

Humility and Exploitation

Humility is a great human virtue.

Syriac culture has a logic to it: **the one who serves human beings/humanity, with humility, is the one who is most near to God.**

A thought which has not found its essence, among various social sectors in our geography -ever always a fertile source of civilization- which despizes humility, negatively evaluates it, and uses it as a tool for exploitation, from time to time, appears

Saint Afrem of Nisibis (303-373), both an exemplar of humility and at the same time a universal authority in Syriac culture and literature, tested by his life-experience the fact that in places and communities where people take on the mentality of the milk cow, they have wrong ideas about humility.

And so he warns us: “**הַשְׁבִּיחַ דְּלוּ חַוְרוֹ**, enhu dethmakkakht,
**haṣbukh dlo havro / when you behave humbly, they think you are
imprudent.**”

The fourteenth century thinker Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) also warns against the exploitation of humility in this manner: **“The outcome of too much humility is that you end up listening to the counsel of some mediocre individual.”**

But actually humility is fundamental to a true life. Humility opens up the world to us.

The most appropriate saying we need to remember about humility, is: **“If man, who was made from the dust of the ground, is not humble like the dust, he has actually departed from his origin/from his humanity.”**

To behave with the logic of humility, excluding abuse and exploitation, fleeing from damage and things that do damage, is truly an act of love. It is the love we feel toward ourselves.

Humility is the power that lines up our personality with our spirit. We can call this genuine power. Humility is a form of perception. “To hear you, is to silence the ‘I’ in me. It is to keep the ‘I’ within limits.”

Humility is not to reduce our own value, it is to give value to others. Humility is to open the doors of our heart to all existence, by taking our ego out of the way. It is not to pretend to be superior, but rather to know the counter-poise between self and other people, and even between self and other creatures. It is the quality of a person who puts the self in just the right place. It is to not pursue the case for the self. It is to listen to the incomparable divine whisper that embraces the universe and to pull the self back.

As a wise man said: **‘just as the darkness makes the light to stand out, so also humility makes the lights of paradise within the person, clear.’**

The humble person receives inspiration from life, from other people, from all the universe, and when he/she is able, inspires others. The humble spirit transposes itself into the keys of good manners and mercy. For this reason to serve human beings is a matter of honor (for him).

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