178673 - She is complaining about being "ugly".

the question

Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. With a dark complexion, acne prone skin, misaligned teeth, and average height, I consider myself ugly. So does that mean Allah hates me? I have heard taunts about my looks for a long time. I have been through a lot of social pressure because of how I look and remain depressed most of the time. Some have even blatantly expressed their concern over my marriage. Where is my position in Islam regarding all this, since Islam encourages men to marry beautiful women? I cannot thoroughly blame others for their concern, because they are in a way quoting the Quran. But then again where is my fault? I didn't choose to be ugly. And how does one justify the fact one is rejected socially, rejected for jobs, rejected for marriage proposals, all because one is not good looking enough? Where is Allah's justice in this when He has created us all equally?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Know dear questioner, that all of Allah's creation is good, but Allah may test a slave with sickness or a defect or ugliness and the like due to a wisdom He is aware of, and a benefit He wished for you to attain.

Beauty and ugliness are like sickness and health, wealth and poverty, and success and failure; Allah has distributed all provisions between His slaves through His vast wisdom, perfect mercy and abundant favour upon His slaves. Granting of any of those things or others is not an indication of Allah's love for the one to whom He granted or provided those things. Nor is withholding any of them a sign of His displeasure towards the one being deprived. Allah says (what means):

"15. And as for man, when his Lord tries him and [thus] is generous to him and favors him, he says, "My Lord has honored me."

16. But when He tries him and restricts his provision, he says, "My Lord has humiliated me."

17. No! But you do not honor the orphan

18. And you do not encourage one another to feed the poor.

19. And you consume inheritance, devouring [it] altogether,

20. And you love wealth with immense love.” (al-Fajr 15-20)

Sh. As-S’adi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Allah the Exalted informs of the nature of man as he is, that he is ignorant and unjust, and does not know the outcomes of things. He thinks that whatever condition he is in will continue and never cease and he thinks that Allah’s honouring him and favouring him in this world is an indication of his honour and and closeness to Him. And when “He tries him and restricts his provision” such that he has only his needs with nothing extra, then this is an insult from Allah. So Allah responds to him his estimation by saying (what means) “No!” i.e. Not everyone I have bestowed favours upon in the world is honoured by Me, and not everyone whom I have restricted provisions for is lowly before Me. Rather, wealth and poverty and abundance and restrictedness are tests from Allah and trials which He puts His slaves through, to see who is grateful to him and who is patient so that He may reward them a great reward for it as compared to those who do not, so they are given a painful punishment. As well: A slaves aspirations may not go beyond himself, due to weakness in zeal, so Allah rebukes them for not being concerned about the affairs of the needy creation…” End quote from Tafsir as-S’adi (924)

If people were to follow your example in your speech, thought and displeasure over the will of your Lord and His destiny for you –may Allah forgive you- there would only be complainers and disgruntled people on earth.

The ill would say: why have You made me ill and saved the people? The poor would say: Why have you made me poor and made others wealthy? Those being tried would say: Why are you trying me and left others in a good state?

The believer is to be pleased, observe patience and anticipate reward while others become annoyed with and complain about their Lord.

Do you not realize that you have two eyes with which you can see while millions cannot even see?!

Do you not see that you are able to walk on your own two feet, you go and come wherever you wish while an infinite number of people are paralyzed and disabled?!

Let's say you lost all that; do you not realize Allah's favour of Islam upon you, and that He chose you for this great favour (which all the pleasures of the earth cannot equal) over most of the creation who do not believe in Allah. On the Day of Resurrection, Allah the Exalted will say (what means): "Oh Adam! And he will respond, Here I am and blessed by You, and all good is in Your hands. Then He will say: Remove the delegation of the fire! He will say: And what is the delegation of the fire? He will say: From every thousand, nine hundred and ninety nine. Al-Bujari (3099) and Muslim (327)

Ponder over this story, O maidservant of Allah:

Al-Awza'i narrates from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad that he said:

I went out to the shore as a patrolman and our patrol at the time was in 'Areesh Misr. When I arrived at the shore, I came upon an open area and there was tent on it. In the tent was a man who had no hands and legs and he was hard of hearing and sight. None of his limbs were of benefit to him but his tongue, and was saying: O Allah, grant me (the ability) to praise you a praise through which I can sufficiently thank You for the favours You have bestowed upon me and by which You have preferred me over many whom You have created a great preference.

Al-Awza'I said: 'Abdulla said: By Allah, I will certainly go to this man and I shall certainly ask him about this speech. An understanding, or knowledge or inspiration which was inspired to him?

So I approached the man and greeted him and said to him: I heard you and you were saying: O Allah, grant me (the ability) to praise you a praise through which I can sufficiently thank You for the favours You have bestowed upon me and by which You have preferred me over many whom

You have created a great preference.; so what favour from the favours of Allah upon you are you praising Him for? And in what way did He prefer you over others a great preference that you need to thank Him for it? He said: Don't you see what my Lord has done? By Allah, if He sent the sky to me as a fire which burned me, or ordered the mountains to crush me, or the oceans to drown me, or the earth to swallow me up; it would only cause me to be more grateful to my Lord for the favour of this tongue He bestowed upon me.

However, O slave of Allah: As long as you have come to me, I have a need of you! Perhaps you see me and the state I am in, I cannot harm nor benefit myself. I had a young son who used to come to me at the time of prayer and help me do my ablution, and when I became hungry he'd feed me, and I became thirsty he'd provide me with a drink but I have missed him for the last three days, so please look for him on my behalf may Allah have mercy on you.

I said: By Allah, no creature could fulfill the need of another which is greater in reward with Allah than a need similar to yours. So I set out looking for the young boy, and I hadn't gone far before I came by a sand hill, and behold I found the boy who had been preyed upon by a beast which ate his flesh! I did istirjaa' (saying Indeed we belong to Allah and to Him is our return) and said: How am I going to be able to face this man with a gentle face?!

As I was heading towards him, the thikr (words of remembrance) of Ayyub the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) came to my heart. So when I reached him I greeted him and he responded and said: Are you not my companion? I said yes! He said: What did you do about my need? I said: Are you more honourable in the site of Allah or was Ayyub the Prophet? He said, of course Ayyub the Prophet. I said: Do you know what His Lord did with him? Did He not test him in his wealth, family and children? He said, yes. I said: How did He find him? He said: He found him patient, grateful and praising. I said: He was not pleased with that for him until his relatives and loved ones deserted him? He said, yes. I said: How did His Lord find him? He said: He found him patient, grateful and praising; make it short may Allah have mercy on you. I said to him: The young boy you sent me in search of, I found him in a sand hill having been preyed upon by a beast which had eaten his flesh. May Allah increase for you tour reward and may He inspire you

with patience.

The tested man said: Praise be to Allah Who did not create from my progeny creations who would disobey Him and He would then punish them by the fire. He then did istirjaa' and breathed a sigh and died.

I said: Indeed to Allah we belong and to Him is our return. What a huge calamity before me; a man like this, if I were to leave him the beasts would eat him, and if I stay I won't be able to harm nor benefit. So I covered him in a cloak which was over him and sat at his head crying.

As I was sitting, four men came upon me and said: O slave of Allah, what is your situation and what is your story. So I told them my story and his. They said to me: uncover his face for us, perhaps we know him. I uncovered his face and the men fell upon him kissing his eyes and his hands alternately and saying: May our father be sacrificed; for how long these eyes were lowered from the prohibitions of Allah. May our father be sacrificed; for how long this body prostrated before Allah while the people were sleeping.

I said: Who is this, may Allah have mercy on you? They said, this is Abu Qilabah al-Jurmi, the companion of ibn 'Abbas. He had tremendous love for Allah and the Prophet of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him)!!

So we washed him and shrouded him with clothing we had with us and prayed over him and buried him. The men left and I went back to my station. When night fell, I put my head down and saw him in a dream, in a garden from the gardens of Paradise wearing two garments from the garments of Paradise while reciting the revelation (which means): "Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. And excellent is the final home." (13:24).

I said: Aren't you my companion? He said, yes. I said: How did you receive this?! He said: Verily, with Allah are levels that cannot be attained except with patience at times of trial and gratitude at times of prosperity along with fear of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, in private and in public. End quote from "ath-Thiqaat" by ibn Hibban (5:3-5)

Have you seen the state of this slave O maidservant of Allah? Did you see his praise of and pleasure with his Lord? Did you see how the blessing of faith from Allah was greater to him than all he lost? Do you see that there are many things for which you and others can still praise and thank Allah for. They are innumerable, leave alone being able to properly thank Allah for them. So, O maidservant of Allah, don't deprive yourself of those lofty positions by being upset with the will of Allah or by thinking evil of Him or allowing your tongue to tire of remembering Allah and praising Him and thanking Him and turning to blaming Him and having a bad opinion of Him.

If you don't have a share of beauty, then what did the non Muslim woman who was deprived of Islam do with her beauty while your Lord granted it (Islam) to you? Where is she now if she has passed on? And where will she be tomorrow if she died upon disbelief? Will her beauty be of benefit to her on the Day when neither wealth nor children will be of benefit, except those who come to Allah with pure hearts?

Would you really be pleased with the alternative? That you be beautiful but non Muslim and that she be ugly but Muslim?

There are many such questions you need to ask yourself and answer in light of this reality in which you are displeased with your Lord.

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says (what means): "And do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [some] categories of them, [its being but] the splendor of worldly life by which We test them. And the provision of your Lord is better and more enduring." (20:131)

Sh. As-S'adi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"i.e. Don't extend your eyes out of amazement and don't keep looking out of approval at what people are enjoying of worldly gains such as tasty food and drink and fancy clothing and adorned homes and beautified women, for all that is from the splendor of worldly life which the souls of deceived ones rejoice over, and which the eyes of the negligent are amazed, and which the wrongdoers enjoy – without thinking of the hereafter. Then it all passes by quickly and disappears

and kills those who love and adore it and they egret at a time when regret is of no benefit. Then when come forward at the time of Resurrection they will know what they were upon and that Allah had only placed it as a trial and test, to see who would be deceived by it as opposed to who would be better in deed as the Exalted says (what means): “Indeed, We have made that which is on the earth adornment for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed. And indeed, We will make that which is upon it [into] a barren ground.” (18:7)

The immediate provisions of your Lord of knowledge, faith and the reality of righteous deeds and the deferred provisions of everlasting pleasures and a good life in the neighbourhood of your Lord, the Merciful, is greater (in essence and description) than what We have bestowed upon some and it is more lasting for it never gets cut off; food and shelter is continuous as the Exalted says (what means): “But you prefer the worldly life, While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.” (87:16-17)

In this verse there is an indication that if a slave sees himself having cravings for the beauties of the world and is inclined towards them, he should remind himself of what is ahead from the provisions of his Lord and balance between the two.” End quote from “Tafsir as-S’adi” (pg. 516)

Indeed your happiness lies your having a good opinion of your Lord, and your Lord (His Glory is great) is as one hopes Him to be, so He is more deserving than beauty and He is worthy of fear and adequate for [granting] forgiveness.

Your happiness lies in being pleased with Allah’s choice for you and in knowing that it is better than what you choose for yourself and in asking Allah of His bounties and in knowing that He is appreciative and Knowing and Wise and Merciful.

So O maidservant of Allah, hasten to repentance to your Lord from what the devil has cast into your heart and caused to flow from your pen or tongue from displeasure of the decree of Allah and displeasure at the distribution of Allah and having a bad opinion of Allah (may He be exalted). And know that the favours of Allah upon you and others is far from being enumerated and accounted for by you. Allah the Exalted says (what means): “And if you should count the favor of Allah, you

could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.” (14:34)

And the Exalted said (what means): “And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (16:18)

For further benefit, look at answers 34170 and 100942

And Allah the Exalted knows best.