

## ‘Istidraaj’

### Deceptive Blessings

عباد الله، سُنُّنُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فِي خَلْقِهِ لَا تَتَبَدَّلُ، وَأَثَارُهَا لَا تَتَقَدَّمُ وَلَا تَتَأَخَّرُ؛ لَقَدْ سَنَّ اللَّهُ - عز وجل- في هذا الكون سُنَنًا لَا تَتَغَيَّرُ وَلَا تَحِيدُ، سُنَنًا لَا تُحَاطِي أَحَدًا سِوَاءَ كَانِ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ أَمْ الْكَافِرِينَ، سُنَنًا فِي الْبَلَاءِ وَالْإِبْتِلَاءِ، سُنَنًا فِي التَّمَحِيصِ، وَسُنَنًا فِي الْإِمْلَاءِ وَالِاسْتِدْرَاجِ، وَمِنْ سُنَنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فِي عِبَادِهِ: اسْتِدْرَاجُهُمْ بِالنِّعَمِ، وَإِنْدَارُهُمْ بِالنُّذْرِ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَهُمْ بِالنِّقَمِ، وَقَدْ دَلَّ عَلَى هَذِهِ السُّنَّةِ الرَّبَّانِيَّةِ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ \* وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ﴾ [الْأَعْرَافُ: 182-183]، وَفِي آيَةٍ أُخْرَى: ﴿قَدْ زُرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَذِّبْ بِهِذَا الْحَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ \* وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ﴾ [الْقَلَمُ: 44-45]

فَالِاسْتِدْرَاجُ هُوَ الْأَخْذُ بِالنَّدْرِجِ، فَكُلَّمَا أَذْنَبَ الْعَبْدُ زَادَهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ النِّعَمِ، وَأَنْسَاهُ التَّوْبَةَ، فَيُذْنِبُهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ قَلِيلًا قَلِيلًا، ثُمَّ يَصْبِهِ عَلَيْهِ صَبًّا...

وَالِاسْتِدْرَاجُ الرَّبَّانِيُّ لِلْبَشَرِ يَقَعُ لِلْأَفْرَادِ وَلِلْأُمَمِ، وَقَدْ يَكُونُ نِعْمَةً إِذَا أَعْقَبَهُ تَوْبَةً، وَقَدْ يَكُونُ نِقْمَةً إِذَا خْتِمَ بِعَذَابٍ وَهَلَاكِ، وَلِلَّهِ تَعَالَى الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ، وَلَهُ الْحِكْمَةُ الْبَاهِرَةُ فِيهِمْ حِينَ يَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ بِنِعْمِهِ، فَقَدْ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمُ النُّذْرُ، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ لَهُمْ عُذْرٌ...

وَيَكُونُ الْإِسْتِدْرَاجُ لِلْكَفَّارِ: فَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا مُسْتَدْرِجُونَ بِالنِّعَمِ لِعَذَابِ الْآخِرَةِ ﴿وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ﴾

وَيَكُونُ الْإِسْتِدْرَاجُ لِلظَّالِمَةِ: وَالْكَفْرُ أَعْظَمُ الظُّلْمِ، وَقَدْ يُسْتَدْرِجُ مَنْ بَغَى عَلَى النَّاسِ وَبَخَسَهُمْ حُقُوقَهُمْ، فَلَا يُعْجَلُ عِقَابُهُ اسْتِدْرَاجًا مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَهُ ﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهُ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ﴾ وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيُمْلِي لِلظَّالِمِ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَهُ لَمْ يُفْلِتْهُ»...

وَيَكُونُ الْإِسْتِدْرَاجُ لِلْمُنَافِقِينَ: كَمَا فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ﴿فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ﴾ [التَّوْبَةُ: 55]

وَيَكُونُ الاسْتِدْرَاجُ لِأَهْلِ الْفُسُوقِ وَالْمَعَاصِي وَالْفُجُورِ: كَمَا فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿ أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ \* ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ \* مَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُمَتَّعُونَ ﴾ [الشُّعَرَاءُ: 205-207]، وَعَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ يُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ اسْتِدْرَاجٌ، ثُمَّ تَلَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ﴿ فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴾ [الْأَنْعَامُ: 44]» رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ

All praise is due to Allah; we praise Him, seek His help, and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Him from the evils of our souls and the consequences of our deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can misguide; whomever He allows to stray, none can guide. To proceed... O servants of Allah, fear Allah as He ought to be feared, for this worldly life deceives, harms, and quickly passes.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ... إِنَّ مِنْ أخطر مَا يَقَعُ فِيهِ الْعَبْدُ أَنْ يَظُنَّ أَنَّ نِعَمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ عِلَامَةٌ رِضًا وَهُوَ غَارِقٌ فِي الْمَعَاصِي!

O people... one of the most dangerous illusions and deceptions a Muslim can fall into is to think that the constant and consistent material possessions and provisions being bestowed upon him are signs of his success, and Allah's pleasure- while he is drowning in an ocean of sins and disobedience to Allah. These are the deceptive blessings or 'punishments disguised as provisions' that Allah tells us about in the Quran. The abundance of constant and consistent worldly possession that are being rained upon us, while the heedless and sinful one is

deeming them as blessings; could actually be punishments from Allah; especially if one is constantly engaged in the impermissible, 'haraam' and immoral.

Allah speaks about this in the Quran, when individuals become heedless of themselves and their actions, and start to deny, and reject Allah's commands and prohibitions; when He says:

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ١٨٢

**“Those who reject our verses, We will gradually lead them to destruction from where they do not know.” (Al A’raaf:182)**

Istidraaj, brothers and sisters is when your Lord gives you time, wealth, and sustenance while you remain in constant sin, engaged in the haram, and impermissible, without repenting—yet you believe they are blessings and approval of what you are doing, you deem these increased provisions as blessings instead of punishments and tests. Istidraaj is an inconspicuous rope pulling you toward your own destruction, but you are unaware.

‘Uqbah ibn ‘Amir reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

"إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ يُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ اسْتِدْرَاجٌ ثُمَّ تَلَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: (فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ)"

“If you see Allah giving a servant what he loves from the worldly life and worldly possessions, despite his sinful disobedience,

then surely it is Allah luring him in to destruction-Istidraaj.”  
Then, the Prophet recited the verse, **“Thus, when they forgot what they were reminded of, We opened the doors of every good thing for them until, as they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly with utter despair and unexpectedly.”** (Al An’aam:44)

(Musnad Imam Ahmed #17311 with a fair chain of narration)

الْإِسْتِدْرَاجُ عَذَابٌ مُّؤَجَّلٌ، وَغَضَبٌ مُّسْتَتِرٌ، وَسَيْفٌ يُشَدُّ وَلَكِنْ لَمْ يُسْتَعْمَلْ بَعْدُ

Istidraaj is a postponed punishment, a delayed torment, an inconspicuous deception, a hidden anger, a sharpened sword that has not been taken out of its scabbard.

Al Istidraaj befalls the heedless and inattentive. The more one is heedless of Allah, inattentive and careless of His commands, His prohibitions, not concerned about doing what pleases Allah nor what displeases him; the more susceptible he is to be from the ‘mustadraajeen’.

Istidraaj happens to the arrogant, the prideful, the heedless, and the one whose heart is hard and does not repent and return to Allah. Allah snatches their souls while they are indulging in their sins and luxuries that they earned from haram and impermissible ways and means.

Istidraaj is a gradual enticement and misleading through Allah’s subtle strategy, that the individual chooses for him/herself. They mistook the material possessions and wealth that

constantly was bestowed upon them- while they remained in sin and engaging in Haram- as a gift of favor from Allah and did not realize that it was really a punishment and istidraaj from Allah, gradually drawing them in to commit more sins. Thus they persisted in disobedience, increased in dealing with Riba, committed more Zina, acted more arrogantly, they purchased more haram products and merchandise, they continued to belittle others, thinking that they will never get caught or seen...only believing that Allah is all forgiving, and not remembering that Allah is also severe in punishment. But all the time, Allah is just gradually enticing them, to dive further into the ocean of sins and haram, until they are too deep and cannot make it back up for air. Their insight, their heart, and mind have been blinded from recognizing Allah's punishment and plan. So the gates of all worldly possession were opened for them, everything they've wished for was given to them; and they perceived it as blessings from Allah while it was really a punishment, torment, and the result of sins upon sins.

Allah reminds us in other verses as well:

أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ (55) نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

**“Do they think that what We extend to them of wealth and children. We are hastening to them as good things? Rather, they do not perceive.” (Al Mu’minoos:55-56)**

Allah is telling us that the quick gains, profits, wealth, and children that are bestowed upon us rapidly while engaging in constant haram, are not blessings rather they are test, and punishments disguised as blessings.

As Allah tells us in other places in the Quran:

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ

**“Let neither their wealth nor their children impress you; Allah only intends to punish them through them in this world, and that their souls should depart while they are disbelievers.” (Al-Tawbah 9:55).**

Allah told the prophet and his ummah to not be impressed by one’s wealth or children, because it is only a punishment for the disbelievers and those who forget about Allah, and they are not a sign of status or that Allah loves you...

مَا هِيَ عَلَامَاتُ الْإِسْتِدْرَاجِ

## WHAT ARE SOME SIGNS OF ISTIDRAAJ

-أَنْ تُفْتَحَ عَلَيْكَ الدُّنْيَا وَتُغْلَقَ عَنْكَ أَبْوَابُ الطَّاعَةِ

The doors of acquiring worldly possessions open up for you while the doors of obedience to Allah keep closing.

-أَنْ تَزْدَادَ فِي الرِّزْقِ وَتَنْقُصَ فِي الشُّكْرِ وَأَنْتَ مُسْتَمِرٌّ فِي الْمَعَاصِي وَلَا يَخْطُرُ عَلَى بَالِكَ أَنْ تَتُوبَ إِلَى الْعُفُورِ الرَّحِيمِ.

That your wealth increases, but your gratitude decreases while continuously sinning and not repenting.

أَنْ تَعْصِيَ اللَّهَ وَتَجِدَ الطَّرِيقَ مُيسَّرًا، وَالْقَلْبَ غَافِلًا، وَالْعَقْلَ نَائِمًا، وَالطَّرِيقَ إِلَى الطَّاعَةِ صَعْبَةً.

You find the path of disobedience to Allah very easy, and the heart becomes heedless and inattentive, and the mind is asleep, and the path to obedience is difficult.

التَّوَسُّعُ فِي الدُّنْيَا بِلَا بَرَكَهٍ-الْمَالُ يَزِيدُ لَكِنَّ الْبَرَكَهَ تَخْتَفِي، فَيُصْرَفُ فِي مَا لَا يَنْفَعُ أَوْ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ الَّتِي تَجْلِبُ الْهَمَّ وَالْغَمَّ

In increase in sustenance, wealth, and worldly possession without blessings within them — your wealth increases, but the blessings in them disappear, so it is spent on what brings no benefit at all, wasted on haram, or spent on things that only brings worry.”

الْغَفْلَةُ عَنِ الذَّنْبِ وَعَدَمُ الشُّعُورِ بِالنَّدَمِ-الْإِنْسَانُ يَرْتَكِبُ الْمَعْصِيَةَ وَلَا يَنْدَمُ، بَلْ رُبَّمَا يَفْرَحُ بِهَا أَوْ يَبْرِرُهَا

Not worrying about constants sins, a lack of regret, and a lack of remorse. A person commits a sin and does not regret it; he may even rejoice in it or justify it.

الْإِعْجَابُ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعُرُورُ بِالْإِنْجَازَاتِ. يُشْعِرُ بِأَنَّهُ مُسْتَحِقٌّ لِكُلِّ مَا يَحْصُلُ عَلَيْهِ، وَيُنْسِبُ الْفَضْلَ لِنَفْسِهِ بَدَلِ أَنْ يَشْكُرَ اللَّهَ

Self-admiration and arrogance about personal achievements.  
He feels that he deserves everything he receives and attributes the credit to himself instead of thanking Allah.

غِيَابُ الْإِبْتِلَاءَاتِ الَّتِي تُوقِظُ الْعَبْدَ- الْإِبْتِلَاءُ رَحْمَةٌ وَتَذَكِيرٌ، وَغِيَابُهُ تَمَامًا مَعَ  
الْإصرَارِ عَلَى الْمَعَاصِي قَدْ يَكُونُ اسْتِدْرَاجًا

Absence of trials that awaken the servant. Trials are a mercy and a reminder, and their complete absence while one persists in sins may be a form of 'istidraaj'.

لِمَاذَا اللَّهُ يَسْتَدْرِجُ الْإِنْسَانَ فِي غِيَّهِ؟

### WHY DOES ALLAH GRADUALLY MISLEAD PEOPLE?

لَأَنَّهُ أَعْطَاهُ فُرَصًا كَثِيرَةً فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِبْ

Because Allah had given him many chances, numerous signs, reminders, much time; but he refused them, rejected them, and denied them. He chose following his desires, whims, personal views and opinions over what Allah commanded him.

لَأَنَّهُ سَمِعَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَعْ، وَعَرَفَ الْحَقَّ وَلَمْ يَتَّبِعْ

Because he heard the Qur'an but did not humble himself, and recognized the truth but did not follow it.

فَيَتْرُكُهُ اللَّهُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَهَوَاهُ وَمَنْ تَرِكَ لِنَفْسِهِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ هَلَكَ

So Allah leaves him to himself, his desires, and following his own whims and opinions... and whoever is left to himself is destroyed.



وَيْلٌ لِّذِي نِعْمَةٍ فِي مَعْصِيَةٍ

## WOE TO THE ONE GIVEN BLESSINGS WHILE SINNING

يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ... لَوْ رَأَيْتَ رَجُلًا يُغَمَّسُ فِي النِّعَمِ وَهُوَ يُحَارِبُ أَمْرَ اللَّهِ، فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ مُكْرَمًا، بَلْ هُوَ مَمْكُورٌ بِهِ

O servants of Allah... if you see a man showered with blessings while he wages war against Allah's commands, know that he is not honored, but deceived.

وَاللَّهِ، لَيْسَ أَخْوَفَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ يَفْسُو وَيَعِمُّ تَزْدَادُ

By Allah, nothing is more frightening than a hard heart accompanied by increasing blessings.

Some of the righteous predecessors used to say:

«إِذَا رَأَيْتَ نِعَمَ اللَّهِ تَتَابَعُ عَلَيْكَ وَالطَّاعَةُ تُفَارِقُكَ، فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ مَمْكُورٌ بِكَ»

"If Allah's blessings pour on you while obedience leaves you, know you are being deceived."

يَا مَنْ تَفَرَّحَ بِالرِّزْقِ وَتَنَسَّى الرَّازِقَ... أَمَا خِفْتَ أَنْ يَكُونَ هَذَا قَبْلَ السَّقْطَةِ؟

O you who rejoice in wealth and forget the Provider... have you not feared that this may be right before your capture by the angel of death?

يَا مَنْ تُعْطِيكَ النِّعَمَ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ... أَلَا تَخْشَى أَنْ تَكُونَ هَذِهِ سِتْرًا قَبْلَ الْإِنْكَشَافِ؟

“O you who are surrounded by provisions and sustenance in every direction—do you not fear that these things may be deceptive blessings, and when the curtain is lifted the truth will be exposed and it will be too late?”

تَمْشِي مُطْمَئِنًّا بَيْنَ نِعَمٍ لَمْ تَحْمَدْهَا... وَتَنْسَى أَنَّ الْمُنْعِمَ إِنَّمَا أَعْطَى ابْتَلَى، وَإِنْ أَمْهَلَ فَقَدْ يَأْخُذُ أَخْذًا عَزِيزًا

“You walk confidently amid blessings for which you have not offered gratitude, forgetting that the One who bestows them may be testing you, and the One who grants respite may ultimately take you unexpectedly at anytime”

يَا مَنْ لَهَتْ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا عَنْ رَبِّ الدُّنْيَا... أَلَا تَخَافُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ تُنَادَى فِيهِ فَلَا تُجَابُ

“O you whom the worldly life has distracted and led gradually astray from the Lord of all worlds—do you not fear the day when you will be called to go back to Him, but will not be able to answer the call?”

لا تقعوا ضحية الاستدراج يا إخواني وأخواتي-حاسبوا أنفسكم قبل أن تُحاسَبوا عند الله

Don't fall victim to Al Istidraaj brothers and sisters...Take account of yourselves before you are taken account of by Allah.

If you are constantly engaging in the haram and impermissible, then know that you need to repent today. Allah is telling us that the heedless and careless will be misled slowly and gradually into the pit and web of sins, one sin after the other, step by

step, adorning for you sins upon sins; until your heart becomes hard, dead, and unreceptive to any types of reminders. Take heed today, repent before it is too late.

May Allah open our eyes, hearts, and minds to come back to Allah and repent.

## **Second khutbah**

**REPENTANCE... REPENTANCE BEFORE HEEDLESSNESS**

Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

**“Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and those who purify themselves.” (Al Baqarah: 222)**

Allah also says:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ

**“O My servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of Allah’s mercy.” (Az Zumar:53).**

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَجْعَلْ نِعَمَكَ عَلَيْنَا اسْتِدْرَاجًا

O Allah, do not make Your blessings upon us a form of istidraaj.

وَاجْعَلْ نِعَمَكَ عَلَيْنَا عَوْنًا عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ، لَا غُرُورًا وَلَا فِتْنَةً

Make your blessings upon us an aid to be more obedient to you, not a deception to fall into more disobedience.

اللَّهُمَّ نَبِّهِ قُلُوبَنَا إِذَا زَاغَتْ، وَرُدَّنَا إِلَيْكَ رَدًّا جَمِيلًا

O Allah awaken our hearts if they start to go astray, help us  
return to you in a beautiful way.