



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

AM I A HYPOCRITE?

INTRODUCTION

Hypocrisy has been mentioned many times in the Qur'an. In fact, when we recite the first 20 verses of Surah Al Baqarah, Allah Informed us about 3 groups of people:

1. The believers are described in 4 verses (verses 2-5)
2. The disbelievers are described in 2 verses (verses 6-7)
3. The hypocrites are described in 12 verses (verses 8-20)

These clearly shows the importance of recognising who the hypocrites are, their traits and if we are one of them! Allah Warned us about the hypocrites:

بَعْضُهُمْ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ
بِالْمُنْكَرِ يَأْمُرُونَ ۖ بَعْضٌ مِّن
وَيَقْبِضُونَ الْمَعْرِوفِ عَن وَّيَنْهَوْنَ
ۖ فَنَسِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ نَسْوًا ۖ أَيَّدِيَهُم
الْفَاسِقُونَ هُمُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ إِنَّ

"The hypocrites, men and women, are from one another, they enjoin (on the people) *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelief and polytheism of all kinds and all that Islam has forbidden), and forbid (people) from *Al-Ma'ruf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and they close their hands [from giving (spending in Allah's Cause) alms, etc.]. They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them. Verily, the hypocrites are the *Fasiqun* (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)." 9: 67

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "There will be successors after sixty years who waste the prayer and follow their lusts, so they will soon meet an evil ending (19:59). Then there will be successors who recite the Quran but it does not go beyond their throats. There are three who recite the Quran: a believer, a hypocrite, and an evildoer."

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān 755

Imam Al-Hasan Al-Basri said of hypocrisy: *“No one fears it but a believer, and no one feels safe from it but a hypocrite.”*

It is a fact that many of the most sincere companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ feared hypocrisy for themselves, and were extremely conscious of their words and actions because of this fear. There’s need to be cautious of this cancer because it eats up good deeds the way the woodpecker destroys the tree. Umar ibn Khattab would often go to meet Hudhayfah ibn Yaman (Radhiallahu Anhum) after the demise of the Rasul ﷺ to ask him if he was one of the hypocrites. Allah’s apostle ﷺ had entrusted him with the name of the hypocrites during his lifetime. He didn’t reveal any name to anyone, but he assured Umar that he wasn’t one of them. Until then did Umar feel a bit relief. This is how we all ought to feel unsafe from the ills of *An-Nifaq*.

WHO ARE THE HYPOCRITES?

The scholars have explained that the state of *eeman* rises and falls. This does not in anyway depict a fault in ones belief. It occurred during the lifetime of the prophet ﷺ and here’s an excerpt of the scenario:

Hanzalah Al-Usayyidi, who was a scribe for the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ reported: I met Abu Bakr and he said, “How are you, O Hanzalah?” I said, “Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.” He said, “Glory be to Allah, what are you saying?” I said, “When we are in the presence of the Messenger of Allah and he reminds us of Hellfire and Paradise, we feel as if we are seeing them with our very eyes, but when we are away from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ attending to our wives, our children, and our business, most of these things slip from our minds.” Abu Bakr said, “By Allah, I have experienced the same thing.” So Abu Bakr and I went to the Messenger of Allah and I said to him, “O Messenger of Allah, Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.” The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “What has happened to you?” I said, “O Messenger of Allah, when we are in your presence and are reminded of Hellfire and Paradise, we feel as if we are seeing them with our very eyes, but when we leave you and attend to our wives, our children, and our business, most of these things slip from our minds.” The Prophet ﷺ said:

By Him in whose hand is my soul, if your state of mind remains the same as it is in my presence and you are always occupied with the remembrance of Allah, the angels will shake your hands in your beds and roads. But Hanzalah, time should be devoted to this and time should be devoted to that. (Muslim)

What is the meaning of the word Nifaq?

What’s the difference between Nifaq and hypocrisy?

Nifaq is derived from the word “nafaqa” means to pass through. “Nafaq” means tunnel. “Naafiqā” means rat’s hole with entry and exit hole.

In linguistic terminology Nifaq means a burrow inside which something can be hidden, or a burrow with two holes inside from which something can go and hide and then come out from the other side. Even the burrow of a rat is also called Nifaq. The underground road tunnels built in the Arabia roads with two outlets in different side are called Nafaqa, which is the root word of Nifaq. You can read the written letters Na Fa Qa on the exit or the entry of the tunnel.

If you see these tunnels it appears plain sands from its surface, but beneath it there is a hidden road or a tunnel from where a car enters and comes out from the other end this is called nafaq, and from it we get Nifaq.

Hypocrisy (Nifaq), it is of two kinds:

The first kind: Major (An Nifaq al akbar) or An Nifaq I'tiqadi (Hypocrisy in Belief) Hypocrisy, which is connected to belief, is to conceal Kufr (disbelief) and to show Iman (belief). This kind of Nifaq takes the person out of the fold of Islam.

For example, The Leader of Munafiq, Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Sulool and his companions in Madinah whose names were disclosed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) by Allah Himself were Munafiq of Aitaqad. They were those Munafiqs who were Disbelievers from the core of their hearts but due to some selfishness they pretended to be Muslims through certain actions.

The second kind: Nifaq is called minor (an Nifaq al Asghar) or an Nifaq Amali (Hypocrisy in Actions/Deeds). It is to perform acts which are the characteristics of the people of Nifaq, like those mentioned in the Hadith. It is to do something that is the behavior of hypocrites, but the faith still exist. This type of hypocrisy does not make the person come out of religion, but it is an intermediary (washilah) to such. The person has both faith and nifaq.

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam) said:

"There are four characteristics if they are found in a person, then he is a real Munafiq (hypocrite), and if one of them is found in a person, then there is a trait of Nifaq in him until he leaves it: If he is entrusted, he cheats, if he speaks he lies, if he promises, he fails to keep his promise, and if he quarrels he uses obscene and immoral expressions." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Anas ibn Malik reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Whoever has three traits is a hypocrite, even if he fasts, prays, goes to Hajj and

Umrah, and claims to be a Muslim. When he speaks, he lies. When he promises, he breaks it. When he is trusted, he betrays it."

Source: Musnad Abī Ya'la' 4039.

Lying - Al-Hassan Al-Basri said: "Nifaaq is the difference between the inner and the appearance, between statement and action and between entering and leaving and it used to be said that the foundation of nifaaq upon which it is built is lying."

Breaking Promises - Making a promise intending to keep it and then later deciding to break it.

"Beware of lying for lying guides to transgression and transgression leads to the fire." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

Also, the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "The most hated of men to Allah is the one given to fierce and violent disputation." (*Bukhari and Muslim*)

Also, the Prophet (sas) said about the one who takes what is not his through clever speech has only been given a piece of the fire.

Breaking Agreements - Allah said:

بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ وَأَوْفُوا
مَسْئُولًا

"Fulfill the covenant. Verily, the covenant will be questioned." 17:34

عَاهِدْتُمْ إِذَا اللَّهُ بِعَهْدٍ وَأَوْفُوا
بَعْدَ الْأَيْمَانِ تَنْقُضُوا وَلَا
عَلَيْكُمْ اللَّهُ جَعَلْتُمْ وَقَدْ تَوَكَّيْدِهَا
مَا يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ كَفِيلاً
تَفْعَلُونَ

"And fulfill the Covenant of Allah (*Bai'a*: pledge for Islam) when you have covenanted, and break not the oaths after you have confirmed them, and indeed you have appointed Allah your surety. Verily! Allah knows what you do.." 16: 91

اللَّهُ بِعَهْدِ يَشْتَرُونَ الَّذِينَ إِنَّ
 أَوْلَيْكَ قَلِيلًا ثَمَنًا وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ
 وَلَا الْآخِرَةَ فِي لَهُمْ خَلَقَ لَا
 إِلَيْهِمْ يَنْظُرُ وَلَا اللَّهُ يُكَلِّمُهُمْ
 وَلَهُمْ يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَا الْقِيَامَةَ يَوْمَ
 أَلِيمٌ عَذَابٌ

“Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah’s Covenant and their oaths, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter (Paradise). Neither will Allah speak to them, nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful torment.” 3: 77.

This applies to Muslim and non-Muslim alike. The Prophet (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever kills an individual protected by treaty without right will not even smell the scent of paradise and its scent can be found at a distance of forty years march." The most serious oath to dishonour is the oath of allegiance to the khalifa of the Muslims.

Betraying of Trusts - When a Muslim is entrusted with something, he must do his best to protect it and to render it back to its owner when the time comes.

Allah said:

الْأَمَانَاتِ تُؤَدُّوا أَنْ يَأْمُرَكُمْ اللَّهُ إِنَّ
 بَيْنَ حَكَمْتُمْ وَإِذَا أَهْلِهَا إِلَى
 إِنَّ بِالْعَدْلِ تَحْكُمُوا أَنْ النَّاسِ
 كَانَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ ۖ بِهِ يَعِظُكُمْ نِعْمًا اللَّهُ
 بَصِيرًا سَمِيعًا

“Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.” 4: 58

لَا آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ آيُّهَا يَا
وَتَخُونُوا وَالرَّسُولَ اللَّهُ تَخُونُوا
تَعْلَمُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ أَمَانَاتِكُمْ

“O you who believe! Betray not Allah and His Messenger, nor betray knowingly your *Amanat* (things entrusted to you, and all the duties which Allah has ordained for you).” 8: 27.

OTHERS

- a) Al-Munaafiqoon: 1-2 (Lying, breaking oaths)
- b) At-Tauba: 73-77 (False oaths, breaking promises (to Allah), lying)
- c) Al-Ahzaab: 72-73 (Betraying trusts)

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The word hypocrisy refers to major hypocrisy which means concealing disbelief, or minor hypocrisy which means behaving differently in private and in public with regard to obligatory duties. ... This is well known among the scholars and this is how they interpreted the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), “The signs of the hypocrite are three: when he speaks he lies, when he makes a promise he breaks it, and when he is entrusted with something he betrays that trust.” Narrated by at-Tirmidhi and others. More than one of the early scholars said: A lesser form of kufr, a lesser form of hypocrisy, a lesser form of shirk.

Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 11/140

Al-Haafiz Ibn Rajab (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The interpretation given by the respectable scholars is that hypocrisy in the linguistic sense refers to a kind of treachery and betrayal, making an outward display of goodness whilst inwardly concealing the opposite. In Islamic terms it may be divided into two categories, the first of which is major hypocrisy, which is when a person makes an outward show of believing in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, whilst inwardly concealing the opposite of that in whole or in part. This is the kind of hypocrisy that existed at the time of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and Qur’an was revealed condemning those hypocrites and describing them as disbelievers, and stating that they would be in the lowest level of Hell. The second type of hypocrisy is minor hypocrisy, which is hypocrisy of deeds. That is when a person makes an outward show of being righteous when inwardly he is the opposite of that.

To sum up, minor hypocrisy refers to behaving differently in private and in public, as was stated by al-Hasan. Minor hypocrisy is a means that may lead to major hypocrisy, just as sins are the harbinger of disbelief. Just as there is the fear that the

one who persists in sin may be deprived of faith at the time of death, there is also the fear that the one who persists in one of the characteristics of hypocrisy will be deprived of faith and will become a pure hypocrite. Imam Ahmad was asked: What do you say about one who does not fear hypocrisy for himself? He said: Who can be sure that he is safe from hypocrisy? Al-Hasan used to call the one who did deeds of hypocrisy a hypocrite, and something similar was narrated from Hudhayfah. End quote from Jaami' al-'Uloom wa'l-Hukam, p. 430-434

If a person has any level of minor hypocrisy and dies in that state, he will not remain in Hell for eternity. Rather the one who will remain in Hell for eternity is the hypocrite in the sense of major hypocrisy. However, minor hypocrisy is a means that may lead to major hypocrisy, as stated above. Hence the Sahaabah and the early generations (may Allah be pleased with them) used to seek refuge with Allah from it.

Based on that, if any Muslim has any of the characteristics of minor hypocrisy, he is not one of those who will remain in Hell forever; rather he is subject to the will of Allah, may He be exalted, in the Hereafter: if He wills, He will punish him in Hell for his sin, then bring him forth from it because of his belief in Tawheed, or if He wills, He will forgive him from the outset. His situation is like that of sinners among the monotheists. As for the hypocrite in the sense of major hypocrisy, he will abide forever in Hell – we seek refuge with Allah from the Fire.

SIGNS OF A HYPOCRITE

Isma'il ibn Nujayd reported: Abu al-Khayr, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Hearts are containers. A heart filled with faith has signs of compassion for all Muslims, concern for their concerns, and is cooperative in their welfare. A heart filled with hypocrisy has signs of malice, rancor, dishonesty, and envy."

Source: Hilyat al-Awliya' 10/377

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ
وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى
الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ
النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

مُذَبِّبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ
يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ وَلَا إِلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ وَمَنْ
فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا

Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for *As-Salat* (the prayer), they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but little.

(They are) swaying between this and that, belonging neither to these nor to those, and he whom Allah sends astray, you will not find for him a way (to the truth - Islam). 4: 142-143

Another aspect of hypocrisy is to do apparently good deeds with wicked intentions. Allah said:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا
وَكُفْرًا وَتَفْرِيقًا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَإِرْصَادًا لِمَنْ حَارَبَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلِيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا
إِلَّا الْحُسْنَٰى^ص وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ
لَكَٰذِبُونَ

{They set up a masjid for the purpose of harm, kufr, creating division among the Muslims and as an outpost for those making war against Allah and His Prophet before this and they will swear "We only intended good." And Allah bears witness that they are liars.} At-Tauba: 107

Fate of a Hypocrite

According to the Qur'an there are two categories of hypocrites, of which Allah will forgive one, but will not forgive the other:

1. The First Group

Those hypocrites, who opt for hypocrisy with consciousness, will not be forgiven by Allah. It is so because they are more dangerous than Kuffar. They will not be pardoned even if Prophet (ﷺ) himself begs for their pardon.

تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ
 سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَن يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ
 ذَلِكَ أَنَّ لَهُمْ كُفْرًا
 وَرَسُولِهِ بِاللَّهِ كَفَرُوا
 بِالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

"Ask forgiveness for them, (O Muḥammad), or do not ask forgiveness for them. If you should ask forgiveness for them seventy times - never will Allah forgive them. That is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people."

[At-Taubah: 80]

Prophet (ﷺ) was forbidden from offering funeral prayer of such people.

مَاتَ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدٌ عَلَى تَصَلِّيٍّ وَلَا
 قَبْرِهِ عَلَى تَقْمٍ وَلَا أَبَدًا
 وَرَسُولِهِ بِاللَّهِ كَفَرُوا
 إِنَّهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

"And do not pray (the funeral prayer, O Muḥammad), over any of them who has died - ever - or stand at his grave. Indeed, they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger and died while they were defiantly disobedient."

[At Taubah: 84]

Prior to the revelation of this verse. Prophet (ﷺ) out of his softness of nature, used to offer funeral prayers of the hypocrites. But after the death of Abdullah Ibn Ubai, the leader of hypocrites, Prophet (ﷺ) was forbidden from offering the funeral prayers of the hypocrites. The faithful should keep away from such people.

2. The Second Group

Those hypocrites, out of their human weaknesses are involved in hypocrisy. They will be definitely punished for their sins, but not like the hypocrites of the first group. It is advisable to be aware of such people also, but at the same time other Muslims should care about the revival of their faith.

Ten Antidotes to Hypocrisy

1. Make *du'a* and beg Allah to protect you from hypocrisy

من قلبي طهر اللهم
الرياء من عملي و النفاق
عيني و الكذب من لساني و
تعلم فانك الخيانة من
تخفي ما و الأعين خائنة
الصدور

This *du'a* is recorded in the following Hadith collections:

Ad-Da'watul Kabir of Bayhaqi, Hadith: 227, Tarikh Baghdad, number: 781 and Nawadirul Usul, Hadith: 888.

Transliteration of the *du'a*:

Allahuma tahhir qalbi minan nifaq wa 'amali minar riya wa lisani minal kadhib wa 'ayni minal khiyana fa inaka t'alamu khainatal a'ayuni wa ma tukhfis sudur

Translation:

'O Allah, purify my heart from hypocrisy, my actions from show, my tongue from lies and my eyes from deception. For surely You fully aware of the deception of the eyes and all that the chest conceals.'

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من
وء الشقاق و النفاق و س

الأخلاق

This hadith can be found in Sunan Abu Dawud and Nasai. It means;

'O Allah! I take your refuge from quarrelling, hypocrisy and bad manners'

2. Always endeavor to speak the truth and eschew falsehood.
3. Ensure you uphold the obligations of Islam, especially the five daily *salaawat* – prayers.
4. Under-promise and over deliver. [Remember talk is cheap, so talk less and do more!](#) If you can't keep it, don't make it. It's not an obligation to displease yourself in order to please others.
5. Endeavor to keep the *amaanah* – whatever you are entrusted with, do not betray that trust.
6. Always remember that the hypocrites have a guaranteed spot in the fire. In fact, they will be fuel for the blazing flame. Would you love to be such? Reflect over this punishment and distance yourself.
7. Increase in patience, control your anger and fight your desires.
8. Purify your intention in whatever you want to do. So long as it pleases Allah and it's in line with the *sunnah*, go ahead. Beware of showing-off!
9. [Make *taubah* and continue to increase in repentance.](#)
10. Remain consistent and steadfast upon points 1-9.