



# Module Ten

## Heart-Matters

## ENVY–HASAD

If you were to describe your desire that someone lose his blessing as “envy,” then your description will be accurate. In other words, if you yourself were able, through some ruse, to eliminate [someone’s blessing], you would utilize that ruse to do so.

Envy is one of the worst diseases of the heart. Some of the scholars say that it is the root of all spiritual diseases. Hasad is one of the first sins ever committed.

## ENVY–HASAD

The definition of hasad is that a person desire than another person lose a blessing they have. It doesn't matter what is the object of envy—it could be a material object or a position.

Hasad=haram

Ghibta=halal

The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, ‘There is to be no hasad except for two people: a person whom Allah has given much wealth that he spends for good, and a person whom Allah gave wisdom, and who dispenses it and teaches others.’

‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz said, ‘I have never seen an oppressor who looks like one oppressed more than an envier; he is always distressed and craving...’

## ENVY–HASAD

Scholars say that a sign of hasad is being angry and resentful when the envied is around, backbiting them when they are not around, and happy if something bad happens to them.’

What makes hasad so deadly is that it attacks the root of our faith—it is the state of a nafs that says with a mute tongue: ‘Allah gave that blessing to the wrong person.’ It is an entitled, shaytani, childish nafsani state of thinking ‘I deserve it more than them and they are wrong for having it when I don’t.’

## CAUSES OF ENVY

1. **Hatred and animosity** toward the envied.
2. **Vying for the love of others**—sibling rivalry can be rooted in envy. This is seeking a position in the heart of someone and seeing that others may have it more than oneself. A lot of family conflicts arise from this.
3. **Arrogance**. Thinking I am better than that person, so how is he getting that. This is the 'hater' He is not worthy; he doesn't deserve that, I do, etc. This was the root of the disbelief of Quraysh: "Are these the one's blessed instead of us?"

## CAUSE OF ENVY

- 4. Seeking honor owing to a feeling of dishonor**—lacking a healthy sense of honor, which causes one to envy people and want to bring them down. Instead of having a healthy sense of self-worth, they would rather others be dragged down to their level.
- 5. Vanity/conceit**—this is feeling of one who is so amazed with himself that he is shocked and envious that one should have what he doesn't.
- 6. Seeking position and leadership**—the one who seeks it and doesn't get it. This is the envy of the hypocrites who wanted power and didn't get it; it also exists with other people who resent when others do well in a field; they fear that they will be eclipsed.

## ENVY–HASAD

But if the fear of [Allah], the Eternally Besought, prevents you from doing so, then you are not an envious person. This is what the Proof of Islam [al-Ghazali] expected with hope from the bounty of the Possessor of Majesty and Generosity.

He says if you feel craving for what others have and would like that you have it instead of them, **but you dislike this quality in yourself and don't act on it by actively wishing the removal of their blessing**, you are not a Hasid/envier.

## TREATMENT

The first cure is to go against one's caprice (hawa). For example, doing something good for the one you envy, or praising them, saying al-Hamdulillah for the blessing Allah gave them and reminding yourself of who gave it to them.

Theoretically, the cure is the following:

1. Know that you only hurt yourself.
2. Think about that pain and release yourself from it.
3. Think about the pain it creates here and the punishment for it now.
4. Reflect on how it is the primary quality of Shaytan.
5. Reflect on the envier and how his envy doesn't actually help him or remove the blessing—it is just a vain Satanic caprice.



## BLAMEWORTHY MODESTY

As for blameworthy modesty, it is that which prevents one from denouncing the condemnable or from asking a question concerning a matter relating to religion and the like. For this reason, it is considered a harmful quality.

This is a figurative haya'. It manifests in two main ways:

1] Not forbidding evil and condemning falsehood (a weakness and timidity of the soul that prevents them from being forthright when they should. This person must still know the conditions for forbidding evil. If a person does not think they fulfil the conditions it is not blameworthy modesty if they don't do it).

2] Not asking about matters pertaining to the Deen.

## WANTONNESS (BATAR)

Wantonness, batar, has many meanings: inability to bear blessings, bewilderment, dislike of something undeserving, mirth, extravagance. Imam Muhammad Mawlud says it is 'excessive mirth' and exuberance. It is state of excessive rejoicing, with a flavor of conceit and arrogance. In Sura al-Anfal, Allah says to the believers, *'Do not be like those who left their homes in a state of batar [filled with excessive pride about their state], showing off to people and preventing others from the way of Allah.'*

A good word that captures something of batar is **hubris**. Batar is most often a disease of the privileged.

## FANTASIZING

**The heart's engagement in matters that do not concern it is only forbidden when it pertains to the prohibited, such as fantasizing about the beautiful qualities of a woman or [dwelling] on the faults of Muslims, even in their absence.**

One of our moral virtues is to leave what does not concern us. The Prophet s said, 'Part of the perfection of a person's Islam is his leaving that which is of no concern to him.'

What is of concern to us is based on a standard, not our personal whims, or what we feel is our concern. What is of concern to us are those things that are of benefit in our worldly life and hereafter.

## FANTASIZING

This can be internal as well as external. Examples of external include:

- Asking people private questions without need
- Gossiping
- ‘Are you pregnant?’ ‘Any plans?’ ‘Any update’ etc.
- ‘Where do you work?’

Imam Muhammad Mawlid is speaking about the internal version of this that is a disease of the heart. He says that the haram form of fantasizing is

1. Fantasizing over the beautiful qualities of a women/or man to whom one is not married.
2. Dwelling on the faults of Muslims, even in their absence.

Essentially, whatever is haram to do is haram to speak about and fantasize about.

## FANTASIZING

In addition to these two examples, there is a third mentioned by scholars: reflecting on the nature of Allah's essence. This haram because it leads one either to anthropomorphism (tajsim/tashbih) or denial (ta'til). The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, **'Contemplate the favors of Allah and do not contemplate the ineffable essence of Allah.'**

We can reflect on the manifestations of the divine attributes, but we are not to try to conceive or imagine the essence of Allah.

## FEAR OF POVERTY

**Fear of poverty originates in having a bad opinion of [Allah] the Exalted, and its cure is in having a good opinion and knowing that what Allah possesses is never diminished in the least and that what has been apportioned to you will reach you inevitably.**

‘Fear of poverty’ is defined as the feeling in the soul that if one loses what he or she possesses of wealth they will not acquire what they need. Harboring this fear is harboring a negative opinion about Allah. Allah says, *‘Shaytan promises you poverty and commands you to immorality, but Allah promises you His forgiveness and bounty.’*

## FEAR OF POVERTY

Some scholars say that fear of poverty stems from *tama'* (craving the stuff of the world/covetousness). Others say it stems from lengthy and prolonged hopes—the idea that we will live so long so we have to ward off poverty at all cost.

There is a difference between the passing thought of poverty as a prodding of the ego or whisper of Shaytan and the fear of poverty that is rooted in the heart that causes one to cling to the world, be preoccupied by it, and display other diseases such as envy. (Don't over identify with the passing thoughts)

## LOVE OF THE THE LOWER WORLD

Many scholars said it is disliked putting great effort into accumulating vast wealth because it runs the real risk of one not fulfilling the rights of Allah. Some of the pitfalls of wealth are:

1. Covetousness and extreme desire to accumulate it, even through unlawful means
2. Becoming stingy in holding the accumulated wealth to the extent that one withholds their zakat and denies the needy
3. Batr—pride of people who think their wealth makes them better than other people
4. Vying and boasting of one's wealth
5. Using the wealth for haram



## TREATMENT

The medicine is having husn al-zann billah (a good opinion of Allah). Allah is the Provider—to see the reality of things with the eye of tawhid will engender a good opinion of Allah. Also, cultivating taqwa in our daily life in how we behave and treat others, we will see this directly.

## ENVY

Shaykh Muhammad Mawlud said:

- **If you were to describe your desire that someone lose his blessing as “envy,” then your description will be accurate.**
- **In other words, if you yourself were able, through some ruse, to eliminate [someone’s blessing], you would utilize that ruse to do so.**

Envy is one of the worst diseases of the heart. Some of the scholars say that it is the root of all spiritual diseases. Others say the root of all spiritual disease is tama’ (covetousness/craving after things). Hasad is one of the first sins ever committed.

## SHOWING OFF–RIYA'

**Showing off is one of the calamities of the heart [whose definition is] to perform an act of devotion for other than the Creator's sake.**

Riya is ostentation. It comes from the word ra'a (to be seen). It is described by the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) as minor shirk. The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said he did not fear his Umma falling into major shirk, but rather minor shirk of doing things for other than the sake of Allah.

By saying 'act of devotion' he excludes acts done for others that are not acts of devotion exclusively for Allah, such as dressing nicely. His definition also excludes actions that are not done for people, such as a person who performs Hajj with the intention of engaging in buying and selling.

## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

Rather, it is for the purpose of seeking some worldly benefit or praise from His creation, or to protect oneself from the opposite, [that is, loss of wealth or dispraise].

Tama' is the root, and because of it a person loves praise and dislikes blame. Were it not for tama' one would not love praise and dislike blame from other people.

## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

Ibn Hamdun says that there are six forms of riya'

1. With the body—making oneself appear sallow and thin, to make it seem to others that one is a Zahid who is staying awake in the night in prayer; having disheveled hair so others think he is too busy with dhikr to bother with such things, purposely developing a zabiba.
2. Body language—hanging head down, closing eyes, etc.
3. Garments—wearing wool or tattered garments, or dirty garments to give the appearance that one doesn't care about such trivialities

## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

4. Statements—the riyā of preachers who adorn their words and put them in rhyming patterns and utter wisdom and alter their voice to make it appear that they are in a ḥāl, while their inward state is bereft of that.
5. Action—lengthy standing and sajdā, stillness in public not observed in private (not always)
6. Gathering a crowd of students around oneself, mixing with lots of shaykhs so that it is thought that he is a Shaykh.

## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

The 'ulama mention that it is not riya to seek status from others by doing things that are not acts of devotion, such as rehearsing poetry, showing one's knowledge of medicine, math, grammar, etc. This is not haram unless it results in pride or harming others or other blameworthy qualities.

The worst riya' is nifaq—manifesting iman while concealing kufr. The second is riya' in ibadat, like the one who only prays when others see him, or only gives zakat when seen by others, or the one who lengthens and beautifies his prayer when others observe him but is sloppy when alone—if he prays them at all.

## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

The cure for riyā' is comprised of an 'ilmi and 'amali aspect. The 'ilmi is:

**[It is cured] by knowing that if all of creation were to join forces to oppose you or support you, they would not be able to do so except by His permission. Indeed, He alone possesses rewards [for your actions] in both abodes, and He is All-Powerful, the Good, and Thankful**

**[It is also cured] by being always conscious of its harm, which results in detesting it and thus warding it off.**



## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

**That is its theoretical treatment. And veiling one's actions from the eyes of others is its practical treatment, as is frequent recitation of Surat al-Ikhlās and the “master supplication for forgiveness.”**

Imam al-Ghazali states that removing riya from the heart requires addressing the three things that cause it:

1. Love of praise
2. Fear of creation
3. Covetousness

He says its remedy is the same as the remedy for love of status—to really know that all of this is an illusion and to deeply understand in oneself that this is HARMFUL to the soul. He says if a person knows there is poison in honey they won't eat it despite how appetizing it looks.

## SHOWING OFF—RIYA'

Some also consider that merely taking delight in people's awareness of one's actions is showing off, though the Star [Imam Malik] did not consider that harmful as long as the original intention was based on the foundation of sincerity.

This is another area where scholars differed. Some say that one who takes delight in people knowing about their good deeds is a show off—albeit retroactively.

Imam Malik did not consider this harmful provided the original intention was sincere. He was asked, 'What do you say about a man who comes to the masjid and thinks to himself that he hopes others see him?' He didn't see anything wrong with that as long as his original intention was sincere and the person wards off such thoughts—we are responsible for what we actively acquire and seek, not passing thoughts.

## ENVY

Shaykh Muhammad Mawlud says:

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