see you right before zuhr time, we will pray together/ let’s have a meeting after Maghreb’*. Our calendar is salat. Our schedule is salat; all the other activities we do are secondary. They can move. Like in a house, my teacher used to give the example, you have pillars. You can move the furniture, what can you never move? The pillars. You can move all the other things in your day; the thing you cannot move is salat.

And the final sign, the sixth sign that I wanted to share with you today is: **They don’t spend except that they regret it.** The ayah here refers to spending for the sake of Allah, that’s the primary meaning. Giving sadaqa, giving the obligatory and beyond. There is sadaqa and of course there is the obligatory i.e., zakat. Nothing comes out of their pockets for the sake of Allah except that they think twice about it, and in their mind they run the entire accounting*. This money could have gone there there there!* You know, when the call is being made to give something for the sake of Allah the first thing that goes in your mind is *Man! What about the groceries this week! Electricity bill! I haven’t paid the car insurance for the next six months! Tuition for college! The house payment!* This and that! All of a sudden you become a CPA— the moment you have to write a check for the sake of Allah. But when you go to wall mart, and you start throwing things in your shopping cart you don’t think twice. When you go to game stop and you are buying video game you don’t think twice! You think about college tuition! None of that goes through your head. *It’s all good; I will take care of it. It will work itself out, I got this.* When you are leaving extra tip for the waiter at the restaurant, it’s all good. When it comes to giving in the sake of Allah, immediately shaitan comes. Immediately he comes and he tells *you listen! You need to think about this man! You need this money! You could be doing so much more with it.*

So Allah tells us in Surat Al-Baqarah “**shaitan promises you poverty”.** When you are thinking about losing your money when you give for the sake of Allah then you should know that shaitan had worked. And the hypocrite has developed that attitude so much; they don’t even think its shaitan. They think it’s themselves. The use of the noun (in the ayah) suggests that they (hypocrites) are always like that. Never comes a time in their life that they have to give for the sake of Allah and they don’t think twice. They don’t like it. And even after they give it they are like *Man! I wish I could just somehow cancel the payment.* You know the regret is going on afterwards! SubhaanAllah!

These are six pretty serious signs of a munaafiq. In the beginning I told you the consequences of this disease, right? I told you they are in the lowest pit of the fire and even the prophet (SAW) asking for forgiveness wouldn’t be enough for them. But in the end I want to leave you with one of the other consequences of hypocrisy that doesn’t happen in the Aakhirah, it happens in the duniya. It doesn’t happen in the next life, it happens in this life. This is something Allah tells to His Messenger (SAW) in Surat At-Taubah.

Allah says, **“Don’t be impressed with their money and don’t be impressed with their kids.”** Because for a hypocrite, all they figure is *I am going to keep this money for what? For myself, building my assets, and I am going to put my kids to a good school, I am going to give them a good career etc.* It’s not bad to take care of your kids but when you only worry about the duniya of your kids and the thought never crossed your mind that I should be giving these children, like Ibraheem (AS) gave his children some concern about where they are going to end up, how they are going to raise a family of their own, an ethical character. *I just need to give them a good education.* Allah says about them don’t be impressed with them. “**Allah only intends to torture them by means of it.”** By means of what? Their money and their children. Torture them by means of their money and their children in this world.

I have met people. They came to this country, good Muslims. When they came to this country, the doors of the haraam are wide open and the halaal option is really small and it’s far away. So they chose to make some compromises in their life. And they chose to become people that don’t care too much about salat and they don’t care too much about giving. And they just became self-indulged. And then they became very successful in their businesses. They put their kids to very good colleges. And you know what? These are the same people sitting in the audience, sometimes they are crying. Because they are saying *what have I done with my kids. They don’t even talk to me! Forget talking to Allah, they don’t even talk to me. I gave my life for them! I worked in grocery stores, I drove a cab and I did all this stuff for them! The only thing I didn’t give them is Deen and look what happened! Now that same money that I exhausted my youth to save for them, the money has become a source of torture and they have become a source of torture for me! That’s all they have become!*

This is the punishment of Allah in this duniya. I have seen it with so many people. That sadness in their eyes when they talk about their children. Wallahi! Wealthy families! Alhamdulillah, I am grateful that I have the opportunity to go to many communities across the country. I meet these people. They are so wealthy. They are so well-off. Their children went to the best schools. They are lawyers and engineers and doctors. They are working in high branches of government etc. and yet they say, *my son, you know,* *he doesn’t talk to me. What should I do?* And if you just sit there and ask how are you raising your children? What kind of life were you living? When did you start coming to the masjid to begin with? Even for jumuah? You will find some really interesting answers. And people don’t make the connection. Many of you sitting in the audience are young and your children are young. This issue of not living a life of hypocrisy is not just important for you. It leaves a legacy for generations to come. Understand that. This is a very serious matter for all of us. Islam is not automatic over here. It’s not auto-pilot. We have to actively keep it alive. This is a country where Islam is being pulled away from us all the time. So you have to be extra involved. It’s not like when you were living back home. Where you say *it’s all good, we are living in a Muslim country. The next generation will be Muslim so what’s the big deal?* No no, it’s not like that. We have to become very aware Muslims. And we have to raise very aware Muslim children.

May Allah help us recognize and fight the causes of hypocrisy. May Allah give us the ability to strengthen our imaan and remove this disease from our hearts. And may Allah not raise us on judgment Day among those who were hypocrites.