

Forging Friendship with Allah

PodSeries - Vol 52




Achieve Noble Character

Forging Friendship with Allah 

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All praises are for Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds, who has given us the inspiration, opportunity and strength to complete this volume. Blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad whose path has been chosen by Allah, the Exalted, for the salvation of mankind.

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We pray that Allah, the Exalted, completes His favour on us and accepts each letter of this book in His august court and allows it to testify on our behalf on the Last Day.

All praise to Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds and endless blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on his blessed Household and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Compiler's Notes

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com.

Introduction

The following short book discusses the aspects of achieving friendship with Allah, the Exalted. This discussion is based on Chapter 10 Yunus, Verses 62-64 of the Holy Quran:

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allah. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allah. That is what is the great attainment.”

Striving to obtain this great goal will aid a Muslim to Achieve Noble Character. According to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that the heaviest thing in the Scales of Judgment Day will be Noble Character. It is one of qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which Allah, the Exalted, complimented in Chapter 68 Al Qalam, Verse 4 of the Holy Quran:

“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”

Therefore, it is a duty on all Muslims to gain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to Achieve Noble Character.

Forging Friendship with Allah ﷻ

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ لَا نَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ

الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.

Those who believed and were fearing Allah.

For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allah. That is what is the great attainment.”

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

In a divine Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502, Allah, the Exalted, declares some important things. The first thing mentioned is that Allah, the Exalted, declares war on the person who shows enmity to one of His righteous friends.

This occurs as the one who shows enmity to a person's friend is in fact showing enmity to the person indirectly. This indirectly warns muslims to only befriend the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, and to never show any enmity or dislike for them as this is the attitude of the enemies of Allah, the Exalted, such as the Devil. Chapter 60 Al Mumtahanah, verse 1:

“O you who have believed, do not take My enemies and your enemies as allies...”

It is important to note, that any form of disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, is waging war against Him. Therefore, a muslim should avoid all forms of disobedience including disliking those who strive in obeying Him as this only invites the anger of Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3862, that a person should never insult his

Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as insulting them is like insulting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and whoever harms him has insulted Allah, the Exalted. And this sinful person will soon be punished unless they sincerely repent.

The next thing mentioned in the main divine Hadith under discussion is that a muslim can only draw close to Allah, the Exalted, through fulfilling their obligatory duties. And they can achieve the love of Allah, the Exalted, through voluntary righteous deeds.

This description splits the servants of Allah, the Exalted, into two categories. The first group draws near to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling their obligatory duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayer, and in respect to people, such as the obligatory charity. This can be summed up by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny.

The second category of those who are brought near to Allah, the Exalted, are superior to the first group as they not only fulfil their obligatory duties but strive in voluntary righteous deeds. This clearly shows that this is the only path to the proximity of Allah, the Exalted. Whoever takes a path other than this will not achieve this vital goal. This completely rejects the concept of obtaining sainthood without striving in obedience to Allah, the Exalted. The person who claims this is simply a liar. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is pure the rest of the body becomes pure. This leads to righteous deeds. So if a person does

not perform righteous deeds, such as their obligatory duties, then their body is impure which means their spiritual heart is impure as well. This person can never reach the proximity of Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to note, the greatest voluntary righteous deeds one can perform are those based on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Anyone who chooses to perform voluntary righteous deeds not based on his traditions has been fooled by the Devil as no path will take one close to Allah, the Exalted, except the path and actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

“Say, [O Muhammad], “If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins....”

The pious muslims who belong in the second higher group are also those who avoid unnecessary things of this material world. This attitude aids them in focusing their efforts on performing voluntary righteous deeds. It is this group who have perfected their faith by loving, hating, giving and withholding all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that when one strives in fulfilling the obligatory duties and performing voluntary

righteous deeds Allah, the Exalted, blesses their five senses so that they use them in obedience to Him. This righteous servant will very rarely commit sins. This increase in guidance has been indicated in Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways...”

This muslim reaches the level of excellence which has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This is when a muslim performs actions, such as the prayer, as if they observe Allah, the Exalted. The one who reaches this level will guard their mind and body from sins. This is the one who when they speak they speak for Allah, the Exalted, when they are silent they are silent for Allah, the Exalted. When they act they act for Him and when they are still they are for His sake. This is an aspect of monotheism and understanding the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that this muslim's supplication will be fulfilled and they will be granted the refuge and protection of Allah, the Exalted. This is a clear lesson for those who desire lawful worldly things. They should not seek to obtain them using any means except through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. No spiritual teacher or anyone else will be able to grant things to a person unless the person strives in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted and they are destined to obtain those things.

To conclude this Hadith makes it clear that the proximity of Allah, the Exalted, is only gained through sincere obedience to Him in the form of fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny. This is the path of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the only path of success in both worlds.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed...”

This verse makes it clear that one will only overcome the difficulties they face in life after they practically fulfil the aspects of faith. People will always face genuine concern about the future but this concern will never become intense fear which can prevent them from sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted. For example, the extreme fear of poverty can drive one to seek provision from unlawful sources. In addition, learning and acting on the teachings of Islam will prevent one from becoming overly sad (grief) over the difficulties they have faced in life. They will face sadness but this will not prevent them from sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, throughout their difficulties. Whereas, severe sadness meaning, grief, can easily encourage one to disobey Allah, the Exalted. For example, a person suffering grief and depression is more likely to abandon their obligatory prayers than the one who only experiences sadness.

The guidance obtained from Islam will allow one to obtain success in both worlds. But this true guidance will only be granted to the one who actualizes their faith and this in turn involves sincerity. In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards: Allah, the Exalted, His book, meaning, the Holy Quran and to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Sincerity towards Allah, the Exalted, includes fulfilling all the duties given by Him in the form of commands and prohibitions, solely for His pleasure. As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1, all

will be judged by their intention. So if one is not sincere towards Allah, the Exalted, when performing good deeds they will gain no reward in this world or in the next. In fact, according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, those who performed insincere deeds will be told on Judgement Day to seek their reward from those who they acted for, which will not be possible. Chapter 98 Al Bayyinah, verse 5.

"And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion....."

If one is lax in fulfilling their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, it proves a lack of sincerity. Therefore, they should sincerely repent and struggle to fulfil them all. It is important to bear in mind Allah, the Exalted, never burdens one with duties they cannot perform or handle. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286.

"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...."

Being sincere towards Allah, the Exalted, means that one should always choose His pleasure over the pleasure of themselves and others. A Muslim should always give priority to those actions which are for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, over all else. One should love others and dislike their sins for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not for the sake of their own desires. When they help others or refuse to take part in sins it should be for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The one who adopts this mentality has perfected their faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

Sincerity towards the Holy Quran includes having deep respect and love for the words of Allah, the Exalted. This sincerity is proven when one fulfils the three aspects of the Holy Quran. The first is to recite it correctly and regularly. The second is to understand its teachings through a reliable source and teacher. The final aspect is to act on the teachings of the Holy Quran with the aim of pleasing Allah, the Exalted. The sincere muslim gives priority to acting on its teachings over acting on their desires which contradict the Holy Quran. Modelling one's character on the Holy Quran is the sign of true sincerity towards the book of Allah, the Exalted. This is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1342.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is sincerity towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes striving to acquire knowledge in order to act on his traditions. These traditions include the ones related to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship, and his blessed noble character towards the creation. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verse 4:

"And indeed, you are of a great moral character."

It includes to accept his commands and prohibitions at all times. This has been made a duty by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 7:

"...And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from..."

Sincerity includes to give priority to his traditions over the actions of anyone else as all paths to Allah, the Exalted, are closed except the path of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

"Say, [O Muḥammad], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins..."

One must love all those who supported him during his life and after his passing, whether they are from his Family or his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all. Supporting those who walk on his path and teach his traditions is a duty on those who desire to be sincere to him. Sincerity also includes loving those who love him and disliking those who criticise him irrespective, of one's relationship with these people. This is all summarised in a single Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 16. It advises that a person cannot have true faith until they love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, more than the entire creation. This love must be shown through actions not just words.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed...”

In a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the signs of a true muslim and a true believer. A true muslim is the one who keeps their verbal and physical harm away from others. This in fact, includes all people irrespective of their faith. It includes all types of verbal and physical sins which can cause harm or distress to another. This can include failing to give the best advice to others as this contradicts sincerity towards others which has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. It includes advising others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, thereby, inviting them towards sins. A muslim should avoid this behavior as they will be taken account for every person who acts on their bad advice. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2351.

Physical harm includes causing problems for other people's livelihood, committing fraud, conning others and physical abuse. All of these characteristics contradict Islamic teachings and must be avoided.

A true believer, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is the one who keeps their harm away from the lives and property of others. Again, this applies to all people irrespective of their faith. This includes stealing, misusing or damaging the property and belongings of others. Whenever one is entrusted with someone else's property they must ensure they only use it with the owner's permission and in a way which is pleasing and agreeable to the owner. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and

blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 5421, that whoever illegally takes someone else's property, through a false oath, even if it is as small as a twig of a tree will go to Hell.

To conclude a muslim must support their verbal declaration of belief with actions as they are the physical proof of one's belief which will be needed in order to obtain success on the Day of Judgment. In addition, a muslim should fulfill the characteristics of true belief in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people. An excellent way of achieving this in respect to people is to simply treat others how they wish to be treated by people, which is with respect and peace.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed...”

Disbelief can be a literal rejecting of Islam or through actions, which involves disobeying Allah, the Exalted, even though one believes in Him. This can be clearly understood by an example. If an unaware person is warned by another of an approaching lion and the unaware person takes practical steps to obtain safety they will be considered someone who believed in the warning given to them as they adapted their behaviour based on the warning. Whereas, if the unaware person does not practically change their behaviour after being warned, people will suspect that they do not believe in the warning given to them even if the unaware person verbally claims belief in the warning given to them.

Some people claim that their belief and obedience to their God is in their hearts and they therefore do not need to demonstrate it practically. Unfortunately, this foolish mentality has infected many Muslims who believe they possess a pure faithful heart even though they fail to fulfil the obligatory duties of Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has clearly declared in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984, that when one's heart is pure the body becomes pure which means their actions become correct. But if one's heart is corrupt the body becomes corrupt which means their actions will be corrupt and incorrect. Therefore, the one who does not obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling their duties practically can never have a pure heart.

In addition, demonstrating one's faith in Allah, the Exalted, practically is their proof and evidence which is required on Judgment Day in order to be granted Paradise. Not having this practical evidence is as silly as a student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming their knowledge is in their mind so they therefore do not need to write it down by answering the exam questions. The same way this student would undoubtedly fail so will a person who reaches Judgment Day without the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, even if they possess faith in their heart.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh.”

Piety/Fearing Allah, the Exalted, cannot be achieved without gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge so that one can fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

“...Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge...”

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2451, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, advised that a muslim cannot become pious until they avoid something which is not harmful to their religion out of caution that it will lead to something which is harmful. Therefore, an aspect of piety is to avoid things which are doubtful not just unlawful. This is because doubtful things takes a muslim one step closer to the unlawful and the closer one is to the unlawful the easier it is to fall into it. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205, advises that the one who avoids unlawful and doubtful things will protect their religion and honor. If one observes those who have become misguided in society, in most cases, this occurred gradually not in one sudden step. Meaning, the person first indulged in doubtful things before falling into the unlawful. This is the reason why Islam stresses the need to avoid unnecessary and vain things in one's life as they can lead them to the unlawful. For example,

vain and useless speech which is not classified sinful by Islam often leads to evil speech, such as backbiting, lying and slander. If a person avoids the first step by not indulging in vain speech they will undoubtedly avoid evil speech. This process can be applied to all things which are vain, unnecessary and especially, doubtful.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh.”

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4119, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the best people are those who remind others of Allah, the Exalted, when they are observed.

This does not refer to those who adopt an Islamic outward appearance, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf, as many of these people do not remind others of Allah, the Exalted, at all. This Hadith refers to those who learn and act on Islamic knowledge so that they sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This leads to the purification of one's heart which leads to the purification of their outward limbs. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984. This will cause others to remember Allah, the Exalted, when they observe these righteous muslims. And this remembrance will only increase when these righteous muslims speak as they only speak in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they avoid evil and vain speech and only speak on beneficial matters in respect to the world and the hereafter. This remembrance further increases when one observes their actions as they practically implement the teachings of Islam thereby, acting only in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. For example, they love, dislike, give and withhold only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This leads to perfecting one's faith according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh.”

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the characteristics which perfect a muslim's faith.

The first is to love for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This includes desiring what is best for others in both worldly and religious matters. This must be practically shown through one's actions meaning, supporting others financially, emotionally and physically within one's means. Counting one's favors to others not only cancels the reward but also proves their lack of love for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, as this person only loves gaining praise and other forms of compensation from people. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

“O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury...”

Any type of negative feelings towards others over worldly reasons, such as envy, contradicts loving others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and must be avoided.

To sum up, this noble quality includes loving for others what one loves for themselves through actions not just words. This is an aspect of being a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

The next characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is to hate for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This means one should dislike the things Allah, the Exalted, dislikes such as His disobedience. It is important to note, this does not mean one should hate others as people can sincerely repent to Allah, the Exalted. Instead a muslim should dislike the sin itself which is proven by them avoiding it and warning others against it also. Muslims should continue to advise others instead of breaking ties with them as this act of kindness may well cause them to sincerely repent. This includes not disliking things based on one's own feelings, such as an action, which is lawful. Finally the proof of one disliking for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is that when they show their dislike through their words and actions it will never be in a way which contradicts the teachings of Islam. Meaning, their dislike for something will never cause them to commit a sin as this would prove that their dislike for something is for their own sake.

The next characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is giving for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This refers to every blessing one can give to others, such as physical and emotional support not just wealth. When one gives they will do so according to the teachings of Islam meaning, in matters pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, such as giving sincere advice. In fact, this is an aspect of being sincere to others which has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. It includes giving and sharing these blessings with others without counting one's favors as this proves they gave in order to receive something from others. Chapter 76 Al Insan, verse 9:

“[Saying], “We feed you only for the face [i.e., approval] of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude.”

The final characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is withholding for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This includes withholding the blessings one possesses, such as wealth, from others in matters which are displeasing to Allah, the Exalted. This muslim will not observe who is requesting something from them instead they only assess the reason behind the request. If the reason contradicts the teachings of Islam they will withhold the blessing and not take part in the activity. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

“...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression...”

This includes withholding one's speech and actions in matters which are not pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, such as backbiting or manifesting one's anger. This muslim will not speak and act according to their desires and only precede in a situation when it pleases Allah, the Exalted, otherwise, they will withhold and refrain from preceding forward.

To conclude, adopting these characteristics leads to perfection of faith as they are based on one's emotions and are therefore extremely difficult to control. Whoever is blessed with controlling them will find fulfilling the other duties of Islam easier. These duties consist of fulfilling

the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

It is important for muslims to strive in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience as Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed a good life in both worlds for the one who behaves in this manner. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

“Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.”

This good life will protect a muslim from severe grief, depression and other extreme moods and mental disorders which can destroy a person's life. Even though, muslims will face difficulties which will sadden them but if they obey Allah, the Exalted, this sadness will never become extreme and effect their entire life on a long term basis. This is because a muslim who strives in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, has an excellent reason to continue moving forward through their difficulty without giving up and turning to depression and even suicide. For example, they look forward to the countless reward which will be granted to the patient. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

“...Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account [i.e., limit].”

Whereas, the muslim who does not strive in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and only claims the title of being a muslim with their tongue will not be granted this attitude and a good life. And whenever they face difficulties it will drive them to extreme moods and mental disorders which will destroy their entire life.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

The essence of sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, is remembering Him.

In a long divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, Allah, the Exalted, advises that He is with anyone who remembers Him.

With the rise of mental problems and disorders, such as depression, it is vital for muslims to understand the importance of this declaration. There is a small chance of a person experiencing a mental issue when they are constantly surrounded and aided by someone that truly loves them. If this is true for a person it is undoubtedly more befitting for Allah, the Exalted, who has promised to be with the one who remembers Him. Acting on this declaration alone would eliminate all mental issues, such as depression. It is the reason why being secluded from others or being amongst others did not affect the mental state of the righteous predecessors as they were always in the company of Allah, the Exalted. It is obvious that when one obtains the company of Allah, the Exalted, they will overcome all obstacles and difficulties successfully until they reach His proximity in the hereafter.

In addition, out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, has not restricted this declaration in anyway. For example, He did not declare He was only with the righteous or with those who perform specific good deeds. He in fact encompassed every muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith or how many sins they have committed. So a muslim should never lose hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. But it is important to note the condition mentioned in this Hadith namely, to remember Allah, the Exalted. This is not only remembering Him with one's tongue but more importantly it is to remember Him through one's actions. This is only achieved by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is the true remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The one who behaves in such a manner will be blessed with the company and support of Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, the more one obeys Allah, the Exalted, the more they will receive His company. What one gives is what they shall receive.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2465, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever prioritises the hereafter over this material world will be granted contentment, their affairs will be corrected for them and they will receive their destined provision in an easy way.

This half of the Hadith means that whoever correctly fulfils their duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and to the creation, such as providing for their family in a lawful manner while avoiding the excess of this material world will be granted contentment. This is when one is pleased with what they possess without being greedy and actively striving to obtain more worldly things. In reality, the one who is content with what they possess is a truly rich person even if they possess little wealth as they become independent of things. Independence of anything makes one rich in respect to it.

In addition, this attitude will allow one to comfortably deal with any worldly issues which may arise during their life. This is because the less one interacts with the material world and focuses on the hereafter the less worldly issues they will face. The less worldly issues a person faces the more comfortable their life will become. For example, the one who possesses one house will have fewer issues to deal with in respect to it, such as a broken cooker, than the one who possesses ten houses. Finally,

this person will easily and pleasantly obtain their lawful provision. Not only this but Allah, the Exalted, will place such grace in their provision that it will cover all their responsibilities and necessities meaning, it will satisfy them and their dependents.

But as mentioned in the other half of this Hadith the one who prioritises the material world over the hereafter meaning, by neglecting their duties or striving for the unnecessary and excess of this material world will find that their need, meaning greed, for worldly things is never satisfied which by definition makes them poor even if they possess much wealth. These people will go from one worldly issue to another throughout the day failing to achieve contentment as they have opened too many worldly doors. And they will receive their destined provision with difficulty and it will not give them satisfaction and never seem enough to fill their greed. This may even push them towards the unlawful which only leads to a loss in both worlds.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

It is a universal aim and goal for all people, irrespective of their faith or social class, to achieve peace of mind in this world. It is the ultimate reason why people strive in this material world, work long hours and dedicate the majority of their efforts to this world. People desire to obtain such a life whereby they have no stresses or worries such as financial difficulties. But it is strange how people, especially muslims, look for peace of mind in the wrong place. Just like a person who desires to watch a football game yet, goes to a cricket match. Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that true peace of mind only lies in His obedience which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 28:

“...Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured.”

Whenever a person seeks peace of mind in the material world it will only lead them further away from their goal. Whenever a person sets a target in respect to this material world that target will only lead onto more targets. This continues until the person departs this world without obtaining what they were looking for. It is obvious that the rich do not obtain true peace of mind as they stress more than normal people and whatever they obtain of the world ends up becoming a burden for them. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found

in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2465, that the one who focuses on the hereafter will be blessed with a rich heart and Allah, the Exalted, will organize their affairs meaning, they will obtain peace of mind. But the one who focuses on the material world will only see their poverty and their affairs will become scattered meaning, they will not achieve peace of mind. The one who obeys Allah, the Exalted, will find peace of mind even if they possess little of this world. But the one who is lost in the material world will go from one worldly door to another but will never find true peace as it has not been placed there. If a person wants to watch a football game they should not go to a cricket match and if a muslim desires peace of mind they should not search for it in the material world as it lies only in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. It is important to note, that those who adhere to the teachings of Islam will encounter difficulties throughout their lives as this is guaranteed but through their obedience Allah, the Exalted, will remove fear and grief from them so that they remain firm and steadfast on the correct path. This is similar to the one who only feels slight discomfort from a medical procedure as they have been anaesthetised.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

These verses could also mean that they do not experience fear and grief in respect to worldly things, which most others experience. This is because of their correct perception and understanding.

It is important for muslims to develop the correct perception so that they can increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is what the righteous predecessors possessed and it encouraged them to avoid the excess luxuries of the material world and instead prepare for the hereafter. This is an important characteristic to possess and it can be explained with a worldly example. Two people are extremely thirsty and come across a cup of murky water. They both desire to drink it even though it is not pure and even if it means they have to argue over it. As their thirst grows the more focused on the cup of murky water they become to the point they lose focus on everything else. But if one of them shifted their focus and observed a river of pure water which was only a short distance ahead they would immediately lose focus on the cup of water to the point they would no longer care about it and no longer argue over it. And instead they would endure their thirst patiently knowing a river of pure water is close. The person who is unaware of the river would probably believe the other person is crazy after observing their change in attitude. This is the case of the two types of people in this world. One group greedily focuses on the material world. The other group has shifted their focus to the hereafter and the pure and eternal blessings therein. When

one shifts their focus to the bliss of the hereafter worldly problems do not seem like such a big deal. Therefore, patience becomes easier to adopt. But if one keeps their focus on this world then it will seem like everything to them. They will argue, fight, love and hate for it. Just like the person in the example mentioned earlier who only focuses on the cup of murky water.

This correct perception is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 53:

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth...”

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

These verses could also mean that they do not experience fear and grief in respect to worldly things, which most others experience. This is because of their correct perception and understanding.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4108, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the material world compared to the hereafter is like a drop of water compared to an ocean.

In reality, this parable was given in order for people to understand how small the material world is compared to the hereafter. But in reality they cannot be compared as the material world is temporal whereas the hereafter is eternal. Meaning, the limited cannot be compared to the unlimited. The material world can be split into four categories: fame, fortune, authority and one's social life, such as their family and friends. No matter what worldly blessing one obtains which falls within these groups it will always be imperfect, transient and death will cut a person off from the blessing. On the other hand, the blessings in the hereafter are lasting and perfect. So in this respect the material world is no more than a drop compared to an endless ocean.

In addition, a person is not guaranteed to experience a long life in this world as the time of death is unknown. Whereas, everyone is guaranteed to experience death and reach the hereafter. So it is foolish to strive for a day, such as one's retirement, which they may never reach over striving for the hereafter which they are guaranteed to reach.

This does not mean one should abandon the world as it is a bridge which must be crossed in order to reach the hereafter safely. Instead, a muslim should take from this material world enough to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. And then dedicate the rest of their efforts in preparing for the eternal hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the teachings of Islam.

An intelligent person will not prioritize the drop of water over an endless ocean and an intelligent muslim would not prioritize the temporal material world over the eternal hereafter.

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life...That is what is the great attainment.”

These verses are connected to chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 30:

“Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allāh" and then remained on a right course - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], "Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised.”

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 159, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a short but far reaching piece of advice. He advised people to sincerely declare their belief in Allah, the Exalted, and then remain steadfast on it.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith means that they must strive in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. It consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, which relate to Him, such as the obligatory fasts and those which relate to people, such as treating others kindly. It includes refraining from all the prohibitions of Islam which are between a person and Allah, the Exalted, and those involving others. A muslim must also face destiny with patience truly believing Allah,

the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

Steadfastness can include refraining from both types of polytheism. The major type is when one worships something other than Allah, the Exalted. The minor type is when one shows off their good deeds to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. Therefore, an aspect of steadfastness is to always act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

It includes obeying Allah, the Exalted, at all times instead of obeying and pleasing oneself or others. If a Muslim disobeys Allah, the Exalted, by pleasing themselves or others they should know neither their desires nor people will protect them from Allah, the Exalted. On the other hand, the one who is sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from all things by Him even if this protection is not apparent to them.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith includes following the path set out by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and not adopting a path which deviates from

this. The one who strives to adopt this path will not need anything else as this is enough to keep them steadfast on their faith.

As people are not perfect they will undoubtedly make mistakes and commit sins. So being steadfast in matters of faith does not mean one has to be perfect but it means they must strive to adhere strictly to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as outlined earlier, and to sincerely repent if they commit a sin. This has been indicated in chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 6:

“...so take a straight course to Him and seek His forgiveness...”

This is further supported by a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1987, which advises to fear Allah, the Exalted, and to erase a (minor) sin which has occurred by performing a righteous deed. In another Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book 2, Hadith number 37, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims to try their best to remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even though they will not be able to do it perfectly. Therefore, a muslim's duty is to fulfil the potential they have been given through their intention and physical actions in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They have not been commanded to achieve perfection as this is not possible.

It is important to note, that one cannot remain steadfast in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, through their physical actions without purifying their

heart first. As indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984, the limbs of the body will only act in a pure way if the spiritual heart is pure. Purity of heart is only achieved by gaining and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Steadfast obedience requires one to control their tongue as it expresses the heart. Without controlling the tongue steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, is not possible. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2407.

Finally, if any deficiency in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted, occurs one must make sincere repentance to Allah, the Exalted, and seek the forgiveness of people if it involves their rights. Chapter 46 Al Ahqaf, verse 13:

“Indeed, those who have said, “Our Lord is Allah,” and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in...the Hereafter...That is what is the great attainment.”

It is important to note, that one will only enter Paradise through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673. This is because every righteous deed is only possible through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of knowledge, inspiration, strength and opportunity to do the deed. This understanding prevents one from adopting pride which is vital to avoid as only an atom's worth of pride is needed to take a person to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 267.

In addition, a muslim must understand that this mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of righteous deeds is in reality a light which one must gather in this world if they desire to obtain a guiding light in the hereafter. If a muslim lives in heedlessness and refrains from gathering this light in the world by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience then how can they expect to receive this guiding light in the hereafter?

All muslims desire to inhabit Paradise with the greatest servants of Allah, the Exalted, such as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But it is important to understand that simply wishing for this without action will not make it come true otherwise the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would have done this. Simply put, the more

one strives in learning and acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the closer they will be to him in the hereafter.

The greatest blessing of Paradise is physically observing Allah, the Exalted, which is discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7436. If a muslim desires to obtain this unimaginable blessing they must practically strive to achieve the level of excellence mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This is when one performs actions, such as the prayer, as if they can observe Allah, the Exalted, overlooking them. This attitude ensures one's persistent and sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted. It is hoped that the one who strives for this level of faith will receive the blessing of physically observing Allah, the Exalted, in the hereafter.

“...No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh...”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated the infinite and absolute power and authority of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2516. This Hadith advises that the entire creation cannot benefit a person if Allah, the Exalted, did not desire them to do so. Similarly, the entire creation together could not harm someone if Allah, the Exalted, did not desire them to. This means only what Allah, the Exalted, decides happens within the universe. It is important to note, that this advice does not indicate one should abandon using means, such as medicine, but it means that one can use the means as they have been created by none other than Allah, the Exalted, but they must understand that Allah, the Exalted, is the only One who decides the outcome of all things. For example, there are many sick people who take medicine and recover from their illness. But there are others who take medicine and do not recover. This indicates that another factor decides the end result namely, the will of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 51:

“Say, “Never will we be struck except by what Allah has decreed for us...”

The one who understands this knows that anything that affected them could not have been avoided. And those things which missed them could never have been obtained.

It is important to note, that whatever the end result even if it is against a person's desire they should remain patient and truly believe Allah, the Exalted, has chosen the best for them even if they do not observe the wisdom behind the outcome. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

When one truly understands this truth they stop relying on the creation knowing they cannot innately harm or benefit them. Instead, they turn to Allah, the Exalted, seeking His support and protection through sincere obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This leads a muslim to trusting in Allah, the Exalted. It also encourages one to only fear Allah, the Exalted, as they know the creation cannot harm them without the will of Allah, the Exalted.

Recognising that all things which occur within one's life and the universe originate from Allah, the Exalted, is a part of understanding the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted. This is a topic which has no end and goes beyond only superficially believing that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the Exalted. When this is fixed in one's heart then they only hope in Allah, the Exalted, knowing He is the only One who can help them. They will only submit and obey Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. In reality, a person only obeys another in order to receive protection from harm or gain some benefit. Only Allah, the Exalted, can grant this therefore only He deserves to be obeyed and worshipped. If anyone chooses the obedience of another over the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, this shows they believe

that this other can bring them some sort of benefit or protect them from harm. This is a sign of the weakness of their faith. The source of all things which occur is Allah, the Exalted, so muslims should only obey Him. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 2:

“Whatever Allah grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter...”

It is important to note, that obeying a person which encourages the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in reality is obeying Allah, the Exalted. For example, obeying the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 80:

“He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah...”

“...No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh...”

As the decree of Allah, the Exalted, cannot be changed in the slightest a muslim must therefore concern themselves with sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, in every situation.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that every situation is blessed for a believer. The only condition is that they need to respond to each situation they encounter while obeying Allah, the Exalted, specifically, patience in difficulties and gratitude in times of ease.

There are two aspects of life. One aspect are the situations people find themselves in whether they are times of ease or difficulties. The control of what situation a person faces is out of their hands. Allah, the Exalted, has decided this and there is no escaping them. Therefore, stressing over the situations one faces does not make sense as they are destined and therefore inevitable. The other aspect is a person's reaction to each situation. This is in each person's control and this is what they are judged on for example, showing patience or impatience in a difficult situation. Therefore, a muslim must concentrate on their behaviour and reaction in each situation instead of stressing over being in a situation as this is unavoidable. If a muslim desires to succeed in both worlds they should assess each situation and always act in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. For example, in times of ease they must use the blessings they possess as prescribed by Islam which is true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

“And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]...”

And in times of difficulty they must show patience knowing Allah, the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants even if they do not understand the wisdom behind the choices. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

“...No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh...”

As the decree of Allah, the Exalted, cannot be changed in the slightest a muslim must therefore concern themselves with sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, in every situation.

It is important for muslims to understand a simple thing which can aid them with patiently facing destiny and the difficulties it brings. A person happily takes a bitter medicine which their doctor prescribes fully trusting in their knowledge, experience and choice all the while believing that their doctor knows what is best for them. This is true even though they are only human and prone to errors. Yet, many muslims fail to place this same level of trust in Allah, the Exalted, even though His knowledge is infinite and His choices always the wisest. Muslims should try to accept destiny and the troubles it brings just like they take the bitter medicine without complaining knowing it is best for them. They should understand that the troubles and difficulties they face are best for them even if they do not understand or observe the wisdoms in them just like they do not understand the science behind the bitter medicine they happily take. Even though in most cases, they will never understand the science behind the bitter medicine they take a time will certainly come, whether in this world or in the hereafter, when the wisdom behind the bitter difficulties they faced will be revealed to them. So a muslim should anticipate this time patiently knowing all will be revealed shortly. Pondering deeply over this can increase one's patience when dealing with difficulties. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

“...No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh...”

As the decree of Allah, the Exalted, cannot be changed in the slightest a muslim must therefore concern themselves with sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, in every situation.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4168, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims not to question destiny as this opens the door to the Devil. He encourages muslims to challenge the choice of Allah, the Exalted, as they do not observe the wisdom behind it because of their short sightedness. This in turn leads to impatience and the loss of reward. One should reflect on their past experiences where they believed something was good when it in fact was bad and vice versa in order to inspire them to remain patient as they will be shown these benefits sooner or later. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh. That is what is the great attainment.”

It is important for muslims to understand that they should not define a situation as good or bad according to worldly definitions. For example, according to a worldly definition being wealthy is good whereas being poor is bad. Instead, muslims should ascribe good and bad to events and things according to the teachings of Islam. Meaning, anything which takes one closer to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, is good even if it is seen as bad from a worldly point of view. And anything which takes one away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is bad even if it appears good.

There are many examples throughout the teachings of Islam which demonstrate this. For example, Qarun was an extremely wealthy person who lived in the time of the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him. Many people then and now may consider his wealth to be a good thing but as it led him to pride it became a means of his destruction. So in his case being wealthy was a bad thing. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verses 79-81.

“So he came out before his people in his adornment. Those who desired the worldly life said, “Oh, would that we had like what was given to Qārūn. Indeed, he is one of great fortune. But those who had been given

knowledge said, "Woe to you! The reward of Allah is better for he who believes and does righteousness. And none are granted it except the patient." And We caused the earth to swallow him and his home. And there was for him no company to aid him other than Allah, nor was he of those who [could] defend themselves."

On the other hand, the third rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Usman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, was also wealthy yet he used his wealth in the correct way. In fact, once after donating a large amount of wealth he was told by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that nothing could harm his faith after that day. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3701. So in his case wealth was a good thing.

To conclude, a muslim should remember that every difficulty they face has wisdoms behind it even if they do not observe them. So they should not believe something is good or bad from a worldly point of view. Meaning, if the thing encourages them towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, then it is good even if it looks bad. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

"...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not."

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh. That is what is the great attainment.”

Greatness and true success is not connected to worldly things, such as wealth or fame. A person may obtain some worldly success through these things but it is quite obvious if one turns the pages of history that this type of success is very temporary and it eventually becomes a burden and regret for a person. A muslim should never believe that superiority lies in these things thereby dedicating themselves to obtaining them while neglecting their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and the creation. Nor should they look down at others who do not possess these worldly things believing they have no value or significance as this attitude contradicts the teachings of Islam. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6071, that the people of Paradise are those who are considered insignificant by society and concluded that if they took an oath on something Allah, the Exalted, would fulfil it for them.

True honour, success and greatness in this world and the next only lies in piety. So the more one sincerely strives to fulfil the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the greater they are even if they appear insignificant to society. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat verse 13:

“...Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you...”

A muslim should therefore search for true success in this and not waste their time and efforts in searching for it in worldly things otherwise they may well reach the hereafter a great loser. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verses 103-104:

“Say, “Shall we [believers] inform you of the greatest losers as to [their] deeds? [They are] those whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work.””

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allāh. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words [i.e., decrees] of Allāh. That is what is the great attainment.”

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4031, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person who imitates a people is counted as one of them.

All muslims irrespective of the strength of their faith desire to be counted and end up with the righteous in the next world. But this Hadith clearly warns that a muslim will only be considered a righteous person and end up with them if they imitate the righteous. This imitation is a practical thing not only a declaration through words. This imitation is correctly done by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

But those who verbally declare their love for the righteous and fail to imitate them and instead imitate the characteristics found in hypocrites and the sinful will be considered and judged as one of them. This does not mean they will lose their faith but it means they will be judged as disobedient muslims. How can a disobedient muslim be counted as an obedient muslim and end up with the righteous? This is only wishful thinking which has no value in Islam. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 20:

“Not equal are the companions of the Fire and the companions of Paradise. The companions of Paradise - they are the attainers [of success].”

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