

# Life of the Prophet Muhammad

صلى الله  
عليه  
وسلم

**PodSeerah - Vol I**



**Achieve Noble Character**

**Life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)**

**ShaykhPod Books**

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Life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

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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](mailto:ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com).

## Introduction

Success and salvation in both worlds have been placed in following the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

*"Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins..."*

But this is not possible to achieve without learning and acting on the teachings found within the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Therefore, this book will discuss many of the events found within the blessed life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that Muslims can adopt his righteous path, which is the path of 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.

# **Life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)**

## **The Blessed Life Before the Migration to Medina**

### **Divinely Guided Upbringing**

During his childhood the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was always under the protection of Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, saved him from the evils that were widespread during the age of ignorance: the time before Islam. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached maturity he was the finest person among his people, the best of them in character and repute, the best of neighbours, the most prudent, the most honest in speech and most trustworthy. He was completely removed from immorality and other evil characteristics. Because of this he became known among the people of Mecca as Al Amin, the trustworthy. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, *The Life of the Prophet*, Volume 1, Page 180.

From this divine protection, care and upbringing of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is a lesson for all Muslims to correctly treat and raise those under their care.

In a Hadith found in *Sahih Bukhari*, number 2409, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that each person is a guardian and responsible for the things under their care.

The greatest thing a Muslim is a guardian of is their faith. Therefore, they must strive to fulfill its responsibility 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.

This guardianship also includes every blessing one has been granted by Allah, the Exalted, which includes external things such as wealth and internal things such as one's body. A Muslim must fulfill the responsibility of these things by using them in the way prescribed by Islam. For example, a Muslim should only use their eyes to look at lawful things and their tongue to utter only lawful and useful words.

This guardianship also extends to others within one's life such as relatives and friends. A Muslim must fulfill this responsibility by fulfilling their rights such as providing for them and gently commanding good and forbidding evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should not cut off from others especially over worldly issues. Instead, they should continue to treat them kindly hoping they will change for the better. This guardianship includes one's children. A Muslim must guide them by leading by example as this by far is the most effective way in guiding children. They must obey Allah, the Exalted, practically as discussed earlier and teach their children to do the same. A separate audio/video podcast series titled: Raising Pious Children, has been produced which discusses this aspect in detail and can be viewed using the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK-9u2mv2fs&list=PLt1Vizm7rRKbi8Dxr6UJJ6AcUExTo8Ib9>

and

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/108539593905598/225085248658377/>

A free PDF version has also been produced which can be accessed using the following link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:1122ebc4-72ab-4384-9198-7a93e45f53b3>

To conclude, according to this Hadith everyone has some sort of responsibility they have been entrusted with. So they should gain and act on the relevant knowledge in order to fulfill them as this is a part of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

The importance of correctly raising those under one's care is also mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1952, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the most virtuous gift a parent can give their child is to teach them good character.

This Hadith reminds Muslims to be more concerned about the faith of their relatives, such as their children, over acquiring and imparting wealth and properties to them. It is important to understand, worldly legacies come and go. How many rich and powerful people have built massive empires only for them to be torn apart and forgotten shortly after their death? The few signs left behind from some of these legacies only endure in order to warn people not to follow in their footsteps. An example is the great empire of Pharaoh. Unfortunately, many Muslims are so concerned about teaching their children how to build an empire and acquire much wealth and properties that they neglect teaching them the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes good manners towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation. A Muslim should not be fooled into believing they have plenty of time for teaching their children good manners as their moment of death is unknown and often pounces on people unexpectedly.

In addition, it is extremely difficult to teach good manners to children when they get older and become set in their ways. Today is the day a Muslim should truly reflect on the gift they wish to impart to their children and relatives. This is how a Muslim sends forward good to the hereafter but also leaves good behind as a righteous child which supplicates for their deceased parent benefits them. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1376. It is hoped that the one who is surrounded by good in this way will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted.

## **The Pact of Al Fudul**

This pact was an agreement to return any excess wealth to those who had owned it and that no one within Mecca would take unfair advantage over anyone else especially, a foreigner. This pact was made 20 years before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, announced prophethood in Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took part in this noble pact and even declared that he would uphold the pact after the coming of Islam. This has been discussed in detail in Imam Ibn Kathir's, *The Life of the Prophet*, Volume 1, Page 186.

This event teaches Muslims to always take part in things which are good and beneficial for society irrespective of who is involved. Since the passing of the righteous predecessors the strength of the Muslim nation has weakened dramatically. It is logical that the greater the number of people in a group the stronger the group will become yet Muslims have somehow defied this logic. The strength of the Muslim nation has only decreased as the number of Muslims have increased. One of the main reasons this has occurred is connected to chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2 of the Holy Quran:

*"...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression..."*

Allah, the Exalted, clearly commands Muslims to aid each other in any matter which is good and not support each other in any matter which is bad. This is what the righteous predecessors acted on but many Muslims have failed to follow in their footsteps. Many Muslims now observe who is doing an action instead of observing what they are doing. If the person is linked to them for example, a relative, they support them even if the thing is not good. Similarly, if the person has no relationship with them they turn away from supporting them even if the thing is good. This attitude completely contradicts the traditions of the righteous predecessors. They would support others in good irrespective of who was doing it. In fact, they went so far on acting on this verse of the Holy Quran that they would even support those they did not get on with as long as it was a good thing.

The other thing connected to this is that many Muslims fail to support each other in good as they believe the person they are supporting will gain more prominence than them. This condition has even affected scholars and Islamic educational institutes. They make lame excuses not to aid others in good as they do not have a relationship with them and they fear their own institution will be forgotten and those they help will gain further respect in society. But this is completely wrong as one only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the truth. As long as one's intention is to please Allah, the Exalted, supporting others in good will increase their respect within society. Allah, the Exalted, will cause the hearts of the people to turn to them even if their support is for another organisation, institution or person. For example, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed this world Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily challenged for the Caliphate and would have found plenty of support in his favour. But he knew the right thing to do was to nominate Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, did not worry about being forgotten by society if he supported another person. He instead obeyed the command in the verse mentioned earlier and supported what was right. This is confirmed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari numbers 3667 and 3668. The honour and respect of Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with

him, within society only increased by this action. This is obvious to those who are aware of Islamic history.

Muslims must reflect on this deeply, change their mentality and strive to aid others in good irrespective of who is doing it and not hold back fearing their support will cause them to be forgotten within society. Those who obey Allah, the Exalted, will never be forgotten in both this world and the next. In fact, their respect and honour will only grow in both worlds.

In addition, this event teaches Muslims the importance of upholding their promises.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that breaking promises is an aspect of hypocrisy.

The greatest of promises a Muslim has made is with Allah, the Exalted, which is to obey Him sincerely. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. All other promises made with people must also be kept unless one has a valid excuse especially, the ones a parent makes with children. Breaking promises only teaches children bad character and encourages them to believe being deceitful is an acceptable characteristic to possess. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2227, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will be against the one who makes a promise in His name and then breaks it without a valid excuse. How can the one who has Allah, the Exalted, against them on Judgment Day possibly succeed?



Finally, this event teaches Muslims the importance helping those who facing difficulties.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever relieves the distress of a Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will relieve a hardship from them on the Day of Judgment.

This shows that a Muslim is treated by Allah, the Exalted, in the same way they act. There are many examples of this within the teachings of Islam. For example, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

*“So remember Me; I will remember you...”*

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who shows mercy to others will receive mercy from Allah, the Exalted.

A distress is anything which causes someone to fall into anxiety and difficulty. Therefore, the one who eases such a distress for another

whether worldly or religious for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from a hardship on Judgment Day by Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in different ways in many Hadiths. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449, that the one who feeds a hungry Muslim will be fed the fruits of Paradise on the Day of Judgment. And the one who gives a drink to a thirsty Muslim will be given a drink from Paradise by Allah, the Exalted, on the Day of Judgment.

As the difficulties of the hereafter are much greater than those found in the world this reward is held back for a Muslim until they reach the hereafter.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Allah, the Exalted, will continue helping a Muslim as long as they are helping others. A Muslim must understand that when they strive for something or are aided by another person to complete a particular task the outcome may be successful or end in failure. But when Allah, the Exalted, helps someone with anything a successful outcome is guaranteed. Therefore, Muslims should, for their own sake, strive to help others in all good things so that they receive the help of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters.

## **A Noble Merchant**

Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, was a merchant of great stature and wealth in Mecca prior to the coming of Islam and even after. She would employ men to trade her goods on her behalf in distant lands. Prior to the announcement of Prophethood and her marriage to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, she heard of the truthfulness, trustworthy nature and noble character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. She proposed that he should trade her goods on her behalf in Syria. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed and traded her goods with the utmost sincerity and honesty in Syria and she made a handsome profit from this business venture. This incident is reported in Imam Ibn Kathir's, *The Life of the Prophet*, Volume 1, Pages 189-190.

It is important for Muslims to understand that Islam teaches good character in all aspects of one's life. This event clearly demonstrates the importance of being honest and sincere in all business transactions. In fact, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2146, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that merchants will be raised as immoral people on Judgment Day except those who fear Allah, the Exalted, act righteously and speak the truth.

This Hadith applies to all those who take part in business transactions. It is extremely important to fear Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes treating others kindly according to the teachings of Islam. In respect to business dealings a Muslim should be honest in their speech by disclosing all the details of the transaction to all who are involved. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2079, warns that when Muslims hide things in financial transactions, such as defects in their goods, it will lead to a loss in blessings.

Acting righteously includes not striving to con others by making them pay excessively for goods. A Muslim should simply treat others how they desire to be treated meaning, with honesty and full disclosure. The same way, a Muslim would not like to be mistreated in financial matters they should not mistreat others.

Those conducting business should always avoid lying as it leads to immorality and immortality leads to Hell. In fact, a person will keep telling and acting on lies until they are recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971.

## **An Honest Living**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2262, that every Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, sent by Allah, the Exalted, at one point in their blessed life was a shepherd of sheep. And prior to him announcing Prophethood the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was employed as a shepherd by the people of Mecca.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2072, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that no one has eaten anything better than from the earnings of their own hands.

It is important for Muslims not to confuse laziness for trusting in Allah, the Exalted. Unfortunately, many Muslims turn away from working a lawful occupation, go on social benefits and inhabit the Mosques claiming to trust in Allah, the Exalted, to provide for them. This is not trusting in Allah, the Exalted, at all. It is only laziness which contradicts the teachings of Islam. True trust in Allah, the Exalted, in respect to gaining wealth is to use the means Allah, the Exalted, provided a person, such as their physical strength, in order to obtain lawful wealth according to the teachings of Islam and then trust that Allah, the Exalted, will provide lawful wealth to them through these means. The aim of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is not to cause one to give up using the means He has created as this would make them useless and Allah, the Exalted, does not create useless things. The purpose of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is to prevent one from earning wealth through doubtful or unlawful means. As a Muslim should firmly believe their provision which includes wealth was allocated to them over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the

Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. This allocation cannot change under any circumstances. A Muslim's duty is to strive in obtaining this through lawful means which is the tradition of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon him. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2072. Using the means provided by Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, as He created them for this very purpose. A Muslim should therefore not be lazy while claiming trust in Allah, the Exalted, by going on social benefits when they have the means to earn lawful wealth through their own efforts and the means created and provided to them by Allah, the Exalted.

## **A Blessed Marriage**

Prior to the announcement of Prophethood, when Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, witnessed the noble character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, she proposed marriage to him. He accepted the proposal as she herself was a decisive, noble, highly respected and intelligent woman. This has been reported in Imam Ibn Kathir's, *The Life of the Prophet*, Volume 1, Page 190.

This event makes it clear that Muslims should choose a spouse based on their good character. In a Hadith found in *Sahih Bukhari*, number 5090, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person is married for four reasons: their wealth, lineage, beauty or for their piety. He concluded by warning that a person should marry for the sake of piety otherwise they will be loser.

It is important to understand that the first three things mentioned in this Hadith are very transient and imperfect. They may give someone temporary happiness but ultimately these things will become a burden for them as they are linked to the material world and not to the thing which grants ultimate and permanent success namely, faith. One only needs to observe the rich and famous in order to understand that wealth does not bring happiness. In fact, the rich are the most unsatisfied and unhappy people on Earth. Marrying someone for the sake of their lineage is foolish as it does not guarantee the person will make a good spouse. In fact, if the marriage does not work out it destroys the family bond the two families possessed before the marriage. Marrying only for the sake of beauty meaning, love is not wise as this is a fickle emotion which changes with

the passing of time and with one's mood. How many couples supposedly drowned in love ended up hating each other?

But it is important to note, that this Hadith does not mean one should find a spouse who is poor as it is important to get married to someone who can financially support a family. Neither does it mean one should not be attracted to their spouse as this is an important aspect of a healthy marriage. But this Hadith means that these things should not be the main or ultimate reason someone gets married. The main and ultimate quality a Muslim should look for in a spouse is piety. This is when a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience. Put simply, the one who fears Allah, the Exalted, will treat their spouse well in both times of happiness and difficulty. On the other hand, those who are irreligious will mistreat their spouse whenever they are upset. This is one of the main reasons why domestic violence has increased amongst Muslims in recent years.

Finally, if a Muslim desires to get married they should firstly obtain the knowledge associated with it, such as the rights they owe their spouse, the rights they are owed from their spouse and how to correctly deal with one's spouse in different situations. Unfortunately, ignorance of this leads to many arguments and divorces as people demand things which their spouse is not obliged to fulfill. Knowledge is the foundation of a healthy and successful marriage.



## **Rebuilding of the Kaaba**

Prior to the announcement of Prophethood the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, had been damaged and so the people of Mecca decided to rebuild it. When the black stone needed to be lifted into its place they fell into a serious and potentially violent dispute over who should place it. They all agreed that they would let the first person to enter the sacred area surrounding the Kaaba decide. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was this person and as they all recognized him as trustworthy and reliable they were pleased to accept his advice. He suggested that the black stone be placed in the middle of a cloth and he ordered the leaders of the local tribes to each hold a corner of the cloth. They then lifted the block stone up and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took the stone and positioned it. This event has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 197-198.

This event teaches Muslims the importance of adopting a positive attitude whereby they aim to eliminate feuds and disagreements between people. In fact, this important characteristic is mentioned in chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114 of the Holy Quran:

*“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin...conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”*

This involves conversing with others with a constructive mindset which brings people together in a positive way instead of possessing a destructive mindset which causes divisions within society. If a person cannot bring people together in a loving way then the minimum they can do is not cause divisions amongst them. Even this is recorded as a good deed when done for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2518.

In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, advises that reconciling between two opposing Muslims for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, is superior to voluntary prayer and fasting. Every good thing found within society was the outcome of this pious attitude such as the construction of schools, hospitals and Mosques.

But it is important to note, that a Muslim will only obtain the great reward mentioned in this verse when they perform the righteous deeds for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Each person will be rewarded based on their intention not just their physical action. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The insincere Muslim will find that on Judgment Day they will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for which will not be possible. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this event also indicates the importance of unity amongst people as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, united the leaders of the tribes of Mecca instead of causing further divisions by choosing one leader over another during the positioning of the black stone.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6541, discusses some aspects of creating unity within society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, firstly advised Muslims not to envy each other.

This is when a person desires to obtain the very blessing someone else possesses meaning, they desire for the owner to lose the blessing. And it involves disliking the fact that the owner was given the blessing by Allah, the Exalted, instead of them. Some only desire this to occur in their hearts without showing it through their actions or speech. If they dislike their thought and feeling it is hoped that they will not be held accountable for their envy. Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when a person strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing.

Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feeling and if they strive to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing they possess. Even though this type is not sinful yet it is disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and only praiseworthy if it involves a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first is when a person envies the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second is when a person envies the one who uses their wisdom and knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

The evil type of envy, as mentioned earlier, directly challenges the choice of Allah, the Exalted. The envious person behaves as if Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake giving a particular blessing to someone else instead of them. This is why it is a major sin. In fact, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903, envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

An envious Muslim must strive to act on the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. It advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. An envious Muslim should therefore, strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person they envy, such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

Another thing advised in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is that Muslims should not hate each other. This means one should only dislike something if Allah, the Exalted, dislikes it. This has been described as an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. A Muslim should therefore, not dislike things or people according to their own desires. If one dislikes another according to their own desires they should never allow it to affect their speech or actions as it is sinful. A Muslim should strive to remove the feeling by treating the other according to the teachings of Islam meaning, with respect and kindness. A Muslim should remember that other people are not perfect just like they are not perfect. And if others possess a bad characteristic they will undoubtedly possess good qualities also. Therefore, a Muslim should advise others to abandon their bad characteristics but continue to love the good qualities they possess.

Another point must be made on this topic. A Muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their scholar's opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a Muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims should not turn away from each other. This means they should not sever ties with other Muslims over worldly issues thereby refusing to support them according to the teachings of Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6077, it is unlawful for a Muslim to sever ties with another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. In fact, the one who severs ties for more than a year over a worldly issue is considered like the one who has killed another Muslim. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4915. Severing ties with others is only lawful in matters of faith. But even then a Muslim should continue to advise the other Muslim to sincerely repent and only avoid their company if they refuse to change for the better. They should still support them on lawful things when they are requested to do so as this act of kindness may inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims are commanded to be like brothers to one another. This is only achievable if they obey the previous advice given in this Hadith and strive to fulfil their duty towards other Muslims according to the teachings of Islam, such as helping others in matters of good and warning them from evil matters. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, advises that a Muslim should fulfil the following rights of other Muslims: they are to return the Islamic greeting of peace, to visit the sick, to take part in their funeral prayers and to reply to the sneezer who praises Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim must learn and fulfil all the rights other people, especially other Muslims, have over them.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a Muslim should not wrong, forsake or hate another Muslim. The sins a person commits should be hated but the sinner should not be as they may sincerely repent at any time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4884, that whoever humiliates another Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will humiliate them. And whoever protects a Muslim from humiliation will be protected by Allah, the Exalted.

The negative characteristics mentioned in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning can develop when one adopts pride. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, pride is when one looks down on

others in contempt. The proud person sees themselves as perfect while seeing others as imperfect. This prevents them from fulfilling the rights of others and encourages them to dislike others.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that true piety is not in one's physical appearance, such as wearing beautiful clothes, but it is an internal characteristic. This internal characteristic manifests outwardly in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is purified the whole body becomes purified but when the spiritual heart is corrupt the whole body becomes corrupt. It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge based on outward appearances, such as wealth, but He considers the intentions and actions of people. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6542. Therefore, a Muslim must strive to adopt internal piety through learning and acting on the teachings of Islam so that it manifests outwardly in the way they interact with Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that it is a sin for a Muslim to hate another Muslim. This hatred applies to worldly things and not disliking others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, loving and hating for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of perfecting one's faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. But even then a Muslim must show respect to others in all cases and dislike only their sins without actually hating the person. In addition, their dislike must never cause them to act against the teachings of Islam as this would prove their hatred is based on their own desires and not for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The root cause of despising others for worldly reasons is pride. It is vital to understand that

an atom's worth of pride is enough to take one to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a Muslim's life, property and honour are all sacred. A Muslim must not violate any of these rights without a just reason. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true Muslim until they protect other people, including non-Muslims, from their harmful speech and actions. And a true believer is the one who keeps their evil away from the lives and property of others. Whoever violates these rights will not be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then justice will be established on Judgment Day whereby the good deeds of the oppressor will be given to the victim and if necessary the sins of the victim will be given to the oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should treat others exactly how they want people to treat them. This will lead to much blessings for an individual and create unity within their society.



## **Anticipating the Last Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him**

Prior to the announcement of Prophethood the scholars of Judaism and Christianity, who were mainly living in Medina, were all awaiting and anticipating the arrival of the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, as he had been described in detail in their divine scriptures. This has been confirmed in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 146 of the Holy Quran:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him [i.e., Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it].”*

For example, there was a Jewish scholar named Yusha. He would often declare that the time was near for a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, to be sent to the people of Arabia. He would urge people to believe in this final Holy Prophet, peace and be upon them, if they lived to his time and witnessed his call. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared Prophethood the same people Yusha urged to accept this final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted him and became Muslims but Yusha himself rejected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Islam out of envy and evil. This incident has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 212.

It is important for Muslims to avoid the major sin of envy. In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4210, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

Envy is a serious and major sin because the envier's problem is not with another person in reality it is with Allah, the Exalted, as He is the One who granted the blessing which is envied. So a person's envy only demonstrates their displeasure with the allocation and choice of Allah, the Exalted. They believe Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake when He allocated a particular blessing to another person instead of them.

Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when the envier strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing. Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feelings and strives to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing. Even though this type is not a sin it is considered disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and praiseworthy if it is over a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first person who can be lawfully envied is the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second person who can be lawfully envied is the one who uses their knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

An envious Muslim should strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person envied such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

One of the reasons why many of the Jewish and Christian scholars rejected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was out of envy. They envied the fact that he was a descendent of the Holy Prophet Ismaeel, peace be upon him, instead of being a descendent of the Holy Prophet Ishaq, peace be upon him, like they were. Even though this was a foolish reason to reject Islam but in reality they were under the impression that the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, would greatly honor them and appoint them as leaders for mankind out of some loyalty to brotherhood. According to their belief this leadership would increase them in social status and wealth. But when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, constructively criticized their blatant disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, which was fueled by their extreme love for wealth and social status they rejected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Islam.

It is therefore vital for Muslims to avoid the excess love for wealth and social status. In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that craving for wealth and status is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are set free on a herd of sheep.

This shows that hardly any of a Muslim's faith remains secure if they crave after wealth and fame in this world just as hardly any of the sheep will be saved from two hungry wolves. So this great similitude contains a severe warning against the evil of craving after excess wealth and social status in the world.

The first type of craving for wealth is when one has extreme love for wealth and strives without fatigue to acquire it through lawful means. To behave in such a manner is not the sign of wise person as a Muslim should firmly believe their provision is guaranteed to them and this allotment can never change. In fact, the provision of the creation was allocated over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. This person will undoubtedly neglect their duties as they are too preoccupied with obtaining wealth. A body which is too busy acquiring wealth will never prepare adequately for the hereafter. In fact, this person will dedicate so much effort to acquiring wealth that they may not even get a chance to enjoy it. Instead, they will depart this world and leave it behind for other people to enjoy even though they will be held accountable for it. This person may acquire wealth lawfully but they will still not find peace of mind as no matter how much they obtain they will only desire more. This person is needy and therefore, a real pauper even if they possess much wealth.

The only craving which is beneficial is craving for accumulating true wealth namely, righteous deeds in order to prepare for one's day of return.

The second type of craving for wealth is similar to the first type but in addition to it this type of person acquires wealth through unlawful means and fails to fulfil the rights of people, such as the obligatory charity. The

Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned against this in many Hadiths. For example, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6576, he warned that this attitude destroyed the past nations as they made unlawful things lawful, withheld the rights of others and killed others for the sake of excess wealth. This person strives for the wealth they are not entitled to which leads to countless major sins. When one adopts this attitude they become intensely greedy. As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1961, the greedy person is far from Allah, the Exalted, far from Paradise, far from people and close to Hell. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3114, warns that extreme greed and true faith will never combine in the heart of a true Muslim.

If a Muslim adopts this type of craving then the extreme danger of it is clear even to an uneducated Muslim. It will destroy their faith until nothing except a little remains just like the main Hadith under discussion warns that this destruction to one's faith is more severe than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are let loose on a herd of sheep. This Muslim risks losing the little faith they possess at the moment of their death, which is the greatest loss. A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than craving for excess wealth. A person will often spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and prestige.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise the hereafter over the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but if someone receives it without asking for it they will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. This is the reason the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not appoint a person who requested to be appointed in a

position of authority or even showed desire for it. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6923. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment. This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worse type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, that this person will go to Hell.

Therefore, it is safer for a Muslim to avoid the craving for excess wealth and high social status as they are two things which can lead to the destruction of their faith by distracting them from preparing adequately for the hereafter.

## **Blind Loyalty**

Some of the scholars of Judaism and Christianity would openly admit that the signs mentioned in their divine scriptures of the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, matched the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 146:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him [i.e., Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it].”*

But some simply rejected him and Islam out of blind loyalty to their people who stubbornly rejected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, out of envy and enmity. For example, a Jewish scholar named Abdullah Bin Suriya once sat with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and admitted that he was the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, as his signs and characteristics were clear in their divine scriptures. When he was questioned why he did not accept Islam when he knew the truth he simply replied that he disliked to disagree with his people and added that if his people accepted Islam so would he. This incident is recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 234.

It is vital for Muslims to never blindly follow people especially in situations which involve the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, a Muslim should carefully choose their companions as they will always have a

positive or negative effect on them. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5534, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the difference between a good and bad companion. The good companion is like a person who sells perfume. Their companion will either obtain some perfume or at least be affected by the pleasant smell. Whereas, a bad companion is like a blacksmith, if their companion does not burn their clothes they will certainly be affected by the smoke.

Muslims must understand that the people they accompany will have an effect on them whether this affect is positive or negative, obvious or subtle. It is not possible to accompany someone and not be affected by it. A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4833, confirms that a person is on their companion's religion. Meaning, a person adopts the characteristics of their companion. It is therefore important for Muslims to always accompany the righteous as they will undoubtedly affect them in a positive way meaning, they will inspire them to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Whereas, bad companions will either inspire one to disobey Allah, the Exalted, or they will encourage a Muslim to concentrate on the material world over preparing for the hereafter. This attitude will become a great regret for them on Judgment Day even if the things they strive for are lawful but beyond their needs.

Finally, as a person will end up with those they love in the hereafter according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, a Muslim must practically show they love for the righteous by accompanying them in this world. But if they accompany bad or heedless people then it proves and indicates they love for them and their ultimate destination in the hereafter. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:



*“Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous.”*

## **Solitude and Reflection**

The first indication of revelation to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came in the form of true dreams. Every dream he witnessed came true. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then developed a liking for solitude. He would spend time alone in the cave of Hira, where he would seek religious purification through devotions. This has been recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403.

It has been suggested by some scholars that the religious devotions the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, performed at this time, prior to the first revelation being revealed to him, was reflection. This reflection on the creation of the Heavens and the Earth and on the teachings of Islam is a powerful way of increasing the strength of one's faith. In fact, a great obstacle to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is weakness of faith. It is a blameworthy characteristic which gives rise to other negative characteristics, such as failing to act on one's knowledge, fearing others, placing the obedience of people above the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, having hope in forgiveness without striving for it and other undesired characteristics. The greatest affliction of weakness of faith is that it allows one to commit sins, such as neglecting the obligatory duties. The root cause of weakness of faith is ignorance of Islam.

One should strive to gain knowledge in order to strengthen their faith. With time they will eventually reach certainty of faith which is so strong that it safeguards a person through all tests and trials and ensures they fulfil their duties both religious and worldly. This knowledge is obtained when one

studies the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Specifically, those teachings which discuss the promises of reward for those who are obedient and the punishment for those who are disobedient to Allah, the Exalted. This creates fear of punishment and hope of reward in a Muslim's heart which acts like a pull and push mechanism towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

One can strengthen their faith by reflecting on the creations within the Heavens and the Earth. When done correctly this clearly indicates the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, and His infinite power. 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...”*

For example, if a Muslim ponders over the night and day and how perfectly in sync they are and the other things linked to them they will truly believe that this is not a random thing meaning, there is a force which ensures everything runs like clockwork. This is the infinite power of Allah, the Exalted. In addition, if one ponders over the perfect timing of the night and day they will realise it clearly indicates that there is only one God namely, Allah, the Exalted. If there were more than one God each god would desire the night and day to occur according to their own desire. This would lead to utter chaos as one God might desire the Sun to rise whereas the other God might desire the night to continue. The perfect uninterrupted system found within the universe proves there is only one God namely, Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 22:

*“Had there been within them [i.e., the heavens and earth] gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined...”*

Another thing which can strengthen one's faith is to persist in righteous deeds and abstain from all sins. As faith is belief supported by actions it weakens when sins are committed and strengthens when good deeds are performed. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 5662, that a Muslim is not a believer when they drink alcohol.

## **Sincerity to Allah, the Exalted**

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403, discusses the first revelation to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When he was in the cave of Hira the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, came to him and revealed the first word namely, “recite”. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he was unlettered. When this exchange happened a few times the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, then recited the first five verses of chapter 96 Al Alaq to him and left:

*“Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not.”*

An important thing to note, is that the first verse ever revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicates the importance of sincerity to Allah, the Exalted. This means a Muslim should always act and speak in order to please Allah, the Exalted.

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.

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.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. A Muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or

enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all Muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that even slightly showing off is polytheism.

This is a minor type of polytheism which does not cause one to lose their faith. Instead it leads to the loss of reward as this Muslim acted for the sake of pleasing people when they should have acted to please Allah, the Exalted. In fact, these people will be told on Judgment Day to seek their reward from those they acted for, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

If the Devil cannot prevent one from performing righteous deeds he will attempt to corrupt their intention thereby destroying their reward. If he cannot corrupt their intention in an obvious way he tries to corrupt it through subtle ways. This includes when people subtly show off their righteous deeds to others. Sometimes it is so subtle that the person themselves are not fully aware of what they are doing. As gaining and acting on knowledge is a duty on all, according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, claiming ignorance will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.



Subtly showing off often occurs through social media and one's speech. For example, a Muslim might inform others they are fasting even though no one directly asked them if they were fasting. Another example is when one publically recites the Holy Quran from memory in front of others thereby showing others they have memorized the Holy Quran. Even criticizing oneself publically can be considered showing off one's humility to others.

To conclude, showing off subtly destroys a Muslim's reward and must be avoided in order to safeguard their righteous deeds. This is only possible by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge, such as how to safeguard one's speech.

## Importance of Knowledge

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403, discusses the first revelation to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When he was in the cave of Hira the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, came to him and revealed the first word namely, “recite”. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he was unlettered. When this exchange happened a few times the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, then recited the first five verses of chapter 96 Al Alaq to him and left:

*“Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not.”*

An important thing to note, is that the first verses to be revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicates the importance of gaining and acting on knowledge.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2645, that when Allah, the Exalted, desires to give someone good He provides them with Islamic knowledge.

There is no doubt that every Muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith desires good in both worlds. Even though many Muslims incorrectly believe that this good which they desire lies in fame, wealth, authority, companionship and their career this Hadith makes it crystal clear that true lasting good lies in gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. It is important to note a branch of religious knowledge is useful worldly knowledge whereby one earns lawful provision in order to fulfil their necessities and the necessities of their dependents. Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has pointed out where good lies yet it is a shame how many Muslims do not place much value in this. They in most cases only strive to obtain the bare minimum of Islamic knowledge in order to fulfil their obligatory duties and fail to acquire and act on more such as the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Instead they dedicate their efforts on worldly things believing true good is found there. Many Muslims fail to appreciate that the righteous predecessors had to journey for weeks on end just to learn a single verse or Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, whereas today one can study Islamic teachings without leaving their home. Yet, many fail to make use of this blessing given to the modern day Muslims. Out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, through his Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has not only pointed out where true good lies but He has also placed this good at one's finger tips. Allah, the Exalted, has informed mankind of where an eternal buried treasure is located which can solve all the problems they may encounter in both worlds. But Muslims will only obtain this good once they struggle to acquire and act on it.

A great distraction which prevents one from submitting to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is ignorance. It can be argued that it is the origin of every sin as the one who truly knows the consequences of sins would never commit them. This refers to true beneficial knowledge which is knowledge that is acted upon. In reality, all knowledge which is not acted on is not beneficial knowledge. The example of the one who behaves in this manner is described in the Holy Quran as a donkey which carries

books of knowledge which do not benefit it. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

*“...and then did not take it on (did not act upon knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]...”*

A person who acts on their knowledge rarely slips up and commits sins intentionally. In fact, when this occurs it is only caused by a moment of ignorance where a person forgets to act on their knowledge which results in them sinning.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once highlighted the seriousness of ignorance in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2322. He declared that everything in the material world is cursed except for the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, whatever is connected to this remembrance, the scholar and the student of knowledge. This means that all the blessings in the material world will become a curse for the one who is ignorant as they will misuse them thereby committing sins.

In fact, ignorance can be considered a person's worse enemy as it prevents them from protecting themselves from harm and gaining benefit all of which can only be achieved through acting on knowledge. The ignorant commits sins without being aware of them. How can one avoid a sin if they do not know what is considered a sin? Ignorance causes one to neglect their obligatory duties. How can one fulfil their duties if they are unaware of what their duties are?

It is therefore a duty on all Muslims to gain enough knowledge to fulfil all their obligatory duties and avoid sins. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

## Natural Fear and Anxiety

As mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403, after the first divine revelation the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned back to his home and wife while his heart was pounding. He asked his wife to cover him up with a blanket because of his anxiety and fear.

This incident indicates that being emotional within limits is acceptable when facing different situations such as being sad during a difficult time. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reacted in a normal and natural way and was not criticized by Allah, the Exalted, as showing emotion is a part of being human. As long as the emotion is within the limits of Islam it is completely acceptable to show it. No one expects a Muslim to act like a robot in difficult situations. In each situation, a Muslim should maintain a balance whereby they release their tension through their emotions without crossing the limits of Islam. This has been indicated in chapter 57 Al Hadid, verse 23:

*“In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you. And Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful.”*

This verse does not prohibit a person from being sad or happy. But it advises one not to be extreme in these two emotions namely, grief and to be exultant both of which can lead to sins.

A Muslim should always remember that as long as they remain within these limits they will successfully overcome all difficulties, earn reward and blessings in both worlds. This has been indicated at the end of this great event where Allah, the Exalted, granted safety to the one who obeyed Him. This safety may not be obvious to a Muslim in the short term but it will eventually be revealed to them in this world or in the next.

## **Sincerity to Others**

As mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403, after the first divine revelation the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned back to his home and wife while his heart was pounding. He asked his wife to cover him up with a blanket because of anxiety and fear. After relating what had occurred with the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, to his wife she demonstrated sincerity to him by comforting him in his moment of stress.

It is important for Muslims to show this sincerity to others as it is a part of faith. 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 the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.



It is a part of sincerity towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of sincerity includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For example, one may sacrifice purchasing certain things in order to donate the wealth to the needy. Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of sincerity towards others. Whereas, dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 53:

*“...Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them...”*

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a Muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

*“...And do good as Allah has done good to you...”*

## **A Wife's Honesty**

As mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403, after the first divine revelation the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned back to his home and wife while his heart was pounding. He asked his wife to cover him up with a blanket because of anxiety and fear. After relating what had occurred with the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, to his wife she demonstrated sincerity to him by comforting him in his moment of stress. She achieved this while sticking to the truth and by narrating some of the blessed characteristics of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to reassure him that he had nothing to fear. The first blessed characteristic of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, she mentioned was that he maintained his ties of kinship.

Upholding the ties of kinship is a vital aspect of Islam which cannot be abandoned if one desires success in both worlds. A true sign of one's faith is not spending all day worshipping Allah, the Exalted, in a Mosque but it is to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and to fulfill the rights of the creation. One of the most important rights of the creation is to uphold the ties of kinship. One can feign piety by dressing Islamically but they cannot deceive Allah, the Exalted. When one turns the pages of history they will always observe that the pious servants of Allah, the Exalted, maintained their ties of kinship. Even when their relative's mistreated them they still responded with kindness. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6525, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, will always aid the one who strives to maintain their ties of kinship even if their relatives make things difficult for them.

Replying good with good is not special whereas, replying good to evil is the sign of a sincere believer. The former behavior is even seen in animals. In most cases, when one treats an animal kindly it will in turn show affection back. It is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5991, that the one who truly upholds the bonds of kinship is the one who maintains ties even when their relatives sever them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was constantly terrorized by most of his relatives but he always showed kindness towards them.

It is commonly known that one cannot achieve success without the closeness of Allah, the Exalted. But in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5987, Allah, the Exalted, has clearly declared that He will sever bonds with the one who cuts their ties of kinship over worldly reasons. Bear in mind, this is true irrespective of how much one struggles to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship such as, the obligatory prayers. If Allah, the Exalted, cuts ties with a Muslim how can they achieve His closeness and eternal success?

In addition, in most cases Allah, the Exalted, delays the punishment of sins in order to give people the opportunity to repent. But breaking the ties

of kinship over worldly reasons is punished swiftly. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4212.

Unfortunately, severing ties is commonly seen in the world today. People easily sever ties of kinship over petty worldly reasons. They fail to recognize that any loss which occurs in the material world is temporary but if they are disconnected from Allah, the Exalted, they will face prolonged suffering in both worlds.

A reason for breaking the ties of kinship which is commonly seen within the Islamic community is when one reaches a higher social status through their occupation. This inspires them to discard their relatives as they believe they are not worthy of interacting with them anymore. Their love for their wealth and social status pushes them to the doors of paranoia which convinces them that their relatives only wish to take their wealth from them.

The Holy Quran indicates that these bonds will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 1:

*“...And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever over you, an Observer.”*

This verse also clearly indicates that one cannot obtain piety without upholding the ties of kinship. So those who believe they can achieve it through excess worship and fasting are proven wrong and must therefore change their behaviour.

Islam teaches Muslims to uphold all ties of kinship by aiding their relatives in matters which are good whenever and wherever possible. They have been ordered to adopt a constructive mindset which unites relatives for the benefit of society rather than a destructive mentality which only causes divisions within families. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, creating divisions amongst people leads to one's destruction.

Those who sever their ties of kinship have been cursed in the Holy Quran. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verses 22-23:

*“So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your [ties of] relationship? Those [who do so] are the ones that Allah has cursed...”*

How can one achieve their lawful desires in this world or in the next when they are encompassed with the curse of Allah, the Exalted, and deprived of His mercy?

Islam does not order one to go beyond their means in supporting their relatives nor does it ask them to sacrifice the limits of Allah, the Exalted, for their relatives as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2625. Therefore, one should never join their relatives in acts of evil. In this case, a Muslim should command their relatives to do good and gently forbid them from evil while maintaining respect for them. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Countless benefits are obtained by the one who maintains the ties of kinship for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who maintains ties will be blessed with extra grace in their provision and in their life. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1693. This means that their provision irrespective of how little it is will be enough for them and it will provide them with peace of mind and body. Grace in life means they will find time to fulfill all their religious and worldly duties. These are two blessings Muslims spend their whole life and wealth trying to obtain but many fail to recognize that Allah, the Exalted, has placed both of them in maintaining ties of kinship.

Maintaining ties of kinship is so important that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered Muslims to fulfill this vital duty even with their non-Muslim relatives. A Hadith advising this is found in Sahih Muslim, number 2324.

One of the traps of the Devil is that he aims to create dissension between relatives and within society which leads to broken families and social divisions. His ultimate goal is to weaken Islam as a nation. Unfortunately, some have become infamous for harboring grudges which go on for decades and pass on from generation to generation. A person will treat a relative well for decades but over one mistake and argument the latter will vow never to speak to them again. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6526, that it is unlawful for a Muslim to cut off ties from another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. If this is the command regarding severing ties with a non-relative can one imagine the seriousness of severing ties with relatives? This question has been answered in Sahih Bukhari, number 5984. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared that the one who severs ties with a relative over worldly reasons will not enter Paradise.

One must reflect on the verses and Hadiths which discuss this important topic and realize that if after decades of sins Allah, the Exalted, does not close His doors or sever links with people why do people so easily turn their backs on their relatives over small worldly issues? This must change if one desires for their connection to Allah, the Exalted, to remain intact.

The next blessed characteristic of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned by Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, in order to comfort him in his moment of stress was that he always spoke the truth.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2501, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that whoever is silent is saved.

This means the one who is silent from vain or evil speech and only speaks good words will be saved by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This is important to understand as the main reason people will enter Hell is because of their speech. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616. In fact, it only takes a single evil word to cause a person to plunge into Hell on Judgement Day which has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

Speech can be of three types. The first is evil speech which should be avoided at all costs. The second is vain speech which only causes one to waste time which will lead to a great regret on Judgment Day. In addition, the first step of sinful speech is often vain speech. So it is safer to avoid this type of speech. The final type is good speech which should always be adopted. Based on these aspects two thirds of speech should be removed from one's life.

In addition, the one who speaks too much will only reflect on their actions and the hereafter a little as this requires silence. This will prevent one from assessing their deeds which inspires one to perform more righteous deeds and sincerely repent from their sins. This person will then be prevented from changing for the better.



Finally, those who speak too much often discuss worldly things and things which are entertaining and fun. This will cause them to adopt a mentality whereby they dislike discussing or listening to serious issues like death and the hereafter. This will prevent them from preparing adequately for the hereafter which will lead to a great regret and a potential punishment.

All of this can be avoided if one simply remains silent from sinful and vain speech and instead only speaks good words. Therefore, the one who is silent in this way will be saved from trouble in this world and from punishment in the next world.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness has three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the

things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a Muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

The next blessed characteristic of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned by Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, in order to comfort him in his moment of stress was that he always helped the needy and those facing difficulties.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever relieves the distress of a Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will relieve a hardship from them on the Day of Judgment.

This shows that a Muslim is treated by Allah, the Exalted, in the same way they act. There are many examples of this within the teachings of Islam. For example, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

*“So remember Me; I will remember you...”*

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who shows mercy to others will receive mercy from Allah, the Exalted.

A distress is anything which causes someone to fall into anxiety and difficulty. Therefore, the one who eases such a distress for another whether worldly or religious for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from a hardship on Judgment Day by Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in different ways in many Hadiths. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449, that the one who feeds a hungry Muslim will be fed the fruits of Paradise on the Day of Judgment. And the one who gives a drink to a thirsty Muslim will be given a drink from Paradise by Allah, the Exalted, on the Day of Judgment.

As the difficulties of the hereafter are much greater than those found in the world this reward is held back for a Muslim until they reach the hereafter.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Allah, the Exalted, will continue helping a Muslim as long as they are helping others. A Muslim must understand that when they strive for something or are aided by another person to complete a particular task the outcome may be successful or end in failure. But when Allah, the Exalted, helps someone with anything a successful outcome is guaranteed. Therefore, Muslims should, for their own sake, strive to help others in all good things so that they receive the help of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1601, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who consoles a grief stricken person will be clothed with a garment of honor on Judgment Day.

As facing difficulties is guaranteed for all this is an extremely simple way of obtaining a great reward which does not require much time, energy or money. This includes striving to aid the family facing a difficulty according to one's means, such as emotional, financial and physical support. A Muslim must gently encourage those facing difficulties to remain patient throughout the ordeal and remind them of the verses of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which discuss the importance and great reward of being patient. They should speak positively by reminding them that things only occur for a good reason even if people fail to understand the wisdom behind them. In reality, a person does not have to be a scholar to perform this righteous deed as in most cases a few kind words of support are enough to make someone facing difficulties feel better. And in some cases just physically being there is enough to provide them with the feeling of support even if no words are spoken.

Finally, it is important Muslims correct their intention when performing this righteous deed meaning, do it for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not do it in order to show off to others, such as their relatives, nor do it out of fear of being criticized by others if they fail to do it. Those who act for the sake of others will be told on Judgment Day to gain their reward from those they acted for which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

## **A Warning of Difficulties**

As mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 403, after the first divine revelation the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned back to his home and related the incident with the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, to his wife Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her. She took him to her cousin, Waraqah Bin Nawfal, who was a Christian and had studied the previous divine scriptures. When he was informed of what had occurred he confirmed that this was the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, and warned the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that his people would become hostile towards him because of what he had and will be given meaning, the Holy Quran and the message of Islam.

It is important to understand that generally when one chooses a path which is different from the path of others, such as their relatives and friends, they will face criticism and resistance from them. In fact, the majority of criticism comes from a person's relatives. For example, when a Muslim decides to concentrate more on acting on the teachings of Islam and if it is something their family have not pursued themselves then they will face criticism from them. They will be labelled foolish and extreme by those who they believed would support them on their path. It is important for Muslims to remain steadfast on the lawful path they choose and trust in the help of Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in order to overcome these difficulties.

This is a common reaction from people for when a person chooses a different path in life from others it makes them feel as if their path is bad

or evil and this is the reason the person has chosen a different path. Even though the person does not believe this but only chooses a different path believing it is better for them yet they will still face criticism. It is the same reason all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were criticised by their people as they chose and passively invited others to a different better path.

To conclude, as long as one's path in life is lawful they should remain steadfast and not be deterred by the criticism of others. But this does not mean they should not try to improve their situation and character. It means they should not be deterred from pursuing their lawful choice according to the teachings of Islam.

A Muslim should always remember that there are two types of people. The first are rightly guided as their criticism of others is based on the criticism and advice found in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This type will always be constructive and guide one to blessings and the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. These people will also refrain from over or under praising others. Over praising others can cause them to become proud and arrogant. Under praising others can lead them to becoming lazy and put them off from doing good. This reaction is often observed in children. Praising according to the teachings of Islam will inspire others to strive harder in both worldly and religious matters and it will prevent them from becoming arrogant. Therefore, the praise and constructive criticism of this person should be accepted and acted upon even if comes from a stranger.

The second type of person criticises based on their own desires. This criticism is mostly unconstructive and only shows one's bad mood and

attitude. These people often over and under praise others as they act based on their own desires. The negative effects of these two were mentioned earlier. Therefore, the criticism and praise of this person should be ignored in the majority of cases even if it comes from a loved one as it will only cause one to become unnecessarily sad in cases of criticism and arrogant in cases of praise.

It is important to remember that a person who over praises others will often over criticise them too. The rule one should always follow is that they should only accept the criticism and praise based on the teachings of Islam. All other things should be ignored and not taken personally.



## Listening to Knowledge

In the early period of divine revelation due to his eagerness to receive the divine revelation the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used to join the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, through recitation. Allah, the Exalted, then ordered him to carefully listen to the revelation and promised him He would store it in his heart and enable him to recite and announce it after. Allah, the Exalted, would clarify, explain and enable him to fully understand it also. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 936. Chapter 75 Al Qiyamah, verses 16-19:

*“Move not your tongue with it, [O Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], to hasten with it [i.e., recitation of the Quran]. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Gabriel], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you].”*

One of the lessons to learn from this incident is that a Muslim should not only carefully listen to knowledge but also strive to act on it. Even though, the number of preachers has increased over time and accessing information has become easier yet the strength of Muslims has only weakened. One of the reasons is that many Muslims have adopted a mentality which has hindered them from learning and acting on Islamic knowledge namely, they believe merely listening to Islamic knowledge is good enough to succeed. This is a trap of the Devil and completely contradicts the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. They not only listened to religious knowledge but they fully intended and fulfilled this intention by acting on

the knowledge they heard. Failing to act in this way has caused the faith of Muslims to weaken. It is the reason why some Muslims have spent decades attending religious gatherings and talks yet have not changed for the better at all. The danger of this attitude is that eventually people will fall lower by believing that they can simply declare Islam with their tongues without the need to listen or act on religious teachings. Muslims will be left with ignorance as their guide which will only lead them to destruction.

## **A Public Call to Islam**

When the Companions of the Holy Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, became around 38 in number Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, urged the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to proclaim and invite others openly. When this was agreed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the sacred area around the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, and Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, rose and addressed all who were present in and around the Mosque while the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, remained seated next to him. He was the first man who openly called people towards accepting Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When the non-Muslims of Mecca heard his call they became extremely angry and violent fights broke out in the Mosque between them and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, was badly wounded. He was taken to his home where he regained consciousness and enquired about the state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This incident has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 319-320.

This incident reminds Muslims the importance of remaining steadfast whenever they are attacked by their enemies namely, the Devil, their inner Devil and those who invite them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should not turn their back on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whenever they are tempted by these enemies. They should instead remain steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is achieved by avoiding the places, things and people who invite and tempt them towards sins and the

disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Avoiding the traps of the Devil is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. The same way traps on a path are only avoided by possessing knowledge of them similarly; Islamic knowledge is required to avoid the traps of the Devil. For example, a Muslim might spend much time reciting the Holy Quran but because of their ignorance they might destroy their righteous deeds without realising it through sins such as, backbiting. A Muslim is bound to face these attacks so they should therefore prepare for them through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return gain an uncountable reward. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed right guidance for those who struggle in this way for His sake. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

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

Whereas facing these attacks with ignorance and disobedience will only lead one to difficulties and disgrace in both worlds. The same way a soldier that possesses no weapons to defend himself would be defeated; an ignorant Muslim will have no weapon to defend himself when facing these attacks which will result in their defeat. Whereas, the knowledgeable Muslim is provided with the most powerful weapon which cannot be overcome or beaten namely, sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved through sincerely gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

## **Steadfast on the Truth**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, continued to call upon people to believe in Allah, the Exalted, day and night, secretly and openly, without anyone being able to deter, dissuade or prevent him. He followed people everywhere into their celebrations, meetings and gatherings, to the fairs and to the pilgrimage stations. Everyone he met, a free person or slave, weak or powerful, rich or poor he called towards Islam; as far as he was concerned all were equal and alike. In the face of physical and verbal violence he continued his mission without weakness or hopelessness. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 334.

It is important for Muslims to adopt steadfastness on the teachings of Islam. 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.”*



## **Equality**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, continued to call upon people to believe in Allah, the Exalted, day and night, secretly and openly, without anyone being able to deter, dissuade or prevent him. Everyone he met, a free person or slave, weak or powerful, rich or poor he called towards Islam; as far as he was concerned all were equal and alike. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 334.

This struggle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in inviting all people towards Islam clearly indicates the importance of equality in Islam.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6543, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge people based on their outward appearance or their wealth instead He observes and judges people's inward intention and their physical actions.

The first thing to note is that a Muslim should always correct their intention when performing any deed as Allah, the Exalted, will only reward them when they perform righteous deeds for His sake. Those who perform deeds for the sake of other people and things will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for on Judgment Day, which will not be

possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this Hadith indicates the importance of equality in Islam. A person is not superior to others by worldly things such as their ethnicity or wealth. Even though, many Muslims have erected these barriers such as social castes and sects thereby believing some are better than others Islam has clearly rejected this concept and declared that in this respect all people are equal in the sight of Islam. The only thing which makes one Muslim superior to another is their piety meaning, how much they fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. 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 busy themselves in obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His rights and the rights of people and not believe that something they possess or belong to will somehow save them from punishment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, that the Muslim who lacks in righteous deeds meaning, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, will not be increased in rank because of their lineage. In reality, this applies to all worldly things such as wealth, ethnicity, gender or social brotherhoods and castes.

## **Accepting and Standing Firm on the Truth**

Even though the majority of the relatives of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, violently opposed him his uncle, Abu Talib, who never accepted Islam, favored him above all other men for his fine qualities. He treated the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with the utmost compassion and kindness and gave him his support and protection. In doing this he was in opposition to his own people and religion. Even though Abu Talib did extend his tribal protection to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and loved him very much yet he never accepted Islam out of misplaced loyalty to his people even though he knew Islam was the truth. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 337.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel

which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam. Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## **Patience in the Face of Evil**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would take every opportunity to call people towards Islam. But those who opposed him such as his uncle Abu Lahab strived hard against him in order to prevent the message of Islam from spreading. For example, during the fair of Dhu Al Majaz, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, called people towards Islam. His uncle, Abu Lahab, would follow him everywhere he went and would hurl lies and abuses at him. This incident has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 335.

This incident shows the importance of remaining patient whenever one strives in doing things which are good. Whenever one invites others towards Islam, commands good and forbids evil they will be challenging the heedless lifestyle of many others which will inspire them to resist the truth anyway they can. The major reason all the past nations rejected their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, was due to this very reason. They could not abandon their lifestyles and characteristics and in defense of them were prepared to wage war against Allah, the Exalted, and their Holy Prophet, peace be upon him. When one takes up this important duty they must be prepared to face many hardships caused by others including their own relatives. The Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, are the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they encountered countless difficulties from their nations. One only needs to study the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to observe this fact. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once declared in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2472, that no one in creation had been persecuted in the path of Allah, the Exalted, more than him.

In cases like this one's response to the bad attitude of others should be educated, respectful and gentle. An example of this is found in chapter 19 Maryam, verses 46-47:

*"[His father] said, "Have you no desire for my gods, O Abraham? If you do not desist, I will surely stone you, so avoid me a prolonged time." [Abraham] said, "Peace [i.e., safety] will be upon you. I will ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Indeed, He is ever gracious to me."*

Here the kind and respectful response of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, to the harsh attitude of his elder is discussed.

In most cases, a person must possess a character flaw if they claim to get along with everyone. Due to the differences within the members of society a person will never get along with everyone. They will always be one or more that disagree with their mentality, life style and advice. This diversity will lead to tension and occasionally problems. But if a person is liked by everyone then in most cases it shows they have adopted the mentality of the hypocrites by being two-faced. If the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were not loved by all how can a normal person achieve this status? This is the reason one should not believe in propaganda as the group that were mistreated the most in this way were the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023.

For example, the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, was once falsely accused of illegal relations by a shameless woman. She was enticed into slandering him by the enemy of Allah, the Exalted, Quraoon. When she accused the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, publically during a religious gathering he interrogated her. When she observed his reaction she immediately retracted her accusation and admitted the truth. As a result Allah, the Exalted, destroyed Quraoon by commanding the Earth to swallow him and his great treasury. This incident has been recorded in Imam Dhahabi's, *The Major Sins*, Pages 166-167. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 81:

*“And We caused the earth to swallow him and his home...”*

The Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were slandered on many occasions but they remained steadfast on their mission until they were granted victory by Allah, the Exalted. When Allah, the Exalted, decides to complete a task like aiding the one who spreads the true word of faith the entire creation combined cannot stop Him.

Muslims must accept that they too will face hardships when spreading the word of Islam. Therefore, they must follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, by remaining steadfast in the face of difficulties. This was the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. If one desires to join them in the next world they must adopt this attitude also.



In addition, the attitude demonstrated by Abu Lahab in this particular incident is an aspect of hypocrisy which Muslims must avoid.

This type of person spreads corruption in society. This negative characteristic affects all social levels beginning from a family unit and ending at the international level. This type of person dislikes seeing people uniting on good as this may cause the worldly status of others to increase beyond their own. This drives them to backbiting and slander in order to cause people to turn against each other. Their evil attitude destroys their own ties of kinship and when they observe other families who are happy it drives them to destroy their happiness also. They are fault finders who dedicate their time unveiling the mistakes of others in order to drag their social status down. They are the first people to begin gossiping about others and act deaf whenever good things are spoken about. Peace and quiet disturbs them so they seek to create problems in order to entertain themselves. They fail to remember the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546. It advises that whoever covers the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will cover their faults. But whoever seeks out and unveils the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults to the people. So in reality, this type of person is only unveiling their own faults to society even though they believe they are exposing the faults of others.

## **Justice in Business**

A man once brought into Mecca some camels which he sold to the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Jahl. But Abu Jahl delayed paying for them and when the man requested help from the people of Mecca as he was a stranger in the city the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, aided him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took the man to the home of Abu Jahl, knocked on his door and when he answered he commanded him to pay the man what was owed. With great fear Abu Jahl hurried inside his home and returned with the money and the man left after thanking the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Later on Abu Jahl told people that during the incident his heart was full of terror and when he opened the door he saw a dangerous and angry stallion camel next to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and he feared the creature would eat him so he paid the man what was due. This incident has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 340-341.

This incident indicates the importance of being honest and just in all business dealings. In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2146, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that merchants will be raised as immoral people on Judgment Day except those who fear Allah, the Exalted, act righteously and speak the truth.

This Hadith applies to all those who take part in business transactions. It is extremely important to fear Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes treating others kindly according to the teachings

of Islam. In respect to business dealings a Muslim should be honest in their speech by disclosing all the details of the transaction to all who are involved. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2079, warns that when Muslims hide things in financial transactions, such as defects in their goods, it will lead to a loss in blessings.

Acting righteously includes not striving to con others by making them pay excessively for goods. A Muslim should simply treat others how they desire to be treated meaning, with honesty and full disclosure. The same way, a Muslim would not like to be mistreated in financial matters they should not mistreat others.

Those conducting business should always avoid lying as it leads to immorality and immortality leads to Hell. In fact, a person will keep telling and acting on lies until they are recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971.

In addition, this incident indicates the importance of aiding those in difficulties by objecting to evil practices. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised the importance of objecting to evil things in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4340. This Hadith clearly shows that it is a duty on all Muslims to object to all forms of evil according to their strength and means. The lowest level, as mentioned in this Hadith, is rejecting the evil with one's heart.

This shows internally approving evil actions is one of the ugliest of those things which are forbidden. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4345, that the one who is present when an evil is committed and denounces it is like the one who was not present. But the one who was absent and approved the evil deed is like the one who was present when it was committed.

The first two aspects of objecting to evil, mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion, are through one's physical actions and speech. This is only a duty on a Muslim who has the strength to do so for example, they will not be harmed by their actions or words.

It is important to note, objecting to evil with one's hand does not refer to fighting. It refers to correcting the evil actions of others, such as returning the rights of someone which have been unlawfully violated. The one who is in a position to do so yet, refrains from doing so has been warned of a punishment in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4338.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised Muslims in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2191, that they should not fear the creation in respect to speaking the truth. In fact, the one who allows the fear of the creation to prevent them from objecting to evil things has been described as the one who hates themselves and will be criticized by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4008. It is important to note, this does not refer to the one who remains silent out of fear of being harmed as this is an acceptable excuse but it refers to the person who remains silent because of the status people hold in their eyes.

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4341, advises that a person can give up objecting to evil things through their actions and speech when others obey their greed, follow their incorrect opinions and desires and when they prefer the material world over the hereafter. It does not take a scholar to conclude this time has arrived. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 105.

*“O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided...”*

But it is important to note, a Muslim should continue with this important duty in respect to their dependents as this is a duty on them according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928, and in respect to those they feel physically and verbally safe from, as this is the superior attitude.

Objecting to evil things which are apparent is what the main Hadith under discussion refers to. Meaning, it does not grant permission to Muslims to spy on others in order to find evil things to object to. Spying and anything associated with it in this respect are forbidden. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed...do not spy...”*

It is important to note, that a Muslim must object to evil according to the teachings of Islam and not their own desires. A Muslim may believe they are acting for sake of Allah, the Exalted, when they are not. This is proven when they object to evil in a way which contradicts the teachings of Islam. In fact, what is considered a good deed may well become a sin because of this negative attitude.

A Muslim must object to evil in a gentle and fair way preferably in private in accordance to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The opposite of these characteristics will only push people away from sincerely repenting and may lead to further sins as a result of angering them.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever relieves the distress of a Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will relieve a hardship from them on the Day of Judgment.

This shows that a Muslim is treated by Allah, the Exalted, in the same way they act. There are many examples of this within the teachings of Islam. For example, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

*“So remember Me; I will remember you...”*

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who shows mercy to others will receive mercy from Allah, the Exalted.

A distress is anything which causes someone to fall into anxiety and difficulty. Therefore, the one who eases such a distress for another whether worldly or religious for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from a hardship on Judgment Day by Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in different ways in many Hadiths. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449, that the one who feeds a hungry Muslim will be fed the fruits of Paradise on the Day of Judgment. And the one who gives a drink to a thirsty Muslim will be given a drink from Paradise by Allah, the Exalted, on the Day of Judgment.

As the difficulties of the hereafter are much greater than those found in the world this reward is held back for a Muslim until they reach the hereafter.

The next thing mentioned in this Hadith is that Allah, the Exalted, will continue helping a Muslim as long as they are helping others. A Muslim must understand that when they strive for something or are aided by another person to complete a particular task the outcome may be successful or end in failure. But when Allah, the Exalted, helps someone with anything a successful outcome is guaranteed. Therefore, Muslims

should, for their own sake, strive to help others in all good things so that they receive the help of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters.



## **A Pure Intention**

Once the leaders of the non-Muslims of Mecca offered the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, all the wealth he desired, they offered to make him their tribal leader and even their king but all he had to do was abandon preaching Islam. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that his intention in delivering the message of Islam was not for the sake of gaining wealth, honor or sovereignty. His only intention was to fulfill his mission as the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, of Allah, the Exalted, in order to please Him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 347-348.

From this incident a Muslim can learn the importance of not desiring worldly things when spreading the knowledge of Islam.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 253, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who obtains religious knowledge in order to show off to scholars, argue with others or attract attention to themselves will go to Hell.

Even though, the foundation of all good in both worldly and religious matters is knowledge Muslims must understand that knowledge will only benefit them when they firstly correct their intention. Meaning, they strive to obtain and act on knowledge in order to please Allah, the Exalted. All

other reasons will only lead to a loss of reward and even punishment if a Muslim fails to sincerely repent.

In reality, knowledge is like rain water which falls on different types of trees. Some trees grow by this water in order to benefit others such as a fruit tree. Whereas, other trees grow by this water and become a nuisance to others such as a thorny tree. Even though, the rain water is the same in both cases but the outcome is very different. Similarly, religious knowledge is the same for people but if one adopts the incorrect intention then it will become a means of their destruction. Conversely, if one adopts the correct intention it will become a means of their salvation.

Muslims should therefore correct their intention in all matters as they will be judged on this. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. And they should remember that one of the first people to enter Hell will be a scholar who only obtained knowledge in order to show off to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4923.

To conclude, only obtaining and acting on useful knowledge with the correct intention is true beneficial knowledge.

## **Foolish Requests**

In order to put people off from accepting Islam the non-Muslims of Mecca came up with foolish requests, some of which have been recorded in the Holy Quran, such as requesting an Angel to openly appear in front of them and verify that he was the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 348-349. Chapter 15 Al Hijr, verse 7:

*“Why do you not bring us the angels, if you should be among the truthful?”*

Belief in the unseen is a core element of faith and without it faith loses its value. If the things which are unseen, such as Angels, were made apparent to people in this world then it would diminish the quality of their faith.

The unseen are things which cannot be perceived through the five senses in this world for example, Hell. They must be accepted as true the knowledge of which was brought and confirmed by the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. This is another indication that right guidance is not possible without following the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as the knowledge regarding the unseen, such as the existence of Hell, can only be delivered by the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. The unseen must stay hidden in this life. If they are revealed then the concept of faith becomes meaningless as

faith involves belief in something which is beyond the perception of the five senses.

The Muslim who truly believes in the unseen, such as Paradise, even though they have not witnessed it should also firmly believe that everything which occurs in their life, whether it is pleasing to them or not, occurs for a good reason even if that reason is unseen to them. So the same way one firmly believes in these unseen things they should believe in the wise choices of Allah, the Exalted, which are also unseen. This will encourage them towards patience and lead them to an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

*"...the patient will be given their reward without account [i.e., limit]."*

## Gifts or Giver

In order to put people off from accepting Islam the non-Muslims of Mecca came up with foolish requests. They even asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to request Allah, the Exalted, to grant him gardens, castles and treasures of gold and silver so his needs are taken of. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he would not request such worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, as this was not part of his mission. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 348-349.

It is important for Muslims to understand a key concept in Islam. Namely, there is nothing wrong with desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, but it is best to avoid worshipping and obeying Allah, the Exalted, in order to obtain them. This is because these types of Muslims often only worship Allah, the Exalted, and inhabit the Mosques when they desire worldly things. But if they do not receive them they become impatient and fed up which causes them to stop obeying Allah, the Exalted. Or if they obtain them then the joy of them often makes them turn away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as they believe they achieved what they desired therefore there is no need to obey Allah, the Exalted, anymore. These Muslims worship Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they obey Allah, the Exalted, only when it suits their desires. And because of this attitude they are in danger of becoming misguided. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his*

*face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

These Muslims may claim that they are worshipping Allah, the Exalted, but in reality, they are only worshipping their own desires and the gifts and blessings they receive.

It is praiseworthy to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to obtain religious blessings, such as Paradise, as this has been recommended by Islamic teachings. But it is far superior to worship Allah, the Exalted, as He is the only One worthy of it and because the creation are His servants.

If a Muslim must desire gifts and blessings then it is best to aim for religious blessings as aiming for worldly blessings can shift a person's intention so that they end up worshipping the gift instead of the Giver.

## **Not a Controller**

The leaders of the non-Muslims of Mecca would often debate with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to put others off from accepting Islam. During these conversations the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be most eager for them to accept the truth. But often they would only alienate and insult him at which he would return home sad and regretful at failing to persuade them to accept Islam. One such incident is discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 348-349.

It is important for Muslims to understand an important point in respect to advising others. It is the duty of Muslims to advise others towards good and forbid evil but a Muslim should not behave as if they have been put in charge as controllers over others. This attitude only leads to anger and bitterness especially, when others do not follow their advice. It is best for Muslims to discharge their duty by advising others but they should avoid stressing over the outcome of their advice meaning, whether the person acts on their advice or not. If Allah, the Exalted, advised the greatest teacher and guide of mankind namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, not to stress over the outcome in many places of the Holy Quran how can a Muslim claim or behave as if they have been put in charge of others. Chapter 88 Al Ghashiyah, verses 21-22:

*“So remind, [O Muhammad]; you are only a reminder. You are not over them a controller.”*

The Muslim who behaves as a controller will not only become bitter when people fail to follow their advice but it can lead them to giving up advising others which is a duty on all Muslims according to their ability.

In addition, this attitude will also cause Muslims to neglect themselves and their own duties as they are too busy concerning themselves with the duties of others. Therefore, Muslims should remain firm in commanding good and forbidding evil but refrain from observing and bothering about the outcome of their advice.



## Respite or Destruction

The non-Muslims of Mecca once asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to turn a mountain in Mecca, Mount Safa, into gold for them and to move away the mountains so that they could grow crops. He was told by Allah, the Exalted, that it was up to him to decide whether to give respite and ignore their foolish request or if he desired Allah, the Exalted, would fulfill their request. But if they disbelieved in Islam after that they would be completely destroyed just like the previous nations who rejected the open signs of Allah, the Exalted, were completely destroyed. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, chose to give them respite and ignore their foolish requests as he knew that they would still disbelieve after. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 59 of the Holy Quran:

*“And nothing has prevented Us from sending signs [i.e., miracles] except that the former peoples denied them. And We gave Thamūd the she-camel as a visible sign, but they wronged her. And We send not the signs except as a warning.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Al Wahidi's, Asbab Al Nuzul, 17:59, Page 104.

Allah, the Exalted, does not hasten the punishment for the one who deserves it out of leniency. Instead He gives them an opportunity to sincerely repent and rectify their behaviour. The Muslim who understands

this will never give up hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, but will not also cross the limits and adopt wishful thinking by believing Allah, the Exalted, will never punish them. They understand that punishment is only delayed not abandoned unless they sincerely repent. So this divine name creates hope and fear in a Muslim. A Muslim should use this delay in order to repent and hasten towards good deeds.

A Muslim should act on this divine attribute by being lenient with people especially, when they demonstrate bad character. They should show leniency towards others just as they desire Allah, the Exalted, to be lenient with them in their moments of heedlessness. But at the same time they should not be lenient with their own bad characteristics knowing that punishment for sins is delayed not permanently abandoned until they sincerely repent. They should also remain steadfast in leniency by replying evil with good according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

## **Times of Ease**

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2347, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once declared that Allah, the Exalted, offered to turn the valley of Mecca into gold for him. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he desired to eat one day so he could be grateful to Allah, the Exalted, and be hungry the next day so he could show patience and humility to Allah, the Exalted.

Muslims often increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, such as attending the Mosques for the congregational prayers or reciting more spiritual exercises in times of difficulty. But in times of ease they often relax and become lazy. But it is important to note, that generally it is more important to be more on guard and increase one's obedience during times of ease than times of difficulty. This is because one often sins more during times of ease than difficulty, such as abandoning their obligatory duties. If one reviews the different misguided people in history, such as Pharaoh and Quroon they will observe that their sins only multiplied during times of ease. Someone who is facing a difficulty where they are stuck and have no option but to patiently wait for relief is less likely to sin as they desire to be relieved of their difficulty. Whereas, a person experiencing times of ease will be in a better position to enjoy and over indulge in worldly things which often leads to sins. For example, a person facing poverty is less likely to sin as many sins require wealth. Whereas, a wealthy person is in an easier position to commit those sins, such as purchasing alcohol or drugs. Therefore, Muslims should take note of this and ensure they maintain or even increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, during times of ease so that they do not fall into sins and disobedience.

In addition, the one who is obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands and refraining from His prohibitions during times of ease will gain the support of Allah, the Exalted, during their times of difficulty which will aid them to overcome them successfully. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

*“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.”*

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that simplicity is a part of faith.

Islam does not teach Muslims to give up all their wealth and lawful desires but it instead teaches them to adopt a simple lifestyle in all aspects of their life, such as their food, clothing, housing and business, so that it provides them free time to prepare for the hereafter adequately. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This simple life includes striving in this world in order to fulfill one's needs and the needs of their dependents without excessiveness, waste or extravagance.

A Muslim should understand that the simpler life they lead the less they will stress over worldly things and therefore the more they will be able to strive for the hereafter thereby, obtaining peace of mind, body and soul.

But the more complicated a person's life is the more they will stress, encounter difficulties and strive less for their hereafter as their preoccupations with worldly things will never seem to end. This attitude will prevent them from obtaining peace of mind, body and soul.

Simplicity leads to a life of ease in this world and a straight forward accounting on the Day of Judgment. Whereas, a complicated and indulgent life will only lead to a stressful life and a severe and difficult accounting on the Day of Judgment.

## **The Will of Allah, the Exalted**

The leaders of the non-Muslims of Mecca sent two of their men to meet with the Jewish scholars of Medina in order to inquire about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as they were the people who possessed the previous divine scriptures and were therefore more knowledgeable on this issue. The Jewish scholars informed them to test the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by asking him three questions. As the people of Mecca knew the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not study the previous scriptures at all he would only be able to answer the questions correctly if he was a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them. The three questions were about the people of the cave, the king who travelled to the east and west and what he encountered and finally about the human soul. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was asked these questions he replied that he would answer them the next day but omitted the phrase "if Allah, the Exalted, so wills". The answers to these questions were only revealed fifteen days later in the Holy Quran. This incident has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 350-352.

First of all, it is important to note that a delay in answering these questions was in fact a clear sign of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as a liar would have answered the questions straight away in order to fool the people and achieve their worldly desires as soon as possible. The fact that there was a delay proved that even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was most eager in guiding the people to Islam yet the answers were delayed in order to correct his omitting of the phrase "if Allah, the Exalted, so wills" and to prove his truthfulness.

In addition, this incident indicates the importance of understanding that nothing in creation occurs without the will of Allah, the Exalted. 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, they are many sick people who take medicine and recover from their illness. But they 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...”*

## Difficult Tests

When the aggression of the non-Muslims of Mecca increased they began to attack the defenseless and socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They imprisoned them, verbally and physically tortured them, deprived them of food and water and subjected them to extreme forms of persecution. For example, Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him, was the slave of a non-Muslim of Mecca, Umayya bin Khalaf. Umayya would lie Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him, on the burning hot sand and then place a huge rock on his chest in order to coerce him into abandoning Islam. But Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him, remained firm on Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 356-357.

Muslims should be grateful that Allah, the Exalted, does not require them to face such horrendous trials like the ones faced by the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. Nor is Allah, the Exalted, subjecting Muslims to face the tests and difficulties as the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, faced. They sacrificed their wealth, homes, families and lives. Instead, Allah, the Exalted, has entrusted Muslims with a few obligatory duties which require little sacrifice of their time, energy and wealth. If one ponders over the greatness of Paradise they will realise the sacrifices they have been encouraged to make are very small compared to the promised reward. Therefore, Muslims should show gratitude for this by submitting obediently to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions, face destiny with patience and use the blessings He has granted them in ways pleasing to Him.

## Helping the Weak

When the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were being violently persecuted by the non-Muslims of Mecca, Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, aided them by purchasing and freeing the male and female slaves who had accepted Islam, such as Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been specifically mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3754. In addition, the following verses of the Holy Quran were revealed because of his pious actions. Chapter 92 Al Layl, verses 5-7:

*“As for he who gives and fears Allah. And believes in the best [reward]. We will ease him toward ease.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 357-358.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever relieves the distress of a Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will relieve a hardship from them on the Day of Judgment.

This shows that a Muslim is treated by Allah, the Exalted, in the same way they act. There are many examples of this within the teachings of Islam. For example, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

*“So remember Me; I will remember you...”*

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who shows mercy to others will receive mercy from Allah, the Exalted.

A distress is anything which causes someone to fall into anxiety and difficulty. Therefore, the one who eases such a distress for another whether worldly or religious for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from a hardship on Judgment Day by Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in different ways in many Hadiths. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449, that the one who feeds a hungry Muslim will be fed the fruits of Paradise on the Day of Judgment. And the one who gives a drink to a thirsty Muslim will be given a drink from Paradise by Allah, the Exalted, on the Day of Judgment.

As the difficulties of the hereafter are much greater than those found in the world this reward is held back for a Muslim until they reach the hereafter.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Allah, the Exalted, will continue helping a Muslim as long as they are helping others. A Muslim must understand that when they strive for something or are aided by another person to complete a particular task the outcome may be successful or end in failure. But when Allah, the Exalted, helps someone with anything a successful outcome is guaranteed. Therefore, Muslims should, for their own sake, strive to help others in all good things so that they receive the help of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters.

In addition, it is important to understand that there are other forms of slavery people fall into which Muslims should aid them in, such as financial slavery through debts. This includes helping others pay off their debts to other people or making things easy when a Muslim is owed a debt from another. In fact, the one who waves a debt they are owed for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be relieved by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 225.

## **Commanding Evil & Forbidding Good**

The non-Muslim leader Abu Jahl was the one who incited the non-Muslims of Mecca to attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. When he heard of a man of status and influence who had accepted Islam he would criticise, insult and accuse him of abandoning the rightly guided practices of their forefathers. He would strive to deprecate their value in society, criticise their opinions and aim to destroy their reputation. If the Companion, may Allah be pleased with them, was a merchant he would encourage others to boycott doing business with them. If the Companion, may Allah be pleased with them, was socially weak Abu Jahl would physically torture them and encourage others to do the same. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 358.

It is vital for Muslims not to adopt this evil mindset. This is in fact an aspect of hypocrisy. This person not only commits evil deeds themselves and abstains from righteous deeds but they encourage others to do the same. They want others to be in the same boat as them so that they find some comfort in their evil character. They not only drown themselves but take others down with them. Muslims must know that a person will be held accountable for every other person who commits a sin because of their invitation. This person will be treated as if they committed the sin even though they only invited others towards it. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 203. This is why some have said that blessed is the person whose evil dies with them because their sins will increase if others act on their evil advice even though they are no longer alive.

## **Outcome of Tests**

During the time of severe violence against the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, at the hands of the non-Muslims of Mecca, a Companion, Khabbab, may Allah be pleased with him, once complained to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of the great physical torture he was facing and requested him to pray against the non-Muslims of Mecca. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, encouraged him to be patient by mentioning the difficulties faced by the believers of previous nations. For example, the previous believers were tortured in such a way that a metal comb would be passed over their skin in order to tear it off their bones yet they would not renounce their faith in Allah, the Exalted. Another would have a saw placed on their head and it would split their body into two parts yet they would not renounce their faith in Allah, the Exalted. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, concluded that Allah, the Exalted, would surely eventually grant them victory. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3852.

Even though tests and trials have affected believers since the dawn of time particularly in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet it seems like the modern day tests only lead to more difficulties and humiliation for Muslims. Whereas, the tests which the righteous predecessors faced only led to their honour in both worlds. The main reason for this difference in the outcome and result of tests is that when the righteous predecessors faced tests in fact, greater tests than the modern day Muslims, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, they faced their tests and difficulties while sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny. This resulted in them safely passing the test and receiving great honour and blessings from Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds.

Whereas, many Muslims in this day and age face tests but do not remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They fail to understand that success and honour through tests is only granted to those who remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whereas, being disobedient only leads to disgrace. Therefore, Muslims should not worship Allah, the Exalted, on an edge whereby they are only obedient to Him in times of ease and turn away from Him angrily and disobediently in times of difficulty. This is not real servant hood or obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Simply put, no action will aid Muslims in the long run if it is not based on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Disobedience will only lead from one difficulty to another, one disgrace to another. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 147:

*“What would Allah do with [i.e., gain from] your punishment if you are grateful and believe?...”*



## Standard for Women

The first martyr of Islam was in fact a woman, Sumayya, may Allah be pleased with her. She was heavily tortured by the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca but refused to renounce Islam and as a result she was martyred. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 358.

The Holy Quran has made it clear that the most honourable and superior person is the one who possesses the most piety. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

*"...Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you..."*

This is when one strives to fulfil the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. Unfortunately, the Devil has tricked many women into debating the status of women compared to men. Even though, Islam has granted women such honour as no other institution or faith ever has such as placing Paradise, which is the ultimate bliss, beneath the feet of a woman namely, one's mother. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3106. In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3895, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the best man is the one who treats his wife the best. There are countless other examples. But the point to note is that women should not be bothered

about comparing themselves to men as this is not what Allah, the Exalted, desires. Instead, women should strive to adopt piety and if they achieve it then they will be superior to every man or woman who possesses less piety than them. This is the benchmark which separates who is superior to whom. And it is clear from this verse that it is not only restricted to men. If one turns the pages of history they will observe great female Muslims who concentrated on this important task instead of arguing and debating about the differences between men and women and as a result they became better than the vast majority of men and women. Even if Muslim women were granted all the rights they dreamed of even then it would not make them superior to others until they adopted piety. This is quite evident when one observes the news and those who behave as they please and it will be made crystal clear in the next world. Therefore, if a Muslim desires to be superior to others they should seek it in piety not in arguing and debates.

## **Stubbornness**

Even though many of the non-Muslims understood and believed in the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they rejected and violently opposed him out of sheer stubbornness and envy. For example, a non-Muslim leader of Mecca, Walid Bin Mughira, once listened to the Holy Quran from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and was visibly impressed by it. As he was a master in Arabic poetry he knew that the Holy Quran was not poetry and instead believed it was special and unique. He even admitted that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was extremely graceful and had achieved greater intellectual and moral heights than anyone else. This he admitted privately to Abu Jahl, another non-Muslim leader of Mecca. Abu Jahl insisted that Walid Bin Mughira publicly denounce Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Instead of admitting the truth his stubbornness and envy encouraged him to publicly accuse the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of sorcery. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 361.

Some adopt stubbornness in worldly matters and as a result they do not change their character for the better. Instead, they remain steadfast on their attitude believing this is somehow a sign of their great strength and wisdom. Steadfastness in matters of faith is a praiseworthy attitude but in most worldly matters it is only called stubbornness, which is blameworthy.

Unfortunately, some believe if they change their attitude it demonstrates weakness or it shows that they are admitting their fault and because of

this they stubbornly fail to change for the better. Adults behave like immature children by believing that if they change their behaviour it means they have lost while others who remain steadfast on their attitude have won. This is simply childish.

In reality, an intelligent person will remain steadfast on matters of faith but in worldly matters they will change their attitude, as long as it is not sinful, in order to make their life easier. So changing to improve one's life is not a sign of weakness it is in fact a sign of intelligence.

In many cases, a person refuses to change their attitude and expects others in their life to change theirs, such as their relatives. But what often occurs is that due to stubbornness all remain in the same state which only leads to regular disagreements and arguments. A wise person understands that if the people around them do not change for the better than they should. This change will improve the quality of their life and their relationship with others which is much better than going around in circular arguments with people. This positive attitude will eventually cause others to respect them as it takes real strength to change one's character for the better.

Those who remain stubborn will always find something to be annoyed about which will remove peace from their life. This will cause further difficulties in all aspects of their life, such as their mental health. But those who adapt and change for the better will always move from one station of peace to another. If one achieves this peace does it really matter if others believe they only changed because they were wrong?

To conclude, to remain steadfast on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is praiseworthy. But in worldly matters and in cases where no sin is committed a person should learn to adapt and change their attitude so that they find some peace in this world.

In addition, this event highlights the importance of avoiding the major sin of envy. In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4210, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

Envy is a serious and major sin because the envier's problem is not with another person in reality it is with Allah, the Exalted, as He is the One who granted the blessing which is envied. So a person's envy only demonstrates their displeasure with the allocation and choice of Allah, the Exalted. They believe Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake when He allocated a particular blessing to another person instead of them.

Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when the envier strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing. Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feelings and strives to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing. Even though this type is not a sin it is considered disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and praiseworthy if it is over a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found

in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first person who can be lawfully envied is the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second person who can be lawfully envied is the one who uses their knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

An envious Muslim should strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person envied such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

## **Plotting Evil Plans**

One of the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca, Walid Bin Mughira, once held a meeting with the other non-Muslim leaders of Mecca during the time of the Holy Pilgrimage. The Holy Pilgrimage did exist before the coming of Islam but the correct practices of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, had been completely changed. He advised the other leaders that soon many people would enter Mecca because of the Holy Pilgrimage and they will come across the message of Islam so they needed to unanimously agree on what to say about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to deter people from accepting Islam. Someone advised that they should label the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, a soothsayer. But Walid replied that it was obvious that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not a soothsayer as he did not possess any of their crazy characteristics therefore people would not accept this. Another advised that they should tell people the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was crazy and was possessed by evil spirits. But Walid replied that it was obvious this was not true as these signs were not apparent in him. Finally, someone advised to label the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, a poet so that people would not pay attention to what he says. But again Walid replied that it was obvious that the Holy Quran or his speech were not poetry as the Arabs were masters of poetry. Walid advised everyone to claim that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was a sorcerer whose goals were to cause separation between people and their religion and divisions within families. After agreeing to this plan they dispersed and waited for people to flood into Mecca for the Holy Pilgrimage and warned them not to pay attention to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as they claimed he was a sorcerer. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 362.

Muslims should never plot to do an evil thing as it will always, one way or another, backfire on them. Even if these consequences are delayed to the next world they will face them eventually. For example, the brothers of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, desired to harm him as they desired the love, respect and affection of their father the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him. But it is clear that their scheming only put them further away from their desire. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 18:

*“And they brought upon his shirt false blood. [Jacob] said, “Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting...”*

The more one plots evil the more Allah, the Exalted, will put them further from their goal. Even if they outwardly achieve their desire Allah, the Exalted, will cause the very thing they desired to become a curse for them in both worlds unless they sincerely repent. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

*“...but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples?...”*

In addition, this incident indicates the importance of always gathering with others for the sake of good and not evil. This is connected to chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114:



*“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”*

In this verse Allah, the exalted, explains how people should conduct themselves when conversing with others so that they derive benefit for themselves and others. The first is that when Muslims gather they should discuss how to benefit others which encompasses charity in the form of wealth and physical aid. If a Muslim is not in a position to help a needy person then this is an excellent way of gaining reward equal to actually helping them. A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6800, advises that the one who inspires someone else towards good will be rewarded as if they performed the good action themselves. If one cannot aid someone in difficulty or inspire another to fulfill this task they can at least encourage others to supplicate for the one in need. Supplication for an absent person causes the Angels to pray for the supplicator. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1534. This mentality can inspire the group to visit the needy person which provides them with emotional support. This has a powerful psychological impact and provides them with a new mode of strength when dealing with their hardship. The important thing to note is that when one mentions the situation of a needy person their intention must be to aid them in their hour of need. It should never be for the sake of passing time and making them a target of ridicule.

The second way to gain blessings is when one converses about anything lawful that will provide benefit to someone in this world or the next. This aspect includes advising others to do good and refrain from evil in every aspect of their life.

The third aspect mentioned in this verse involves conversing with others with a constructive mindset which brings people together in a positive way instead of possessing a destructive mindset which causes divisions within society. If a person cannot bring people together in a loving way then the minimum they can do is not cause divisions amongst them. Even this is recorded as a good deed when done for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2518.

In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, advises that reconciling between two opposing Muslims for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, is superior to voluntary prayer and fasting. Every good thing found within society was the outcome of this pious attitude such as the construction of schools, hospitals and Mosques.

But it is important to note, that a Muslim will only obtain the great reward mentioned in this verse when they perform the righteous deeds for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Each person will be rewarded based on their intention not just their physical action. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The insincere Muslim will find that on Judgment Day they will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for which will not be possible. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

## **Worldly Competition**

The non-Muslim leader of Mecca and uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Jahl, was once asked what his honest opinion was regarding the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Holy Quran. He replied that his tribe and the tribe of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had always been rivals for social status. They would compete in feeding the poor, helping people, giving charity and other social things. But when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, announced Prophethood how could his tribe compete with that. So because of this worldly competition he swore to never accept the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Page 367.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4297, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a day would soon come when other nations would attack the Muslim nation and even though they would be great in number they would be deemed insignificant by the world. Allah, the Exalted, would remove the fear of Muslims from the hearts' of the other nations. This would occur because of the Muslim nation's love for the material world and their hatred for death.

The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were small in number yet, they overcame entire nations whereas the Muslims today are greater in number yet, have no social or political influence in the world. This is because the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, lived their lives according to the teachings of Islam thereby, favouring and preparing

for the hereafter over enjoying the lawful pleasures of this world. Whereas, most of the Muslims today have adopted the opposite mind-set. It is important to understand that the root of all sins is the love of the material world. This is because any sin which is committed is done out of love and desire for it. The material world can be split into four aspects: fame, fortune, authority and one's social life, such as their relatives and friends. It is in the excess pursuit of these things which lead to sins, such as earning unlawful wealth out of love for fortune. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, warns that love for wealth and authority is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction two hungry wolves would cause if they were let loose on a herd of sheep. Whenever people seek the excess of these aspects of the material world it always leads to disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. When this occurs the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, is removed which leads to nothing but trouble.

Even though, some Muslims believe pursuing the excess things of the material world is harmless it is something the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against in many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3158. He warned that he did not fear poverty for Muslims. What he feared was that Muslims would pursue the excess of this material world, such as excess wealth, and this would cause them to compete with each other over it and this would lead to their destruction. As warned in this Hadith this was the behaviour of the past nations.

As the material world is limited it is obvious that people would have to compete over it if they desired more than their necessities. This competition would cause them to adopt the characteristics which contradict the character of a true Muslim, such as envy and enmity for others. They would stop caring for each other as they are too busy competing in gathering and hoarding the material world. And they would contradict the advice given in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number

6011, which advises that Muslims should act like one body when any part of the body suffers from an illness the rest of the body shares in the pain. This competition would drive a Muslim to stop loving for others what they love for themselves which is a characteristic of a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, as they desire to outdo their fellow Muslims in worldly things. Persisting on this competition will cause a Muslim to love, hate, give and withhold all for the sake of the material world instead of for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, which is an aspect of perfecting one's faith according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. This competition is the difference between the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and many of the Muslims today.

If Muslims desire to regain the strength and influence Islam once had they must strive and prioritise preparing for the hereafter over striving for obtaining and hoarding the excess of this material world. This must occur from an individual level until it affects the whole nation.

## **The First Migration**

As the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, increased the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some of them to migrate to Ethiopia. He advised them that their king was a just man and they would not face persecution there. Several Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, departed leaving behind their families, businesses and homes all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 1-2.

It is important for Muslims to understand that Allah, the Exalted, does not demand Muslims to overcome the difficulties which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, endured. For example, this event which discusses the migration of some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to Ethiopia.

In comparison, the difficulties Muslims face now are not as difficult as those the righteous predecessors faced. Muslims should therefore be grateful that they are only required to make a few small sacrifices, such as sacrificing some sleep to offer the obligatory dawn prayer and some wealth to donate the obligatory charity. Allah, the Exalted, is not commanding them to leave their homes and families for His sake. This gratitude must be shown practically by using the blessings one possesses in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, when a Muslim faces difficulties they should remember the difficulties the righteous predecessors faced and how they overcame them through steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This knowledge can provide a Muslim the strength to overcome their difficulties as they know the righteous predecessors were more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they endured more severe difficulties with patience. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, advises that the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, endured the most difficult of tests and they are undoubtedly the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted.

If a Muslim follows the steadfast attitude of the righteous predecessors it is hoped they will end up with them in the hereafter.

## Negativity

After some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, migrated to Ethiopia the leaders of the non-Muslims of Mecca dispatched two of their men to the king of Ethiopia in order to create problems between him and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They attempted to fill the heart of the king with enmity and dislike for the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, through lies. As the king of Ethiopia was Christian they attempted to show that Islam was disrespecting the Holy Prophet Isa, peace be upon him, and his mother, Maryam, may Allah be pleased with her. But when the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were questioned they spoke the truth and recited the Holy Quran to the king who after hearing it accepted the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He allowed the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to live in peace in his land and treated them with respect and kindness. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 5-6.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4860, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned people against speaking negatively about others as this causes ill feelings towards them in people's hearts.

It is often observed that families especially, from the Asian community, become broken over time. This is one of the biggest complaints family members, such as parents often have. They wonder why their children have become separated even though they were once firmly together.



One of the main reasons the relationships between relatives become fractured is because someone has spoken negatively about a person's relative to them. This is often done by a family member. For example, a mother will speak negatively about her son to her other child. This leads to enmity between the two relatives and over time it builds up and creates a wedge between the two. Those who were once like one person become like strangers to one another.

It is important to understand that people are not Angels. Except for a very few, when a negative thing is said to a person about another they will get affected by it even if they do not desire this to occur. This enmity still occurs even if the initial person who spoke negatively about someone's relative does not intend to create a wedge between relatives. Some often act in this way out of habit and are not trying to damage relationships. For example, parents often adopt this habit and there is no doubt they do not desire the relationships of their children to become fractured or broken.

This attitude has such a serious impact on people's mentality that it also affects relatives that very rarely see or converse with each other. For example, a person will mention negative things about a person's relative to them even though their relative may not even live in the same country as them. This behaviour implants enmity within their heart and with the passing of time they will find that they dislike their distant relative even though they barely know them.

This issue often occurs when two people discuss negative things about others in front of other people. For example, parents may discuss negative things about their relatives in front of their children. Even though, they are

not telling their children directly none the less it still affects their hearts. If one truly reflected for a moment they will realise that the majority of the ill feelings they have towards others were not caused by what that person did or said to them directly. In most cases, it occurred because of a third party who mentioned something negative about that person to them.

In cases where one is trying to warn another of some danger then it is perfectly acceptable to mention another person in a negative way. If one is trying to teach another person a lesson for example, if a mother desires to teach one of her children not to behave as their sibling did they then should follow the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and mention the negative thing without naming the person. An example of this beautiful mentality is discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6979. Mentioning a negative thing without naming the person is good enough to teach someone a lesson.

To conclude, Muslims should ponder deeply before speaking negatively about their relatives or others, privately or publically. Otherwise, they may well find as time passes their family becomes separated and emotionally distant from one another.

## **A Lesson in Gratitude**

Some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, from Ethiopia with a delegation sent by the king of Ethiopia. When this delegation reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he arose in order to personally serve them. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to remain seated and allow them to serve the delegation. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that as they honored his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, he desired to repay them by serving them personally. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 19.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1954, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever is not grateful to people cannot be grateful to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though there is no doubt that the source of all blessings is none other than Allah, the Exalted, none the less showing gratitude to people is an important aspect of Islam. This is because Allah, the Exalted, sometimes uses a person as a means to help others such as one's parents. As the means has been created and used by Allah, the Exalted, being grateful to them is in fact being grateful to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, Muslims must show good character and always show appreciation for any aid or support they receive from others irrespective of its size. They should show gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessing according to His commands as He is the source of the blessing

and show gratitude to the person as they are the means which was created and chosen by Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should show gratitude verbally to people and practically by repaying their act of kindness according to their means even if it is only a supplication on their behalf. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 216.

The person who does not show gratitude to people cannot show true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, and therefore they will not be given an increase in blessings. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

If a Muslim desires an increase in blessings they must fulfill both aspects of gratitude namely, to Allah, the Exalted, and to people.

## Ignorance and its People

While the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was preaching Islam openly in Mecca 20 learned Christians came to him and questioned him about Islam. After answering their questions and reciting the Holy Quran to them they accepted Islam as they recognized the signs of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which were recorded in their divine scriptures. When they arose to leave him the non-Muslim leader of Mecca, Abu Jahl, blocked their path and insulted them by claiming that they had abandoned their correct faith. They simply replied that they would not insult him back and instead greeted him with peace and left him. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed the chapter 28 Al Qasas, verses 52-55 of the Holy Quran:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture before it - they are believers in it. And when it is recited to them, they say, “We have believed in it; indeed, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed we were, [even] before it, Muslims [i.e., submitting to Allah].” Those will be given their reward twice for what they patiently endured and [because] they avert evil through good, and from what We have provided them they spend. And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, “For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.””*

This incident has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 24-25.

This incident is connected to chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

*“...and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.”*

Specifically, when people act in a foolish way they do not reply in the same way. Instead, they show patience and treat these people kindly which is shown through their speech and actions. They understand that the best response they can give a foolish person is to leave them in peace as replying to them in an evil way only spurs them on. This does not mean they do not defend themselves as Islam permits this but they have adopted humility without weakness. They do not wish to waste their time on people who are only looking for trouble. Ignorance is a disliked characteristic in Islam and is one of the reasons why seeking knowledge is a duty on all Muslims. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224. The ignorant commit sins without even realising it therefore, the true servants of the Most Merciful avoid its people and this characteristic by dedicating time to studying the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and strive to adopt these teachings into their lives through actions. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 9:

*“...Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?"...”*

The Holy Quran has made it clear that an ignorant person cannot attain true piety. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

This is because knowledge is required in order to adopt the good characteristics and avoid the evil traits advised in Islamic teachings. If one is unaware of an evil trait how can they avoid or remove it from their character?

One should not only strive to attain and act on Islamic knowledge but they should always maintain respect for those who possess knowledge as this keeps one away from pride.

The Holy Quran advises Muslims to turn away from the company of the ignorant as they can only inspire their friends towards pointless or evil things. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 55:

*“And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, "For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.””*

This does not mean one should not advise or teach the ignorant but this should be left to educated Muslims who have adopted the correct characteristics required to spread the message of Islam correctly. This has been discussed in a separate eBook titled: How to Spread Islam, and can be viewed using the following link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:ca824971-256b-4db3-9749-dcfa07b7001d>

The truly ignorant is not someone who lacks knowledge. In truth, the ignorant is someone who does not act on their knowledge. Such a person is ignorant even if they possess much knowledge. Acting on knowledge is knowledge which is beneficial. Everything else is only knowledge of the tongue which will not benefit its possessor. In actual fact this knowledge will testify against a person on Judgment Day. So Muslims should strive to learn and act on Islamic knowledge and seek refuge with Allah, the Exalted, from knowledge which does not benefit as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3843.



## **True Muslim and Believer**

When the resistance and violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, intensified they openly decided to murder the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, ordered his tribe to bring the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, into their area of Mecca and protect him from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca and their hideous plan. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 27.

One should never plot to do an evil thing as it will always, one way or another, backfire on them. Even if these consequences are delayed to the next world they will face them eventually. For example, the brothers of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, desired to harm him as they desired the love, respect and affection of their father the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him. But it is clear that their scheming only put them further away from their desire. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 18:

*"And they brought upon his shirt false blood. [Jacob] said, "Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting..."*

The more one plots evil the more Allah, the Exalted, will put them further from their goal. Even if they outwardly achieve their desire Allah, the

Exalted, will cause the very thing they desired to become a curse for them in both worlds unless they sincerely repent. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

*“...but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples?...”*

In addition, Muslims should fulfill the characteristics of a true Muslim and believer. 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.

## **Social Boycott**

When the resistance and violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, intensified they openly decided to murder the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, ordered his tribe to bring the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, into their area of Mecca and protect him from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca and their hideous plan. When the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca became aware of Abu Talib's plan they made a pact that they would not sit down with nor do business with nor enter the homes of the tribe that were protecting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, until they surrendered him for execution. This social boycott carried on for three years during which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, his Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, and even the tribe of Abu Talib suffered greatly. Their markets had been cut off, no food was allowed into their area of Mecca and all their business dealings were disrupted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 27-28.

It is important to understand that generally when one chooses a path which is different from the path of others, such as their relatives and friends, they will face criticism and resistance from them. In fact, the majority of criticism comes from a person's relatives. For example, when a Muslim decides to concentrate more on acting on the teachings of Islam and if it is something their family have not pursued themselves then they will face criticism from them. They will be labelled foolish and extreme by those who they believed would support them on their path. It is important for Muslims to remain steadfast on the lawful path they choose and trust in the help of Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience by fulfilling His

commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in order to overcome these difficulties.

This is a common reaction from people for when a person chooses a different path in life from others it makes them feel as if their path is bad or evil and this is the reason the person has chosen a different path. Even though the person does not believe this but only chooses a different path believing it is better for them yet they will still face criticism. It is the same reason all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were criticised by their people as they chose and passively invited others to a different better path.

To conclude, as long as one's path in life is lawful they should remain steadfast and not be deterred by the criticism of others. But this does not mean they should not try to improve their situation and character. It means they should not be deterred from pursuing their lawful choice according to the teachings of Islam.

In addition, whenever one invites others towards Islam, commands good and forbids evil they will be challenging the heedless lifestyle of many others which will inspire them to resist the truth anyway they can. The major reason all the past nations rejected their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, was due to this very reason. They could not abandon their lifestyles and characteristics and in defense of them were prepared to wage war against Allah, the Exalted, and their Holy Prophet, peace be upon him. When one takes up this important duty they must be prepared to face many hardships caused by others including their own relatives. The Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, are the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they encountered countless difficulties from their nations.

One only needs to study the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to observe this fact. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once declared in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2472, that no one in creation had been persecuted in the path of Allah, the Exalted, more than him.

In cases like this one's response to the bad attitude of others should be educated, respectful and gentle. An example of this is found in chapter 19 Maryam, verses 46-47:

*"[His father] said, "Have you no desire for my gods, O Abraham? If you do not desist, I will surely stone you, so avoid me a prolonged time." [Abraham] said, "Peace [i.e., safety] will be upon you. I will ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Indeed, He is ever gracious to me."*

Here the kind and respectful response of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, to the harsh attitude of his elder is discussed.

In most cases, a person must possess a character flaw if they claim to get along with everyone. Due to the differences within the members of society a person will never get along with everyone. They will always be one or more that disagree with their mentality, life style and advice. This diversity will lead to tension and occasionally problems. But if a person is liked by everyone then in most cases it shows they have adopted the mentality of the hypocrites by being two-faced. If the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were not loved by all how can a normal person achieve this status?

This is the reason one should not believe in propaganda as the group that were mistreated the most in this way were the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023.

For example, the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, was once falsely accused of illegal relations by a shameless woman. She was enticed into slandering him by the enemy of Allah, the Exalted, Quraon. When she accused the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, publically during a religious gathering he interrogated her. When she observed his reaction she immediately retracted her accusation and admitted the truth. As a result Allah, the Exalted, destroyed Quraon by commanding the Earth to swallow him and his great treasury. This incident has been recorded in Imam Dhahabi's, The Major Sins, Pages 166-167. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 81:

*“And We caused the earth to swallow him and his home...”*

The Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were slandered on many occasions but they remained steadfast on their mission until they were granted victory by Allah, the Exalted. When Allah, the Exalted, decides to complete a task like aiding the one who spreads the true word of faith the entire creation combined cannot stop Him.

Muslims must accept that they too will face hardships when spreading the word of Islam. Therefore, they must follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, by remaining steadfast in the face of

difficulties. This was the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. If one desires to join them in the next world they must adopt this attitude also.



## **Ties of Kinship**

When the resistance and violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, intensified they openly decided to murder the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, ordered his tribe to bring the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, into their area of Mecca and protect him from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca and their hideous plan. When the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca became aware of Abu Talib's plan they made a pact that they would not sit down with nor do business with nor enter the homes of the tribe that were protecting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, until they surrendered him for execution. This social boycott carried on for three years during which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, and even the tribe of Abu Talib suffered greatly. Their markets had been cut off, no food was allowed into their area of Mecca and all their business dealings were disrupted. But at the start of the third year certain men belonging to the side of the non-Muslims of Mecca became critical of this pact and recognized that they were breaking the bonds of kinship and disregarding what was right. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 27-28.

Even though this criticism came from non-Muslims none the less it is important for Muslims to understand the importance of maintaining the ties of kinship.

Upholding the ties of kinship is a vital aspect of Islam which cannot be abandoned if one desires success in both worlds. A true sign of one's faith is not spending all day worshipping Allah, the Exalted, in a Mosque but it is to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and to fulfill the rights of the creation. One of the most important rights of the creation is to uphold the ties of kinship. One can feign piety by dressing Islamically but they cannot deceive Allah, the Exalted. When one turns the pages of history they will always observe that the pious servants of Allah, the Exalted, maintained their ties of kinship. Even when their relative's mistreated them they still responded with kindness. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6525, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, will always aid the one who strives to maintain their ties of kinship even if their relatives make things difficult for them.

Replying good with good is not special whereas, replying good to evil is the sign of a sincere believer. The former behavior is even seen in animals. In most cases, when one treats an animal kindly it will in turn show affection back. It is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5991, that the one who truly upholds the bonds of kinship is the one who maintains ties even when their relatives sever them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was constantly terrorized by most of his relatives but he always showed kindness towards them.

It is commonly known that one cannot achieve success without the closeness of Allah, the Exalted. But in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5987, Allah, the Exalted, has clearly declared that He will sever bonds with the one who cuts their ties of kinship over worldly reasons. Bear in mind, this is true irrespective of how much one struggles to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship such as, the obligatory prayers. If Allah, the Exalted, cuts ties with a Muslim how can they achieve His closeness and eternal success?

In addition, in most cases Allah, the Exalted, delays the punishment of sins in order to give people the opportunity to repent. But breaking the ties of kinship over worldly reasons is punished swiftly. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4212.

Unfortunately, severing ties is commonly seen in the world today. People easily sever ties of kinship over petty worldly reasons. They fail to recognize that any loss which occurs in the material world is temporary but if they are disconnected from Allah, the Exalted, they will face prolonged suffering in both worlds.

A reason for breaking the ties of kinship which is commonly seen within the Islamic community is when one reaches a higher social status through their occupation. This inspires them to discard their relatives as they believe they are not worthy of interacting with them anymore. Their love for their wealth and social status pushes them to the doors of paranoia

which convinces them that their relatives only wish to take their wealth from them.

The Holy Quran indicates that these bonds will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 1:

*“...And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever over you, an Observer.”*

This verse also clearly indicates that one cannot obtain piety without upholding the ties of kinship. So those who believe they can achieve it through excess worship and fasting are proven wrong and must therefore change their behaviour.

Islam teaches Muslims to uphold all ties of kinship by aiding their relatives in matters which are good whenever and wherever possible. They have been ordered to adopt a constructive mindset which unites relatives for the benefit of society rather than a destructive mentality which only causes divisions within families. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, creating divisions amongst people leads to one's destruction.

Those who sever their ties of kinship have been cursed in the Holy Quran. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verses 22-23:

*“So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your [ties of] relationship? Those [who do so] are the ones that Allah has cursed...”*

How can one achieve their lawful desires in this world or in the next when they are encompassed with the curse of Allah, the Exalted, and deprived of His mercy?

Islam does not order one to go beyond their means in supporting their relatives nor does it ask them to sacrifice the limits of Allah, the Exalted, for their relatives as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2625. Therefore, one should never join their relatives in acts of evil. In this case, a Muslim should command their relatives to do good and gently forbid them from evil while maintaining respect for them. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Countless benefits are obtained by the one who maintains the ties of kinship for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who maintains ties will be blessed with extra grace in their provision and in their

life. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1693. This means that their provision irrespective of how little it is will be enough for them and it will provide them with peace of mind and body. Grace in life means they will find time to fulfill all their religious and worldly duties. These are two blessings Muslims spend their whole life and wealth trying to obtain but many fail to recognize that Allah, the Exalted, has placed both of them in maintaining ties of kinship.

Maintaining ties of kinship is so important that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered Muslims to fulfill this vital duty even with their non-Muslim relatives. A Hadith advising this is found in Sahih Muslim, number 2324.

One of the traps of the Devil is that he aims to create dissension between relatives and within society which leads to broken families and social divisions. His ultimate goal is to weaken Islam as a nation. Unfortunately, some have become infamous for harboring grudges which go on for decades and pass on from generation to generation. A person will treat a relative well for decades but over one mistake and argument the latter will vow never to speak to them again. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6526, that it is unlawful for a Muslim to cut off ties from another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. If this is the command regarding severing ties with a non-relative can one imagine the seriousness of severing ties with relatives? This question has been answered in Sahih Bukhari, number 5984. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared that the one who severs ties with a relative over worldly reasons will not enter Paradise.

One must reflect on the verses and Hadiths which discuss this important topic and realize that if after decades of sins Allah, the Exalted, does not close His doors or sever links with people why do people so easily turn their backs on their relatives over small worldly issues? This must change if one desires for their connection to Allah, the Exalted, to remain intact.

## Friends

A non-Muslim leader of Mecca, Ubayy Bin Khalaf, once became enraged at his friend, Uqba Bin Abu Muayt, when he heard he listened to the Holy Quran being recited by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ubayy demanded his friend to show disrespect to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, or he would never even look at him again. Uqba did disrespect the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, out of blind love for his friend. After this Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 25, verses 27-28 of the Holy Quran:

*“And the Day the wrongdoer will bite on his hands [in regret] he will say, “Oh, I wish I had taken with the Messenger a way. Oh, woe to me! I wish I had not taken that one as a friend.””*

This incident has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 35.

Muslims should note that a major sign of true love is when one directs their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is because obedience leads to success and safety in both this world and in the hereafter. A person who does not desire safety and success for a person can never truly love them irrespective of what they claim or how they treat the other person. The same way a person



becomes happy when their beloved obtains worldly success, like a job, they will also desire their beloved to obtain success in the hereafter. If a person does not care about another obtaining safety and success especially, in the next world then they do not love them.

A true lover could not bear knowing and seeing their beloved facing difficulties and punishment in this world or in the next. This is only avoidable through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they would always direct their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. If a person directs another towards their own selfish interest or the interest of others instead of the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. This applies to all relationships such as friendships and relatives.

Therefore, a Muslim should assess whether those in their life direct them towards Allah, the Exalted, or not. If they do then it is a clear sign of their love for them. If they do not then it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

*“Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous.”*

## Argumentation

A non-Muslim Ibn Zibarra once claimed that if everything besides Allah, the Exalted, that is worshiped will go to Hell that means that the Angels they worshipped, and the Holy Prophets Uzayr and Isa, peace be upon them, who were worshipped by some Jews and Christians, would also go to Hell. When this was reported to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he replied that all those wanting and demanding others to worship them besides Allah, the Exalted, will be in Hell with those who worshiped them. Then Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verses 101-102 of the Holy Quran:

*“Indeed, those for whom the best [reward] has preceded from Us - they are from it [Hell] far removed. They will not hear its sound, while they are, in that which their souls desire, abiding eternally.”*

This verse is referring to the Holy Prophets Uzayr and Isa, peace be upon them, and the Angels who were worshipped by some communities. And to indicate their argumentative and negative mindset chapter 43 As Zukhruf, verses 57-58 were revealed:

*“And when the son of Mary was presented as an example, immediately your people laughed aloud. And they said, "Are our gods better, or is he?" They did not present it [i.e., the comparison] except for [mere] argument. But, [in fact], they are a people prone to dispute.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 34.

It is important for Muslims especially, in this day and age to understand the difference between those who discuss certain topics which may be considered controversial in order to genuinely benefit people through a positive change and those who simply discuss these issues in order to attract the attention of others. Those who desire a positive change in society will always show respect and good character towards others especially, to those they are challenging through their words. They never result to vulgar language or actions in order to declare their point of view. They instead study and understand the subject they are debating about without misinterpreting or falsifying information in order to support their point of view. Their criticism is always constructive and their genuine and sincere intention to improve the society is shown through their behaviour and words. These are the people who Muslims should pay attention to as if they are correct it will improve society for everyone. But if their viewpoint is wrong they will accept the truth when it is made clear to them by others. But those who behave opposite to this correct attitude, whether they are found in the media or anywhere else, should simply be ignored as they do not desire to improve the lives of people. They are starved for attention and like an infant act out in order to attract some attention from others. Muslims should not circulate and pass on videos or other content which are linked to people like this as they are playing right into their hands and giving them the attention they so badly desire. Debating with these people is a complete waste of time because of their evil intention and behaviour. Muslims should instead place their efforts in other useful places which benefit them and others in both worlds.

## Cooperation on Falsehood

Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, was making a circumambulation of the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. During his act of worship he was obstructed by some of the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca who claimed that it was best for everyone if they cooperated with each other by compromising on their beliefs. They would worship Allah, the Exalted, if the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted to worship their idols. This way everyone would get along with no hostilities. After this Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 109 Al Kafirun, verses 1-2:

*“Say, “O disbelievers. I do not worship what you worship.””*

This incident is recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 35-36.

Muslims are not expected to make huge sacrifices like those made by the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, but they should not compromise on their faith for the sake of people or to gain worldly things. It is important to understand that no matter what worldly success a person gains through compromising on their faith eventually this success will become a curse and great burden for them in both worlds. It is quite evident when one observes the media that those who compromised on their moral values and faith ended up sad and depressed irrespective of how much worldly success they obtained.

So a Muslim should instead remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam and firmly believe, sooner or later, they will be blessed with worldly success beyond their expectations let alone the blessings which await them in the next world. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 30:

*“Indeed, those who have said, “Our Lord is Allah” 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.”*

## Islam for All

Once a highly respected non-Muslim leader of Mecca was conversing with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The latter was eager to convince him to accept Islam as it meant his whole tribe would follow him into Islam also. During their conversation a blind and poor companion, Ibn Umm Maktum, may Allah be pleased with him, unknowingly interrupted their conversation and desired the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to teach him more about Islam. As the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not desire to break off his conversation with the non-Muslim leader he temporarily turned away from the poor Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, and did not reply to him with the hope he would understand the importance of the situation and return later on. At this point Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 80 Abasa, verses 1-10:

*“He [i.e., the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) ] frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man, [interrupting]. But what would make you perceive that perhaps he might be purified. Or be reminded and the remembrance would benefit him? As for he who thinks himself without need. To him you give attention. And not upon you [is any blame] if he will not be purified. But as for he who came to you striving [for knowledge]. While he fears [Allah]. From him you are distracted.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 36.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant Muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

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

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one's race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a Muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their

footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these Muslims.



## **Kind & Gentle Preaching**

When a respected and honoured man of the tribe of Daws, Al Tufayl Bin Amr, came into Mecca the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca warned him about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and insisted that he should not listen to him nor converse with him. He even stuffed cotton into his ears in order to avoid listening to the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But after he saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he used his common sense and deduced that if what the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, invites him to was good he would accept it but if it was bad he would simply reject it. After listening to the teachings of Islam he accepted it and returned to his tribe urging them to accept Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised him to preach to his tribe in a kind and gentle manner. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 48-49.

The beauty of Islam is found in gentleness. This has been advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in many Hadiths such as the one found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3689. The Holy Quran even mentions that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, constantly lovingly accompanied the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, because of his gentleness and soft nature. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

The Arabs were infamous for being harsh hearted but due to the Holy Prophet Muhammad's, peace and blessings be upon him, soft temperament their tough hearts melted and thus they adopted this quality and became beacons to guide the rest of mankind. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4809, that the one who is deprived of gentleness is deprived of good. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 103:

*“...And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers...”*

This is a clear message to those who desire to spread the word of Islam. They must possess a gentle constructive mind set rather than a harsh destructive one. They should unite people and strive to benefit others rather than spreading controversy within society. A good example of this is seen in one's attitude towards their children. The parents that showed a gentle nature towards their children had a greater positive impact on them than the parents who adopted a harsh temperament. Often some push people further away from Islam with their harsh attitude and this completely challenges the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, once an uneducated Bedouin urinated in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, desired to punish him the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade them and gently explained to the Bedouin the etiquettes of being in a Mosque. This incident is mentioned

in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 529. This soft approach affected the man in a positive way.

This important characteristic is also mentioned in many places of the Holy Quran. For example, even though Pharaoh claimed to be the highest Lord yet Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them both, to invite Pharaoh towards guidance using gentle and kind speech. Chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 24:

*“And said, "I am your most exalted lord.””*

and Chapter 20 Taha, verses 43-44:

*“Go, both of you, to Pharaoh. Indeed, he has transgressed. And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].”*

Children and even animals understand the language of gentleness. So how can an adult not be guided correctly if one adopts this characteristic when inviting them towards Islam and good? This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6601, that Allah, the Exalted, is kind and gentle according to His infinite dignity and likes the creation to act softly with each other. Unfortunately, many who spread the word of Islam have adopted the incorrect belief that being gentle is a sign of weakness. This

is nothing but a ploy of the Devil as he desires to lead mankind away from Islam.

## **Mission of Mercy**

When the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca escalated further against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, Allah, the Exalted, subjected them to a severe famine. It was so bad that they were forced to eat carrion, leather and bones. Some of the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, stating that his claim was a mission of mercy for mankind so he should therefore pray for this famine to be removed from them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did pray for this and Mecca was blessed with profuse rain and the effects of the famine were removed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 59-60.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that Allah, the Exalted, will not show mercy to the one who does not show mercy to others.

Islam is a very simple religion. One of its fundamental teachings is so simple that even uneducated people can understand and act on them namely, how people treat others is how they will be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, those who learn to overlook and forgive the mistakes of others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Those who support others in beneficial worldly and religious matters such as emotional or financial aid will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. This same Hadith advises that the one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, if one treats others with kindness and respect according to the teachings of Islam they will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted. And those who mistreat others will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted, even if they fulfill the obligatory duties which are connected to Him such as the obligatory prayers. This is because a Muslim must fulfill both duties in order to achieve success namely, the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Finally, it is important to note a Muslim will only be treated kindly by Allah, the Exalted, if they treat others kindly for His sake. If they do it for any other reason than they will undoubtedly forfeit the reward mentioned in these teachings. The foundation of all acts and Islam itself is one's intention. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

## **Sincerity to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him**

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

*“Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs...”*

On his return he informed the people of Mecca of his Heavenly Journey. The non-Muslims of Mecca refuted his claim and tried to convince the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to renounce Islam as they believed this journey was impossible. But Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, simply replied that believing in this journey was a small issue as he believed in greater things which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, informed him about such as divine revelation. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 63.

Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, demonstrated true sincerity to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at all times.

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 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.

## Company of the Greats

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

*“Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs...”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was welcomed by numerous Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, in the different levels of Heaven. For example, he met the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, in the first Heaven. He met the Holy Prophets Yahyah and Isa, peace be upon them, in the second Heaven. He met the Holy Prophet Idris, peace be upon him, in the fourth Heaven. He met the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, in the sixth Heaven and the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, in the seventh Heaven. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 66.

Every Muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah

be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

## **Life is a Mirror**

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

*“Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs...”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was welcomed by numerous Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, in the different levels of Heaven. He met the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, and observed him leaning against the House of Allah, the Exalted, in the seventh Heaven, the Bayt Al Mamur. This House of Allah, the Exalted, is directly above His house in Mecca, the Kaaba. The Bayt Al Mamur is so sacred that each day 70,000 Angels worship Allah, the Exalted, therein and circumambulate it and they will not have the opportunity to do this again until Judgement Day. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 66.

Throughout the divine scriptures there are many examples which indicate that a person shall be treated according to how they act. For example, in one verse of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will

remember the person who remembers Him. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152.

*“So remember Me; I will remember you.”*

Another example is found in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 40:

*“...fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant [from Me]...”*

Finally, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever shows mercy to others will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted.

And similarly this incident indicates how the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, was granted a station near the house of Allah, the Exalted, the Bayt Al Mamur, located in the seventh Heaven as he strived hard to build and establish the house of Allah, the Exalted, in Mecca thousands of years ago. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 127:

*“And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], “Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing.”*

In addition, this discussion is connected to chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

*“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.”*

This verse means that if one aids Islam then Allah, the Exalted, will help them in both worlds. It is strange how countless people desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet do not fulfil the first part of this verse through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. The excuse most people give is that they do not have time to perform righteous deeds. They desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet will not make time to do the things which please Him. Does this make sense? Those who do not fulfil the obligatory duties and then expect the aid of Allah, the Exalted, in their moment of need are quite foolish. And those who do fulfil the obligatory duties yet refuse to go beyond them will find that the aid they receive is limited. How one behaves is how they are treated. The more time and energy dedicated to Allah, the Exalted, the more support they will receive. It really is that simple.

A Muslim needs to understand that the majority of the obligatory duties, such as the five daily prayers, only takes a small amount of time in one's day. A Muslim cannot expect to barely dedicate an hour a day to offering the obligatory prayers and then neglect Allah, the Exalted, for the rest of the day and still expect His continuous support through all difficulties. A

person would dislike a friend who treated them in such a manner. How then can one treat Allah, the Exalted, the Lord of the worlds, like this then?

Some only dedicate extra time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, when they encounter a worldly problem then demand Him to fix it as if they done Allah, the Exalted, a favour by performing voluntary good deeds. This foolish mentality clearly contradicts servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. It is amazing how this type of person finds time to do all their other leisurely activities, such as spending time with family and friends, watching TV and attending social functions yet finds no time to dedicate to pleasing Allah, the Exalted. They cannot seem to find time to recite and adopt the teachings of the Holy Quran. They do not seem to find time to study and act on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people somehow find wealth to spend on their unnecessary luxuries yet seem to find no wealth to donate in voluntary charity.

It is important to understand that a Muslim will be treated according to how they behave. Meaning, if a Muslim dedicates extra time to please Allah, the Exalted, then they will find the support they need to journey through all difficulties safely. But if they fail to fulfil the obligatory duties or only fulfil them without dedicating any other time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, then they will find a similar response from Allah, the Exalted. Put simply, the more one gives the more they shall receive. If one does not give much they should not expect much in return.



## The All Mighty

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

*“Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 61.

The first thing to note is that Muslims should never doubt the power of Allah, the Exalted, in respect to solving their problems and granting them a way out of difficulties. This Heavenly Journey sounds impossible yet it occurred as nothing is beyond the infinite power of Allah, the Exalted. The condition for being granted a way out of all difficulties is sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

*“...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out”*

## The Highest Rank

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

*“Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 61.

This great event and the verse quoted indicate the highest rank a person can reach namely, a sincere servant of Allah, the Exalted. If there was a greater rank than this Allah, the Exalted, would have referred to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with it. This has been indicated in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Muslim, number 851, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, referred to himself as the servant of Allah, the Exalted, before declaring his Messengership. This is a clear lesson to all Muslims that if they desire ultimate success and the highest ranks in both worlds they must become true servants of Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved by following in the footsteps of the greatest servant of Allah, the

Exalted, namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Servanthood is not possible to achieve any other way. 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. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

## Addressing More Important Issues

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

*“Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs...”*

Scholars have debated for many generations whether the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was blessed with physically observing Allah, the Exalted, or the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, in his true form during the Heavenly Journey. Both sides have presented proves supporting their views. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 66-68.

But the important thing to note, is that Muslims should never fall into arguments over this and similar issues to the point that it creates enmity between them. In addition, believing one way or the other will not affect their faith and obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Neither will this be questioned about on the Day of Judgement by Allah, the Exalted, otherwise the Muslim nation would have been informed of this. So spending countless hours arguing, debating and publishing books discussing this issue does not make sense. Muslims should instead

concentrate more on the things which when clarified will increase their sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and concentrate on those things which will be questioned about on Judgement Day, such as fulfilling the rights of people. Unfortunately, arguing and debating over these types of issues has distracted Muslims from concentrating on more important things and issues and this is one of the reasons why the general strength of the Muslim nation has declined over time.

This issue is connected to a Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2518. It advises that a Muslim should leave a thing which creates doubt in them and act on the things which create no doubt in them. The vast majority of Muslims are aware of the obligatory duties and the majority of the unlawful things, such as drinking alcohol. So these things create no doubt within Muslims therefore they should act accordingly meaning, fulfil the obligatory duties and abstain from unlawful things.

All other things which are not obligatory and create a doubt in society should therefore be avoided. Allah, the Exalted, will not question why someone did not perform a voluntary deed on Judgement Day. Instead, He will question why they performed a voluntary deed. Therefore, leaving the voluntary action will have no consequences in the hereafter whereas performing a voluntary deed will namely, punishment, reward or forgiveness. It is important for Muslims to act on this short but extremely important Hadith as it will solve and prevent many problems and debates. In fact, this is the advice given in another Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205. It advises that both the lawful and unlawful things in Islam have been made clear to mankind and all other matters of

voluntary actions which create doubt should be left aside. This attitude will protect one's religion and honour.

## **The Obligatory Prayers**

A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 213, discusses a specific part of the Heavenly Journey. This is when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was gifted the obligatory prayers. The fact that this was the only obligatory duty which was given in this way while the rest were revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, while he was on Earth shows the importance of establishing the obligatory prayers. This specific Hadith advises that initially fifty obligatory prayers were commanded and step by step they were reduced until five remained. If a Muslim had to perform fifty obligatory prayers every day it would prevent them from doing anything else. This shows the importance of the obligatory prayers. It teaches Muslims that the obligatory prayers must be the centre of their life. One should mould their life around their obligatory prayers and not mould their duties around their life.

In addition, the obligatory prayers are an indication of how one should attach to Allah, the Exalted, while detaching from the material world. A Muslim praying is not allowed to talk, eat or do other normal lawful things during the prayer. This indicates the importance of one connecting to Allah, the Exalted, through fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Being initially commanded to fulfil fifty daily obligatory prayers reminds Muslims that this obedience and connection to Allah, the Exalted, should be their top priority and all other things should be placed in their rightful place according to the teachings of Islam. This is the true purpose of mankind. Their purpose is not to strive to for the unnecessary and vain things of this material world. This material world is a bridge which connects one to the hereafter. It is not a permanent home. The obligatory prayers and this great event remind Muslims of this fact. Therefore, they should strive in crossing this bridge



according to the teachings of Islam so that they can reach the hereafter safely.

## Rejecting the Truth

The non-Muslims of Mecca desired the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to show them a miracle, other than the Holy Quran, in order to confirm his declaration. He showed them the splitting of the Moon. Even after this obvious sign they simply claimed he tricked their eyes. During this time chapter 54 Al Qamar, verses 1-3, were revealed:

*“The Hour has come near, and the moon has split [in two]. And if they see a sign [i.e., miracle], they turn away and say, “Passing magic.” And they denied and followed their inclinations. But for every matter is a [time of] settlement.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 77-78. And a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3637, also discusses this event.

The Holy Quran teaches mankind that certain people are so drowned in the material world no advice will penetrate their veiled hearts. The Holy Quran describes how this group of people possesses hearts harder than rocks. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 74:

*“Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder...”*

At this point those who desire to spread the word of Islam should separate from this type of person and instead concentrate on others. But it is important to note, even in this case a Muslim should always demonstrate good character towards the sinful as they can repent at anytime. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

*“...and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.”*

Similarly, in another verse of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that when a limit is reached it is best to separate and leave the stubborn and misguided people to their false beliefs. A day will undoubtedly come when Allah, the Exalted, will inform mankind who was rightly guided and who was lost in darkness. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 55:

*“And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, "For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.””*

Muslims should never get depressed and confused when their good advice does not affect others. In some cases, these people are drowned in sins to such an extent their heart becomes veiled. This veil prevents the good advice affecting them in a positive way. A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, explains how a sin causes a black spot to be etched

onto the spiritual heart. The more one sins the more their spiritual heart becomes engrossed by this darkness. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

*“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.”*

This is similar to another verse where Allah, the Exalted, declares that their ears, eyes and hearts have been veiled from the truth and they therefore cannot be guided to the truth. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 7:

*“Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil...”*

The fault does not lie with the message of Islam but in the hearts of the misguided. Just like the fault lies in the eyes of a blind person and not the bright Sun. Unfortunately, this stubborn attitude has become a widespread problem within society. Some of these people believe in Islam yet have closed their hearts and minds to the teachings of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They refuse to accept any good advice which would benefit them in both worlds.

Those who choose to spread the word of Islam should understand that there are two types of mind-sets people can adopt. The first is when

someone makes their mind up beforehand about an issue and then searches and accepts only those things which support their predetermined belief. Whereas, the correct attitude is to live with an open mind by searching and accepting strong evidence regarding different issues. The first mentality will only cause problems from a personal level right up to a national level. Unfortunately, this is how some aspects of the media work. They predetermine the information they would like to publish, find bits of weak supporting evidence and then blow it out of proportion for the world to see. Those spreading the word of Islam should avoid the first type of people and instead concentrate on inviting the second group towards the truth.

## **A Fine Companion**

During these difficult years of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, his beloved wife, Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, passed away. She had been his trusted adviser in all his troubles and he would always seek reassurance from her. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 81.

There are countless examples in the world of how a person inspired their friend to take the wrong path in life which caused them serious trouble, such as prison. One should not only be cautious of people who possess bad characteristics as they will influence their friends in a negative way which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4833. But a Muslim should also be cautious over the people who seem to possess genuine love for them especially those who do not possess real knowledge. This is because the one who does not possess real knowledge will sometimes advise their loved ones incorrectly believing they have fulfilled and shown their love to their companion. For example, a wife may advise her tired husband to offer his obligatory prayer at home instead of at the Mosque with congregation. Even though according to some scholars it is permissible to offer one's obligatory prayer at home yet, this advice will only take one away from one of the greatest traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This in turn will only take them further away from Allah, the Exalted. This wife may believe she has behaved in a loving way even though she has not. This is why gaining useful knowledge is extremely important and a duty on all Muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224. This is because some things may seem difficult outwardly yet many blessings are contained within them. And many things may seem easy and even lawful yet they only take one away from Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, a Muslim should be cautious and remain firm on the obedience

of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience and not get fooled by the advice a loved one gives. They should not assume the advice will benefit them just because it comes from a beloved companion.

## **The Guardian**

In a single year both the beloved wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, and his uncle Abu Talib, passed away. She had been his trusted adviser in all his troubles and he would seek reassurance from her. And the death of his uncle, Abu Talib, meant he had lost a source of support and protection against the non-Muslims of Mecca. The difficulties of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, greatly increased after these deaths. The physical violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against him greatly increased. For example, they once poured dirt over his head. When he returned home one of his daughters washed the dirt off while weeping. He told her not to cry as Allah, the Exalted, was his Protector. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 81.

Allah, the Exalted, safeguards and preserves the creation and takes care of them with special care. He protects the obedient from the plots and traps of the Devil and He safeguards the disobedient from His immediate punishment in order to give them an opportunity to sincerely repent.

A Muslim should act on this divine name by using the means provided to them by Allah, the Exalted, but always trust in His divine care and choices in every situation and outcome they face even if they do not observe the wisdom behind some choices. This inspires patience and even contentment with the choice of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 3:



*“...And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him...”*

A Muslim should also understand that they will only be protected from misguidance and punishment by the Guardian namely, Allah, the Exalted. This removes any signs of pride and ensures they seek His protection through sincere obedience to Him. A Muslim must act on this divine name by safeguarding every trust they possess such as their blessings by using them according to the teachings of Islam. They should safeguard their actions and speech from the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they receive more blessings from 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]...”*

## **No Forcefulness in Religion**

When the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, was on his deathbed his non-Muslim relatives gathered at his house desiring him to encourage the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to compromise with them. But instead the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, desired and urged Abu Talib to accept Islam but he was constantly challenged by his relatives until Abu Talib died as a non-Muslim. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared he would continue asking forgiveness for him until he was prohibited from it by Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 113:

*“It is not for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even if they were relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of Hellfire.”*

And chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 56:

*“Indeed, [O Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him], you do not guide whom you like...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 83-84. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4772, also discusses this event.

Even though commanding good and forbidding evil is an important duty on each Muslim yet they will encounter people who do not seem to listen nor act on the advice given to them. This is quite obvious especially in this day and age. In cases like this it is best not to give up but to consider changing one's technique. Advising others through words is one way of commanding good and forbidding evil but a better way is to advise others through one's actions. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was the greatest teacher as he advised others through his words and actions. This leading by example technique is important to adopt as it is more likely to affect others in a positive way. But those who still fail to accept this technique of commanding good and forbidding evil should be left alone. One should continue showing a practical example but perhaps take a step back from verbally advising them as continuously advising others who do not pay attention can cause both parties to become irritated and angered. This contradicts the very attitude a Muslim should possess when they advise others towards good. It is a sad truth that one should not bother verbally imposing themselves on people who do not care what they have to say. But they should continue advising others through their actions. In this way one not only helps themselves by refining their own character but also fulfils their duty in commanding good and forbidding evil. Chapter 31 Luqman, verse 17:

*“...enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you. Indeed, [all] that is of the matters [requiring] resolve.”*

## **Upholding Old Ties**

After the death of the wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Khadija, may Allah be pleased with her, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, maintained ties with her family and friends. For example, he would often present them food and gifts. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3818.

The Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, were the best group ever created after the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. The fact they physically observed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his lifetime is definitely one factor. But anyone who knows about their life and their righteous deeds understands that their superiority is due to more than just this unique and great deed.

One of the main reasons for their superiority is shown in a Hadith involving the Companion Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, which is found in Sahih Muslim, number 6515. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was once riding on his conveyance in the desert when he came across a Bedouin. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted the Bedouin, placed his turban on the Bedouin's head and insisted that the Bedouin ride on his conveyance. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was told that the greeting he gave the Bedouin was more than enough as the Bedouin would have been greatly pleased at the fact that the great Companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted him. Yet, Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, went much further than this and showed the Bedouin great respect.

Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he only did this because the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that one of the best ways a person can honour their parent is by showing love and respect to their parent's relatives and friends. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, added that the Bedouin's father was a friend of his father the Commander of the Faithful, Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him.

This incident indicates the superiority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They completely submitted to the teachings of Islam. They not only fulfilled the obligatory duties and avoided all sins but completely fulfilled all acts which were recommended to them to the highest possible degree. Their submission caused them to put aside their own desires and only act to please Allah, the Exalted. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily ignored the Bedouin as none of the actions he done were obligatory yet, unlike many Muslims who would use this excuse, he completely submitted to the teachings of Islam and acted the way he did.

It is the lack of submission to the teachings of Islam which has weakened the faith of Muslims. Some only fulfil the obligatory duties and turn away from other righteous deeds, such as voluntary charity, which contradict their desires by claiming the actions are not obligatory. All Muslims desire to end up with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. But how is this possible if they do not follow their path or way? If a Muslim follows a path other than theirs then how can they end up with them? To end up with them one must follow their path. But this is only possible if one completely submits to the teachings of Islam like they did instead of cherry picking the deeds which suit their desires.

## **Neighbours**

When the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, died he lost a source of support and protection against the non-Muslims of Mecca. The physical violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against him greatly increased. For example, the most harm directed at the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during this time was from his neighbours who were also his relatives. They would toss filthy things on him while he was in his house and even placed these things in his cooking pot. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never responded in kind and would instead carry the filth out of his home and dispose of it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 99.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6014, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that he was encouraged to treat neighbors kindly to such an extent that he thought that a neighbor would become an heir of every Muslim.

Unfortunately, this duty is often neglected even though treating one's neighbour kindly is an important aspect of Islam. First of all, it is important to note that a person's neighbour in Islam includes all those people who are living within forty houses in each direction to a Muslim's home. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, Number 109.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once connected belief in Allah, the Exalted, and Judgment Day to treating a neighbour kindly in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 174. This Hadith alone is enough to indicate the seriousness of treating neighbours kindly. A Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 119, warns that a woman who fulfilled her obligatory duties and offered much voluntary worship would go to Hell because she mistreated her neighbours through her speech. If this is the case for the one who harms their neighbour through words can one imagine the seriousness of physically harming one's neighbour?

A Muslim must be patient when mistreated by their neighbor. In fact, a Muslim should treat them kindly in cases like this. Repaying good with good is not difficult. A good neighbour is the one who repays harm with good. A Muslim should respect the private space of their neighbour's property but at the same time greet them and offer them help without being too intrusive. They should be supported by whatever means is available to a person, such as financial or emotional support.

A Muslim should always conceal the faults of their neighbors. The one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted. And the one who exposes the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults and publically disgrace them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4880.

## **Private Conversations**

When the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, died he lost a source of support and protection against the non-Muslims of Mecca. The physical violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against him greatly increased. So he decided to visit the near city of Taif in order to call their people to Islam and seek their help against the non-Muslims of Mecca. When he met the leaders of Taif they insulted and ridiculed him. As he was leaving Taif he requested them to keep their meeting and conversation a secret as he knew the non-Muslims of Mecca would only intensify their violence against him if they found out about it. But the leaders of Taif refused to even this act of common decency. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 99-100.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1959, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that private conversations are a trust which must be protected.

Unfortunately, many have the bad habit of divulging the private conversations of people to others. This is an incredibly bad characteristic to possess as it contradicts the attitude of a true Muslim. Many do this with their close relatives believing it is acceptable when it is clearly not. A Muslim should always keep the words spoken in a conversation secret unless they are fully sure the person they conversed with would not mind the information being mentioned to a third party. If they would then doing this betrays them which contradicts being sincere to them. Being sincere to others has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. It is important to act on the main Hadith as it prevents sins



such as backbiting and gossiping and prevents negative feelings being developed for each other. These all only lead to fractured and broken relationships. If one honestly reflects on their life they will realize that the majority of the people they have felt negative feelings towards occurred because of what they were told about them not what they directly witnessed about them. Divulging private conversations prevents unity amongst people especially relatives. And unity has been commanded in many teachings of Islam such as the one declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6065. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 58:

*“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due...”*

## **Accepting the Divine Decree**

When the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, died he lost a source of support and protection against the non-Muslims of Mecca. The physical violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against him greatly increased. So he decided to visit the near city of Taif in order to call their people to Islam and seek their help against the non-Muslims of Mecca. When he met the leaders of Taif they insulted and ridiculed him. As he was leaving Taif he requested them to keep their meeting and conversation a secret as he knew the non-Muslims of Mecca would only intensify their violence against him if they found out about it. But the leaders of Taif refused to even this act of common decency. In fact, they incited a crowd of people to revile, injure and chase him out of their city. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sought refuge in a garden from the mob. He spoke the following supplication at this time, "O Allah, I complain to You about my weakness and inadequacy before the people. O You Most Merciful of all, You who are Lord of the oppressed, You who are my Lord, to whom would You entrust me? To those far away who greet me with displeasure or to some enemy to whom You entrust me? As long as You are not angry with me I will not care but I would prefer your favour. I take refuge with the light of Your face that brightens the shadows, repairs the troubles of this world and the hereafter, ensuring that Your anger or discontent not alight upon me. May You be content and be pleased; all power and strength stem from You." This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 99-100.

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.”*



## **Pardon & Overlook**

When the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Talib, died he lost a source of support and protection against the non-Muslims of Mecca. The physical violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against him greatly increased. So he decided to visit the near city of Taif in order to call their people to Islam and seek their help against the non-Muslims of Mecca. When he met the leaders of Taif they insulted and ridiculed him. As he was leaving Taif he requested them to keep their meeting and conversation a secret as he knew the non-Muslims of Mecca would only intensify their violence against him if they found out about it. But the leaders of Taif refused to even this act of common decency. In fact, they incited a crowd of people to revile, injure and chase him out of their city. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sought refuge in a garden from the mob. Allah, the Exalted, sent the Angel of the mountains to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who offered to crush the city with two mountains. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, turned down the offer and instead declared that he hoped that the city would one day accept Islam and worship none except Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3231.

## Gentle Persistence

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, remained steadfast on his mission and invited all he encountered towards Islam. He visited many tribes and clans in order to spread the message of Islam the vast majority, during the early days of Islam, rejected his invitation. For example, he visited the tribe of Kinda, the tribe of Kalb, the tribe of Hanifa and many others. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 105.

The one who desires to spread the word of Islam should strive to frequently remind others of good. People can become heedless quickly therefore, reminding them consistently is important. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 51:

*“And We have [repeatedly] conveyed to them the word [i.e., the Qur’ān] that they might be reminded.”*

Just like students who revise their notes repeatedly in order to reinforce its knowledge into their minds one will benefit from being frequently reminded of the true word of Islam. One should not just offer good advice once and then give up. Repeating good words is like continuous drops of water which with time penetrates the toughest of structures. This is the tradition of Allah, the Exalted, and all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them all. For example, Allah, the Exalted, only needed to command

Muslims to establish the obligatory prayers once yet He has done it many times throughout the Holy Quran.

The Holy Prophet Nuh, peace be upon him, spent approximately 950 years continuously spreading the word of faith to his people. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 14:

*“And We certainly sent Noah to his people, and he remained among them a thousand years minus fifty years...”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used every moment to spread the word of Islam and even in his last moments advised the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, to adhere to Islamic teachings. This has been recorded in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2697. Therefore, one should adopt this attitude and not fall prey to the whisperings of the Devil by giving up offering advice after a few occasions. The duty of a Muslim who invites others to Islam is to do it consistently but whether this effects the hearts of the people is out of their control.

But it is important to stress there is a difference between being regular and hounding others. A Muslim should not constantly command others to good as this can become overbearing and burdensome for others. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, refrained from giving too many lectures as he did not want the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, becoming bored and overburdened. This is why the Companion, Abdullah Bin Masood, may

Allah be pleased with him, only gave lectures on Thursdays even though he was requested to give more. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7127.



## **A Good Intention**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, remained steadfast on his mission and invited all he encountered towards Islam. He visited many tribes and clans in order to spread the message of Islam the vast majority, during the early days of Islam, rejected his invitation. For example, he visited the tribe of Kinda, the tribe of Kalb, the tribe of Hanifa and many others. The tribal leaders of Kinda did pay attention to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They inquired that if they accepted his message and aided him in his mission and Allah, the Exalted, granted him victory would he bestow power and authority on them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that power always rests with Allah, the Exalted, and He places it wherever He wishes. Meaning, he was not in a position to guarantee them positions of authority if they aided him. After hearing this response they rejected his call to Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 106.

Many people have come and gone who have stood up for some sort of cause whether it was to do with women's rights, human rights, the poor, or something else, yet only a small per cent of these people had a positive impact on society. The majority had no positive effect and instead became footnotes in history. One of the reasons for this is a lack of sincerity. If one turns the pages of history they will observe that those who acted with the correct intention meaning, to truly benefit society without any ulterior motives were granted success even if they were not Muslims. Benefit to others is something Allah, the Exalted, loves and He therefore grants success to all those who sincerely strive for this end.

Those who did not achieve a positive effect on society lacked this good intention as they desired something else, such as fame. In most cases their bad intention is quite evident as their words and actions clearly contradict each other. For example, some claim to stand up for the rights of women then happily take part in advertising campaigns which show women to be nothing except ornaments to be gawked at. If their actions supported their claims they would have instead taught the advertising companies that a woman's intelligence, good character and inner strength are what should be displayed to the world through their advertising campaigns.

Many of these people who claim to stand up for different causes are in a position of political and social influence and they possess much wealth yet, their positive influence on society is minimal and very short lived. On the other hand, those who may not have possessed such influence changed the attitude of millions through their sincerity. They only desired to benefit society; they did not seek anything else. Because of their sincerity their positive influence and remembrance endured long after they departed this world whereas, those whose intention was corrupt were quickly forgotten even while they were still alive.

So if one desires to succeed in the material world or more importantly in matters of faith they should strive to correct their intention. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, judges people based on their intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

## The Helpers

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, remained steadfast on his mission and invited all he encountered towards Islam. He visited many tribes and clans in order to spread the message of Islam the vast majority, during the early days of Islam, rejected his invitation. For example, he visited the tribe of Kinda, the tribe of Kalb, the tribe of Hanifa and many others. During the festivals he would invite all the people who attended but none would respond positively to him. This went on until he came across the people of Medina, which was known as Yathrib before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated there. They accepted his message of Islam and aided him in his mission. They learned the divine revelation that had been revealed up to that point and returned back to Medina inviting their people towards Islam. Eventually no home in Medina was empty of a Muslim. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 131.

Since the passing of the righteous predecessors the strength of the Muslim nation has weakened dramatically. It is logical that the greater the number of people in a group the stronger the group will become yet Muslims have somehow defied this logic. The strength of the Muslim nation has only decreased as the number of Muslims have increased. One of the main reasons this has occurred is connected to chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2 of the Holy Quran:

*"...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression..."*

Allah, the Exalted, clearly commands Muslims to aid each other in any matter which is good and not support each other in any matter which is bad. This is what the righteous predecessors acted on but many Muslims have failed to follow in their footsteps. Many Muslims now observe who is doing an action instead of observing what they are doing. If the person is linked to them for example, a relative, they support them even if the thing is not good. Similarly, if the person has no relationship with them they turn away from supporting them even if the thing is good. This attitude completely contradicts the traditions of the righteous predecessors. They would support others in good irrespective of who was doing it. In fact, they went so far on acting on this verse of the Holy Quran that they would even support those they did not get on with as long as it was a good thing.

The other thing connected to this is that many Muslims fail to support each other in good as they believe the person they are supporting will gain more prominence than them. This condition has even affected scholars and Islamic educational institutes. They make lame excuses not to aid others in good as they do not have a relationship with them and they fear their own institution will be forgotten and those they help will gain further respect in society. But this is completely wrong as one only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the truth. As long as one's intention is to please Allah, the Exalted, supporting others in good will increase their respect within society. Allah, the Exalted, will cause the hearts of the people to turn to them even if their support is for another organisation, institution or person. For example, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed this world Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily challenged for the Caliphate and would have found plenty of support in his favour. But he knew the right thing to do was to nominate Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, did not worry about being forgotten by society if he supported another person. He instead obeyed the command in the verse mentioned earlier and supported what was right. This is

confirmed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari numbers 3667 and 3668. The honour and respect of Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, within society only increased by this action. This is obvious to those who are aware of Islamic history.

Muslims must reflect on this deeply, change their mentality and strive to aid others in good irrespective of who is doing it and not hold back fearing their support will cause them to be forgotten within society. Those who obey Allah, the Exalted, will never be forgotten in both this world and the next. In fact, their respect and honour will only grow in both worlds.

## **The Pledge of the Helpers**

During the pilgrimage season to Mecca, which used to occur before the coming of Islam even though the correct practices had become corrupted, the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, after accepting Islam took a pledge with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 132.

The first aspect of the pledge was that they would hear and obey the teachings of Islam.

Even though, the number of preachers has increased over time and accessing information has become easier yet the strength of Muslims has only weakened. One of the reasons is that many Muslims have adopted a mentality which has hindered them from learning and acting on Islamic knowledge namely, they believe merely listening to Islamic knowledge is good enough to succeed. This is a trap of the Devil and completely contradicts the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. They not only listened to religious knowledge but they fully intended and fulfilled this intention by acting on the knowledge they heard. Failing to act in this way has caused the faith of Muslims to weaken. It is the reason why some Muslims have spent decades attending religious gatherings and talks yet have not changed for the better at all. The danger of this attitude is that eventually people will fall lower by believing that they can simply declare Islam with their tongues without the need to listen or act on religious teachings. Muslims will be left with ignorance as their guide which will only lead them to destruction.

In addition, true obedience to the teachings of Islam is only possible when one adopts true 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 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.

The next part of the pledge the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, made with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was that they would give the blessings they possessed to the needy whether in times of difficulty or ease for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 661, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that when a Muslim donates a tiny amount of charity such as a single date fruit from lawful earnings Allah, the Exalted, will give reward on Judgment Day equivalent to a large mountain.

The first thing to note is that Allah, the Exalted, is only pleased with wealth which is obtained lawfully and utilized in a lawful manner. Any wealth

which is obtained unlawfully will corrupt any righteous deed it is used upon such as charity or performing the Holy Pilgrimage with it. A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2346, clearly warns that a person's supplication will be rejected if they obtain and utilize the unlawful. If one's supplication is rejected how can any other action be accepted by Allah, the Exalted?

This Hadith indicates the importance of spending in anyway which pleases Allah, the Exalted, such as spending on one's needs and the needs of their dependents. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006. Allah, the Exalted, will greatly reward those who spend in the correct way according to their intention meaning, the quality of their spending and not according to quantity. Therefore, Muslims should correct their intention by spending for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, irrespective of how much or little it is. It is important for a Muslim to spend according to their means and never worry about how much or little they spend. It is hoped that whoever spends according to their means will be granted reward according to the infinite status of Allah, the Exalted, which is beyond comprehension. But the one who holds back will miss out on this great reward.

Finally, it is important to note that this Hadith applies to all blessings one possesses, such as their good health, not just wealth. It is vital for Muslims to correctly use each blessing according to the teachings of Islam so that they receive more which in reality is true gratitude. Otherwise, they may well lose the blessing forever. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The next part of the pledge the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, made with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was that they would command good and forbid evil.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2686, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that failing to fulfill the important duty of commanding good and forbidding evil can be understood with the example of a boat with two levels full of people. The people on the lower level keep disturbing the people on the upper level whenever they desire to access water. So they decide to drill a hole in the lower level so that they can access water directly. If the people on the upper level fail to stop them they will all surely drown.

It is important for Muslims to never give up commanding good and forbidding evil according to their knowledge in a gentle way. A Muslim should never believe that as long as they obey Allah, the Exalted, other misguided people will not be able to affect them in a negative way. A good apple will eventually get affected when placed with rotten apples. Similarly, the Muslim who fails to command others to do good will eventually be effected by their negative behavior whether it is subtle or apparent. Even if the wider society has become heedless one should never give up advising their dependents such as their family as not only will their negative behavior affect them more but this is a duty on all Muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. Even if a Muslim is ignored by others they should discharge their duty by persistently advising them in a gentle way which is supported by strong evidence and knowledge. Only in this way will they be protected from their negative effects and pardoned on the Day of Judgment. But if they only

care about themselves and ignore the actions of others it is feared that the negative effects of others may well lead to their eventual misguidance.

The next part of the pledge the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, made with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was that they would object to evil for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not fear any criticism directed at them for doing so.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised the importance of objecting to evil things in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4340. This Hadith clearly shows that it is a duty on all Muslims to object to all forms of evil according to their strength and means. The lowest level, as mentioned in this Hadith, is rejecting the evil with one's heart.

This shows internally approving evil actions is one of the ugliest of those things which are forbidden. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4345, that the one who is present when an evil is committed and denounces it is like the one who was not present. But the one who was absent and approved the evil deed is like the one who was present when it was committed.

The first two aspects of objecting to evil, mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion, are through one's physical actions and speech. This is

only a duty on a Muslim who has the strength to do so for example, they will not be harmed by their actions or words.

It is important to note, objecting to evil with one's hand does not refer to fighting. It refers to correcting the evil actions of others, such as returning the rights of someone which have been unlawfully violated. The one who is in a position to do so yet, refrains from doing so has been warned of a punishment in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4338.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised Muslims in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2191, that they should not fear the creation in respect to speaking the truth. In fact, the one who allows the fear of the creation to prevent them from objecting to evil things has been described as the one who hates himself and will be criticized by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4008. It is important to note, this does not refer to the one who remains silent out of fear of being harmed as this is an acceptable excuse but it refers to the person who remains silent because of the status people hold in their eyes.

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4341, advises that a person can give up objecting to evil things through their actions and speech when others obey their greed, follow their incorrect opinions and desires and when they prefer the material world over the hereafter. It does not take a scholar to conclude this time has arrived. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 105.

*“O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided...”*

But it is important to note, a Muslim should continue with this important duty in respect to their dependents as this is a duty on them according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928, and in respect to those they feel physically and verbally safe from, as this is the superior attitude.

Objecting to evil things which are apparent is what the main Hadith under discussion refers to. Meaning, it does not grant permission to Muslims to spy on others in order to find evil things to object to. Spying and anything associated with it in this respect are forbidden. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed...do not spy...”*

It is important to note, that a Muslim must object to evil according to the teachings of Islam and not their own desires. A Muslim may believe they are acting for sake of Allah, the Exalted, when they are not. This is proven when they object to evil in a way which contradicts the teachings of Islam. In fact, what is considered a good deed may well become a sin because of this negative attitude.

A Muslim must object to evil in a gentle and fair way preferably in private in accordance to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The opposite of these characteristics will only push people away from sincerely repenting and may lead to further sins as a result of angering them.

The next part of the pledge the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, made with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was that they would not fear any criticism directed at them for commanding good and forbidding evil.

A Muslim should always remember that there are two types of people. The first are rightly guided as their criticism of others is based on the criticism and advice found in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This type will always be constructive and guide one to blessings and the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. These people will also refrain from over or under praising others. Over praising others can cause them to become proud and arrogant. Under praising others can lead them to becoming lazy and put them off from doing good. This reaction is often observed in children. Praising according to the teachings of Islam will inspire others to strive harder in both worldly and religious matters and it will prevent them from becoming arrogant. Therefore, the praise and constructive criticism of this person should be accepted and acted upon even if comes from a stranger.

The second type of person criticises based on their own desires. This criticism is mostly unconstructive and only shows one's bad mood and attitude. These people often over and under praise others as they act based on their own desires. The negative effects of these two were



mentioned earlier. Therefore, the criticism and praise of this person should be ignored in the majority of cases even if it comes from a loved one as it will only cause one to become unnecessarily sad in cases of criticism and arrogant in cases of praise.

It is important to remember that a person who over praises others will often over criticise them too. The rule one should always follow is that they should only accept the criticism and praise based on the teachings of Islam. All other things should be ignored and not taken personally.

The next part of the pledge the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, made with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was that they would help and defend the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the same way they would help and defend their own relatives.

An aspect of this is showing true sincerity to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which has been discussed in detail in this chapter already. Another aspect of this is fulfilling the important duty of being the ambassadors and representatives of Islam. The best way to achieve this is by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with His choices. Islam spread across the entire globe because the righteous predecessors took this duty very seriously. When they gained and acted on beneficial knowledge the outside world recognised the truthfulness of Islam through their behaviour. This caused countless people to enter the fold of Islam. Unfortunately, many Muslims today believe that showing others about Islam is merely in one's appearance, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf. This is only an aspect of representing Islam. The greatest part is by adopting the

characteristics of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed in the Holy Quran and his traditions. Only with this attitude will the outside world observe the true nature of Islam. A Muslim should always remember that adopting an Islamic appearance while possessing characteristics which oppose the teachings of Islam only causes the outside world to disrespect Islam. They will be held accountable for this disrespect as they are the cause of it. A Muslim should therefore behave as a true ambassador of Islam by adopting the inward teachings of Islam as well as the outer appearance of Islam.

In addition, this important position should remind Muslims that they will be held accountable and questioned whether they fulfilled this role or not on Judgment Day. The same way a king would become angry at their diplomat and representative if they failed to fulfil their duty so will Allah, the Exalted, become angry with the Muslim who fails to fulfill their duty as an ambassador of Islam.

## **United for Allah, the Exalted**

During the pilgrimage season to Mecca, which used to occur before the coming of Islam even though the correct practices had become corrupted, the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, after accepting Islam took a pledge with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One of the Companions of Medina, may Allah be pleased with him, voiced his concern by stating that he feared that when Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he would return to Mecca and leave the Companions of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them. This could cause problems for them especially after supporting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, against countless enemies. At this the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, smiled and replied that if they blood was sought by their enemies then that would be the same as if his blood was sought. And their defeat would be his defeat. He promised to battle those who battled against them and make peace with those who they made peace with. He concluded that he was from them and they from him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 134.

With the passing of time many people become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the

Exalted. Whereas, most Muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to strength. Whereas, many Muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

## **Under Your Care**

During the pilgrimage season to Mecca, which used to occur before the coming of Islam even though the correct practices had become corrupted, the people of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, after accepting Islam took a pledge with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When 12 leaders from the Companions from Medina, may Allah be pleased with them, were chosen the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised these leaders that the people of Medina would be entrusted to them just as the apostles/disciples represented the Holy Prophet Isa, peace be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 135.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2409, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that each person is a guardian and responsible for the things under their care.

The greatest thing a Muslim is a guardian of is their faith. Therefore, they must strive to fulfill its responsibility 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.

This guardianship also includes every blessing one has been granted by Allah, the Exalted, which includes external things such as wealth and

internal things such as one's body. A Muslim must fulfill the responsibility of these things by using them in the way prescribed by Islam. For example, a Muslim should only use their eyes to look at lawful things and their tongue to utter only lawful and useful words.

This guardianship also extends to others within one's life such as relatives and friends. A Muslim must fulfill this responsibility by fulfilling their rights such as providing for them and gently commanding good and forbidding evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should not cut off from others especially over worldly issues. Instead, they should continue to treat them kindly hoping they will change for the better. This guardianship includes one's children. A Muslim must guide them by leading by example as this by far is the most effective way in guiding children. They must obey Allah, the Exalted, practically as discussed earlier and teach their children to do the same. A separate eBook titled: Raising Pious Children, has been produced which discusses this aspect in detail and can be viewed using the following link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:1122ebc4-72ab-4384-9198-7a93e45f53b3>

To conclude, according to this Hadith everyone has some sort of responsibility they have been entrusted with. So they should gain and act on the relevant knowledge in order to fulfill them as this is a part of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

## Great Sacrifices

After the violence against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased them, escalated further he gave the Companions, may Allah be pleased them, permission to migrate to Medina. Covertly they began to migrate to Medina leaving behind everything they owned and knew.

When one of the Companions, Shoaib, may Allah be pleased him, decided to migrate the non-Muslims of Mecca attempted to prevent him from doing so. They claimed that when he first entered Mecca he was poor and through the financial opportunities there he became wealthy so they would not allow him to leave Mecca after benefiting from it. Shoaib, may Allah be pleased him, offered them his entire wealth which he had buried in Mecca in exchange for letting him go or they could fight with him until one side was victorious. They chose to let him go in exchange for his wealth. On his arrival to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised him that his trade was most profitable. The following verse of the Holy Quran has also been linked to this incident: chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 207:

*“And of the people is he who sells himself, seeking means to the approval of Allah. And Allah is Kind to [His] servants.”*

This has been discussed in Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Volume 1, Page 580.

It is important for Muslims to understand that Allah, the Exalted, does not demand Muslims to overcome the difficulties which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, endured. For example, this incident mentions the migration from Mecca to Medina whereby they left behind their families, homes, businesses and migrated to a strange land all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

In comparison, the difficulties Muslims face now are not as difficult as those the righteous predecessors faced. Muslims should therefore be grateful that they are only required to make a few small sacrifices, such as sacrificing some sleep to offer the obligatory dawn prayer and some wealth to donate the obligatory charity. Allah, the Exalted, is not commanding them to leave their homes and families for His sake. This gratitude must be shown practically by using the blessings one possesses in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, when a Muslim faces difficulties they should remember the difficulties the righteous predecessors faced and how they overcame them through steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This knowledge can provide a Muslim the strength to overcome their difficulties as they know the righteous predecessors were more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they endured more severe difficulties with patience. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, advises that the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, endured the most difficult of tests and they are undoubtedly the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted.



If a Muslim follows the steadfast attitude of the righteous predecessors it is hoped they will end up with them in the hereafter.

## Permission to Migrate

Allah, the Exalted, gave the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, permission to migrate to Medina by revealing chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 80:

*“And say, “My Lord, cause me to enter a sound entrance and to exit a sound exit and grant me from Yourself a supporting authority.””*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 151.

The supplication in this verse encompasses both one's inward intention and outward action. Entering with the truth can indicate that whenever a Muslim enters any situation, whether worldly or religious, they should do so with the intention to please Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim will be rewarded for all the lawful actions completed with this intention even if the deed appears worldly. For example, earning lawful wealth and fulfilling the needs of one's family appears to be a worldly deed but when done with the correct intention it becomes a righteous deed. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006. It is important to note, that a sincere intention is always supported by actions according to the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The one who possesses an incorrect intention will not be rewarded by Allah, the Exalted. In fact, on Judgment Day they will

be told to seek their reward from who they acted for. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

Entering on the truth also includes physically entering every situation in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, and only performing those actions which are pleasing to Him while avoiding all situations and actions which are based on falsehood and sins. This is only achieved by learning and acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Exiting on the truth is when one leaves every situation with an intention which pleases Allah, the Exalted. Meaning, a Muslim must maintain their good intention from the start till the end of an action without changing it. And it includes practically leaving situations in a way pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. For example, leaving a difficulty or test with patience according to the teachings of Islam knowing that Allah, the Exalted, chooses the best situation for each person even if they do not observe the wisdom behind His 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.”*

The final part of this supplication indicates the importance of adhering to the supreme authority of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace

and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If Muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many Muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied Muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a Muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

Finally, a supporting authority could also indicate a request for Allah, the Exalted, to bless a Muslim with the strength to use their authority over their own body and blessings in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

## **An Evil Gathering**

When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, began to migrate to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca understood that it was only a matter of time when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, also migrates to Medina. So they held a meeting in Dar Al Nadwa, which is located in Mecca close to the house of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. Even the Devil disguised as an old man joined their meeting. Members of this meeting offered their opinions on what to do with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to crush his mission but the Devil refuted them until the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Jahl, suggested his opinion. He advised to assassinate him with a group of people belonging to different tribes. This would prevent the tribe of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, waging war against them all in retaliation and they would simply pay his tribe off in order to end the affair. The Devil and all the other members of this meeting agreed with this evil plan. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 152-153.

It is important for Muslims to understand a simple yet profound lesson namely, they will never succeed in this world or the next in worldly or religious matters through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Since the dawn of time to this age and till the end of time no person has ever achieved true success nor will they ever through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious when one turns the pages of history. Therefore, when a Muslim is in a situation which they desire to achieve a positive and successful outcome from they should never choose to disobey Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of how tempting or easy it may seem to be. Even if one is advised by their close friends and relatives to do so as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. And in truth they will never be able to protect them from Allah,

the Exalted, and His punishment in either this world or the next. The same way Allah, the Exalted, grants success to those who obey Him He removes a successful outcome from those who disobey Him even if this removal takes time to witness. A Muslim should not be fooled as this will occur sooner or later. The Holy Quran has made it extremely clear that an evil plan or action only encompasses the doer even if this punishment is delayed. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

*“...but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people...”*

Therefore, no matter how difficult the situation and choice Muslims should always choose the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters as this alone will lead to true success in both worlds even if this success is not obvious immediately.

## A Way Out

When the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca plotted to assassinate the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they ordered the group assigned with this evil task to wait outside the home of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and attack him while he slept. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, instructed Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, to take his place in his bed and guaranteed his safety so that he could migrate in secret. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left his home he recited the Holy Quran and Allah, the Exalted, temporarily took away the sight of the assassins. While walking through them the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, poured dirt on their heads and left. The assassins only realized what had occurred after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had left the area and when they were informed of what had occurred to them by a passer-by. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 153.

This miracle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, teaches Muslims that whenever they encounter a difficult situation they should remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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, trusting that He will provide them a way out of it even if this seems impossible at the time. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

*“...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”*

A Muslim should understand that Allah, the Exalted, chooses the best for His servants even if the wisdoms behind the difficulty are not obvious. It is a person's reaction which either leads to blessings or the anger of Allah, the Exalted. One only needs to reflect on the countless examples in their own life where they believed something was bad only to change their mind later on and vice versa. This is just like when a person takes a bitter medicine prescribed to them by a doctor. Even though the medicine is bitter they still take it believing it will benefit them. It is strange how a Muslim can trust a doctor whose knowledge is limited and who is not absolutely certain the bitter medicine will benefit them and fail to trust Allah, the Exalted, whose knowledge is infinite and when He only decrees the best for His servants.

A Muslim should understand the difference between wishful thinking and trust in Allah, the Exalted. The person who does not obey Allah, the Exalted, and then expects Him to help them in difficulties is a wishful thinker. The one who will gain the help of Allah, the Exalted, which is indicated in this event, is the one who sincerely strives in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and then trusts His judgment without complaining or questioning His choice.



## **Fulfilling Trusts**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina with Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him. He left behind Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, ordering him to migrate to Medina after he returned the people of Mecca their precious belongings which they deposited with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for safekeeping as his reputation for honesty and trustworthiness was widely known and accepted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 155.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst Muslims.

## **True Love**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina with Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him. During their journey Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, would first position himself in front of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when walking and then sometimes position himself behind him. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, questioned him about his behaviour he responded that every time he feared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be attacked from behind he would position himself behind the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but then he would fear a frontal attack and this would cause him to switch positions. They eventually took shelter in the Cave of Mount Thaur for a few days. Before entering the cave Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, insisted on entering it first in order to clean and remove any harmful things from inside it. He even placed his foot on a crevice inside the cave out of fear a creature might emerge from it and harm the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 157.

Every Muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him

as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to

follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

## **The Best Companion**

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, sought refuge in the cave of Mount Thawr during the migration to Medina they were pursued by the non-Muslims of Mecca determined to martyr the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. On this occasion the non-Muslims of Mecca reached the cave where they were hiding. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, observed that if the non-Muslims were to look down at their feet they would see both him and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, hiding in the cave. At this the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that he should not be afraid as Allah, the Exalted, was their third Companion. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3922. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 40:

*"...when they were in the cave and he [i.e., the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us."..."*

In a 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.

# **The Blessed Life After the Migration to Medina**

## **The 1<sup>st</sup> Year After Migration**

### **A Beautiful Legacy**

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, arrived in Medina one of the first things he did was build a house of Allah, the Exalted, the Masjid An Nabawi. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 165-166.

First of all, it is important to understand worldly legacies come and go. How many rich and powerful people have built massive empires only for them to be torn apart and forgotten shortly after their death? The few signs left behind from some of these legacies only endure in order to warn people not to follow in their footsteps. An example is the great empire of Pharaoh. Islam not only teaches Muslims to send blessings ahead of them to the hereafter in the form of righteous deeds but it also teaches them to leave a lovely legacy behind from which people can benefit from. In fact, when a Muslim passes away and leaves behind anything which is useful, such as an ongoing charity in the form of a water well they will be rewarded for it. This is confirmed in Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4223. So a Muslim should strive to perform righteous deeds and send forward as much good as possible but they should also try leaving a good legacy behind which will benefit them after they pass away.



Unfortunately, many Muslims are so concerned about their wealth and properties that they only end up leaving them behind which does not benefit them in the least. Each Muslim should not be fooled into believing they have plenty of time for creating a legacy for themselves as the moment of death is unknown and often pounces on people unexpectedly. Today is the day a Muslim should truly reflect on the legacy they will leave behind. If this legacy is good and beneficial they should praise Allah, the Exalted, for granting them the strength to do so. But if it is something which will not benefit them then they should prepare something which will so that they not only send forward good to the hereafter but also leave good behind. It is hoped that the one who is surrounded by good in this way will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. So each Muslim should ask themselves what is their legacy?

## **Lead by Example**

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, arrived in Medina one of the first things he did was build a house of Allah, the Exalted, the Masjid An Nabawi. Instead of ordering others to build the Mosque and relax himself, which most leaders in this day and age would do, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively took part in constructing the Mosque. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 166.

It is important for all Muslims, especially parents, to act on what they advise to others. It is obvious if one turns the pages of history that those who acted on what they preached had a much more positive effect on others compared to those who did not lead by example. The best example being the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who not only practiced what he preached but adhered to those teachings more strictly than anyone else. Only with this attitude will Muslims especially, parents have a positive impact on others. For example, if a mother warns her children not to lie as it is a sin but often lies in front of them her children are unlikely to act on her advice. A person's actions will always have more of an impact on others than their speech. It is important to note that this does not mean one needs to be perfect before advising others. It means they should sincerely strive to act on their own advice before advising others. The Holy Quran has made it clear in the following verse that Allah, the exalted, hates this behaviour. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3267, that the a person who commanded good but refrained from it themselves and prohibited evil yet acted on it themselves will be punished in severely Hell. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

*“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”*

So it is vital for all Muslims to strive to act on their advice themselves then advise others to do the same. Leading by example is the tradition of all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and is the best way to affect others in a positive way.

## **A Sign of Love**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that if he was not compelled to perform the migration from Mecca to Medina, thereby making him a migrant, a Muhajir, he would have liked to be a Helper from Medina, may Allah be pleased with them all. And if people had been told to journey to any valley he would have gone to the valley of the Companions of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 186.

A sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is to love all those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even if this contradicts one's personal opinion about them. This love includes those who proclaim love through their words and more importantly through their actions. For example, it is obvious to all that all the household of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors possessed this true love. So loving each of them is a duty upon the one who claims love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been proven through many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 17. It advises that love for the helpers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, meaning, the residents of the Holy city of Medina is a part of faith and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy. In another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3862, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has clearly warned Muslims not to criticize any of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as loving them is a sign of loving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him,

and hating them is a sign of hating the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and Allah, the Exalted. This person will not succeed unless they sincerely repent. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned a similar statement regarding his blessed household, may Allah be pleased with them, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 143.

If a Muslim unjustifiably criticises any Muslim who demonstrates their love for Allah, the Exalted, it proves their lack of love for Allah, the Exalted. If a Muslim commits a sin other Muslims should hate the sin but they should, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, still have love for the sinful Muslim because of their love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The sign of loving others is to treat them kindly and respectfully. Simply put, one should treat others how they wish people to treat them.

In addition, a Muslim should dislike all those who show dislike for those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, irrespective of if the person is a relative or a stranger. A Muslim's feelings should never prevent them from fulfilling this sign of true love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This does not mean they should harm them but they should make it clear to them that hating those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, is unacceptable. If they persist on this deviant attitude then one should separate from them until they sincerely repent.

## The Truth

After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, arrived in Medina Abdullah Bin Salam, may Allah be pleased with him, a well-respected and knowledgeable Jewish scholar immediately accepted Islam after seeing the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as he recognized his signs mentioned in the previous divine revelations. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 146:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him [i.e., Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it].”*

He warned the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that the other Jewish scholars highly respected him but if they found out that he accepted Islam they would make up lies about him. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, summoned the Jewish scholars and asked them to admit the truth that they full-well knew he was the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they denied him. After finding out Abdullah Bin Salam, may Allah be pleased with him, accepted Islam they called him a liar. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 194-195.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance

of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness has three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a Muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cherry picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

## Love for the World

Many different Hadiths and incidents have been recorded which discuss the rejection of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Islam by many of the Jewish and Christian scholars of his time even though they fully believed he was the final Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, whom they recognized through their divine scriptures. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 146:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him [i.e., Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it].”*

For example, two Jewish scholars once returned from meeting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One of them swore by Allah, the Exalted, that he was undoubtedly the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, as they recognized him through the signs recorded in their divine scriptures. But then he swore by Allah, the Exalted, that he would treat the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with enmity as long as he lived. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 197.

Two major reasons why they behaved in this manner was due to their extreme love for wealth and social status. They understood that accepting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would



mean that they would lose their social influence and the wealth gained from it. They would go from being the leaders of their tribes and faith to being ordinary followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that craving for wealth and status is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are set free on a herd of sheep.

This shows that hardly any of a Muslim's faith remains secure if they crave after wealth and fame in this world just as hardly any of the sheep will be saved from two hungry wolves. So this great similitude contains a severe warning against the evil of craving after excess wealth and social status in the world.

The first type of craving for wealth is when one has extreme love for wealth and strives without fatigue to acquire it through lawful means. To behave in such a manner is not the sign of wise person as a Muslim should firmly believe their provision is guaranteed to them and this allotment can never change. In fact, the provision of the creation was allocated over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. This person will undoubtedly neglect their duties as they are too preoccupied with obtaining wealth. A body which is too busy acquiring wealth will never prepare adequately for the hereafter. In fact, this person will dedicate so much effort to acquiring wealth that they may not even get a chance to enjoy it. Instead, they will depart this world and leave it behind for other people to enjoy even though they will be held accountable for it. This

person may acquire wealth lawfully but they will still not find peace of mind as no matter how much they obtain they will only desire more. This person is needy and therefore, a real pauper even if they possess much wealth.

The only craving which is beneficial is craving for accumulating true wealth namely, righteous deeds in order to prepare for one's day of return.

The second type of craving for wealth is similar to the first type but in addition to it this type of person acquires wealth through unlawful means and fails to fulfil the rights of people, such as the obligatory charity. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned against this in many Hadiths. For example, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6576, he warned that this attitude destroyed the past nations as they made unlawful things lawful, withheld the rights of others and killed others for the sake of excess wealth. This person strives for the wealth they are not entitled to which leads to countless major sins. When one adopts this attitude they become intensely greedy. As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1961, the greedy person is far from Allah, the Exalted, far from Paradise, far from people and close to Hell. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3114, warns that extreme greed and true faith will never combine in the heart of a true Muslim.

If a Muslim adopts this type of craving then the extreme danger of it is clear even to an uneducated Muslim. It will destroy their faith until nothing except a little remains just like the main Hadith under discussion warns that this destruction to one's faith is more severe than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are let loose on a herd of sheep. This Muslim risks losing the little faith they possess at the moment of their

death, which is the greatest loss. A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than craving for excess wealth. A person will often spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and prestige.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise the hereafter over the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but if someone receives it without asking for it they will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. This is the reason the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not appoint a person who requested to be appointed in a position of authority or even showed desire for it. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6923. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment. This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worse type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, that this person will go to Hell.

Therefore, it is safer for a Muslim to avoid the craving for excess wealth and high social status as they are two things which can lead to the

destruction of their faith by distracting them from preparing adequately for the hereafter.

## The First Friday Sermon in Medina

The following is the sermon of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, given on the first Friday he prayed in Medina:

“Praise be to Allah, the Exalted; I give Him praise, and I ask His help. I ask for His forgiveness and for His guidance. I believe in Him, will not disbelieve in Him, and will do battle with those who do. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, that He has no associate, that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger whom He has sent with guidance and the religion of truth and light, at a time without Messengers, when there is little knowledge, the people are misguided, when the time is out of joint, and the day of retribution and fate is at hand. Whoever obeys Allah, the Exalted, and His Messenger is rightly guided; whoever disobeys Allah, the Exalted, and His Messenger is misled, and has erred and gone far astray. I charge you to fear Allah, the Exalted; this is the best advice a Muslim can give a Muslim, to urge him onto the afterlife, to order him to fear Allah, the Exalted. Beware of what Allah, the Exalted, has Himself cautioned you. There is no better advice nor charge than this. It is an act of piety for those who accomplish this with apprehension and fear and a true means of assistance towards your aspirations for the afterlife. Whoever cultivates, both openly and in secret, his relationship with Allah, the Exalted, seeking only His favor thereby, shall receive recognition in the short term and reward after death, when a man will wish he had done differently than he had before, and would want to put great distance between himself and that behaviour. Allah, the Exalted, bids you beware of Him, though He is merciful towards His worshippers. Whoever believes His words and fulfills His promise will find nothing taken back therefrom for Allah, the Exalted states “*Whatever I say shall not be changed, and I am not unjust towards my worshippers.*” (Chapter 50 Qaf, verse 29). Fear Allah, the Exalted, both in matters that are at hand and those that follow, in secret and openly, for “... *Whoever fears Allah, Allah will remove his evil*

*ways from him and give him a great reward.*” (Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 5). And “...*Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will have won a mighty success.*” (Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 71). Fearing Allah, the Exalted, will forestall His disapproval, His punishment and His anger. Fearing Allah, the Exalted, will bring satisfaction, please the Lord and elevate one’s status. Take advantage of your good fortune and do not be lax in matters pertaining to Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, has instructed you in His book, laid out for you His path, so that He may make evident those who speak the truth and those who lie. Do good, just as Allah, the Exalted, does good to you. Oppose His enemies and strive energetically for Allah, the Exalted. It is He who chose you and named you Muslims, so that those who perish do so with evident cause, while those who live do so with evident cause. There is no power but with Allah, the Exalted. Make frequent mention of Allah, the Exalted. Strive for what comes after death. For he who makes good his relationship with Allah, the Exalted, will find his relationship with people satisfactory. That is because Allah, the Exalted, passes judgement upon people, while they do not pass judgment upon Him. It is He who controls people, while they do not control Him. Allah, the Exalted, is truly Great! There is no power but with Allah, the Exalted and Glorious. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 197-199.

## **Best Places on Earth**

The Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in Medina was initially built with bricks above which was a light roof made of palm leaves. Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, made no improvements to it during his Caliphate. But during his Caliphate Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, enlarged it rebuilding it in the same manner as in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that is with bricks and palm leaves and he also restored its wooden pillars. During his Caliphate Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, made changes and major additions. He had its walls built with cut stone and plaster, its pillars of stone and its roof of teak. He was putting into effect the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 738. It advises that whoever builds a Mosque for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even as small as a sparrow's nest or smaller Allah, the Exalted, will build for them a house in Paradise. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 201-202.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1528, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the most beloved places to Allah, the Exalted, are the Mosques and the most hated places to Him are the market places.

Islam does not prohibit Muslims from going to places other than the Mosques. Nor does it command them to always inhabit the Mosques. But it is important that they prioritize attending Mosques for the congregational prayers and attending religious gatherings over visiting the market places unnecessarily.

When a need arises there is no harm to attend other places, such as shopping centers, but a Muslim should avoid going to them unnecessarily as they are places where sins more often occur. Whereas, the Mosques are meant to be a sanctuary from sins and a comfortable place to obey Allah, the Exalted, in. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. Just like a student benefits from a library as it is an environment created for studying similarly, Muslims can benefit from Mosques as their very purpose is to encourage Muslims to obtain and act on useful knowledge so that they can obey Allah, the Exalted.

Not only should a Muslim prioritize the Mosques over other places but they should encourage others such as their children to do the same. In fact, it is an excellent place for the youth to avoid sins, crimes and bad company, which lead to nothing but trouble and regret in both worlds.



## Simple Housing

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, built apartments around his Mosque which would be dwellings for himself and his family. These were small dwellings with narrow courtyards. They were short in size as an adult could touch the highest ceiling in these apartments while standing. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 207.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2482, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that all lawful spending gains reward from Allah, the Exalted, except the wealth which is spent on buildings.

This includes all spending on lawful things which is free from excessiveness, waste or extravagance. Spending on construction which is necessary is not included in this Hadith but the construction which is beyond one's needs is. This is disliked as spending on construction easily leads to waste and extravagance. In addition, the one who spends wealth on construction is less likely to donate charity and spend in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Also this behavior often leads a Muslim to adopt hopes for a long life as the one who believes their stay in this world is extremely short will not waste energy and wealth on constructing a beautiful home. The greater one's hope for a long life the less righteous deeds they will perform believing they can always perform good deeds in the future. It also causes one to delay sincere repentance believing they can always change for the better in the future. Finally, it causes one to dedicate more efforts to the world in order to create a more comfortable life for their supposed long stay in this world.

Actively taking part in unnecessary construction occupies one's time which prevents them from performing voluntary righteous deeds, such as fasting and the voluntary night prayer out of extreme fatigue. It also prevents them from striving to gain and act on Islamic knowledge.

Finally, in reality taking part in unnecessary construction never ends. Meaning, the moment a person completes one part of their home they move to the next until the cycle repeats itself.

Therefore, Muslims should adhere to what is within their necessity in respect to all things not just construction so that they can avoid these negative consequences.

## **Kind Treatment**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, drew up a contract between the different Muslim and non-Muslim groups of Medina. It included that the non-Muslims of Medina, such as the Jews, must never be mistreated nor should a Muslim help someone acting against them unjustly. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 213.

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.

## **Brotherhood**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, established brotherhood between his fellow Emigrants, the Muhajireen and the Helpers, the Ansars, may Allah be pleased with them all. He advised them to become brothers in the cause of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 215.

With the passing of time people become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, most Muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to strength. Whereas, many Muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

## **Two Parts of Gratitude**

The Emigrants of Mecca, may Allah be pleased with them, once complimented the Helpers of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them, to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They said that they had never been to a people who gave more help to them and yet desired nothing in return than the Helpers of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them. They added that the Helpers of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them, spared them of much difficulty and shared their comfort with them. They concluded that they were afraid that the Helpers of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them, would receive all the blessings of Allah, the Exalted, and they, the Emigrants of Mecca, may Allah be pleased with them, would receive nothing as they were not in a position to reciprocate. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that the Emigrants of Mecca, may Allah be pleased with them, would receive reward as they correctly praised and supplicated for the Helpers of the Medina, may Allah be pleased with them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 217.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1954, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever is not grateful to people cannot be grateful to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though there is no doubt that the source of all blessings is none other than Allah, the Exalted, none the less showing gratitude to people is an important aspect of Islam. This is because Allah, the Exalted, sometimes uses a person as a means to help others such as one's parents. As the means has been created and used by Allah, the Exalted,

being grateful to them is in fact being grateful to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, Muslims must show good character and always show appreciation for any aid or support they receive from others irrespective of its size. They should show gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessing according to His commands as He is the source of the blessing and show gratitude to the person as they are the means which was created and chosen by Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should show gratitude verbally to people and practically by repaying their act of kindness according to their means even if it is only a supplication on their behalf. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 216.

The person who does not show gratitude to people cannot show true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, and therefore they will not be given an increase in blessings. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

If a Muslim desires an increase in blessings they must fulfill both aspects of gratitude namely, to Allah, the Exalted, and to people.



## **True Knowledge**

In Medina most of the Jewish scholars arrogantly rejected Islam and were full of antagonism towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They were those who asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, many pointless questions in order to confuse others and express their obstinacy and disbelief. They made things difficult for Islam and tried tirelessly to extinguish it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 227.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 253, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who obtains religious knowledge in order to show off to scholars, argue with others or attract attention to themselves will go to Hell.

Even though, the foundation of all good in both worldly and religious matters is knowledge Muslims must understand that knowledge will only benefit them when they firstly correct their intention. Meaning, they strive to obtain and act on knowledge in order to please Allah, the Exalted. All other reasons will only lead to a loss of reward and even punishment if a Muslim fails to sincerely repent.

In reality, knowledge is like rain water which falls on different types of trees. Some trees grow by this water in order to benefit others such as a

fruit tree. Whereas, other trees grow by this water and become a nuisance to others such as a thorny tree. Even though, the rain water is the same in both cases but the outcome is very different. Similarly, religious knowledge is the same for people but if one adopts the incorrect intention then it will become a means of their destruction. Conversely, if one adopts the correct intention it will become a means of their salvation.

Muslims should therefore correct their intention in all matters as they will be judged on this. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. And they should remember that one of the first people to enter Hell will be a scholar who only obtained knowledge in order to show off to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4923.

To conclude, only obtaining and acting on useful knowledge with the correct intention is true beneficial knowledge.

## Two-Faced

It is well known that apart from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and those who openly disbelieved a third group emerged in Medina who were known as the hypocrites. They pretended to accept Islam outwardly in order to reap the rewards of being a Muslim but were disbelievers as they rejected Islam internally and secretly. They possessed many evil traits which have been discussed extensively in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, one of them would attentively listen to the Holy Quran being recited by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, while secretly planning against Islam with his fellow hypocrites. This man once stated that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was just an ear who believed anything which was said to him. At this Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 61:

*“And among them are those who abuse the Prophet and say, “He is an ear.” Say, “[It is] an ear of goodness for you that believes in Allah and believes the believers and [is] a mercy to those who believe among you.” And those who abuse the Messenger of Allah - for them is a painful punishment.”*

A sign of hypocrisy is being two-faced. This is the one who changes their behaviour in order to please different groups of people intending thereby to gain some worldly things. They speak with many different tongues showing their support to different people while harbouring dislike for them. They fail to be sincere towards people which has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. If they fail to repent they

will find themselves in the hereafter with two tongues of fire. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4873. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 14:

*“When they meet the believers, they say: “We believe,” but when they meet their evil companions (in privacy), they say: “Surely we are with you; we were merely jesting.””*

## **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Always Facing Allah, the Exalted**

In the second year after the migration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Medina the direction of the prayer, the Qibla, was changed from Masjid Aqsa in Palestine to the Kaaba in Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, desired this change and showed his desire by turning his blessed face towards the Heavens. Then Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 144:

*“We have certainly seen the turning of your face toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a Qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face [i.e., yourself] toward al-Masjid al-Ḥarām. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces [i.e., yourselves] toward it [in prayer]...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 248.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 528, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the five obligatory prayers erase one's sins just like taking a bath five times a day would clean the body of dirt.

The first thing to note is that this Hadith refers to minor sins only as major sins require sincere repentance.

In addition, it is important for Muslims to not only purify their outer beings of minor sins by establishing the five obligatory prayers but also fulfill the other aspect of purification namely, inner purification. This is indicated by the fact that the five obligatory prayers were spread across the day instead of being put together. Meaning, a Muslim should repeatedly inwardly turn to Allah, the Exalted, throughout the day just like their body turns to Allah, the Exalted, five times a day through the obligatory prayers. This inner purification involves correcting one's intention so that they are only perform actions in order to please Allah, the Exalted. This is the foundation of Islam and is what Allah, the Exalted, assesses when judging an action. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. Those who act for the sake of other people will be told to gain their reward from them on Judgment Day which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

Finally, this inner purification includes learning and acting on the teachings of Islam so that one removes the bad characteristics they possess, such as envy and instead adopt good characteristics, such as patience. The outer purification is important but if a Muslim desires to achieve success and overcome all difficulties in both worlds they must purify their inner being as well as their outer being.

## The Prayer Direction

In the second year after the migration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Medina the direction of the prayer, the Qibla, was changed from Masjid Aqsa in Palestine to the Kaaba in Mecca. Allah, the Exalted, declared the purpose of having two prayer directions, one after the other, in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 143:

*“...And We did not make the Qiblah which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 249.

The purpose of having two prayer directions, one after the other, was to make apparent who was truly sincere to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by following him in the change.

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 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.

## Good Effort

In the second year after the migration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Medina the direction of the prayer, the Qibla, was changed from Masjid Aqsa in Palestine to the Kaaba in Mecca. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, whether the prayers of the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who died before the change in the prayer direction would be accepted. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 143:

*“...And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith [i.e., your previous prayers]. Indeed Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful.”*

This has been recorded in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2964.

This incident is connected to chapter 11 Hud, verse 115:

*“...Allah does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.”*

This verse provides hope that as long as one strives to do something lawful and beneficial their efforts will not be wasted. If Allah, the Exalted, does not waste the efforts of people who do not even believe in Him why would He not support the Muslims who believe in His Oneness and Lordship? If Allah, the Exalted, does not waste the efforts of people when they strive for the material world how can He then waste the efforts of those who strive to achieve good in the hereafter?

People should therefore, never give up striving to achieve good in both this world and in the next. Unfortunately, some Muslims have given up struggling to earn a lawful income after facing some hardship. They instead opt to receive social benefits and become a burden on society. Those who are rightly entitled to receive benefits should continue to utilise them as it is their right. But those who have the ability to earn for themselves should do so.

This verse also encourages Muslims to continue doing good to others even if they do not appreciate their efforts. If one acts with sincerity meaning, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, they should be confident their efforts have been recorded and will be rewarded in both worlds.

To conclude, whatever lawful action a Muslim performs whether its worldly, such as a business opportunity, or whether they perform a religious deed they should put full effort into it knowing that Allah, the Exalted, will support them and grant them success, sooner or later.

## **Establishing the Prayers is Faith**

In the second year after the migration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Medina the direction of the prayer, the Qibla, was changed from Masjid Aqsa in Palestine to the Kaaba in Mecca. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, whether the prayers of the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who died before the change in the prayer direction would be accepted. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 143:

*“...And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith [i.e., your previous prayers]. Indeed Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful.”*

This has been recorded in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2964.

It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, used the word faith in place of the prayers in this verse. This indicates that one cannot possess true faith without establishing the obligatory prayers.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2618, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the difference between belief and disbelief is abandoning the obligatory prayers.

In this day and age this has become far too common. Many give up their obligatory prayers for trivial reasons all of which are undoubtedly rejected. If the obligation of the prayer has not been removed for the one who is engaging in battle how can it be removed from anyone else? Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 102:

*“And when you [i.e., the commander of an army] are among them and lead them in prayer, let a group of them stand [in prayer] with you and let them carry their arms. And when they have prostrated, let them be [in position] behind you and have the other group come forward which has not [yet] prayed and let them pray with you, taking precaution and carrying their arms...”*

Neither is the traveller or the sick exempt from offering their obligatory prayers. The traveller has been advised to reduce the amount of cycles in some of the obligatory prayers in order to reduce the burden for them but they have not been exempt from offering them. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 101:

*“And when you travel throughout the land, there is no blame upon you for shortening the prayer...”*

The sick have been advised to perform dry ablution if contact with water will harm them. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 6:

*“...But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it...”*

In addition, the sick can perform the obligatory prayer in a way which is easier for them. Meaning, if they cannot stand they are allowed to sit and if they cannot sit they can lay down and offer the obligatory prayer. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 372. But again, no complete exemption is granted to the sick unless one is mentally ill which prevents them from comprehending the obligation of the prayer.

The other major issue is that some Muslims delay their obligatory prayers and offer them beyond their correct times. This clearly contradicts the Holy Quran as the believers have been described as those who offer their obligatory prayers on time. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 103:

*“...Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.”*

Many believe that the following verse of the Holy Quran refers to those who unnecessarily delay their obligatory prayers. This has been discussed in Tafseer Ibn Kathir, volume 10, pages 603-604. Chapter 107 Al Ma'un, verses 4-5:

*“So woe to those who pray. [But] who are heedless of their prayer.”*

Here Allah, the Exalted, has clearly cursed those who have adopted this evil trait. How can one find success in this world or the next if they have been removed from the mercy of Allah, the Exalted?

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 512, that delaying one's obligatory prayers unnecessarily is a sign of hypocrisy. The Holy Quran has made it clear that one of the main reasons people will enter Hell is failing to establish the obligatory prayers. Chapter 74 Al Muddaththir, verses 42-43:

*“[And asking them], “What put you into Saqar?” They will say, “We were not of those who prayed.”*

Abandoning the obligatory prayers is such a serious sin that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2621, that whoever commits this sin has disbelieved in Islam.

In addition, no other good deed will benefit a Muslim until their obligatory prayers are not established. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 553, clearly warns that one's good deeds are destroyed if they miss the afternoon obligatory prayer. If this is the case for abandoning one obligatory prayer can one imagine the penalty of abandoning them all?

Observing the obligatory prayers at their correct times has been advised to be one of the most beloved deeds to Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 252. From this one can determine that delaying the obligatory prayers beyond their time or completely missing them is one of the most hated deeds by Allah, the Exalted.

It is an important duty for all elders to encourage the children under their care to offer the obligatory prayers from a young age so that they establish them before it becomes legally binding on them. Those adults that delay this and wait until children are older have failed in this extremely important duty. The children who were only encouraged to offer the obligatory prayers when it became obligatory on them very rarely established them quickly. In most cases, it takes years for them to fulfil this important duty correctly. And the blame falls on the elders of the family especially, the parents. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 495, that families most encourage their children to offer the obligatory prayers when they turn seven years old.

Another major issue many Muslims face is that they may offer the obligatory prayers but fail to do so correctly. For example, many do not complete the stages of the prayer correctly and instead rush through it. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 757, clearly warns that the



one who prays like this has not prayed at all. Meaning, they are not recorded as a person who offered their prayer and therefore their obligation has not been fulfilled. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 265, clearly warns that the prayer of the one who does not settle in each position of the prayer is not accepted.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the one who does not bow or prostrate correctly in the prayer as the worse thief. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Muwatta Malik, Book number 9, Hadith number 75. Unfortunately, many Muslims who have spent decades offering their obligatory and many voluntary prayers like this will find that none of them have counted and thus they will be treated as one who did not fulfil their obligation. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1313.

The Holy Quran indicates the importance of offering the obligatory prayers with congregation usually at a Mosque. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 43:

*“...and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience].”*

In fact, due to this verse and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, some reliable scholars have declared this obligatory on Muslim men. For example, one Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 550, clearly warns that the Muslims who would not offer their obligatory prayers with congregation at the Mosque were considered hypocrites by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon

him, even threatened to burn the houses of the men who failed to perform their obligatory prayers at the Mosque with congregation without a valid excuse. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1482. Those Muslims who are in a position to perform this important deed should do so. They should not fool themselves into claiming they are performing other righteous deeds such as helping their family with house chores. Even though, this is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 676, but it is important not to rearrange the importance of his traditions according to one's desires. Whoever does this is not following his traditions they are only following their own desires even if they are performing a righteous deed. In fact, this same Hadith concludes by advising that when it was time for the obligatory prayer the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would leave for the Mosque.

## **A Unique Deed**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina fasting in Ramadan became obligatory for all adult Muslims unless they were/are exempt by Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 250.

In a Divine Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2219, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that all righteous deeds people perform are for themselves except for fasting as this is for Allah, the Exalted, and He shall reward it directly.

This Hadith indicates the uniqueness of fasting. One of the reasons it is described in this manner is because all other righteous deeds are visible to people, such as the prayer, or they are between people, such as secret charity. Whereas, fasting is a unique righteous deed as others cannot know someone is fasting by only observing them.

In addition, fasting is a righteous deed which puts a lock on every aspect of oneself. Meaning, a person who fasts correctly will be prevented from committing verbal and physical sins, such as looking at and hearing unlawful things. This is also achieved through the prayer but the prayer is only performed for a short time and is visible to others whereas, fasting occurs throughout the day and is invisible to others. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 45:

*“...Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing...”*

It is clear from the following verse a person who does not complete the obligatory fasts without a valid reason will not be a true believer as the two have been directly connected. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 183:

*“O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 723, that if a Muslim does not complete a single obligatory fast without a valid reason they cannot make up for the reward and blessings lost even if they fasted every day for their entire life.

In addition, as indicated by the verse quoted earlier fasting correctly leads to piety. Meaning, simply starving during the day does not lead to piety but paying extra attention to abstaining from sins and performing righteous deeds during the fast will lead to piety. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 707, warns that a fast will not be significant if one does not abstain from speaking and acting on falsehood. A similar Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1690, warns that some fasting people obtain nothing except hunger. When one becomes more aware and careful in obeying Allah, the Exalted, while they are fasting this habit will eventually

affect them so they behave in a similar way even when they are not fasting. This is in fact true piety.

The righteousness mentioned in the verse quoted earlier is connected to fasting as fasting reduces one's evil desires and passions. It prevents pride and the encouragement of sins. This is because fasting hinders the appetite of the stomach and one's carnal desires. These two things lead to many sins. In addition, the desire for these two things is greater than the desire for other unlawful things. So whoever controls them through fasting will find it easier to control the weaker evil desires. This leads to true righteousness.

As briefly indicated earlier there are different levels of fasting. The first and lowest level of fasting is when one abstains from the things which will break their fast, such as food. The next level is abstaining from sins which damages one's fast thereby reducing the reward of their fast, such as lying. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2235. Fasting which involves each member of the body is the next level. This is when each body part fasts from sins for example, the eyes from looking at the unlawful, the ears from listening to the unlawful and so on. The next level is when one behaves in this manner even when they are not fasting. Finally, the highest level of fasting is abstaining from all things which are not connected to Allah, the Exalted.

A Muslim should also fast inwardly as their body fasts outwardly by abstaining from sinful or vain thoughts. They should fast from persisting on their own plans in respect to their desires and try to concentrate on fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. In addition, they should fast from inwardly challenging the decree of Allah, the Exalted, and instead except

destiny and whatever it brings knowing Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants even if they do not understand the wisdom behind these 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.”*

Finally, a Muslim should aim for the highest reward by keeping their fast a secret and not informing others if it is avoidable as informing others unnecessarily leads to a loss of reward as it is an aspect of showing off.

## **Greatness is in Humility**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. On the way to raiding a caravan the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, took turns riding their camels as they had so few. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, shared one camel with Ali and Abu Lubaba, may Allah be pleased with them. When it was the Holy Prophet Muhammad's, peace and blessings be upon him, turn to walk his two Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, offered to take his place so he could ride on the camel. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that they were not stronger than him meaning, he was not injured or sick that he could use that as an excuse not to walk, and he added that he desired the reward of walking. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 258.

Unlike the leaders of today who refuse to face the same difficulties their followers undertake the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, shared in the difficulties faced by his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. This was an indication of his great humility.

The servants of Allah, the Exalted, have understood that anything good they possess is solely because Allah, the Exalted, granted it to them. And any evil they are saved from is because Allah, the Exalted, protected them. Is it not foolish to be proud of something that does not belong to someone? Just like a person does not boast about a sports car which does not belong to them Muslims must realize nothing in reality belongs to them. This attitude ensures one remains humble at all times. The

humble servants of Allah, the Exalted, fully believe in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673, which declares that the righteous deeds of a person will not take them to Paradise. Only the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, can cause this to occur. This is because every righteous deed is only possible when Allah, the Exalted, provides one with the knowledge, strength, opportunity and inspiration to perform it. Even the acceptance of the deed is dependent on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. When one bares this in mind it saves them from pride and inspires them to adopt humility. One should always remember that being humble is not a sign of weakness as Islam has encouraged one to defend themselves if necessary. In other words, Islam teaches Muslims to be humble without weakness. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, that whoever humbles themselves before Allah, the Exalted, will be raised by Him. So in reality, humility leads to honor in both worlds. One only needs to reflect on the most humble of the creation to understand this fact namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Allah, the Exalted, has clearly ordered people by ordering the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to adopt this important quality. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verse 215:

*“And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers.”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led a humble life. For example, he happily carried out the domestic duties at home thereby proving these chores are gender-neutral. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 538.



Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63, shows that humility is an inner characteristic that manifests outwards such as the way one walks. This is discussed in another verse chapter 31 Luqman, verse 18:

*“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly...”*

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Paradise is for the humble servants who possess no trace of pride. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 83:

*“That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1998, that whoever possesses an atom's worth of pride will not enter Paradise. Only Allah, the Exalted, has the right to be proud as He is the Creator, Sustainer and Owner of the entire universe.

It is important to note, pride is when one believes they are superior to others and rejects the truth when it is presented to them as they dislike accepting the truth when it comes from other than them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4092.



## Seeking Counsel

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. On the way to raiding a caravan of the non-Muslims of Mecca the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca had organized an army to confront the Muslims. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, for their opinion on what to do. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 259-260.

Some Muslims have adopted a strange mentality where they counsel many people about their affairs. The issue with this attitude is that when one tells too many people then sharing their problems and seeking advice becomes a means of complaining about their difficulties which is a clear sign of their impatience. In addition, this attitude will only cause one to become confused as the advice they receive will be varied which will cause them to become more and more uncertain of the correct path. Whereas, consulting a few wise people will only cause one's certainty to increase. Repeating one's problems over and over again to many people also causes them to focus too much on their problem which makes it appear bigger and more significant than it really is, even to the point that it causes them to neglect their other duties which only leads to more impatience.

Therefore Muslims, should only consult a few people in respect to their affairs. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

*“...So ask the people of the message if you do not know.”*

This verse reminds Muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a person would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical health a Muslim should only consult those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a Muslim should only consult those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

## **Standing Firm**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. On the way to raiding a caravan of the non-Muslims of Mecca the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca had organized an army to confront the Muslims. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, for their opinion on what to do. Al Miqdad Bin Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would not abandon him by following in the footsteps of the nation of the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, when they disrespectfully declared that the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace and be upon him, can go and fight as they were not going to aid him. Instead Miqdad, may Allah be pleased with him, declared that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would fight with him under all situations. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 25-260.

This incident reminds Muslims the importance of remaining steadfast whenever they are attacked by their enemies namely, the Devil, their inner Devil and those who invite them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should not turn their back on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whenever they are tempted by these enemies. They should instead remain steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is achieved by avoiding the places, things and people who invite and tempt them towards sins and the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Avoiding the traps of the Devil is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. The same way traps on a path are only avoided by possessing knowledge of them

similarly; Islamic knowledge is required to avoid the traps of the Devil. For example, a Muslim might spend much time reciting the Holy Quran but because of their ignorance they might destroy their righteous deeds without realising it through sins such as, backbiting. A Muslim is bound to face these attacks so they should therefore prepare for them through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return gain an uncountable reward. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed right guidance for those who struggle in this way for His sake. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

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

Whereas facing these attacks with ignorance and disobedience will only lead one to difficulties and disgrace in both worlds. The same way a soldier that possesses no weapons to defend himself would be defeated; an ignorant Muslim will have no weapon to defend himself when facing these attacks which will result in their defeat. Whereas, the knowledgeable Muslim is provided with the most powerful weapon which cannot be overcome or beaten namely, sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved through sincerely gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

In addition, an aspect of hypocrisy is when one verbally shows support for others and their good projects such as, building a mosque but when the time comes to take part in the project such as, donating wealth they seem to disappear. Similarly, when people are facing good times they verbally support them reminding others of their loyalty to them. But the moment the people face difficulties these hypocrites offer no emotional or physical support. Instead they criticize them. This was the attitude of the hypocrites

in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 62:

*“So how [will it be] when disaster strikes them because of what their hands have put forth and then they come to you swearing by Allah, “We intended nothing but good conduct and accommodation.””*

## **Accepting Good Counsel**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached Badr he stopped at a certain place. Some Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, enquired whether stopping at that place was a divine command or a choice made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When he informed his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, that it was his choice and not a divine command they advised the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to setup camp at a different location as it was tactically more advantageous. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted and acted on their advice. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 267.

Rejecting good advice given by anyone can be considered a sign of pride. In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a person who possesses even an atom's worth of pride in their heart will not enter Paradise. He clarified that pride is when a person rejects the truth and looks down on others.

No amount of good deeds will benefit someone who possesses pride. This is quite obvious when one observes the Devil and how his countless years of worship did not benefit him when he became proud. In fact, the following verse clearly connects pride with disbelief so a Muslim must avoid this evil characteristic at all costs. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 34:



*“And [mention] when We said to the angels, “Prostrate before Adam”; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.”*

The proud is the one who rejects the truth when it is presented to them simply because it did not come from them and as it challenges their desires and mentality. The proud person also believes they are superior to others even though they are unaware of their own ultimate end and the ultimate end of others. This is plain ignorance. In reality, it is foolish to be proud of anything seeing as Allah, the Exalted, created and granted everything a person owns. Even the righteous deeds one performs are only due to the inspiration, knowledge and strength granted by Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, being proud of something which does not innately belong to them is plain foolishness. This is just like a person who becomes proud over a mansion they do not even own or live in.

This is the reason why pride belongs to Allah, the Exalted, as He alone is the Creator and innate Owner of all things. The one who challenges Allah, the Exalted, in pride will be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4090.

A Muslim should instead follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and adopt humility. The humble truly recognise that all the good they possess and all the evil they are protected from comes from no one except Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, humility is more fitting for a person than pride. A person should

not be fooled into believing humility leads to disgrace as no one has been more honoured than the humble servants of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has guaranteed an increase in status for the one who adopts humility for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029.

## Sincerity to Leaders

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. When the Muslim army reached the battlefield a Companion, Sa'd Bin Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him, advised that a temporary shelter should be built for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If the Muslim army lost the battle the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could then retreat and rejoin the rest of his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in Medina. He added that these Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, only stayed behind in Medina as they were unaware a battle was going to take place and they would always strive to protect the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and give him good counsel. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed with his idea but still participated in the battle more than anyone else did. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 268.

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 the leaders of society. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

*"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you..."*

This makes it clear that it is a duty to obey the leaders of society. But it is important to note, this obedience is a duty as long as one does not disobey Allah, the Exalted. There is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of the Creator. In cases like this, revolting against leaders should be avoided as it only leads to the harm of innocent people. Instead, the leaders should be gently advised good and forbidden evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should advise others to act accordingly and always supplicate for the leaders to remain on the correct path. If the leaders remain straight the general public will remain straight, also.

To be deceitful towards the leaders is a sign of hypocrisy, which one must avoid at all times. Sincerity also includes striving to obey them in matters which unite society on good and warning against anything which causes disruption in society.

## Divine Blessings & Support

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. Allah, the Exalted, initially showed the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to be few in the sight of the non-Muslims so that the battle would take place and so that the truth could prevail over falsehood. But once the battle commenced Allah, the Exalted, showed the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to be twice their actual number to the non-Muslims in order to strike fear in their hearts thereby giving aid to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Chapter 8 Al Anfal, verse 44:

*“And [remember] when He showed them to you, when you met, as few in your eyes, and He made you [appear] as few in their eyes so that Allah might accomplish a matter already destined...”*

And chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 13:

*“Already there has been for you a sign in the two armies which met [in combat at Badr] - one fighting in the cause of Allah and another of disbelievers. They saw them [to be] twice their [own] number by [their] eyesight. But Allah supports with His victory whom He wills. Indeed in that is a lesson for those of vision.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 269.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1081, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims how to gain blessings in their provision, divine support and an improvement in their condition and state.

The first thing is to sincerely repent to Allah, the Exalted, before one dies. As the time of death is unknown this Hadith actually indicates sincerely repenting whenever one commits a sin meaning, repenting without delay. This consists of seeking forgiveness from Allah, the Exalted, and whoever else has been wronged, feeling regret, making a firm promise not to commit the same or a similar sin again. And finally, if possible, to make up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

The next thing advised in the main Hadith is that a Muslim must make use of their time before they become preoccupied with responsibilities, an illness or a difficulty. A Muslim can achieve this by obeying Allah, the Exalted, through fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must hasten to perform righteous deeds within their means as much as possible without delay as the tomorrow they hope for may never come. It is hoped that the one who behaves in this manner will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, when they are no longer in a position to perform extra righteous deeds due to a change in circumstances.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a Muslim must strengthen their bond with Allah, the Exalted, by remembering Him much. True remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, consists of three levels. The first is internal remembrance meaning, sincerity to Him. The second level consists of remembering Allah, the Exalted, by speaking good words and avoiding vain and sinful speech. And the highest level is to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, through one's actions as outlined earlier.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith is giving much charity both hidden and open. This includes both the obligatory and voluntary charity. It is important to note, this means giving charity according to one's means whether it is much or little. Allah, the Exalted, does not observe quantity He observes and judges actions based on quality meaning, one's sincerity. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. This leaves Muslims with no excuses but to give charity according to their means. In addition, it is important to give charity regularly instead of once in a while as regular deeds are more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, even if they are little. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6465. Finally, those who desire to encourage others to give charity can give it publically. This will lead to them gaining the same reward as those who donate because of their inspiration. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2351. But those who are fearful of showing off, which cancels their reward, should do so privately. Islam has provided many options and opportunities for Muslims to gain much reward which lead to the removal of their burdens in both worlds.

## **True Hope**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. Before the battle commenced the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, persistently and ardently supplicated to Allah, the Exalted, to grant victory to them. His pleas to Allah, the Exalted, were so intense that his cloak would slip down off his shoulders when he raised his hands in supplications. Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, was with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and would reposition his cloak for him and out of sympathy he requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to lessen his intensity as Allah, the Exalted, would fulfill His promise and grant him victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 273.

As the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is the perfect servant of Allah, the Exalted, he did not stop turning and supplicating to his Lord and Master. Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, during this incident was at the station of true hope in Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the difference between true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, and wishful thinking. True hope is when one controls their soul by avoiding the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, and actively struggles for preparing for the hereafter. Whereas, the foolish wishful thinker follows their desires and then expects Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and fulfill their wishes.



It is important for Muslims not to confuse these two attitudes so that they avoid living and dying as a wishful thinker as this person is highly unlikely to succeed in this world or the next. Wishful thinking is like a farmer who fails to prepare the land for planting, fails to plant seeds, fails to water the land and then expects to harvest a huge crop. This is plain foolishness and this farmer is highly unlikely to succeed. Whereas, true hope is like a farmer who prepares the land, plants seeds, waters the land and then hopes Allah, the Exalted, will bless them with a huge harvest. The key difference is that the one who possesses true hope will actively strive to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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. And whenever they slip up they sincerely repent. Whereas, the wishful thinker will not actively strive in obeying Allah, the Exalted, and instead follow their desires and still expect Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and fulfill their wishes.

Muslims must therefore learn the key difference so that they can abandon wishful thinking and instead adopt true hope in Allah, the Exalted, which always leads to nothing except good and success in both worlds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405.

## **Bravery**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. During the battle the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was nearest to the enemy than anyone else and he was the bravest man that day. This has been recorded in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 282.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2511, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned Muslims to avoid being cowardly. This attitude prevents trust in Allah, the Exalted, and in what He has promised, such as one's guaranteed provision. It can cause one to seek their provision in doubtful and unlawful means which will destroy a person in both worlds. Allah, the Exalted, does not accept any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2342.

In addition, being a coward prevents one from striving against the Devil and one's inner Devil which requires genuine struggle. This will lead one to fail in obeying Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. And it will therefore prevent them from fulfilling the rights of people. Both worldly and religious success requires effort and time. A coward will be too afraid to undertake this struggle and will instead be lazy which leads to failure in both worldly and religious matters.

## Help from the Heavens

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. During the battle Allah, the Exalted, sent thousands of Angels to help the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Chapter 8 Al Anfal, verse 12:

*"[Remember] when your Lord inspired to the angels, "I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieved, so strike [them] upon the necks and strike from them every fingertip."*

On one occasion a Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, pursued a non-Muslim soldier and heard the noise of a whip and someone speaking even though no one else was present. He found the non-Muslim dead. When he informed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, what had occurred he confirmed that was an Angel from the third Heaven. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4588.

Allah, the Exalted, safeguards and preserves the creation and takes care of them with special care. He protects the obedient from the plots and traps of the Devil and He safeguards the disobedient from His immediate punishment in order to give them an opportunity to sincerely repent.

A Muslim should act on this divine name by using the means provided to them by Allah, the Exalted, but always trust in His divine care and choices in every situation and outcome they face even if they do not observe the wisdom behind some choices. This inspires patience and even contentment with the choice of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 3:

*“...And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him...”*

A Muslim should also understand that they will only be protected from misguidance and punishment by the Guardian namely, Allah, the Exalted. This removes any signs of pride and ensures they seek His protection through sincere obedience to Him. A Muslim must act on this divine name by safeguarding every trust they possess such as their blessings by using them according to the teachings of Islam. They should safeguard their actions and speech from the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they receive more blessings from 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]...”*

## **A Bad Companion**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. The Devil in the form of a human joined the army of the non-Muslims and encouraged them to battle while promising to protect and aid them. But after the Devil witnessed the Angels descending from the Heavens to aid the Muslim army he withdrew and retreated from the battlefield with his minions. When he was criticized by the non-Muslims he replied that he witnessed what they could not see and feared Allah, the Exalted, and His punishment. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 288.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5534, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the difference between a good and bad companion. The good companion is like a person who sells perfume. Their companion will either obtain some perfume or at least be affected by the pleasant smell. Whereas, a bad companion is like a blacksmith, if their companion does not burn their clothes they will certainly be affected by the smoke.

Muslims must understand that the people they accompany will have an effect on them whether this affect is positive or negative, obvious or subtle. It is not possible to accompany someone and not be affected by it. A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4833, confirms that a person is on their companion's religion. Meaning, a person adopts the characteristics of their companion. It is therefore important for Muslims to always accompany the righteous as they will undoubtedly affect them in a positive way meaning, they will inspire them to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing

destiny with patience. Whereas, bad companions will either inspire one to disobey Allah, the Exalted, or they will encourage a Muslim to concentrate on the material world over preparing for the hereafter. This attitude will become a great regret for them on Judgment Day even if the things they strive for are lawful but beyond their needs.

Finally, as a person will end up with those they love in the hereafter according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, a Muslim must practically show they love for the righteous by accompanying them in this world. But if they accompany bad or heedless people then it proves and indicates they love for them and their ultimate destination in the hereafter. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

*“Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous.”*

## **The Help of Allah, the Exalted**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. On that day the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, not to kill certain people who were on the side of the non-Muslims as they had come to the battlefield reluctantly. In addition, he forbade the killing of a man, Abu Al Bakhtari, as he protected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca and annulled the document boycotting the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 290.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, will continue helping a Muslim as long as they are helping others. A Muslim must understand that when they strive for something or are aided by another person to complete a particular task the outcome may be successful or end in failure. But when Allah, the Exalted, helps someone with anything a successful outcome is guaranteed. Therefore, Muslims should, for their own sake, strive to help others in all good things so that they receive the help of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters.

## **Consequences of Actions**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After the battle was over and the non-Muslims were defeated the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered the bodies of the non-Muslims to be placed in an old well. After this was done he called out to them enumerating those in the well and asked if they had found what Allah, the Exalted, promised them as he was given exactly what Allah, the Exalted, promised him. When he was questioned about calling out to the dead he replied that they could hear his words but they could not reply. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 300.

It is important to learn that no matter how much physical or social strength a person has a day will certainly come when they face the consequences of their actions. In most cases, this occurs during their life where the actions of a person leads them to trouble, such as prison and eventually they will face the consequences of their actions in the hereafter as well. This applies to all people not just leaders.

A Muslim should therefore never mistreat others, such as their relatives. They should learn a lesson from the tyrannical leaders of history who were greater in strength than them yet, a day certainly came when their strength did not benefit them and they faced the consequences of their evil deeds. Social influence and strength are fickle things as they quickly pass from person to person thereby, never remaining with anyone for long. Therefore, a Muslim who possesses such strength should use it in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, by benefiting themselves and others.



But if they abuse their authority then they will eventually face a punishment which no one can protect them from.

In addition, it is important not to abuse one's authority as it may cause them to be hurled into Hell on Judgment Day. Every oppressor will have to give their righteous deeds to their victims and if necessary take the sins of their victims until justice is established. This will cause many oppressors to be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should never forget to hold themselves accountable for their deeds. Those who do will avoid disobeying Allah, the Exalted, and harming others. But those who do not judge themselves will continue disobeying Allah, the Exalted, and harming others heedlessly not knowing that in actual fact they are only harming themselves. But when they realize this fact it will be too late for them to escape punishment.

## **A Merciful Act**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After victory was given to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, consulted his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, on what to do with their prisoners of war. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, advised to execute them for their many crimes and acts of war. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, disliked this suggestion. Then Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, suggested to pardon them from execution and instead allow them to purchase their own freedom. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was pleased with this advice and acted on it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 305.

Throughout the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Muslims have been advised to be merciful to others. For example, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924, advises that those who show mercy to the creation will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to note, that showing mercy is not only through one's actions, such as donating wealth to the poor. It in fact encompasses every aspect of one's life and interaction with others, such as one's words. This is why Allah, the Exalted, warns those who show mercy to others by donating charity that failing to show mercy through their speech, such as

counting their favours done to others, only cancels their reward. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

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

True mercy is shown in everything: one's facial expression, one's glance and the tone of their speech. This was the full mercy shown by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is therefore how Muslims must act.

In addition, showing mercy is so important that Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear in the Holy Quran that even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possessed countless beautiful and noble characteristics yet, the one which attracted the hearts of people towards him and Islam was mercy. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

It clearly warns that without mercy people would have fled from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If this was the

case in respect to him even though he possessed countless other beautiful characteristics how can Muslims, who do not possess such noble characteristics, expect to have a positive impact on others, such as their children, without showing true mercy?

Simply put, Muslims should treat others how they wish to be treated by Allah, the Exalted, and others, which is undoubtedly with true and full mercy.

## **Love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After victory was given to the Muslims some prisoners of war were taken including the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, who later became Muslim. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, encouraged Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, to accept Islam and commented that him accepting Islam would please him more than if his own father accepted Islam as this would greatly please the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 307-308.

This was an indication of the sincerity Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, had for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. 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 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.



## **Best Conduct**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed Medina in order to raid a caravan belonging to the non-Muslims of Mecca, which eventually unintentionally led to the Battle of Badr, he ordered his son-in-law Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, to stay in Medina and nurse his wife, the daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Ruqayya, may Allah be pleased with her, as she was severely sick and eventually passed away from this sickness. On his return to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, a share of the war booty thereby clearly indicating that he was considered a participant of the Battle of Badr. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 315.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2612, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who possesses complete faith is the one who is best in conduct and most kind to their family.

Unfortunately, some have adopted the bad habit of treating non-relatives in a kind manner while mistreating their own family. They behave in this manner as they do not understand the importance of treating one's own family kindly and as they fail to appreciate their family. A Muslim will never achieve success until they fulfill both aspects of faith. The first is fulfilling their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands,



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. The second is to fulfill the rights of people which includes treating them kindly. None have more right to this kind treatment than one's own family. A Muslim must aid their family in all matters which are good and warn them against bad things and practices in a gentle way according to the teachings of Islam. They should not blindly support them in bad things simply because they are their relatives neither should they fail to help them in good matters because of some ill feelings towards them as this contradicts Islamic teachings. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

*"...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression..."*

The best way to guide others is through a practical example as this is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is much more effective than just verbal guidance.

Finally, one should generally choose gentleness in all matters especially, when dealing with their family. Even if their commit sins they should be warned in a gentle manner and still be aided in matters which are good as this kindness is more effective in bringing them back to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, than treating them harshly.

## Spreading News

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, headed back to Medina. He sent ahead two of his Companions, Zayd Bin Haritha and Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with them, into Medina in order to give the city the good news of victory. When they arrived in Medina they began telling everyone what had occurred at Badr. Some hypocrites began to spread rumors in Medina that the Muslim army was defeated and the two Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were confused. This caused confusion and fear to spread within the city. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 316.

It is important for Muslims to act on the following verse of the Holy Quran and not spread information to others even if they believe they are benefiting others by doing so without verifying the information first. Meaning, they should ensure it comes from a reliable source and is accurate. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 6:

*“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.”*

Even though, this verse indicates a wicked person spreading news it can still apply to all people which share information with others. As mentioned in this verse a person may believe they are helping others but by spreading unverified information they might harm others instead, such as emotional harm. Unfortunately, many Muslims are heedless to this and have a habit of simply forwarding information through text messages and social media applications without verifying it. In cases where the information is connected to religious matters it is even more important to verify the information before spreading it. As one may get punished for the actions of others based on the incorrect information they provided them. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2351.

In addition, with everything that is going on in the world and how it is affecting Muslims it is even more important to verify information as warning others over things which did not happen only creates distress in society and furthers the rift between Muslims and other communities. This contradicts Islamic teachings.

A Muslim needs to understand that Allah, the Exalted, will not question why they did not share unverified information with others on Judgment Day. But He will certainly question them if they do share information with others, whether it is verified or not. Therefore, an intelligent Muslim will only share verified information and anything which is not verified they will leave knowing they will not be held accountable for it.

## **Sublime Character**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, headed back to Medina. He entrusted the prisoners of Badr to the Companions, may Allah be pleased them, and commanded them to behave well towards them. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would give their best food to the prisoners namely, bread and consume the lowest quality of food themselves namely, dates. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 319.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the heaviest thing in the scales of Judgment Day will be good character. This includes showing good character towards Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. It also includes showing good character towards people. Unfortunately, many Muslims strive to fulfil the obligatory duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, but neglect the second aspect by mistreating others. They fail to understand its importance. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, clearly advises that a person will not be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. Meaning, the same way a person desires to be treated kindly they must also treat others with good character otherwise they will not succeed as the only truly successful people are the believers.

In addition, a person cannot be a true believer until they keep their verbal and physical harm away from others and their possessions irrespective of their faith. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3318, that a woman will enter Hell because she mistreated a cat which led to its death. And another Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2550, advises that a man was forgiven because he fed a thirsty dog. If this is the outcome of showing good character and the consequences of showing evil character to animals can one imagine the importance of showing good character towards Allah, the Exalted, and people? In fact, the main Hadith under discussion concludes by advising that the one who possesses good character will be rewarded like the Muslim who persistently worships Allah, the Exalted, and regularly fasts.

## **Soft & Merciful Nature**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, headed back to Medina. One of the prisoners of Badr claimed he was very poor and did not have enough wealth to ransom himself. He appealed to the soft nature of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and asked him to set him free. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, showed mercy to him and fulfilled his request on the condition that he would not fight against Islam again. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 326-327.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that Allah, the Exalted, will not show mercy to the one who does not show mercy to others.

Islam is a very simple religion. One of its fundamental teachings is so simple that even uneducated people can understand and act on them namely, how people treat others is how they will be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, those who learn to overlook and forgive the mistakes of others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Those who support others in beneficial worldly and religious matters such as emotional or financial aid will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. This same Hadith advises that the one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, if one treats others with kindness and respect according to the teachings of Islam they will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted. And those who mistreat others will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted, even if they fulfill the obligatory duties which are connected to Him such as the obligatory prayers. This is because a Muslim must fulfill both duties in order to achieve success namely, the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Finally, it is important to note a Muslim will only be treated kindly by Allah, the Exalted, if they treat others kindly for His sake. If they do it for any other reason than they will undoubtedly forfeit the reward mentioned in these teachings. The foundation of all acts and Islam itself is one's intention. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

## **Never Tricked Twice**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, headed back to Medina. One of the prisoners of Badr claimed he was very poor and did not have enough wealth to ransom himself. He appealed to the soft nature of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and asked him to set him free. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, showed mercy to him and fulfilled his request on condition that he would not fight against Islam again. But after being released he broke his promise and fought against Islam with the non-Muslims. He was captured again by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in another battle, the Battle of Uhud. He requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to release him again but he replied that a believer is not bitten from the same hole twice. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 326-327.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6133, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a believer does not get stung from the same hole twice.

This means that a believer does not get fooled by something or someone twice. This includes committing sins. A true believer is not immune to committing sins. But when they happen to commit them they do not repeat their mistake and instead learn and change for the better by sincerely repenting to Allah, the Exalted.



A true believer does not blindly trust people thereby increasing the chances of being wronged by them. But if they are fooled by anyone they should overlook and pardon as this leads to their forgiveness. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

But they should also change their behaviour by treading cautiously when dealing with this person thereby ensuring they do not get fooled again. There is a vast difference between forgiving others and blindly trusting them especially, after they have wronged someone.

This Hadith applies to every aspect of one's life as a true believer is the one who constantly learns from their experiences and knowledge in order to change for the better so that they increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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.

## **No Preferential Treatment**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, headed back to Medina. Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, released some of the prisoners of Badr without a ransom he however made sure the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, took a ransom for his own uncle, Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, even though the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, offered to release him for free as he was the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In fact, Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, had to pay more than anyone else for his freedom. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 345.

One of the major reasons why society seems to be digressing is because people have abandoned acting justly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6787, that previous nations were destroyed as the authorities would punish the weak when they broke the law but would pardon the rich and influential. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, being the head of state even declared in this Hadith that if his own daughter committed a crime he would enforce the full legal punishment on her. Even though members of the general public might not be in a position to advise their leaders to remain just in their actions but they can influence them indirectly by acting justly in all their dealings and actions. For example, a Muslim must act justly in respect to their dependents, such as their children, by treating them equally. This has been specifically advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3544. They should act justly in all their business dealings

irrespective of who they deal with. If people act with justice on an individual level then communities can change for the better and in turn those who are in influential positions, such as politicians, will act justly whether they desire to or not.

## **Importance of Education**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After Allah, the Exalted, granted victory to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, headed back to Medina with some prisoners of war. Some of these prisoners had no ransom money available to free themselves so the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had some of them work off their ransom by teaching the children of Medina how to write. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 345.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have made these prisoners work off their ransom in different ways such as physical labor e.g. farming, but he chose to use them in a more important way. This indicates the importance of education and knowledge.

A great distraction which prevents one from submitting to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is ignorance. It can be argued that it is the origin of every sin as the one who truly knows the consequences of sins would never commit them. This refers to true beneficial knowledge which is knowledge that is acted upon. In reality, all knowledge which is not acted on is not beneficial knowledge. The example of the one who behaves in this manner is described in the Holy Quran as a donkey which carries books of knowledge which do not benefit it. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

*“...and then did not take it on (did not act upon knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]...”*

A person who acts on their knowledge rarely slips up and commits sins intentionally. In fact, when this occurs it is only caused by a moment of ignorance where a person forgets to act on their knowledge which results in them sinning.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once highlighted the seriousness of ignorance in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2322. He declared that everything in the material world is cursed except for the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, whatever is connected to this remembrance, the scholar and the student of knowledge. This means that all the blessings in the material world will become a curse for the one who is ignorant as they will misuse them thereby committing sins.

In fact, ignorance can be considered a person's worse enemy as it prevents them from protecting themselves from harm and gaining benefit all of which can only be achieved through acting on knowledge. The ignorant commits sins without being aware of them. How can one avoid a sin if they do not know what is considered a sin? Ignorance causes one to neglect their obligatory duties. How can one fulfil their duties if they are unaware of what their duties are?

It is therefore a duty on all Muslims to gain enough knowledge to fulfil all their obligatory duties and avoid sins. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

## **A Wise Proposal**

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, proposed marriage to the daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her. This was agreed and the marriage took place. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 368.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person is married for four reasons: their wealth, lineage, beauty or for their piety. He concluded by warning that a person should marry for the sake of piety otherwise they will be loser.

It is important to understand that the first three things mentioned in this Hadith are very transient and imperfect. They may give someone temporary happiness but ultimately these things will become a burden for them as they are linked to the material world and not to the thing which grants ultimate and permanent success namely, faith. One only needs to observe the rich and famous in order to understand that wealth does not bring happiness. In fact, the rich are the most unsatisfied and unhappy people on Earth. Marrying someone for the sake of their lineage is foolish as it does not guarantee the person will make a good spouse. In fact, if the marriage does not work out it destroys the family bond the two families possessed before the marriage. Marrying only for the sake of beauty meaning, love is not wise as this is a fickle emotion which changes with

the passing of time and with one's mood. How many couples supposedly drowned in love ended up hating each other?

But it is important to note, that this Hadith does not mean one should find a spouse who is poor as it is important to get married to someone who can financially support a family. Neither does it mean one should not be attracted to their spouse as this is an important aspect of a healthy marriage. But this Hadith means that these things should not be the main or ultimate reason someone gets married. The main and ultimate quality a Muslim should look for in a spouse is piety. This is when a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience. Put simply, the one who fears Allah, the Exalted, will treat their spouse well in both times of happiness and difficulty. On the other hand, those who are irreligious will mistreat their spouse whenever they are upset. This is one of the main reasons why domestic violence has increased amongst Muslims in recent years.

Finally, if a Muslim desires to get married they should firstly obtain the knowledge associated with it, such as the rights they owe their spouse, the rights they are owed from their spouse and how to correctly deal with one's spouse in different situations. Unfortunately, ignorance of this leads to many arguments and divorces as people demand things which their spouse is not obliged to fulfill. Knowledge is the foundation of a healthy and successful marriage.



## **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Being Trustworthy**

Whenever the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed from Medina he always appointed someone trustworthy in charge to manage its affairs until he returned. For example, in the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, he left for an expedition known as Dhu Amarr and appointed Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, in charge. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 1.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst Muslims.

## **Taking Revenge**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he left for an expedition. During this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took a nap under a tree. The non-Muslim army took this opportunity by stealthily sending a soldier to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with the intention to assassinate him. He startled the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and while brandishing his sword asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who would protect him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, confidently replied that Allah, the Exalted, would. The Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, then pushed the man to the ground. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, picked up his sword and asked the same question the soldier asked him. The soldier pleaded with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to release him and he did without punishing him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 1-2.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

*“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”*

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted, does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

## **Nobility in Islam**

Whenever the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed from Medina he always appointed someone trustworthy in charge to manage its affairs until he returned. For example, in the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, he left for an expedition to a place called Buhran and appointed a blind and poor Companion, Ibn Umm Maktum, may Allah be pleased with him, in charge of Medina. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 2.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant Muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

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

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one’s race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a Muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these Muslims.

## True Loyalty

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a Jewish tribe, the Banu Qaynuqa, who were living in Medina broke their pact and fought against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Due to worldly benefits the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, who had allied with the Banu Qaynuqa before the migration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Medina, insisted that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, avoid harming them and he stayed loyal to them even though they broke their pact with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Whereas a Companion, Ubada Bin Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, who also had an old alliance with Banu Qaynuqa openly renounced his alliance with them and instead reaffirmed his alliance with Allah, the Exalted, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 51:

*“O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.”*

And chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 56:

*“And whoever is an ally of Allah and His Messenger and those who have believed - indeed, the party of Allah - they will be the predominant.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 3-4.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed



her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam. Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## Bad Advice

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a Jewish scholar and an aggressive enemy of Islam, Ka'b Bin Ashraf, visited Mecca in order to incite them further against Islam. A non-Muslim leader of Mecca asked him who was more rightly guided and favored by Allah, the Exalted, the idol worshippers of Mecca or the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Islam. Ka'b replied that the idol worshippers of Mecca were more rightly guided. This was a foolish answer as being a Jewish scholar he very well knew that idol worshipping was far from right guidance. On this occasion Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 51:

*“Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture, who believe in jibt [superstition] and ṭāghūt [false objects of worship] and say about the disbelievers, “These are better guided than the believers as to the way?””*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 7.

Muslims should note that a major sign of true love is when one directs their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is because obedience leads to success and safety in both this world and in the hereafter. A person who does not desire safety

and success for a person can never truly love them irrespective of what they claim or how they treat the other person. The same way a person becomes happy when their beloved obtains worldly success, like a job, they will also desire their beloved to obtain success in the hereafter. If a person does not care about another obtaining safety and success especially, in the next world then they do not love them.

A true lover could not bear knowing and seeing their beloved facing difficulties and punishment in this world or in the next. This is only avoidable through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they would always direct their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. If a person directs another towards their own selfish interest or the interest of others instead of the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. This applies to all relationships such as friendships and relatives.

Therefore, a Muslim should assess whether those in their life direct them towards Allah, the Exalted, or not. If they do then it is a clear sign of their love for them. If they do not then it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

*“Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous.”*

## **An Evil Conversation**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca gathered with the non-Muslims who had lost their relatives at the Battle of Badr. They declared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had caused them great harm and killed their elite and relatives. They urged them to financially and physically support them in taking revenge. They all pledged their allegiance to this evil campaign which eventually led to the Battle of Uhud. On this occasion Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 8 Al Anfal, verse 36:

*“Indeed, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to avert [people] from the way of Allah. So they will spend it; then it will be for them a [source of] regret; then they will be overcome. And those who have disbelieved - unto Hell they will be gathered.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 12.

This incident is connected to chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114:

*“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people.*

*And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”*

In this verse Allah, the exalted, explains how people should conduct themselves when conversing with others so that they derive benefit for themselves and others. The first is that when Muslims gather they should discuss how to benefit others which encompasses charity in the form of wealth and physical aid. If a Muslim is not in a position to help a needy person then this is an excellent way of gaining reward equal to actually helping them. A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6800, advises that the one who inspires someone else towards good will be rewarded as if they performed the good action themselves. If one cannot aid someone in difficulty or inspire another to fulfill this task they can at least encourage others to supplicate for the one in need. Supplication for an absent person causes the Angels to pray for the supplicator. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1534. This mentality can inspire the group to visit the needy person which provides them with emotional support. This has a powerful psychological impact and provides them with a new mode of strength when dealing with their hardship. The important thing to note is that when one mentions the situation of a needy person their intention must be to aid them in their hour of need. It should never be for the sake of passing time and making them a target of ridicule.

The second way to gain blessings is when one converses about anything lawful that will provide benefit to someone in this world or the next. This aspect includes advising others to do good and refrain from evil in every aspect of their life.

The third aspect mentioned in this verse involves conversing with others with a constructive mindset which brings people together in a positive way instead of possessing a destructive mindset which causes divisions within society. If a person cannot bring people together in a loving way then the minimum they can do is not cause divisions amongst them. Even this is recorded as a good deed when done for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2518.

In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, advises that reconciling between two opposing Muslims for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, is superior to voluntary prayer and fasting. Every good thing found within society was the outcome of this pious attitude such as the construction of schools, hospitals and Mosques.

But it is important to note, that a Muslim will only obtain the great reward mentioned in this verse when they perform the righteous deeds for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Each person will be rewarded based on their intention not just their physical action. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The insincere Muslim will find that on Judgment Day they will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for which will not be possible. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

## **Being Grateful to People**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, released a non-Muslim prisoner of war after the Battle of Badr, Abu Azza Al Jumahi, as he was poor and could not afford his ransom. A non-Muslim leader urged Abu Azza to aid them by encouraging a non-Muslim tribe to join their campaign. Even though he admitted that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was kind to him and he did not desire to oppose him eventually he was convinced to join the campaign against Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 12-13.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1954, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever is not grateful to people cannot be grateful to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though there is no doubt that the source of all blessings is none other than Allah, the Exalted, none the less showing gratitude to people is an important aspect of Islam. This is because Allah, the Exalted, sometimes uses a person as a means to help others such as one's parents. As the means has been created and used by Allah, the Exalted, being grateful to them is in fact being grateful to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, Muslims must show good character and always show appreciation for any aid or support they receive from others irrespective of its size. They should show gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessing according to His commands as He is the source of the blessing

and show gratitude to the person as they are the means which was created and chosen by Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should show gratitude verbally to people and practically by repaying their act of kindness according to their means even if it is only a supplication on their behalf. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 216.

The person who does not show gratitude to people cannot show true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, and therefore they will not be given an increase in blessings. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

If a Muslim desires an increase in blessings they must fulfill both aspects of gratitude namely, to Allah, the Exalted, and to people.



## **Desiring Peace**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. When the non-Muslim army reached close to Uhud the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had a dream which suggested that the Muslim army should remain in Medina and confront the enemy within the city. But the young Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, who had not witnessed the Battle of Badr kept urging him to march forward and meet the non-Muslim army in Uhud, which he eventually agreed to. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, put on his battle armor the young Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, realized their error and advised the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to revert back to his initial suggestion meaning, confront the non-Muslim army within Medina. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that it was not proper for a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, to take off their battle armor without confronting the enemies of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 14.

Even though a Muslim should always be ready to defend Islam, themselves, their relatives, the innocent and their properties yet they should not be so eager for confrontation. Instead they should prefer peace and safety.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2346, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever

wakes up in the morning safe from danger, healthy and having food for the day is as if the world was gathered for them.

In this day and age where many people around the world are living in unsafe countries a Muslim who has been blessed with safety should make use of it by using their freedom to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. For example, they should take advantage of journeying to the Mosques for the congregational prayers and religious gatherings of knowledge.

In addition, Muslims should extend this sense of security to others irrespective of their faith so that the whole society becomes secure from danger. In fact, according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, a person cannot be a true Muslim or believer until they keep their verbal and physical harm away from the self and possessions of others. Simply put, a Muslim should treat others in the same way they desire to be treated by people.

A Muslim must take advantage of their good health by obeying Allah, the Exalted, as it is a blessing which is often only truly appreciated until it is lost. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6412. Those who make good use of their good health by obeying Allah, the Exalted, will find that they will receive His support when they eventually lose their good health. But those who fail to make use of this blessing are unlikely to receive this support. It is important to note, making use of one's health includes striving in this material world in order to fulfill one's needs and the needs of their dependents.

One of the major concerns of a person is their provision. A Muslim should remember that it was allocated to them over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. The one who obtains their daily provision should concern themselves with their other duties and plan for tomorrow without stressing as their provision is guaranteed.

## **All Talk No Action**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed Medina in order to confront the enemies at Uhud initially the leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy agreed to take part in the battle with his people. As they approached Uhud Abdullah Bin Ubayy retreated with his 300 men and the Muslim army was left with 700 men against a non-Muslim army of 3000. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 16-17.

An aspect of hypocrisy is when one verbally shows support for others and their good projects such as, building a mosque but when the time comes to take part in the project such as, donating wealth they seem to disappear. Similarly, when people are facing good times they verbally support them reminding others of their loyalty to them. But the moment the people face difficulties these hypocrites offer no emotional or physical support. Instead they criticize them. This was the attitude of the hypocrites in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 62:

*"So how [will it be] when disaster strikes them because of what their hands have put forth and then they come to you swearing by Allah, "We intended nothing but good conduct and accommodation.""*

## **Blessed in All Situations**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The confusion and chaos increased when voices were heard claiming that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had been martyred. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 29-30.

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.”*

## **All Difficulties**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. During the battle the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was heavily wounded. His teeth were broken and his face and lips were cut. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 30.

Even though the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, are protected from committing sins none the less Muslims can learn a benefit from physical and emotional injuries.

In a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 492, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a Muslim does not face any type of physical difficulty, irrespective of its size, such as a prick of a thorn, or any emotional difficulty, such as stress, except Allah, the Exalted, erases their sins because of it.

This refers to minor sins as major sins require sincere repentance. This outcome occurs when a Muslim remains patient from the onset of the difficulty until the end of their life. This is important to understand as many people believe they can complain initially and then show patience after. This is not true patience instead it is only acceptance which occurs with

the passing of time. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1870. In addition, patience needs to be shown throughout one's life as a person can destroy their reward by showing impatience down the line.

A Muslim should remember that it is far better to have their minor sins erased through these difficulties than to reach the Day of Judgment while still possessing them. A Muslim should constantly repent and strive to perform righteous deeds in order to erase their minor sins. And if they encounter any physical or emotional difficulties they should remain patient hoping for their minor sins to be erased and to obtain an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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



## **Continuing the Mission**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The confusion and chaos increased when voices were heard claiming that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had been martyred. This caused some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to lose hope as their strength and inspiration had supposedly been martyred. But a Companion, Anas Bin Nadr, may Allah be pleased with him, declared that even if the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had been martyred Allah, the Exalted, is Ever Living and cannot die. They should therefore continue fighting for what the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, stood for. Anas Bin Nadr, may Allah be pleased with him, continued fighting until he was martyred. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 29-31.

Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is not physically amongst Muslims today none the less they must continue to strive for what he stood for by becoming the true ambassadors

of Islam. The best way to achieve this is by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with His choices. Islam spread across the entire globe because the righteous predecessors took this duty very seriously. When they gained and acted on beneficial knowledge the outside world recognised the truthfulness of Islam through their behaviour. This caused countless people to enter the fold of Islam. Unfortunately, many Muslims today believe that showing others about Islam is merely in one's appearance, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf. This is only an aspect of representing Islam. The greatest part is by adopting the characteristics of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed in the Holy Quran and his traditions. Only with this attitude will the outside world observe the true nature of Islam. A Muslim should always remember that adopting an Islamic appearance while possessing characteristics which oppose the teachings of Islam only causes the outside world to disrespect Islam. They will be held accountable for this disrespect as they are the cause of it. A Muslim should therefore behave as a true ambassador of Islam by adopting the inward teachings of Islam as well as the outer appearance of Islam.

In addition, this important position should remind Muslims that they will be held accountable and questioned whether they fulfilled this role or not on Judgment Day. The same way a king would become angry at their diplomat and representative if they failed to fulfil their duty so will Allah, the Exalted, become angry with the Muslim who fails to fulfill their duty as an ambassador of Islam.

## **Making Tests Small**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. Many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were martyred including Musab Bin Umayr, may Allah be pleased with him. He possessed nothing except a woolen cloak. During his burial when his head was covered with it his feet were uncovered and when his feet were covered with the woolen cloak his head was left exposed. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded that his head should be covered with the woolen cloak and grass should be used to cover his feet. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 46.

It is important for Muslims to understand that Allah, the Exalted, does not demand Muslims to overcome the difficulties which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, endured. For example, the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, sacrificed their families, homes, businesses and even lives for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

In comparison, the difficulties Muslims face now are not as difficult as those the righteous predecessors faced. Muslims should therefore be grateful that they are only required to make a few small sacrifices, such as sacrificing some sleep to offer the obligatory dawn prayer and some wealth to donate the obligatory charity. Allah, the Exalted, is not commanding them to leave their homes and families for His sake. This

gratitude must be shown practically by using the blessings one possesses in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, when a Muslim faces difficulties they should remember the difficulties the righteous predecessors faced and how they overcame them through steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This knowledge can provide a Muslim the strength to overcome their difficulties as they know the righteous predecessors were more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they endured more severe difficulties with patience. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, advises that the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, endured the most difficult of tests and they are undoubtedly the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted.

If a Muslim follows the steadfast attitude of the righteous predecessors it is hoped they will end up with them in the hereafter.

## **Overlooking & Good Will**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. During this confusion some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, mistakenly martyred another Companion, Al Yaman, may Allah be pleased with him. His son Hudhayfa, may Allah be pleased with him, who was also present in Uhud witnessed what occurred but never held it against the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, and kept up this good will until he left this world years later. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 46 and is also recorded in Sahih Bukhari, number 3824.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

*“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”*

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the

Exalted, does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

## **Gaining Reward from Allah, the Exalted**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. There was a man who was on fighting on the side of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, named Quzman. When his bravery was mentioned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he declared that he would go to Hell. During the battle he fought fiercely against the non-Muslims and showed great courage. Eventually his wounds disabled him and he was carried off the battle field. He was praised by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, but he replied that he only fought for the sake of his tribe's honor and social status meaning, he did not fight for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. When the pain from his wounds became extreme he used an arrow to kill himself. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 50.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. A Muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly



actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all Muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

## Quranic Knowledge

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. After the battle was over the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, began burying their fallen comrades. Due to limited supplies the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would place one piece of clothing over two martyred Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. He ordered that the one who had better knowledge of the Holy Quran should be placed in the grave first. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 56-57 and has been recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1343.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 30, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the Holy Quran will intercede on Judgment Day. Those who follow it during their lives on Earth will be led to Paradise on Judgment Day. But those who neglect it during their lives on Earth will find that it pushes them into Hell on Judgment Day.

The Holy Quran is a book of guidance. It is not merely a book of recitation. Muslims must therefore strive to fulfill all aspects of the Holy Quran to ensure that it guides them to success in both worlds. The first aspect is reciting it correctly and regularly. The second aspect is to understand it. And the final aspect is to act on its teachings according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who behave in such a manner are the ones who are given glad tidings of right guidance through every difficulty in this world and its intercession on the Day of Judgment. But as warned by this Hadith the Holy Quran is only guidance and a mercy for those who correctly act on its aspects according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But those who misinterpret it and instead act according to their desires in order to gain worldly things, such as fame, will be deprived of this right guidance and its intercession on Judgment Day. In fact, their complete loss in both worlds will only increase until they sincerely repent. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

*“And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.”*

## **A Pledge Fulfilled**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. After the battle was over the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, began burying their fallen comrades. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed by a martyred Companion, Musab Bin Umayr, may Allah be pleased with him, and recited chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 23:

*“Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death], and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter [the terms of their commitment] by any alteration.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 62.

This incident is linked to chapter 7 Al A'raf, verse 172 of the Holy Quran:

*“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] - lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware.””*

All humans were brought forth so that they could take this pledge to Allah, the Exalted. The lesson to understand behind this incident is that all people accepted Allah, the Exalted, as their Lord. Meaning, the One who created them, sustains them and the One who will judge their deeds on the Day of Judgment. It is important for all Muslims to fulfil this pledge through sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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.

This verse indicates that Allah, the Exalted, did not ask the creation if they were His servants instead, He asked them if He was their Lord. This is an indication that the will of Allah, the Exalted, should always come before the will and desire of a person. If a Muslim has a choice between pleasing Allah, the Exalted, or someone else this pledge should remind them that the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, must come first.

This question is also an indication of the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted, as He hinted the answer to the creation by wording it as He did. This shows Muslims that even though Allah, the Exalted, is the Lord who will judge their deeds yet, He is also infinitely merciful.

The effect of this covenant is deeply embedded in the hearts of all mankind. In fact, this is the nature which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6755. From this one can understand that it is important for people not to search for the truth after making their minds up beforehand and then search for evidence which supports their predetermined belief. Only those who open their minds without making a predetermined decision will unlock this covenant which has been embedded deep in their hearts. In fact, having an open mind is important in all issues not just in matters of faith as it helps one to find the truth and the best path. This attitude strengthens society and always encourages peace between people. But the stubbornness of those who predetermine their choices will always create wedges between members of a society which can affect people on a national level. It is important for Muslims not to always believe they are correct in worldly matters otherwise they will adopt this stubborn attitude. This will prevent them from accepting the opinions of others which will lead to arguments, enmity and fractured relationships. Therefore, this attitude should be avoided at all costs.

Finally, the fact that this covenant is deeply embedded in a person's heart indicates that it is a duty on Muslims to uncover it. This will lead one to certainty of faith which is much stronger than faith based on hearsay meaning, being told by one's family that they are a Muslim. Certainty of faith allows a Muslim to overcome all difficulties successfully in this world while fulfilling their religious and worldly duties. One only fails in tests and their duties because of weakness in their faith. Certainty of faith is only obtained by gaining and acting on the 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...”*

## **Times of Grief**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina he heard the women lamenting for their fallen relatives. He became sad as there was no one mourning for his uncle, Hamza, may Allah be pleased with him, who was martyred during the battle. These women were then told by their male relatives to lament for Hamza, may Allah be pleased with him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, prayed for them but replied that he did not desire this and concluded that he did not like wailing. He forbade wailing after this. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 66-67.

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3127, warns that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade people from wailing.



Unfortunately, some believe it is not permitted to cry in times of difficulty, such as losing a loved one. This is incorrect as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, cried on many occasions when someone passed away. For example, he wept when his son Ibrahim, may Allah be pleased with him, passed away. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3126.

In fact, crying on someone's death is a sign of mercy which Allah, the Exalted, has placed in the hearts of His servants. And only those who show mercy to others will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1284. This same Hadith clearly mentions that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, cried over his grandson who passed away.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2137, advises that a person will not be punished for crying over the death of someone or the grief they feel in their heart. But they may well face punishment if they utter words showing their impatience with the choice of Allah, the Exalted.

It is clear that feeling grief in one's heart or shedding tears is not prohibited in Islam. The things which are prohibited are wailing, showing one's impatience through words or actions, such as tearing one's clothes or shaving one's head in grief. They are severe warnings against those who act in this way. Therefore, one should avoid these actions at all costs. Not only may a person face punishment for acting in this way but if the deceased desired and commanded others to act like this when they passed away they too will be held accountable. But if the deceased did not desire this then they are free of any accountability. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1006. It is common sense

to understand that Allah, the Exalted, would not punish someone because of the actions of another when the former did not advise them to act in that manner. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 18:

*“And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another...”*

## Causing Divisions

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The hypocrites unsuccessfully attempted to take advantage of the grieving Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, by emotionally cutting them off from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Jewish scholars claimed that if Islam was true then they would not have been defeated. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 67.

A sign of hypocrisy is that a person spreads corruption in society. This negative characteristic affects all social levels beginning from a family unit and ending at the international level. This type of person dislikes seeing people uniting on good as this may cause the worldly status of others to increase beyond their own. This drives them to backbiting and slander in order to cause people to turn against each other. Their evil attitude destroys their own ties of kinship and when they observe other families who are happy it drives them to destroy their happiness also. They are fault finders who dedicate their time unveiling the mistakes of others in order to drag their social status down. They are the first people to begin

gossiping about others and act deaf whenever good things are spoken about. Peace and quiet disturbs them so they seek to create problems in order to entertain themselves. They fail to remember the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546. It advises that whoever covers the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will cover their faults. But whoever seeks out and unveils the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults to the people. So in reality, this type of person is only unveiling their own faults to society even though they believe they are exposing the faults of others.

In addition, it is clear that all Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were tested with different hardships and trials. In fact, according to the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, they were tested the most out of all of mankind. Therefore, Muslims should understand that actualising belief in Islam does not guarantee protection from difficulties. It in fact guarantees a safe journey through the difficulties and a mighty reward in both worlds. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

*“...Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.”*

## **Obedience in Difficulties**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to Medina they became aware that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca were considering marching back towards Medina in order to wipe out Islam for good. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave orders for the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, despite their grievous wounds and tired bodies, to move out in pursuit of the non-Muslims. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, responded positively Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 172:

*“Those [believers] who responded to Allah and the Messenger after injury had struck them. For those who did good among them and feared Allah is a great reward.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 67-68.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why their worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties.

But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

To conclude, it is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.

## Two Tongues

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. Many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were martyred and outwardly it appeared that they had been defeated. The leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, retreated from Uhud with his followers before the battle had begun. Before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would give his Friday sermon Abdullah Bin Ubayy would rise and declare that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was amongst them and that Allah, the Exalted, gave them all honor and glory through him. He would then command the people of Medina to support, listen and obey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After the Battle of Uhud and before the Friday sermon he rose to give his usual insincere speech but this time he was manhandled by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who told him to sit down and be quiet as he was no longer worthy of addressing the people in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 71-72.

A sign of hypocrisy is being two-faced. This is the one who changes their behaviour in order to please different groups of people intending thereby to gain some worldly things. They speak with many different tongues showing their support to different people while harbouring dislike for them. They fail to be sincere towards people which has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. If they fail to repent they will find themselves in the hereafter with two tongues of fire. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4873. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 14:



*“When they meet the believers, they say: “We believe,” but when they meet their evil companions (in privacy), they say: “Surely we are with you; we were merely jesting.””*

## **Search for Piety**

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, married Umm Kulthum, may Allah be pleased with her, the daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, following the death of his previous wife Umm Kulthum's sister Ruqayya, may Allah be pleased with them. Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, was the only man to marry two daughters, one after the other, of a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 82.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, only permitted these marriages as Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, was a pious man.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person is married for four reasons: their wealth, lineage, beauty or for their piety. He concluded by warning that a person should marry for the sake of piety otherwise they will be loser.

It is important to understand that the first three things mentioned in this Hadith are very transient and imperfect. They may give someone temporary happiness but ultimately these things will become a burden for them as they are linked to the material world and not to the thing which

grants ultimate and permanent success namely, faith. One only needs to observe the rich and famous in order to understand that wealth does not bring happiness. In fact, the rich are the most unsatisfied and unhappy people on Earth. Marrying someone for the sake of their lineage is foolish as it does not guarantee the person will make a good spouse. In fact, if the marriage does not work out it destroys the family bond the two families possessed before the marriage. Marrying only for the sake of beauty meaning, love is not wise as this is a fickle emotion which changes with the passing of time and with one's mood. How many couples supposedly drowned in love ended up hating each other?

But it is important to note, that this Hadith does not mean one should find a spouse who is poor as it is important to get married to someone who can financially support a family. Neither does it mean one should not be attracted to their spouse as this is an important aspect of a healthy marriage. But this Hadith means that these things should not be the main or ultimate reason someone gets married. The main and ultimate quality a Muslim should look for in a spouse is piety. This is when a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience. Put simply, the one who fears Allah, the Exalted, will treat their spouse well in both times of happiness and difficulty. On the other hand, those who are irreligious will mistreat their spouse whenever they are upset. This is one of the main reasons why domestic violence has increased amongst Muslims in recent years.

Finally, if a Muslim desires to get married they should firstly obtain the knowledge associated with it, such as the rights they owe their spouse, the rights they are owed from their spouse and how to correctly deal with one's spouse in different situations. Unfortunately, ignorance of this leads to many arguments and divorces as people demand things which their spouse is not obliged to fulfill. Knowledge is the foundation of a healthy and successful marriage.



## Showing Mercy

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Mount Uhud this exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never admonished or censured the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who committed the mistake during the Battle of Uhud. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].”*

Throughout the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Muslims have been advised to be merciful to others. For example, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi,

number 1924, advises that those who show mercy to the creation will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to note, that showing mercy is not only through one's actions, such as donating wealth to the poor. It in fact encompasses every aspect of one's life and interaction with others, such as one's words. This is why Allah, the Exalted, warns those who show mercy to others by donating charity that failing to show mercy through their speech, such as counting their favours done to others, only cancels their reward. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

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

True mercy is shown in everything: one's facial expression, one's glance and the tone of their speech. This was the full mercy shown by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is therefore how Muslims must act.

In addition, showing mercy is so important that Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear in the Holy Quran that even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possessed countless beautiful and noble characteristics yet, the one which attracted the hearts of people towards him and Islam was mercy.

The verse quoted earlier clearly warns that without mercy people would have fled from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If this was the case in respect to him even though he possessed countless other beautiful characteristics how can Muslims, who do not possess such noble characteristics, expect to have a positive impact on others, such as their children, without showing true mercy?

Simply put, Muslims should treat others how they wish to be treated by Allah, the Exalted, and others, which is undoubtedly with true and full mercy.

## **The 4<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Proof of Love**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a tribe living outside Medina claimed to have accepted Islam and requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to send some Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to their tribe in order to teach them more about Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched some Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, but they were betrayed. Some Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were martyred others were captured and turned over to the non-Muslims of Mecca as prisoners. When one of these prisoners, Zayd Bin Al-Dathina, may Allah be pleased with him, was being executed he was asked whether he would prefer to swap places with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He swore an oath that he would not like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to be even pricked by a thorn if it meant he escaped execution. A non-Muslim leader commented that he had never witnessed a group of people love someone more than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, loved the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 86-88.

Every Muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with



those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

## **Breaking Pledges**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, visited a non-Muslim tribe who he had previously made a pledge of support and peace with in order to ask for financial assistance. They replied that they would help him while secretly planning to assassinate him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, received divine revelation informing them of their treachery and he left and returned to Medina before they had a chance to act out their evil plan. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 100-101.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that breaking promises is an aspect of hypocrisy.

The greatest of promises a Muslim has made is with Allah, the Exalted, which is to obey Him sincerely. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. All other promises made with people must also be kept unless one has a valid excuse especially, the ones a parent makes with children. Breaking promises only teaches children bad character and encourages them to believe being deceitful is an acceptable characteristic to possess. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2227, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will be against the one who makes a promise in His name and then breaks it without a valid excuse. How can the one who has Allah, the Exalted, against them on Judgment Day possibly succeed?

## **True Justice**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, visited a non-Muslim tribe, Banu Nadir, who he had previously made a pledge of support and peace with in order to ask for financial assistance. They replied that they would help him while secretly planning to assassinate him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, received divine revelation informing them of their treachery and he left and returned to Medina before they had a chance to act out their evil plan. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then dispatched a message to the Banu Nadir warning them to leave his territory and protection. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 100-101.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have taken revenge immediately against this non-Muslim tribe who broke their pledge and plotted to assassinate him but instead he adhered to justice and gave them an opportunity to leave peacefully.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for Muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach Muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themselves harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.<sup>1</sup> So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just...”*

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

## **Evil Support**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, visited a non-Muslim tribe, Banu Nadir, who he had previously made a pledge of support and peace with in order to ask for financial assistance. They replied that they would help him while secretly planning to assassinate him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, received divine revelation informing them of their treachery and he left and returned to Medina before they had a chance to act out their evil plan. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then dispatched a message to the Banu Nadir warning them to leave his territory and protection. The hypocrites urged the Banu Nadir to stay and offered their support to them. They claimed that if the Banu Nadir resisted against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they would support them, if the Banu Nadir fought they would fight with them and if they were expelled from the territory they would leave with them. This encouraged the Banu Nadir to stand against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ultimately the hypocrites did nothing when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, decided to fight against the Banu Nadir. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 100-101.

Muslims should note that a major sign of true love is when one directs their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is because obedience leads to success and safety in both this world and in the hereafter. A person who does not desire safety and success for a person can never truly love them irrespective of what they claim or how they treat the other person. The same way a person becomes happy when their beloved obtains worldly success, like a job,

they will also desire their beloved to obtain success in the hereafter. If a person does not care about another obtaining safety and success especially, in the next world then they do not love them.

A true lover could not bear knowing and seeing their beloved facing difficulties and punishment in this world or in the next. This is only avoidable through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they would always direct their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. If a person directs another towards their own selfish interest or the interest of others instead of the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. This applies to all relationships such as friendships and relatives.

Therefore, a Muslim should assess whether those in their life direct them towards Allah, the Exalted, or not. If they do then it is a clear sign of their love for them. If they do not then it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

*“Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous.”*



## **Forgoing Revenge**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, visited a non-Muslim tribe, Banu Nadir, who he had previously made a pledge of support and peace with in order to ask for financial assistance. They replied that they would help him while secretly planning to assassinate him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, received divine revelation informing them of their treachery and he left and returned to Medina before they had a chance to act out their evil plan. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then dispatched a message to the Banu Nadir warning them to leave his territory and protection. The hypocrites urged the Banu Nadir to stay and offered their support to them. They claimed that if the Banu Nadir resisted against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they would support them, if the Banu Nadir fought they would fight with them and if they were expelled from the territory they would leave with them. This encouraged the Banu Nadir to stand against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ultimately the hypocrites did nothing when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, decided to fight against the Banu Nadir. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, besieged the Banu Nadir they requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to spare their blood and instead grant them safe passage so they could evacuate the area with their belongings. Instead of taking revenge against the Banu Nadir for their evil plan the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, allowed them to take whatever they could carry except weapons. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 100-101.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

*“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”*

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as

taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted, does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

## **Sincerity to the Holy Quran**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left for an expedition called Dhat Al Riqqa. When they stopped at a valley overnight he ordered two Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to stand guard at the mouth of the valley while the army slept. One of these Companions, Abbad Bin Bishr, may Allah be pleased with him, took the first shift while the second Companion, Ammar Bin Yasir, may Allah be pleased with him, slept. Abbad Bin Bishr, may Allah be pleased with him, began to pray. During his prayer a non-Muslim enemy soldier spotted him and struck him with an arrow. Abbad Bin Bishr, may Allah be pleased with him, removed the arrow from his body and continued praying. This occurred four times in total and only then did he wake up Ammar Bin Yasir, may Allah be pleased with him. The non-Muslim soldier fled when he realized that there were two guards. Ammar Bin Yasir, may Allah be pleased with him, enquired why Abbad Bin Bishr, may Allah be pleased him, did not wake him up when he was struck with the first arrow. He replied that he did not want to stop reciting the Holy Quran until he finished his prayer. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 115-116.

Muslims are not expected to behave in this manner but they are expected to show true sincerity to the Holy Quran.

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 the Holy Quran. This 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.

## **Increase or Loss**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, married Zaynab Bin Khuzayma, may Allah be pleased with her. She was known as the “mother of the poor” for her continuous generous charitable donations and for her kindness and compassion towards the poor and needy. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 112.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2336, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that every day two Angels supplicate to Allah, the Exalted. The first asks Allah, the Exalted, to compensate the one who spends for His sake. The second asks Allah, the Exalted, to destroy the one who withholds.

The aim of this Hadith is to encourage one to become generous and avoid being stingy. It is important to note that spending for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, does not only involve the obligatory charity but it also includes spending on one's own necessities and the necessities of their family as this has been commanded by Islam. Anyone who fails to spend on these elements deserves for their wealth to be destroyed as they have failed to fulfil its purpose which in reality makes wealth useless. It is important to note, spending for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, never leads to an overall loss as a person is compensated one way or another. In fact the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has guaranteed that charity does not decrease one's wealth in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029. Chapter 34 Saba, verse 39:

*“...But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it...”*

A Muslim should remember a generous person is close to Allah, the Exalted, close to Paradise, close to people and far from Hell. Whereas, the stingy person is far from Allah, the Exalted, far from Paradise, far from people and close to Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1961.

Finally, it is important to note that this Hadith applies to all blessings one possesses, such as their good health, not just wealth. So if one fails to dedicate and expend their blessings in the correct way as commanded by Allah, the Exalted, the supplication against their blessing by the Angel maybe accepted by Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, it is vital for Muslims to correctly use each blessing according to the teachings of Islam so that they receive more which in reality is true gratitude. Otherwise, they may well lose the blessing forever. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

## **Ease with Difficulty**

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, married Umm Salama, may Allah be pleased with her. She was first married to a Companion, Abu Salama, may Allah be pleased with him, but he was severely wounded at the Battle of Uhud and sometime after he died. After his death she followed the advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by acknowledging that all things belong to Allah, the Exalted, and to Him they will all return, by supplicating to Allah, the Exalted, to compensate her for the loss of her husband and to give her something better in exchange. She did wonder how she could find someone finer than Abu Salama, may Allah be pleased with him, but Allah, the Exalted, fulfilled her supplication and so she accepted a marriage proposal from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 123-124 and has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2126.

In a Hadith found in Musnad Ahmad, number 2803, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the importance of understanding that every difficulty a person faces will be followed by ease. This reality has also been mentioned in the Holy Quran for example, chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 7:

*“...Allah will bring about, after hardship, ease [i.e., relief].”*



It is important for Muslims to understand this reality as it gives rise to patience and even contentment. Being uncertain over the changes in circumstances can lead one to impatience, ingratitude and even towards unlawful things, such as unlawful provision. But the one who firmly believes all difficulties will eventually be replaced with ease will patiently wait for this change fully trusting in the teachings of Islam. This patience is much loved by Allah, the Exalted, and greatly rewarded. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 146:

*“...And Allah loves the steadfast.”*

This is the reason Allah, the Exalted, has mentioned numerous examples within the Holy Quran when difficult situations were followed by ease and blessings. For example, the following verse of the Holy Quran mentions the great difficulty the Holy Prophet Nuh, peace be upon him, faced from his people and how Allah, the Exalted, saved him from the great flood. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 76:

*“And [mention] Noah, when he called [to Allah] before [that time], so We responded to him and saved him and his family from the great affliction [i.e., the flood].”*

Another example is found in chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 69:

*"We [i.e., Allah] said, "O fire, be coolness and safety upon Abraham."*

The Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, faced a great difficulty in the form of a great fire but Allah, the Exalted, made it cool and peaceful for him.

These examples and many more have been mentioned in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that Muslims understand that a moment of difficulty will eventually be followed by ease for those who obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

Therefore, it is important for Muslims to study these Islamic teachings in order to observe the countless cases where Allah, the Exalted, granted ease to His obedient servants after they faced difficulties. If Allah, the Exalted, has saved His obedient servants from great difficulties mentioned in the divine teachings then He can and will save the obedient Muslims facing smaller difficulties also.

## **The 5<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **A True Leader**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq/Ahzab. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 128.

It is important for all Muslims, especially parents, to act on what they advise to others. It is obvious if one turns the pages of history that those who acted on what they preached had a much more positive effect on others compared to those who did not lead by example. The best example being the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who not only practiced what he preached but adhered to those teachings more strictly than anyone else. Only with this attitude will Muslims especially, parents have a positive impact on others. For example, if a mother warns her children not to lie as it is a sin but often lies in front of them her children are unlikely to act on her advice. A person's actions will always have more of an impact on others than their speech. It is important to note that this does not mean one needs to be perfect before advising others. It means they should sincerely strive to act on their own advice before advising others. The Holy Quran has made it clear in the following verse that Allah, the exalted, hates this behaviour. In fact, the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3267, that the a person who commanded good but refrained from it themselves and prohibited evil yet acted on it themselves will be punished in severely Hell. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

*“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”*

So it is vital for all Muslims to strive to act on their advice themselves then advise others to do the same. Leading by example is the tradition of all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and is the best way to affect others in a positive way.

## Effort Leads to Reward

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 128.

This incident is connected to chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

*“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.”*

This verse means that if one aids Islam then Allah, the Exalted, will help them in both worlds. It is strange how countless people desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet do not fulfil the first part of this verse through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. The excuse most people give is that they do not have time to perform righteous

deeds. They desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet will not make time to do the things which please Him. Does this make sense? Those who do not fulfil the obligatory duties and then expect the aid of Allah, the Exalted, in their moment of need are quite foolish. And those who do fulfil the obligatory duties yet refuse to go beyond them will find that the aid they receive is limited. How one behaves is how they are treated. The more time and energy dedicated to Allah, the Exalted, the more support they will receive. It really is that simple.

A Muslim needs to understand that the majority of the obligatory duties, such as the five daily prayers, only takes a small amount of time in one's day. A Muslim cannot expect to barely dedicate an hour a day to offering the obligatory prayers and then neglect Allah, the Exalted, for the rest of the day and still expect His continuous support through all difficulties. A person would dislike a friend who treated them in such a manner. How then can one treat Allah, the Exalted, the Lord of the worlds, like this then?

Some only dedicate extra time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, when they encounter a worldly problem then demand Him to fix it as if they done Allah, the Exalted, a favour by performing voluntary good deeds. This foolish mentality clearly contradicts servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. It is amazing how this type of person finds time to do all their other leisurely activities, such as spending time with family and friends, watching TV and attending social functions yet finds no time to dedicate to pleasing Allah, the Exalted. They cannot seem to find time to recite and adopt the teachings of the Holy Quran. They do not seem to find time to study and act on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people somehow find wealth to spend on their unnecessary luxuries yet seem to find no wealth to donate in voluntary charity.

It is important to understand that a Muslim will be treated according to how they behave. Meaning, if a Muslim dedicates extra time to please Allah, the Exalted, then they will find the support they need to journey through all difficulties safely. But if they fail to fulfil the obligatory duties or only fulfil them without dedicating any other time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, then they will find a similar response from Allah, the Exalted. Put simply, the more one gives the more they shall receive. If one does not give much they should not expect much in return.

## Weakness in Striving

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. Some of the hypocrites held back from physically taking part and complained of weakness. Some of them without permission secretly left the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, while they dug the trench. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 24 An Nur, verses 62-64:

*“The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and, when they are [meeting] with him for a matter of common interest, do not depart until they have asked his permission...Allah certainly knows those of you who slip away, hiding behind others....And Allah is Knowing of all things.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 128-129.



An aspect of hypocrisy is when one verbally shows support for others and their good projects such as, building a mosque but when the time comes to take part in the project such as, donating wealth they seem to disappear. Similarly, when people are facing good times they verbally support them reminding others of their loyalty to them. But the moment the people face difficulties these hypocrites offer no emotional or physical support. Instead they criticize them. This was the attitude of the hypocrites in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 62:

*“So how [will it be] when disaster strikes them because of what their hands have put forth and then they come to you swearing by Allah, “We intended nothing but good conduct and accommodation.””*

## **The Real Life**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came out to the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, during a cold morning and witnessed their hunger and extreme fatigue while digging the trench. He supplicated for Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and added that the real life is the life of the hereafter. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 129 and has been recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4099.

When people, irrespective of their faith, go on holiday they only pack the things they need and maybe a little extra but they try to avoid over packing. Even the amount of money they take with them they limit in respect to their stay abroad. When they arrive they often stay in a hotel which usually has the main necessities of living with a few extras. If they believe they will never return to the same destination in the future they will never buy a house as they will claim they stay is short and they will not return. They do not get a job during their holiday claiming that they stay is short so they do not need to earn more money. They do not get married nor have children claiming the holiday destination is not their homeland where they

would get married and have children. Generally speaking, this is the attitude and mind-set of holiday makers.

It is strange how Muslims truly believe they will depart from this world soon meaning, they stay in the world is temporary just like being on holiday, and they believe their stay in the hereafter will be permanent yet, they do not adequately prepare for it. If they truly realised the short time they have, similarly to a holiday, they would not dedicate too much effort on their homes and instead be content with a simple home just like the traveller who is content with a simple hotel. So in reality, this world is like the holiday destination in the example yet, Muslims do not treat it like one. Instead, they dedicate the majority of their efforts in beautifying their world while neglecting the eternal hereafter. It is sometimes hard to believe some Muslims actually believe in the permanent hereafter when one observes the amount of effort they dedicate to the temporal world. Muslims should therefore strive in preparing for the hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience while being pleased with obtaining and utilising the necessities of this world. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to live in this world as travellers in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6416. They should not take this world as a permanent home and instead treat it like a holiday destination.

## **Gratitude with Patience**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. While digging the trench the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would chant supplications and couplets in order to encourage the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. One of those included the following couplet: "In Allah's name and through Him we were guided and if we had worshipped any but Him we would have suffered. What a fine Lord! What a fine religion!" This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 130-131.

This incident highlights a negative trait of the soul. It is when a person believes they require patience when in fact they should be showing gratitude to Allah, the Exalted. When a person faces a difficulty they should remember the countless blessings they still possess. And they should remember that Allah, the Exalted, only decrees the best for His servants even if they do not observe the wisdoms behind the choice immediately. 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.”*

These truths will inspire one to show gratitude even in difficult situations where most people would expect one to demonstrate patience.

## **Outcome of Tests**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. While digging the trench the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of a patch of extremely hard ground which they could not break. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came and struck the hard ground with a spade and it turned into soft sand. They also witnessed that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, tied a stone to his stomach in order to hold back the pangs of hunger as they all had not eaten in three days because of a lack of resources. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 131 and has also been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4101.

Even though tests and trials have affected believers since the dawn of time particularly in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet it seems like the modern day tests only lead to more difficulties and humiliation for Muslims. Whereas, the tests which the righteous predecessors faced only led to their honour in both worlds. The

main reason for this difference in the outcome and result of tests is that when the righteous predecessors faced tests in fact, greater tests than the modern day Muslims, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, they faced their tests and difficulties while sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny. This resulted in them safely passing the test and receiving great honour and blessings from Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. Whereas, many Muslims in this day and age face tests but do not remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They fail to understand that success and honour through tests is only granted to those who remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whereas, being disobedient only leads to disgrace. Therefore, Muslims should not worship Allah, the Exalted, on an edge whereby they are only obedient to Him in times of ease and turn away from Him angrily and disobediently in times of difficulty. This is not real servant hood or obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Simply put, no action will aid Muslims in the long run if it is not based on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Disobedience will only lead from one difficulty to another, one disgrace to another. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 147:

*“What would Allah do with [i.e., gain from] your punishment if you are grateful and believe?...”*

## Concern for Others

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Mecca encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. While digging the trench the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of a patch of extremely hard ground which they could not break. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came and struck the hard ground with a spade and it turned into soft sand. They also witnessed that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, tied a stone to his stomach in order to hold back the pangs of hunger as they all had not eaten in three days because of a lack of resources. One of the Companions, Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, requested permission to return home and asked his wife to cook some food for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After cooking enough for a few people he invited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He informed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of the little food available but the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, still invited the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who were present in the hundreds and miraculously the food became enough for all present. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages



131-132 and has also been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4101.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have accepted the invitation for himself but he, as always, remained sincere to all people.

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 the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

It is a part of sincerity towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of sincerity includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For example, one may sacrifice purchasing certain things in order to donate the wealth to the needy. Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of sincerity towards others. Whereas, dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 53:

*“...Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them...”*

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a Muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

*“...And do good as Allah has done good to you...”*

## One of Us

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. During the digging the Emigrants from Mecca, the Muhajireen, and the Helpers from Medina, the Ansar, may Allah be pleased with them all, began arguing over Salman, may Allah be pleased with him. Each side claimed that he belonged to them even though he was neither a resident of Medina or an emigrant from Mecca he instead came from Persia. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ended the debate by declaring that Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, was a member of his household. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 135.

This honor was bestowed on Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, because of his piety as he was in no way connected to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through blood. In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam,

peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant Muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

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

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one’s race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a Muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these Muslims.

## **Strong Faith**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. During the digging some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, came across a strong white rock which they could not break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came to it he struck it three times with a pickaxe. Each time he struck it a huge flash of light could be seen similar to a great lantern on a very dark night. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commented that each time he struck the rock he was shown three dominant empires which ruled at that time and he was given glad tidings that his nation would overcome all of them. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, praised Allah, the Exalted, and became extremely pleased with these glad tidings. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 135.

It is important to note that this occurred at an extremely difficult time for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They were digging a huge trench with minimal provisions and expecting a huge enemy attack. Even with these

difficulties the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, accepted the word of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as their faith was extremely strong.

All Muslims have faith in Islam but the strength of their faith varies from person to person. For example, the one who follows the teachings of Islam because their family told them to is not the same as the one who believes in it through evidence. A person who has heard about something will not believe in it in the same way as the one who has witnessed the thing with their own eyes.

As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all Muslims. One of the reasons for this is that it is the best way a Muslim can strengthen their faith in Islam. This is important to pursue as the stronger one's certainty of faith the greater the chance they will remain steadfast on the correct path, especially when facing difficulties. In addition, having certainty of faith has been described as one of the best things one can possess in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3849. This knowledge should be obtained by studying the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through a reliable source.

Allah, the Exalted, did not only declare a truth in the Holy Quran but He also provided evidence for it through examples. Not only examples which are to be found in the past nations but examples which have been placed in one's very own life. For example, in the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that sometimes a person loves a thing even though it will cause them trouble if

they obtained it. Similarly, they might hate a thing while there is much hidden good in it for them. 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.”*

There are many examples of this truth in history such as the Pact of Hudaibiya. Some Muslims believed this pact, which was made with the non-Muslims of Mecca, would completely favour the latter group. Yet, history clearly shows that it favoured Islam and the Muslims. This event is discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731 and 2732.

If one reflects on their own life they will find many examples when they believed something was good when it was actually bad for them and vice versa. These examples prove the authenticity of this verse and help one's faith strengthen.

Another example is found in chapter 79 An Naziyat, verse 46:

*“It will be, on the Day they see it (Judgement Day) as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof.”*



If one turns the pages of history they will clearly observe how great empires came and went. But when they left they passed away in such a way as if they were only on Earth for a moment. All but a few of their signs have faded away as if they were never present on Earth in the first place. Similarly, when one reflects on their own life they will realise that no matter how old they are and no matter how slow certain days might have felt overall their life so far has passed in a flash. Understanding the truthfulness of this verse strengthens one's certainty of faith and this inspires them to prepare for the hereafter before their time runs out.

The Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, are full of such examples. Therefore, one should strive to learn and act on these divine teachings so that they adopt certainty of faith. The one who achieves this will not be shaken by any difficulty they face and will remain steadfast on the path which leads to the gates of Paradise. 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...”*

## Corrupt Hearts

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. During the digging some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, came across a strong white rock which they could not break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came to it he struck it three times with a pickaxe. Each time he struck it a huge flash of light could be seen similar to a great lantern on a very dark night. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commented that each time he struck the rock he was shown three dominant empires which ruled at that time and he was given glad tidings that his nation would overcome all of them. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, praised Allah, the Exalted, and became extremely pleased with these glad tidings. On the other hand those with harsh and corrupt hearts namely, the hypocrites, mockingly declared that how could the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, claim that these great empires will be defeated by his nation even though the poor Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were digging a trench and could not even move out into the open out of fear of an enemy attack. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 12:

*“And [remember] when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is disease said, “Allah and His Messenger did not promise us except delusion.””*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 135.

The corruption and hardness of the spiritual heart is an extremely important matter which has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 52. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that when the spiritual heart becomes corrupt then the whole body becomes corrupt. This corruption is then reflected in one’s speech and actions. Similarly, the Holy Quran has highlighted the importance of a soft and sound heart by advising that one will not derive benefit from their possessions or relatives on Judgment Day unless they possess a sound spiritual heart. Chapter 26 Ash Shu’ara, verses 88-89:

*“The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children. But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.”*

The one with a hard spiritual heart can be described as a person who rejects the truth when it is presented to them believing they are superior in knowledge. They lack submission and the fear of Allah, the Exalted, which leads to abandoning good deeds, committing sins, excessive love and striving for the material world while remaining heedless to preparing for the

eternal hereafter. The hard hearted are easily influenced by the Devil into committing sins and rejecting good deeds. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 53:

*“[That is] so He may make what Satan throws in [i.e., asserts] a trial for those within whose hearts is disease and those hard of heart...”*

Two specific blameworthy characteristics are adopted by the one who possesses a hard spiritual heart. They intentionally misinterpret divine scriptures in order to fulfil their own desires such as obtaining fame. They criticise those who strive to adhere to the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as they desire people to follow their thinking and love for the material world. The second is that they cherry pick verses and Hadiths which suit their desires. They label those who strive to adopt and act on all verses and Hadiths as extremists thereby making their own attitude seem pleasing to others. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 13:

*“So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hardened. They distort words from their [proper] places [i.e., usages] and have forgotten a portion of that of which they were reminded. And you will still observe deceit among them, except a few of them...”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned that those who talk excessively without mentioning Allah, the

Exalted, are prone to adopting a spiritual hard heart. The one who possesses a hard spiritual heart is furthest from Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2411.

As mentioned earlier those who abandon the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience, will be cursed with a hard heart. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 13:

*“So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hardened...”*

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2305, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who laughs excessively will become hard hearted. It is important to understand this does not mean one cannot smile as this has been classified as an act of charity by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1970. Laughing excessively causes one to adopt a mentality whereby they only discuss funny issues. This causes one to avoid serious issues such as death and Judgment Day. If one avoids these important issues how can they prepare for them? A lack of preparation will lead to one's spiritual heart becoming hard.

Some say over eating can cause hardness of the spiritual heart. This is because over eating causes one to become lazy. Laziness leads to a reduction in good deeds which can cause the spiritual heart to become hard.

As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3334, when a person sins a black spot is etched on their spiritual heart. If the number of sins increases then this blackness increases which leads to a hard spiritual heart. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

*“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.”*

This is why it has been said persistently sinning can cause the spiritual heart to die.

It is important for Muslims to strive to soften their heart as it leads to its purification. As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, when the spiritual heart is purified all the limbs of the body become purified also. This purification will encourage one to perform righteous deeds and abandon sins for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

## **An Evil Friend**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A soldier travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Initially, Ka'b Bin Asad, did not desire to break his pledge as he declared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was nothing but trustworthy and truthful. But the non-Muslim kept urging Ka'b until he eventually gave into the evil plan. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 139-140.

Muslims should note that a major sign of true love is when one directs their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with

patience. This is because obedience leads to success and safety in both this world and in the hereafter. A person who does not desire safety and success for a person can never truly love them irrespective of what they claim or how they treat the other person. The same way a person becomes happy when their beloved obtains worldly success, like a job, they will also desire their beloved to obtain success in the hereafter. If a person does not care about another obtaining safety and success especially, in the next world then they do not love them.

A true lover could not bear knowing and seeing their beloved facing difficulties and punishment in this world or in the next. This is only avoidable through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they would always direct their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. If a person directs another towards their own selfish interest or the interest of others instead of the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. This applies to all relationships such as friendships and relatives.

Therefore, a Muslim should assess whether those in their life direct them towards Allah, the Exalted, or not. If they do then it is a clear sign of their love for them. If they do not then it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

*“Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous.”*



## **Fulfilling Trusts**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Mecca encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Initially, Ka'b Bin Asad, did not desire to break his pledge as he declared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was nothing but trustworthy and truthful. But the non-Muslim kept urging Ka'b until he eventually gave into the evil plan. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 139-140.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst Muslims.

## **Being Suspicious**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Initially, Ka'b Bin Asad, did not desire to break his pledge as he declared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was nothing but trustworthy and truthful. But the non-Muslim kept urging Ka'b until he eventually gave into the evil plan. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. When news of this reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he dispatched some of his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to meet with the Banu Qurayza and determine whether the news was true or not. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 140-141.

It is important for Muslims to avoid a particular negative mentality which is mentioned in chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*

Unfortunately, adopting this negative mind-set affects people from a family unit to a national level. First of all, interpreting things in a negative way often leads to sins, such as backbiting and slandering. In all cases, a Muslim should interpret things where possible in a positive way in order to give the benefit of the doubt to others. For example, how many times has a nation gone to war over an assumption and suspicion? The vast majority of scandals which are found in the media are based on assumptions. Even laws have been created which support the use of assumptions and suspicion. This often leads to fractured and broken relationships as people with this mind-set always believe others are taking a dig at them through their words or actions. This prevents one from taking advice from others as they believe they are only being mocked by the one giving advice. And it prevents one from giving advice as they believe the other person will not pay any attention to what they say. And a person will refrain from advising the one who possesses this negative mind-set as they believe it will only lead to an argument. This leads to other negative traits, such as bitterness. It is important for Muslims to accept any good advice they are given even if they assume someone is taking a dig at them. They should strive to interpret things, where possible, in a positive way which leads to a positive mentality.

## **Steadfast in All Conditions**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Initially, Ka'b Bin Asad, did not desire to break his pledge as he declared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was nothing but trustworthy and truthful. But the non-Muslim kept urging Ka'b until he eventually gave into the evil plan. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. The anxiety and fear increased as the enemies were outside and inside Medina. The hypocrites feared for their lives and desired to abandon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so they requested him to grant them permission to return to their homes so that they could protect them. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 13:

*“And when a faction of them said, “O people of Yathrib, there is no stability for you [here], so return [home].” And a party of them asked permission of the Prophet, saying, “Indeed, our houses are exposed [i.e., unprotected],” while they were not exposed. They did not intend except to flee.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 141-142.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why their worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

To conclude, it is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.

## **Concern for the People**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. The anxiety and fear increased as the enemies were outside and inside Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, desired to break up the non-Muslim army by offering a tribe accompanying the non-Muslim army compensation for retreating and returning to their homes. When he sought counsel from his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, they enquired if this desire was a command from Allah, the Exalted, or his own choice. He replied that it was his own choice as he was witnessing how the many different tribes of Arabia descended on Medina and he was desperate to help his Companions,



may Allah be pleased with them, any way he could. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 142.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 13, that a person cannot become a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves.

This does not mean a Muslim will lose their faith if they fail to adopt this characteristic. It means that a Muslim's faith will not be complete until they act on this advice. This Hadith also indicates that a Muslim will not perfect their faith until they also dislike for others what they dislike for themselves. This is supported by another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6586. It advises that the Muslim nation is like one body. If one part of the body is in pain the rest of the body shares the pain. This mutual feeling includes loving and hating for others what one loves and hates for themselves.

A Muslim can only achieve this status when their heart is free from evil traits, such as envy. These evil traits will always cause one to desire better for themselves. So in reality, this Hadith is an indication that one should purify their heart by adopting good characteristics, such as being forgiving, and eliminate evil traits, such as envy. This is only possible through learning and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is important for Muslims to understand that desiring good for others will cause them to lose out on good things. The treasury of Allah, the Exalted, has no limits so there is no need to adopt a selfish and greedy mentality.

Desiring good for others includes striving to aid others in anyway one can, such as financial or emotional support, in the same way a person would desire others to aid them in their moment of need. Therefore, this love must be shown through actions not just words. Even when a Muslim forbids evil and offers advice which contradicts the desire of others they should do so gently just like they would want others to advise them kindly.

As mentioned earlier, the main Hadith under discussion indicates the importance of eliminating all bad characteristics which contradict mutual love and care, such as envy. Envy is when a person desires to possess a specific blessing which is only obtainable when it is taken away from someone else. This attitude is a direct challenge to the distribution of blessings chosen by Allah, the Exalted. This is why it is a major sin and leads to the destruction of the envier's good deeds. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903. If a Muslim must desire the lawful things others possess they should wish and supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, to grant them the same or similar thing without the other person losing the blessing. This type of jealousy is lawful and is praiseworthy in aspects of religion. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Muslims should only be jealous of a wealthy person who uses their wealth correctly. And be jealous of a knowledgeable person who uses their knowledge to benefit themselves and others.

A Muslim should not only love for others to obtain lawful worldly blessings but also for them to gain religious blessings in both worlds. In fact, when one wishes this for others it encourages them to strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This type of healthy competition is welcomed in Islam. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 26:

*“...So for this let the competitors compete.”*

This encouragement will also inspire a Muslim to assess themselves in order to find and eliminate any faults in their character. When these two elements combine meaning, striving in sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and purifying one's character, it leads to success in both worlds.

A Muslim must therefore not only claim to love for others what they desire for themselves verbally but show it through their actions. It is hoped that the one who is concerned for others in this way will receive the concern of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1930.

## Steadfast Obedience

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Mecca encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. The anxiety and fear increased as the enemies were outside and inside Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, desired to break up the non-Muslim army by offering a tribe accompanying the non-Muslim army compensation for retreating and returning to their homes. When he sought counsel from his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, they enquired if this desire was a command from Allah, the Exalted, or his own choice. He replied that it was his own choice as he was witnessing how the many different tribes of Arabia descended on Medina and he desired to help his Companions, may

Allah be pleased with them, any way he could. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, replied that before Islam the non-Muslim army would never have dared to attack Medina and now that Allah, the Exalted, honored them with Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they would never compromise on the truth even if it led to war. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 142.

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.”*



## **Difficulties and Ease**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. The anxiety and fear increased as the enemies were outside and inside Medina. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, witnessed this fear and anxiety he encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, by declaring that Allah, the Exalted, will certainly give them relief after this distress. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 148.

In a Hadith found in Musnad Ahmad, number 2803, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the importance of understanding that every difficulty a person faces will be followed by ease. This reality has also been mentioned in the Holy Quran for example, chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 7:

*“...Allah will bring about, after hardship, ease [i.e., relief].”*

It is important for Muslims to understand this reality as it gives rise to patience and even contentment. Being uncertain over the changes in circumstances can lead one to impatience, ingratitude and even towards unlawful things, such as unlawful provision. But the one who firmly believes all difficulties will eventually be replaced with ease will patiently wait for this change fully trusting in the teachings of Islam. This patience is much loved by Allah, the Exalted, and greatly rewarded. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 146:

*“...And Allah loves the steadfast.”*

This is the reason Allah, the Exalted, has mentioned numerous examples within the Holy Quran when difficult situations were followed by ease and blessings. For example, the following verse of the Holy Quran mentions the great difficulty the Holy Prophet Nuh, peace be upon him, faced from his people and how Allah, the Exalted, saved him from the great flood. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 76:

*“And [mention] Noah, when he called [to Allah] before [that time], so We responded to him and saved him and his family from the great affliction [i.e., the flood].”*

Another example is found in chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 69:

*“We [i.e., Allah] said, “O fire, be coolness and safety upon Abraham.”*

The Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, faced a great difficulty in the form of a great fire but Allah, the Exalted, made it cool and peaceful for him.

These examples and many more have been mentioned in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that Muslims understand that a moment of difficulty will eventually be followed by ease for those who obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

Therefore, it is important for Muslims to study these Islamic teachings in order to observe the countless cases where Allah, the Exalted, granted ease to His obedient servants after they faced difficulties. If Allah, the Exalted, has saved His obedient servants from great difficulties mentioned in the divine teachings then He can and will save the obedient Muslims facing smaller difficulties also.

## **An Exit**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. The anxiety and fear increased as the enemies were outside and inside Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, remained firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, throughout this battle and eventually Allah, the Exalted, dispatched a fierce wind towards the non-Muslim army which completely uprooted their camp and caused them to sink into confusion and distress. The non-Muslims decided to return home as the weather was against them and they failed to successfully penetrate the trench and enter Medina. This has been

discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 154-155.

An important lesson to learn from this event is trusting in Allah, the Exalted. Even in situations which appear inescapable and disastrous, like this great event, a Muslim should always trust in the choice of Allah, the Exalted. Muslims must understand that their knowledge is very limited and that they are extremely short sighted. Meaning, they cannot fully perceive the wisdoms behind the choices of Allah the Exalted. On the other hand, the knowledge and the divine perception of Allah, the Exalted, is unlimited. Therefore, a Muslim should trust in the choices of Allah, the Exalted, just like a blind person trusts the guidance of their physical guide. No matter what the attitude of a Muslim the choice of Allah, the Exalted, will occur so it is best to trust in His wisdom rather than showing impatience which only leads to further trouble.

In addition, it is important to remember the countless examples within one's life when a person desired something only to regret it after obtaining it. And when they disliked something from occurring only to change their mind later on. 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."*

As destiny is out of people's hands it is important for Muslims to concentrate on the thing which is in their control if they desire to be rescued from difficulties namely, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Allah, the Exalted, has already guaranteed that He will save a Muslim from all difficulties in both worlds. All they have to do is remain obedient to Him. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

*“...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”*

It is foolish to stress about the thing which is not in one's control meaning, destiny, and remain heedless to the thing which is in one's control namely, obeying Allah, the Exalted.

## **Facing Consequences**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug around Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. Eventually Allah, the Exalted, dispatched a fierce wind towards the non-Muslim army which completely uprooted their camp and caused them to sink into confusion and distress. The non-Muslims decided to return home as the weather was against them and they failed to successfully penetrate the trench and enter Medina. The next morning the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left the trench with the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and returned home laying their weapons down. While wearing battle armor the Angel Jibrael, peace be upon him, visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and told him Allah, the Exalted, had commanded him



to move against Banu Qurayza. Allah, the Exalted, also revealed chapter 33, verses 25-27:

*“And Allah repelled those who disbelieved, in their rage, not having obtained any good...And He brought down those who supported them among the People of the Scripture from their fortresses and cast terror into their hearts [so that] a party you killed, and you took captive a party... And ever is Allah, over all things, competent.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 158.

It is important to learn that no matter how much physical or social strength a person has a day will certainly come when they face the consequences of their actions. In most cases, this occurs during their life where the actions of a person leads them to trouble, such as prison and eventually they will face the consequences of their actions in the hereafter as well. This applies to all people not just leaders.

A Muslim should therefore never mistreat others, such as their relatives. They should learn a lesson from the tyrannical leaders of history who were greater in strength than them yet, a day certainly came when their strength did not benefit them and they faced the consequences of their evil deeds. Social influence and strength are fickle things as they quickly pass from

person to person thereby, never remaining with anyone for long. Therefore, a Muslim who possesses such strength should use it in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, by benefiting themselves and others. But if they abuse their authority then they will eventually face a punishment which no one can protect them from.

In addition, it is important not to abuse one's authority as it may cause them to be hurled into Hell on Judgment Day. Every oppressor will have to give their righteous deeds to their victims and if necessary take the sins of their victims until justice is established. This will cause many oppressors to be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should never forget to hold themselves accountable for their deeds. Those who do will avoid disobeying Allah, the Exalted, and harming others. But those who do not judge themselves will continue disobeying Allah, the Exalted, and harming others heedlessly not knowing that in actual fact they are only harming themselves. But when they realize this fact it will be too late for them to escape punishment.

## The Best People

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. After Allah, the Exalted, defeated the non-Muslim army the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to fight against the Banu Qurayza for their act of treason when they broke their pact of peace and support with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead aligned with the non-Muslim army during the Battle of Khandaq. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, besieged the Banu Qurayza and Allah, the Exalted, cast terror in their hearts so they requested a Companion, Abu Lubaba, may Allah be pleased with him, for some advice as they were not in a position to fight the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Abu Lubaba, may Allah be pleased with him, indicated to them that their male soldiers would most likely be executed for their treason, a standard punishment even in this day and age, if they surrendered. Abu Lubaba, may Allah be pleased with him, felt great regret at what he indicated as he believed he betrayed Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. So he chained himself to a tree in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, until he was forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 102:

*“And [there are] others who have acknowledged their sins. They had mixed [i.e., polluted] a righteous deed with another that was bad. Perhaps Allah will turn to them in forgiveness. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 162-164.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4251, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that people commit sins but the best person who commits sins is the one who sincerely repents.

As people are not Angels they are bound to commit sins. The thing that makes these people special is when they sincerely repent from their sins. Sincere repentance includes feeling remorse, seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, making a firm promise not to commit the sin or a similar sin again and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

It is important to note, minor sins can be erased through righteous deeds which has been advised in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Muslim, number 550. It advises that the five daily obligatory prayers and two consecutive Friday congregational prayers erase the minor sins committed in between them as long as major sins are avoided.

Major sins are only erased through sincere repentance. Therefore, a Muslim should strive to avoid all sins, minor and major, and if they happen to occur to immediately sincerely repent as the time of death is unknown. And they should continue obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

## **Rejecting the Truth**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. After Allah, the Exalted, defeated the non-Muslim army the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to fight against the Banu Qurayza for their act of treason when they broke their pact of peace and support with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead aligned with the non-Muslim army during the Battle of Khandaq. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, besieged the Banu Qurayza and Allah, the Exalted, cast terror in their hearts. One of the leaders of the Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, who was the main person responsible for their act of treason, then warned his tribe to accept and follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as all the signs mentioned in their divine scripture of the last Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, were found in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But his people stubbornly rejected this advice and claimed that they would not abandon the laws of the Torah even though they never adhered to them correctly in the first place. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 163.

Some adopt stubbornness in worldly matters and as a result they do not change their character for the better. Instead, they remain steadfast on their attitude believing this is somehow a sign of their great strength and wisdom. Steadfastness in matters of faith is a praiseworthy attitude but in most worldly matters it is only called stubbornness, which is blameworthy.

Unfortunately, some believe if they change their attitude it demonstrates weakness or it shows that they are admitting their fault and because of this they stubbornly fail to change for the better. Adults behave like immature children by believing that if they change their behaviour it means they have lost while others who remain steadfast on their attitude have won. This is simply childish.

In reality, an intelligent person will remain steadfast on matters of faith but in worldly matters they will change their attitude, as long as it is not sinful, in order to make their life easier. So changing to improve one's life is not a sign of weakness it is in fact a sign of intelligence.

In many cases, a person refuses to change their attitude and expects others in their life to change theirs, such as their relatives. But what often occurs is that due to stubbornness all remain in the same state which only leads to regular disagreements and arguments. A wise person understands that if the people around them do not change for the better than they should. This change will improve the quality of their life and their relationship with others which is much better than going around in circular arguments with people. This positive attitude will eventually cause others to respect them as it takes real strength to change one's character for the better.

Those who remain stubborn will always find something to be annoyed about which will remove peace from their life. This will cause further difficulties in

all aspects of their life, such as their mental health. But those who adapt and change for the better will always move from one station of peace to another. If one achieves this peace does it really matter if others believe they only changed because they were wrong?

To conclude, to remain steadfast on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is praiseworthy. But in worldly matters and in cases where no sin is committed a person should learn to adapt and change their attitude so that they find some peace in this world.



## **Adhere to the Truth**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. After Allah, the Exalted, defeated the non-Muslim army the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to fight against the Banu Qurayza for their act of treason when they broke their pact of peace and support with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead aligned with the non-Muslim army during the Battle of Khandaq. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, besieged the Banu Qurayza and Allah, the Exalted, cast terror in their hearts. One of the members of Banu Qurayza, Amr Bin Su'da, left their fortress and passed by the Companion, Muhammad Bin Maslama, may Allah be pleased with him, who was on guard duty. As Amr Bin Su'da refused to commit treason by breaking his pact of peace and support with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the Companion, Muhammad Bin Maslama, may Allah be pleased with him, allowed him to leave. Amr Bin Su'da spend the night in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and departed Medina in the morning. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, heard about this incident he commented that Allah, the Exalted, saved Amr Bin Su'da because of his trustworthiness meaning, he adhered to the truth and refused to commit treason. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 164-165.

It is important for Muslims to adhere to the truth in all aspects of their lives if they desire the protection and blessings of Allah, the Exalted. In a Hadith

found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness has three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a Muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cherry picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to

disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

## **Treason**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. After Allah, the Exalted, defeated the non-Muslim army the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to fight against the Banu Qurayza for their act of treason when they broke their pact of peace and support with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead aligned with the non-Muslim army during the Battle of Khandaq. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, besieged the Banu Qurayza and Allah, the Exalted, cast terror in their hearts. The Banu Qurayza agreed to submit to the decision of a Companion, Sa'd Bin Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him, who they knew well even before he became a Muslim. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed to this and Sa'd, may Allah be pleased with him, was summoned and he decided that the soldiers of Banu Qurayza be executed and their assets seized. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then declared that he had given judgement according to the ruling of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 166.

It is important to bear in mind the capital punishment for treason is a very standard judgement even in this day and age.

Allah, the Exalted, takes revenge on those who oppress His weak servants as they do not possess the power to defend nor avenge themselves.

A Muslim who understands this divine name will not oppress the servants of Allah, the Exalted, especially those who appear defenceless as in reality their Protector and Avenger is Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, will take revenge for His servants during their lives on Earth and especially on Judgement Day. He will establish justice by forcing the oppressor to hand over their righteous deeds to their victim and if necessary, the victim's sins will be shifted to their oppressor. This may well cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

A Muslim must act on this divine name by taking revenge against their own inner Devil which inspires them towards evil by subjecting it to the strict obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. And a Muslim must seek revenge on all things which prevent them from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by turning away from them.

## **Garden or Pit**

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he besieged the Banu Qurayza after their act of treason. After deciding the punishment for the treason committed by Banu Qurayza Sa'd Bin Mu'adth, may Allah be pleased with him, died from the wounds he was inflicted with during the Battle of Khandaq. During his burial the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that Sa'd's grave, may Allah be pleased with him, momentarily constrained him until Allah, the Exalted, relieved him of it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 175.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2460, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a grave is either a garden of Paradise or a pit of Hell. This Hadith further explains that when a successful believer is placed in their grave it widens and becomes comfortable for them whereas, the grave of a sinful person becomes extremely constricted and harmful for them.

It is important to note, that in reality each person takes the garden of Paradise or pit of Hell with them when they depart this world namely, their deeds. If a Muslim obeys Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then it will ensure they prepare the deeds required to make their grave

a garden of Paradise. But if they disobey Allah, the Exalted, then their sins will create the pit of Hell they will rest in until the Day of Judgment.

Therefore, Muslims must act today and not delay in this preparation as the time of death is unknown and often comes suddenly. Delaying to a tomorrow one may not see is foolish and it only leads to regrets. The same way a person spends much energy and time beautifying their home in this world they must strive harder in beautifying their grave as the journey there is inevitable and the stay there long. And if one suffers in their grave then what follows will only be worse. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4267.

## Visiting Others

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he married Zaynab Bint Jahsh, may Allah be pleased with her. A feast was held in honour of the marriage and guests were invited to the home of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But some guests lingered and continued conversing with each other after they had finished their meal. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not desire to ask them to leave so he left and went for a walk. After this Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 53:

*“O you who have believed, do not enter the houses of the Prophet except when you are permitted for a meal, without awaiting its readiness. But when you are invited, then enter; and when you have eaten, disperse without seeking to remain for conversation. Indeed, that [behavior] was troubling the Prophet, and he is shy of [dismissing] you. But Allah is not shy of the truth...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 199-200 and has been recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5163.

It is important for a Muslim to fulfil the etiquettes and conditions of visiting others according to the teachings of Islam in order to obtain their reward.



They should not stay long thereby causing trouble to the host and their relatives. In this day and age it is easy to contact the host and their family beforehand in order to ensure they visit them at the appropriate time. They should control their actions and speech so that they avoid all types of sins such as gossiping, backbiting and slandering others. They should discuss beneficial matters in respect to the world and the hereafter. Only when one behaves in this manner will they obtain the reward outlined in the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If they fail in this they will either gain no reward or they may well be left with sins depending on how they behaved. Unfortunately, many Muslims enjoy performing this righteous deed but fail to fulfill its conditions correctly. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114:

*“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”*

## **The 6<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Causing Divisions**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were returning from this expedition a group of them surrounded a well aiming to quench their thirst. As the area around the well was overcrowded two of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, got into a small quarrel. The leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy took this opportunity to cause further disruption by claiming that the migrants of Mecca were only causing them problems. He began to criticize the other hypocrites for allowing the migrants of Mecca to move into Medina. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 213.

A sign of hypocrisy is that a person spreads corruption in society. This negative characteristic affects all social levels beginning from a family unit and ending at the international level. This type of person dislikes seeing people uniting on good as this may cause the worldly status of others to increase beyond their own. This drives them to backbiting and slander in order to cause people to turn against each other. Their evil attitude destroys their own ties of kinship and when they observe other families who are happy it drives them to destroy their happiness also. They are fault finders who dedicate their time unveiling the mistakes of others in order to drag their social status down. They are the first people to begin gossiping about others and act deaf whenever good things are spoken about. Peace and quiet disturbs them so they seek to create problems in order to entertain themselves.

They fail to remember the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546. It advises that whoever covers the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will cover their faults. But whoever seeks out and unveils the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults to the people. So in realty, this type of person is only unveiling their own faults to society even though they believe they are exposing the faults of others.

## **Two Tongues of Fire**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were returning from this expedition a group of them surrounded a well aiming to quench their thirst. As the area around the well was overcrowded two of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, got into a small quarrel. The leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy took this opportunity to cause further disruption by claiming that the migrants of Mecca were only causing them problems. He began to criticize the other hypocrites for allowing the migrants of Mecca to move into Medina. A child, Zayd Bin Arqam, may Allah be pleased with him, overheard his evil words and reported them to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Abdullah Bin Ubayy was summoned but he took huge oaths that he never spoke these words. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 213-214.

A sign of hypocrisy is being two-faced. This is the one who changes their behaviour in order to please different groups of people intending thereby to gain some worldly things. They speak with many different tongues showing their support to different people while harbouring dislike for them. They fail to be sincere towards people which has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. If they fail to repent they will find themselves in the hereafter with two tongues of fire. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4873. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 14:

*“When they meet the believers, they say: “We believe,” but when they meet their evil companions (in privacy), they say: “Surely we are with you; we were merely jesting.””*

## **Envy & Hatred**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were returning from this expedition a group of them surrounded a well aiming to quench their thirst. As the area around the well was overcrowded two of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, got into a small quarrel. The leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy took this opportunity to cause further disruption by claiming that the migrants of Mecca were only causing them problems. He began to criticize the other hypocrites for allowing the migrants of Mecca to move into Medina. A child, Zayd Bin Arqam, may Allah be pleased with him, overheard his evil words and reported them to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Abdullah Bin Ubayy was summoned but he took huge oaths that he never spoke these words. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dismissed him without taking any further actions. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, later mentioned this incident to a man who knew Abdullah Bin Ubayy well. The man Usayd Bin Hudayr told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to go easy on Abdullah Bin Ubayy as the people of Medina were preparing to make Abdullah Bin Ubayy their king before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated there. So Abdullah Bin Ubayy always believed that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took his kingdom away from him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 214.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4210, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

Envy is a serious and major sin because the envier's problem is not with another person in reality it is with Allah, the Exalted, as He is the One who granted the blessing which is envied. So a person's envy only demonstrates their displeasure with the allocation and choice of Allah, the Exalted. They believe Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake when He allocated a particular blessing to another person instead of them.

Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when the envier strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing. Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feelings and strives to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing. Even though this type is not a sin it is considered disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and praiseworthy if it is over a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first person who can be lawfully envied is the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second person who can be lawfully envied is the one who uses their knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

An envious Muslim should strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person envied such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.



## **Kind Treatment**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy strived hard in order to create discord and problems for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Once his son Abdullah Bin Abdullah Bin Ubayy, who was a loyal Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and offered to kill his hypocrite father for his evil acts of treason against the city of Medina and its leader, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he would instead forgive and treat his father, the leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy, kindly. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 215.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2701, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves gentleness in all matters.

This is an important characteristic which must be adopted by all Muslims. It should be used in all aspects of one's life. It is important to understand that being gentle benefits the Muslim themselves more than anyone else. Not only will they receive blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, and minimize the amount of sins they commit, as a gentle person is less likely to commit sins through their speech and actions, but it benefits them in worldly affairs

also. For example, the person who treats their spouse gently will gain more love and respect in return than if they treated their spouse in a harsh manner. Children are more likely to obey and treat their parents with respect when they are treated gently. Colleagues at work are more likely to help the one who is gentle with them. The examples are endless. Only in very rare cases is a harsh attitude required. In most cases, gentle behaviour will be much more effective than a harsh attitude.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possesses countless good qualities yet, Allah, the exalted, specifically highlighted his gentleness in the Holy Quran as it is a key ingredient required to affect others in a positive way. Chapter 3 Al Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

A Muslim must remember that they will never be better than a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, nor will the person they interact with be worse than Pharaoh yet, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them, to deal with Pharaoh in a kind manner. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:

*“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].”*

Therefore, a Muslim should adopt gentleness in all affairs as it leads to much reward and affects others, such as one's family, in a positive way.

## **Benefit Yourself**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy strived hard in order to create discord and problems for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Once his son Abdullah Bin Abdullah Bin Ubayy, who was a loyal Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and offered to kill his hypocrite father for his evil acts of treason against the city of Medina and its leader, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he will instead forgive and treat his father, the leader of the hypocrites Abdullah Bin Ubayy, kindly. After the people of Medina heard this they would often criticize Abdullah Bin Ubayy whenever he behaved in an evil way. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 215.

It is important for Muslims to understand that when they treat others kindly it in reality, benefits themselves and not others. This is because treating others kindly has been commanded by Allah, the Exalted, and fulfilling this important duty gains one reward.

In addition, when one is kind to others they will supplicate for them while they are alive which will benefit them. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sahih

Muslim, number 6929, that a supplication done for a person in secret is always answered.

In addition, the people will supplicate for them after they pass away which is definitely answered as it has been recorded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 10:

*“...saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith...”*

Finally, a person who treated others kindly will gain their intercession on the Day of Judgment, which is a day people will be desperate for the intercession of others. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7439.

But those who mistreat others even if they fulfil their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, will miss out on the benefits mentioned earlier. And on Judgment Day they will find that Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive them until their victim forgives them first. If they choose not to then the oppressor's good deeds will be given to their victim and if needed the victim's sins will be given to their oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

Therefore, a Muslim should be kind to themselves by being kind to others as in reality they are only benefiting themselves in this world and the next. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 6:

*“And whoever strives only strives for [the benefit of] himself...”*

## **A Manifest Slander**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 217-218.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6593, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, explained the meaning of backbiting and slander.

Backbiting is when one criticizes someone behind their back in a way which would be displeasing to them even though it is the truth. Whereas, slander is similar to backbiting except that the statement is not true. These sins mainly involve speech but can include other things, such as using hand signals. These are major sins and backbiting has been compared to eating the flesh of a dead corpse in the Holy Quran. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“...And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it...”*

It is important to understand that these sins are worse than most of the sins which are between a person and Allah, the Exalted. This is because the sins between a person and Allah, the Exalted, will be forgiven by Him if the sinner sincerely repents. But Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive a backbiter or a slanderer until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then on Judgment day the good deeds of the backbiter/slanderer will be given to their victim as compensation and if needed the sins of the victim will be given to their backbiter/slanderer until justice is established. This may well cause the backbiter/slanderer to be hurled into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.



The only times backbiting is lawful is if one is warning and protecting another person of harm or if a person is resolving a complaint against another with a third party, such as a legal case.

One should avoid backbiting and slandering by firstly gaining knowledge on the evil consequences of these major sins. Secondly, a person should only utter words which they would happily say in front of the person full well knowing they would not take it in an offensive way. Thirdly, a Muslim should only utter words about another if they would not mind someone else saying those or similar words about them. Meaning, they should talk about others how they want people to talk about them. Finally, a Muslim should concentrate on fixing their own faults and when done sincerely it will prevent them from backbiting and slandering others.

## **Thinking Positively**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 217-218.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4993, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking well

about people is an aspect of worshipping Allah, the Exalted, correctly. Meaning, it is an aspect of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Interpreting things in a negative way often leads to sins such as backbiting and slander. In all cases a Muslim should interpret things where possible in a positive way in order to give the benefit of the doubt to others. Unfortunately, adopting a negative mind-set effects people from a family unit to a national level. For example, how many times has a nation gone to war over an assumption and suspicion? The vast majority of scandals which are found in the media are based on assumptions. Even laws have been created which support the use of assumptions and suspicion. This often leads to fractured and broken relationships as people with this mind-set always believe others are taking a dig at them through their words or actions. This prevents one from taking advice from others as they believe they are only being mocked by the one giving advice and it prevents one from giving advice as they believe the other person will not pay any attention to what they say. And a person will refrain from advising the one who possesses this negative mind-set as they believe it will only lead to an argument. This leads to other negative traits such as bitterness.

It is important for Muslims to understand that even if they assume someone is taking a dig at them they should still accept their advice if it is based on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They should strive to interpret things where possible in a positive way which leads to a positive mentality. And a positive mindset leads to healthy relationships and feelings. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*

## **Good Conduct**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. On returning to Medina Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, became quite sick and remained at home. No one informed her of the slander that was spreading across Medina which by now had reached her entire family. The only thing she noticed was that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, seemed more emotionally distant from her but still, as always, maintained his excellent behaviour towards her. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 218.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2612, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who possesses complete faith is the one who is best in conduct and most kind to their family.

Unfortunately, some have adopted the bad habit of treating non-relatives in a kind manner while mistreating their own family. They behave in this manner as they do not understand the importance of treating one's own family kindly and as they fail to appreciate their family. A Muslim will never achieve success until they fulfill both aspects of faith. The first is fulfilling their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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. The second is to fulfill the rights of people which includes treating them kindly. None have more right to this kind treatment than one's own family. A Muslim must aid their family in all matters which are good and warn them against bad things and practices in a gentle way according to the teachings of Islam. They should not blindly support them in bad things simply because they are their relatives neither should they fail to help them in good matters because of some ill feelings towards them as this contradicts Islamic teachings. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

The best way to guide others is through a practical example as this is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is much more effective than just verbal guidance.

Finally, one should generally choose gentleness in all matters especially, when dealing with their family. Even if they commit sins they should be warned in a gentle manner and still be aided in matters which are good as this kindness is more effective in bringing them back to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, than treating them harshly.

## Comforting Others

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relieve herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. On returning to Medina Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, became quite sick and remained at home. After she found out about the slander she came to her mother and questioned why she hid the slander from her. Her mother comforted her and told her not to take the slander seriously as people always speak badly about those who have been blessed like she had. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 219.



Emotionally comforting others is a sign of sincerity which all Muslims must show to others. 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 the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

It is a part of sincerity towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of sincerity includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For example, one may sacrifice purchasing certain things in order to donate the wealth to the needy. Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of sincerity towards others. Whereas, dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 53:

*“...Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them...”*

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a Muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

*“...And do good as Allah has done good to you...”*

## Spreading Gossip

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relieve herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did address the people and publicly questioned why people were gossiping and spreading slander about his family and the Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased with them all. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 219.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 290, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who spreads malicious gossip will not enter Paradise.

This is the one who spreads gossip whether it is true or not and it leads to problems between people, fractured and broken relationships. This is an evil characteristic and those who behave in such a manner are in fact human devils as this mentality belongs to none other than the Devil as he always strives to cause separation between people. Allah, the Exalted has cursed this type of person in the Holy Quran. Chapter 104 Al Humazah, verse 1:

*“Woe to every scorner and mocker.”*

How can one expect Allah, the Exalted, to fix their problems and bestow them with blessings if this curse has surrounded them? The only time tale bearing is acceptable is when one is warning others of a danger.

It is a duty on a Muslim not to pay any attention to a tale bearer as they are wicked people who should not be trusted or believed. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 6:

*“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance...”*

A Muslim should forbid the tale bearer from continuing with this evil characteristic and urge them to sincerely repent. As commanded in the Holy Quran a Muslim should not harbour any ill will against the person that supposedly said something bad about them. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*

This same verse teaches Muslims not to try to prove or disprove the tale bearer by spying on others. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“...And do not spy...”*

Instead the tale bearer should be ignored. A Muslim should not mention the information given to them by the tale bearer to another person or mention the tale bearer as this would make them a tale bearer as well.

Muslims should avoid tale bearing and the company of tale bearers as they can never be worthy of trust or companionship until they sincerely repent.

## **Mind Your Business**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relieve herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. One of the people who took part in spreading this slander was Hamna, the sister of the wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Zaynab Bin Jahsh, may Allah be pleased with her. Hamna took part as she believed that this slander would cause the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to love her sister more than Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her. She did this even though her sister, Zaynab Bin Jahsh, may Allah be pleased with her, always said nothing except good things about Aisha, may Allah be pleased her. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 219.

First of all it is important to note that a Muslim should understand that they can never truly help another person through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Whatever worldly benefit one achieves for themselves and others will eventually become a curse for them in both worlds. A Muslim should only aid people in things which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, a Muslim should understand the importance of minding their business. Firstly, a person who fails to adopt this attitude will be deprived of their precious time. Everything can be bought except more time. Wasting time will be a great regret for a person in the hereafter when they observe the reward of those who utilized their time correctly. Even though, some things uttered by a person who does not mind their business is not sinful it is obvious they have lost out on using their time in a more productive way. This is the reason why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3976, that a person cannot perfect their Islam until they stay away from things which do not concern them.

The definition of speaking about something that does not concern a person is if a person chose to remain silent from this type of speech they will not be sinful nor cause any harm by their silence.



In reality, a person should not even speak about things which concern them unless it is at an appropriate time and place. Ignoring this advice only leads to trouble for the speaker and others.

Asking questions about things which do not concern one is a common problem found in society today. People often enquire about these sort of things and force others who desire to keep things private to either lie, avoid answering directly through trickery or they ignore them which comes across rude. A Muslim should be more considerate and only enquire about general things which do concern them.

Those who dedicate their speech to things which do not concern them will be deprived of speaking about things which do concern them. And those who truly direct their efforts on things which concern them will not find time to speak about things which do not concern them. The latter are the successful who utilized their tongue in the correct way.

If one truly reflected on all the arguments they have had they will realise the majority of them was caused by someone speaking about something which did not concern them. Imagine how many arguments could be avoided just by avoiding this attitude?

## **Corrupting Unity**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did address the people and publicly questioned why people were gossiping and spreading slander about his family and the Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased with them all. After this address the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, became enraged when witnessing the distress this slander caused the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But as the hypocrites were concealing their disbelief and enmity it was difficult to identify them and so this stress caused even some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to

argue with each other over who was responsible for this slander. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 219.

A sign of hypocrisy is that a person spreads corruption in society. This negative characteristic affects all social levels beginning from a family unit and ending at the international level. This type of person dislikes seeing people uniting on good as this may cause the worldly status of others to increase beyond their own. This drives them to backbiting and slander in order to cause people to turn against each other. Their evil attitude destroys their own ties of kinship and when they observe other families who are happy it drives them to destroy their happiness also. They are fault finders who dedicate their time unveiling the mistakes of others in order to drag their social status down. They are the first people to begin gossiping about others and act deaf whenever good things are spoken about. Peace and quiet disturbs them so they seek to create problems in order to entertain themselves. They fail to remember the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546. It advises that whoever covers the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will cover their faults. But whoever seeks out and unveils the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults to the people. So in reality, this type of person is only unveiling their own faults to society even though they believe they are exposing the faults of others.

## Sharing Problems

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. When the effects of the slander intensified in Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, called for his two close Companions, Ali Bin Abu Talib and Usama Bin Zayd, may Allah be pleased with them, and consulted with them. They both spoke well about Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, and even found further proof of her fine character by calling upon a witness, a slave girl, who worked within the house of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. She also spoke nothing except good about Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her. This has

been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 219-220.

Muslims should strive to avoid adopting a certain attitude namely, sharing their problems with too many people. The issue with this attitude is that when one tells too many people then sharing their problems and seeking advice becomes a means of complaining about their difficulties which is a clear sign of their impatience. In addition, this attitude will only cause one to become confused as the advice they receive will be varied which will cause them to become more and more uncertain of the correct path. Whereas, consulting a few wise people will only cause one's certainty to increase. Repeating one's problems over and over again to many people also causes them to focus too much on their problem which makes it appear bigger and more significant than it really is, even to the point that it causes them to neglect their other duties which only leads to more impatience.

Therefore Muslims, should only consult a few people in respect to their difficulties. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

*"...So ask the people of the message if you do not know."*

This verse reminds Muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a person

would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical health a Muslim should only share their problems with those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a Muslim should only share their problems with those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

## **Controlling Anger**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. When the effects of the slander intensified in Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came to Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, and kindly reminded her that Allah, the Exalted, forgives whoever sincerely repents to Him. As soon as Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, heard these words she immediately stopped crying. She waited for her parents to defend her in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but out of love and respect for him they remained silent. She then directly responded to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by declaring that she would

never admit doing something she did not do and her only option was to remain patient just like the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him, remained patient when he experienced the loss of his son the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 220.

It is important to note that Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, could have easily become enraged at those around her as she felt she did not have their full support. But she instead controlled her anger and remained patient.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised a person not to get angry.

In reality, this Hadith does not mean a person should never get angry as anger is an innate characteristic which is even found in the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. In fact, in some rare cases anger can be useful for example, in self-defence. This Hadith actually means that a person should control their anger so it does not lead them to sins. In addition, this Hadith shows that anger can lead to many evils and controlling it leads to much good.

Firstly, this advice is a command to adopt all the good characteristics which will encourage one to control their anger, such as patience. This Hadith also



indicates that a person should not act according to their anger. Instead, they should struggle with themselves in order to control it so that it does not lead them to sins. Controlling anger for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is a great deed and leads to divine love. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 134:

*“...who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good.”*

There are many teachings within Islam which encourage Muslims to control their anger. For example, as anger is linked to and inspired by the Devil a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3282, advises that an angry person should seek refuge in Allah, the Exalted, from the Devil.

An angered Muslim has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2191, to cling to the ground. This could mean that they should prostrate on the Earth until they calm down. In fact, the more one takes an inactive body position the less chance they will lash out in anger. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4782. Acting on this advice allows one to imprison their anger within themselves until it passes so that it does not negatively affect others.

A Muslim who is angered should follow the advice given in the Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4784. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the angry Muslim to perform ablution.

This is because water counters the innate characteristic of anger namely, heat. If one then offers prayer this would help them control their anger further and lead to a great reward.

The advice discussed so far helps an angry Muslim to control their physical actions. In order to control one's speech it is best to refrain from speaking when angered. Unfortunately, words can often have more of a lasting effect on others than physical actions. Countless relationships have been fractured and broken because of words spoken in anger. This behaviour often leads to other sins and crimes as well. It is important for a Muslim to note the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3970, which warns that it only takes a single evil word to cause a person to plunge into Hell on Judgement Day.

Controlling anger is a great virtue and the one who masters this has been described by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as a strong person in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6114. In fact, the one who swallows their anger for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they do not commit a sin because of their anger, will have their heart filled with peace and true faith. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4778. This is a characteristic of the sound heart which is mentioned in the Holy Quran. It is the only heart which will be granted safety on the Day of Judgment. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verses 88 and 89:

"The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children. But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart."

As mentioned earlier, anger within limits can be useful. It should be used for repelling harm to one's self, faith and possessions which if done correctly, according to the teachings of Islam, is counted as anger for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This was the state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who was never angered for the sake of his own desires. He only became angry for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6050. The character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was the Holy Quran, which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1739. This means he would be pleased with what it was pleased with and angered with what it was angered with.

It is important to note, that becoming angered only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is praiseworthy but if this anger causes one to exceed the limits then it becomes blameworthy. It is absolutely vital for one to control their anger according to the teachings of Islam even when they are angered for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4901, warns of a worshipper who angrily claimed Allah, the Exalted, would not forgive a specific sinful person. As a result this worshipper will be sent to Hell while the sinner will be forgiven on Judgment Day.

The origins of evil consist of four things: failing to control one's desire, fear, evil appetites and anger. Therefore, the one who accepts the advice of this Hadith will remove a quarter of evil from their character and life.

To conclude, it is vital for Muslims to control their anger so it does not cause them to act or speak in a way which will lead them to a great regret in both this world and the next.

## **Patience Leads to Reward**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. When the effects of the slander intensified in Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, came to Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, and kindly reminded her that Allah, the Exalted, forgives whoever sincerely repents to Him. As soon as Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, heard these words she immediately stopped crying. She waited for her parents to defend her in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but out of love and respect for him they remained silent. She then directly responded to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by declaring that she would

never admit doing something she did not do and her only option was to remain patient just like the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him, remained patient when he experienced the loss of his son the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him. Before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, even had a chance to get up from his seat Allah, the Exalted, revealed the verses which exonerated and greatly honored Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, and harshly criticized those who began and took part in the slander against her. Chapter 24 An Nur, verses 11-26:

*“Indeed, those who came with falsehood are a group among you. Do not think it bad for you; rather, it is good for you...Those [good people] are declared innocent of what they [i.e., slanderers] say. For them is forgiveness and noble provision.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 220.

A Hadith found in Musnad Ahmad, number 2803, advises that being patient over the things one dislikes leads to a great reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

Patience is a key element required in order to fulfil the three aspects of faith: fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny. But a higher and more rewarding level than patience is contentment. This is when a Muslim deeply believes that Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants and they therefore prefer His choice over their own. 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.”*

A patient Muslim understands that anything which effected them, such as a difficulty, could not have been avoided even if the entire creation aided them. Similarly, whatever missed them could not have affected them. The one who truly accepts this fact will not exult and grow proud over anything they obtain knowing Allah, the Exalted, allocated that thing to them. Nor will they grieve over anything which they fail to obtain knowing Allah, the Exalted, did not allocate that thing to them and nothing in existence can alter this fact. Chapter 57 Al Hadid, verses 22-23:

*“No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being - indeed that, for Allah, is easy. In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you...”*

In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 79, that when something occurs a Muslim should firmly believe it was decreed and nothing could have changed the outcome. And a Muslim should not have regrets believing they could have prevented the outcome if they somehow behaved differently as this attitude only causes the Devil to encourage them towards impatience and complaining about destiny. A patient Muslim truly understands that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has chosen is best for them even if they do not observe the wisdom behind it. The one who is patient does desire a change in their situation and even supplicates for it but they do not complain about what has occurred. Being persistently patient can lead a Muslim to a greater level namely, contentment.

The one who is content does not desire things to change as they know the choice of Allah, the Exalted, is better than their choice. This Muslim firmly believes and acts on the Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500. It advises that every situation is best for the believer. If they encounter a problem they should show patience which leads to blessings. And if they experience times of ease they should show gratitude which also leads to blessings.

It is important to know that Allah, the Exalted, tests those He loves. If they show patience they will be rewarded but if they are angered it only proves their lack of love for Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2396.



A Muslim should be patient or content with the choice and decree of Allah, the Exalted, in both times of ease and hardship. This will reduce one's distress and provide them with much blessings in both worlds. Whereas, impatience will only destroy the reward they could have received. Either way a Muslim will go through the situation decreed by Allah, the Exalted, but it is their choice whether they desire reward or not.

A Muslim will never reach full contentment until their behaviour is equal in times of difficulty and ease. How can a true servant go to the Master namely, Allah, the Exalted, for a judgment and then become unhappy if the choice does not match their desire. There is a real possibility that if a person gets what they desire it will destroy them. 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."*

A Muslim should not worship Allah, the Exalted, on the edge. Meaning, when the divine decree matches their wishes they praise Allah, the Exalted. And when it does not they become annoyed acting as if they know better than Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*"And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to*

*unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss."*

A Muslim should behave with the choice of Allah, the Exalted, as if they would behave with a skilled trustworthy doctor. The same way a Muslim would not complain taking bitter medicine prescribed by the doctor knowing it is best for them they should accept the difficulties they face in the world knowing it is best for them. In fact, a sensible person would thank the doctor for the bitter medicine and similarly an intelligent Muslim would thank Allah, the Exalted, for any situation they encounter.

In addition, a Muslim should review the many verses of the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which discuss the reward given to the patient and content Muslim. Deep reflection on this will inspire a Muslim to remain steadfast when facing difficulties. For example, Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2402. It advises that when those who patiently faced trials and difficulties in the world receive their reward on Judgment Day those who did not face such trials will wish they patiently faced difficulties such as their skin being cut off with scissors.

In order to gain patience and even contentment with what Allah, the Exalted, chooses for a person they should seek and act on the knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that they reach the high level of excellence of faith. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. Excellence in faith is when a Muslim performs deeds, such as the prayer, as if they can witness Allah, the Exalted. The one who reaches this level will not feel the pain of difficulties and trials as they will completely be immersed in the awareness and love of Allah, the Exalted. This is similar to the state of the women who did not feel pain when cutting their own hands when they observed the beauty of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 31:

*"...and gave each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph], "Come out before them." And when they saw him, they greatly admired him and cut their hands and said, "Perfect is Allah! This is not a man; this is none but a noble angel.""*

If a Muslim cannot reach this high level of faith they should at least try to reach the lower level mentioned in the Hadith quoted earlier. This is the level where one is constantly aware they are being observed by Allah, the Exalted. The same way a person would not complain in front of an authoritative figure they feared, such as an employer, a Muslim who is constantly aware of the presence of Allah, the Exalted, will not complain about the choices He makes.

## Let Things Go

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retraced her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. After Allah, the Exalted, exonerated Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, of this slander her father, Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased him, declared that he would no longer financially aid his relative who took part in spreading this slander. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22, encouraging him and all Muslims to forgive and overlook the mistakes of others:

*“And let not those of virtue among you and wealth swear not to give [aid] to their relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah, and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

After this Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, retracted his declaration and continued helping his relative. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3180.

All Muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same Muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many Muslims often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a Muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships

with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement.

## **The Real Pilgrimage**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 223 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1773, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the reward for an accepted Holy Pilgrimage is nothing except Paradise.

The real purpose of the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj) and the Visitation (Umra) is to prepare Muslims for their final journey to the hereafter. The same way a Muslim leaves behind their home, business, wealth, family, friends and social status in order to perform the Holy Pilgrimage this will occur at the time of their death when they take their final journey to the hereafter. In fact, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, advises that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds, good and bad, accompany them.

When a Muslim bears this in mind during their Holy Pilgrimage they will fulfil all the aspects of this duty correctly. This Muslim will return back home a changed person as they will prioritise preparing for their final journey to the hereafter over amassing the excess aspects of this material world. They will strive in fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which includes taking from this world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance.

Muslims should not treat the Holy Pilgrimage as a holiday and a place to shop as this attitude defeats the purpose of it. It must remind Muslims of their final journey to the hereafter a journey which has no return and no second chances. Only this will inspire one to fulfil the Holy Pilgrimage correctly and prepare adequately for the hereafter.



## **Hindering Good**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 223-224 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

Since the passing of the righteous predecessors the strength of the Muslim nation has weakened dramatically. It is logical that the greater the number of people in a group the stronger the group will become yet Muslims have somehow defied this logic. The strength of the Muslim nation has only decreased as the number of Muslims have increased. One of the main reasons this has occurred is connected to chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2 of the Holy Quran:

*"...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression..."*

Allah, the Exalted, clearly commands Muslims to aid each other in any matter which is good and not support each other in any matter which is bad. This is what the righteous predecessors acted on but many Muslims have failed to follow in their footsteps. Many Muslims now observe who is doing an action instead of observing what they are doing. If the person is linked to them for example, a relative, they support them even if the thing is not good. Similarly, if the person has no relationship with them they turn away from supporting them even if the thing is good. This attitude completely contradicts the traditions of the righteous predecessors. They would support others in good irrespective of who was doing it. In fact, they went so far on acting on this verse of the Holy Quran that they would even support those they did not get on with as long as it was a good thing.

The other thing connected to this is that many Muslims fail to support each other in good as they believe the person they are supporting will gain more prominence than them. This condition has even affected scholars and Islamic educational institutes. They make lame excuses not to aid others in good as they do not have a relationship with them and they fear their own institution will be forgotten and those they help will gain further respect in society. But this is completely wrong as one only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the truth. As long as one's intention is to please Allah, the Exalted, supporting others in good will increase their respect within society. Allah, the Exalted, will cause the hearts of the people to turn to them even if their support is for another organisation, institution or person. For example, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed this world Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily challenged for the Caliphate and would have found plenty of support in his favour. But he knew the right thing to do was to nominate Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, did not worry about being forgotten by society if he supported another person. He instead obeyed the command in the verse mentioned earlier and supported what was right. This

is confirmed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari numbers 3667 and 3668. The honour and respect of Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, within society only increased by this action. This is obvious to those who are aware of Islamic history.

Muslims must reflect on this deeply, change their mentality and strive to aid others in good irrespective of who is doing it and not hold back fearing their support will cause them to be forgotten within society. Those who obey Allah, the Exalted, will never be forgotten in both this world and the next. In fact, their respect and honour will only grow in both worlds.

## **Experiencing Difficulties**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the group to take an alternate road into Mecca which was rough and extremely dangerous. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 224 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

In a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 492, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a Muslim does not face any type of physical difficulty, irrespective of its size, such as a prick of a thorn, or any emotional difficulty, such as stress, except Allah, the Exalted, erases their sins because of it.

This refers to minor sins as major sins require sincere repentance. This outcome occurs when a Muslim remains patient from the onset of the difficulty until the end of their life. This is important to understand as many people believe they can complain initially and then show patience after. This

is not true patience instead it is only acceptance which occurs with the passing of time. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1870. In addition, patience needs to be shown throughout one's life as a person can destroy their reward by showing impatience down the line.

A Muslim should remember that it is far better to have their minor sins erased through these difficulties than to reach the Day of Judgment while still possessing them. A Muslim should constantly repent and strive to perform righteous deeds in order to erase their minor sins. And if they encounter any physical or emotional difficulties they should remain patient hoping for their minor sins to be erased and to obtain an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

## **Accepting Good Things**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the group to take an alternate road into Mecca which was rough and extremely dangerous. Eventually, when they reached close to Hudaibiya the camel of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sat down and refused to go any further. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, understood that staying within this area was best for them instead of marching forward towards Mecca. He commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to setup camp in Hudaibiya and declared that he would accept anything the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca requested from him that day as long as it did not contradict the commands of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 224 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

Some adopt stubbornness in worldly matters and as a result they do not change their character for the better. Instead, they remain steadfast on their attitude believing this is somehow a sign of their great strength and wisdom. Steadfastness in matters of faith is a praiseworthy attitude but in most worldly matters it is only called stubbornness, which is blameworthy.

Unfortunately, some believe if they change their attitude it demonstrates weakness or it shows that they are admitting their fault and because of this they stubbornly fail to change for the better. Adults behave like immature children by believing that if they change their behaviour it means they have lost while others who remain steadfast on their attitude have won. This is simply childish.

In reality, an intelligent person will remain steadfast on matters of faith but in worldly matters they will change their attitude, as long as it is not sinful, in order to make their life easier. So changing to improve one's life is not a sign of weakness it is in fact a sign of intelligence.

In many cases, a person refuses to change their attitude and expects others in their life to change theirs, such as their relatives. But what often occurs is that due to stubbornness all remain in the same state which only leads to regular disagreements and arguments. A wise person understands that if the people around them do not change for the better than they should. This change will improve the quality of their life and their relationship with others which is much better than going around in circular arguments with people. This positive attitude will eventually cause others to respect them as it takes real strength to change one's character for the better.

Those who remain stubborn will always find something to be annoyed about which will remove peace from their life. This will cause further difficulties in

all aspects of their life, such as their mental health. But those who adapt and change for the better will always move from one station of peace to another. If one achieves this peace does it really matter if others believe they only changed because they were wrong?

To conclude, to remain steadfast on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is praiseworthy. But in worldly matters and in cases where no sin is committed a person should learn to adapt and change their attitude so that they find some peace in this world.



## United in Faith

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the group to take an alternate road into Mecca which was rough and extremely dangerous. Eventually, when they reached close to Hudaibiya the camel of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sat down and refused to go any further. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, understood that staying within this area was best for them instead of marching forward towards Mecca. He commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to setup camp in Hudaibiya and declared that he would accept anything the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca requested from him that day as long as it did not contradict the commands of Allah, the Exalted. The non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. One of these men from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca was Urwa Bin Masood. After witnessing the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and how much they varied in respect to tribe, ethnicity and social class he declared that if the non-Muslims of Mecca decided to attack them the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would flee. Urwa believed that the only people who would stay and fight with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be the people from his own tribe. He and many others believed this as

tribal affiliation meant everything to them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 226 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

With the passing of time people become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, most Muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to strength. Whereas, many Muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

## Showing True Love

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. One of these men from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca was Urwa Bin Masood. After some time Urwa observed the great love the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, had for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After returning to the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca he declared that whenever the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would perform ablution his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would compete for the water he used. If he spat the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would prevent it from falling on the ground. And they would compete for his hair if it fell from him. He concluded that he had visited and observed the King of Persia, Chosroe, the Roman King, Caesar and even the Ethiopian King, Negus but he had never seen the devotion and love the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, had for their leader the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 226-227 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

Every Muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

## Goodwill

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. The non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched 40 to 50 men who encircled the camp of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to capture a Companion, may Allah be pleased with him. But this force was captured by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and were presented as prisoners to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Instead of punishing them he forgave them and set them all free. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 227.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

*“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”*

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted,



does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

## **Adhere to the Straight Path**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, as his ambassador to the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in order to inform them of his peaceful intention. After Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, delivered this message he was granted permission to circumambulate the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba but he replied that he could never do that before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did so. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 227.

This is an important characteristic to adopt meaning, adhering strictly to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, instead of doing things beyond these two sources of guidance.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If Muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many Muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied Muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a Muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

## **Pledge of Servanthood**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, as his ambassador to the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in order to inform them of his peaceful intention. After Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, delivered this message he was detained by the non-Muslims of Mecca. News spread to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, had been martyred. He took a pledge from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, that they would not leave Mecca until they took revenge for Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, as he not only entered Mecca unarmed but as an ambassador of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ambassadors have always been treated with respect and harming them is a declaration of war. This is true even in this day and age. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 227-228.

It is important for humanity to fulfill the pledge they made with Allah, the Exalted, which has been mentioned in chapter 7 Al A'raf, verse 172 of the Holy Quran:

*“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] - lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware.””*

All humans were brought forth so that they could take this pledge to Allah, the Exalted. The lesson to understand behind this incident is that all people accepted Allah, the Exalted, as their Lord. Meaning, the One who created them, sustains them and the One who will judge their deeds on the Day of Judgment. It is important for all Muslims to fulfil this pledge through sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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.

This verse indicates that Allah, the Exalted, did not ask the creation if they were His servants instead, He asked them if He was their Lord. This is an indication that the will of Allah, the Exalted, should always come before the will and desire of a person. If a Muslim has a choice between pleasing Allah, the Exalted, or someone else this pledge should remind them that the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, must come first.

This question is also an indication of the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted, as He hinted the answer to the creation by wording it as He did. This shows Muslims that even though Allah, the Exalted, is the Lord who will judge their deeds yet, He is also infinitely merciful.

The effect of this covenant is deeply embedded in the hearts of all mankind. In fact, this is the nature which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6755. From this one can understand that it is important for people not to search for the truth after making their minds up beforehand and then search for evidence which supports their predetermined belief. Only those who open their minds without making a predetermined decision will unlock this covenant which has been embedded deep in their hearts. In fact, having an open mind is important in all issues not just in matters of faith as it helps one to find the truth and the best path. This attitude strengthens society and always encourages peace between people. But the stubbornness of those who predetermine their choices will always create wedges between members of a society which can affect people on a national level. It is important for Muslims not to always believe they are correct in worldly matters otherwise they will adopt this stubborn attitude. This will prevent them from accepting the opinions of others which will lead to arguments, enmity and fractured relationships. Therefore, this attitude should be avoided at all costs.

Finally, the fact that this covenant is deeply embedded in a person's heart indicates that it is a duty on Muslims to uncover it. This will lead one to certainty of faith which is much stronger than faith based on hearsay meaning, being told by one's family that they are a Muslim. Certainty of faith allows a Muslim to overcome all difficulties successfully in this world while

fulfilling their religious and worldly duties. One only fails in tests and their duties because of weakness in their faith. Certainty of faith is only obtained by gaining and acting on the 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...”*

## Verifying News

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, as his ambassador to the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in order to inform them of his peaceful intention. After Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, delivered this message he was detained by the non-Muslims of Mecca. News spread to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, had been martyred. He took a pledge from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, that they would not leave Mecca until they took revenge for Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, as he not only entered Mecca unarmed but as an ambassador of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ambassadors have always been treated with respect and harming them is a declaration of war. This is true even in this day and age. After this pledge the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, received news that Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, was in fact alive and he eventually returned to their camp. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 228.



A great problem society is facing in this age is the spread of fake news within society. One can imagine how difficult this is to control especially in this time of social media. It is therefore important for Muslims to act on the following verse of the Holy Quran and not spread information to others even if they believe they are benefiting others by doing so without verifying the information first. Meaning, they should ensure it comes from a reliable source and is accurate. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 6:

*“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.”*

Even though, this verse indicates a wicked person spreading news it can still apply to all people which share information with others. As mentioned in this verse a person may believe they are helping others but by spreading unverified information they might harm others instead, such as emotional harm. Unfortunately, many Muslims are heedless to this and have a habit of simply forwarding information through text messages and social media applications without verifying it. In cases where the information is connected to religious matters it is even more important to verify the information before spreading it. As one may get punished for the actions of others based on the incorrect information they provided them. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2351.

In addition, with everything that is going on in the world and how it is affecting Muslims it is even more important to verify information as warning others over things which did not happen only creates distress in society and furthers the rift between Muslims and other communities. This contradicts Islamic teachings.

A Muslim needs to understand that Allah, the Exalted, will not question why they did not share unverified information with others on Judgment Day. But He will certainly question them if they do share information with others, whether it is verified or not. Therefore, an intelligent Muslim will only share verified information and anything which is not verified they will leave knowing they will not be held accountable for it.

## **Remaining Firm when in Doubt**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions. One of which was that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not perform the Visitation (Umra) that year and instead he would return the following year. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, like many of the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not pleased with these conditions as they seemed outwardly to favor the non-Muslims of Mecca. So he spoke to Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, about this and Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, reminded him to remain firm on the obedience to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, then discussed this matter with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the latter declared that he would not oppose the command of Allah, the Exalted, and He would never let his mission fail. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 228-229.

This incident reminds Muslims to always remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even in situations which are unclear to them.

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.”*

## **Greatness is in Difficulties**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions. One of which was that if any person who accepted Islam from Mecca fled to Medina he or she would be returned to Mecca. But if someone fled from Medina to Mecca they would not be sent back to Medina. When the pact was signed a Companion, Abu Jandal, may Allah be pleased with him, who had been imprisoned in Mecca managed to escape and reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But as the pact was agreed Abu Jandal, may Allah be pleased with him, had to be returned to Mecca and could not go to Medina with the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Witnessing this greatly distressed the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded Abu Jandal, may Allah be pleased with him, to be patient and control himself. He promised that Allah, the Exalted, would provide relief and succor for him and the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, stuck in Mecca. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 229-230.



In life a Muslim will always face either times of ease or times of difficulty. No one only experiences times of ease without experiencing some difficulties. But the thing to note is that even though difficulties by definition are hard to deal with they are in fact a means to obtain and demonstrate one's true greatness and servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. In addition, in the majority of cases people learn more important life lessons when they face difficulties than when they face times of ease. And people often change for the better after experiencing times of difficulty than times of ease. One only needs to reflect on this in order to understand this truth. In fact, if one studies the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they will realize the majority of the events discussed, such as this one, involve difficulties. This indicates that true greatness does not lie in always experiencing times of ease. It in fact, lies in experiencing difficulties while remaining obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is proven by the fact that each of the great difficulties discussed in Islamic teachings end with ultimate success for those who obeyed Allah, the Exalted. So a Muslim should not be bothered about facing difficulties as these are just moments for them to shine while acknowledging their true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience. This is the key to ultimate success in both worlds.

## **Fulfill All Promises**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions. One of which was that if any person who accepted Islam from Mecca fled to Medina he or she would have to be returned to Mecca. But if someone fled from Medina to Mecca they would not be sent back to Medina. When the pact was signed a Companion, Abu Jandal, may Allah be pleased with him, who had been imprisoned in Mecca managed to escape and reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But as the pact was agreed Abu Jandal, may Allah be pleased with him, had to be returned to Mecca and could not go to Medina with the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Witnessing this greatly distressed the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded Abu Jandal, may Allah be pleased with him, to be patient and control himself. He promised that Allah, the Exalted, would provide relief and succor for him and the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, stuck in Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, concluded that

he had made a peace pact with the non-Muslims of Mecca which he could not betray. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 229-230.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that breaking promises is an aspect of hypocrisy.

The greatest of promises a Muslim has made is with Allah, the Exalted, which is to obey Him sincerely. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. All other promises made with people must also be kept unless one has a valid excuse especially, the ones a parent makes with children. Breaking promises only teaches children bad character and encourages them to believe being deceitful is an acceptable characteristic to possess. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2227, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will be against the one who makes a promise in His name and then breaks it without a valid excuse. How can the one who has Allah, the Exalted, against them on Judgment Day possibly succeed?

## Seeking Advice

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions all of which seemed to outwardly favor the non-Muslims of Mecca. This caused the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to become extremely sad and upset. After the pact was signed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to fulfill the aspects of their Visitation (Umra) which included making animal sacrifices and shaving their hair. At first none of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, responded as they were all sunken in grief and sadness. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to his camp and sought advice from his wife, Umm Salama, may Allah be pleased with her. She advised him to silently fulfill the aspects of his Visitation (Umra) and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would undoubtedly follow him when they witnessed this. He did what she advised and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did respond positively and showed no signs of impatience

or disobedience. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 239.

Muslims should avoid consulting many people about their affairs and problems. The issue with this attitude is that when one tells too many people then sharing their problems and seeking advice becomes a means of complaining about their difficulties which is a clear sign of their impatience. In addition, this attitude will only cause one to become confused as the advice they receive will be varied which will cause them to become more and more uncertain of the correct path. Whereas, consulting a few wise people will only cause one's certainty to increase. Repeating one's problems over and over again to many people also causes them to focus too much on their problem which makes it appear bigger and more significant than it really is, even to the point that it causes them to neglect their other duties which only leads to more impatience.

Therefore Muslims, should only consult a few people in respect to their difficulties. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

*"...So ask the people of the message if you do not know."*

This verse reminds Muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a person

would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical health a Muslim should only share their problems with those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a Muslim should only share their problems with those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

## **A Clear Victory**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions all of which seemed to outwardly favor the non-Muslims of Mecca. After the pact was signed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to Medina without performing the Visitation (Umra), which was part of the pact. This pact of peace for ten years in reality favored the Muslims. Prior to this pact whenever Muslims and non-Muslims met it often led to some sort of fighting but when warfare came to an end because of the pact whenever these people met they only conversed. When Islam was explained to the non-Muslims they began to accept it. Islam entered the hearts of more people in the next two years than it did in all the previous years since its coming. This clear victory was acknowledged by Allah, the Exalted, who revealed chapter 48 Al Fath after the agreement had been signed. Chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 1:

*“Indeed, We have given you, a clear conquest”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 231.

This superiority and success was granted to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as they remained sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, at all times. Even though the number of Muslims have increased over time it is obvious that the strength of Muslims has only decreased. Each Muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith believes in the authenticity of the Holy Quran as doubting it would cause them to lose their faith. In the following verse Allah, the Exalted, has given the key to obtaining superiority and success which would remove the weakness and grief Muslims are experiencing all around the world. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 139:

*“So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.”*

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Muslims only need to become true believers in order to achieve this superiority and success in both worlds. True belief involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions



of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and those towards people, such as loving for others what one loves for themselves which has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. This requires one to learn and act on Islamic teachings. Through this attitude was success and superiority granted to the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. And if Muslims desire to achieve it then they must return to this rightly guided attitude. As Muslims believe in the Holy Quran they should understand this simple teaching and act on it.

## **Evil Plots Fail**

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions. One of which was that if any person who accepted Islam from Mecca fled to Medina he or she would be returned to Mecca. But if someone fled from Medina to Mecca they would not be sent back to Medina. It was obvious the non-Muslims of Mecca only demanded this as they believed it would weaken the Muslim nation by breaking their unity. After the pact was signed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to Medina. A Companion, Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, escaped his imprisonment in Mecca and fled to Medina. The non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched two men to retrieve Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, from Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, honored the agreement and handed him over to be returned to Mecca. On his way back to Mecca Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, escaped and eventually fled to another secluded area away from Medina and Mecca. After this occurred whenever a Companion, may Allah be

pleased with them, fled their imprisonment in Mecca they joined up with Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him. Their numbers grew till eventually they began raiding and looting the merchant caravans of the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. This caused severe financial problems for the people of Mecca. They eventually send a message to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, pleading to him to call Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, and his force to Medina so that the raids and looting would end. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed and Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, and his men migrated to Medina peacefully. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 240.

One should never plot to do an evil thing as it will always, one way or another, backfire on them. Even if these consequences are delayed to the next world they will face them eventually. For example, the brothers of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, desired to harm him as they desired the love, respect and affection of their father the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him. But it is clear that their scheming only put them further away from their desire. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 18:

*“And they brought upon his shirt false blood. [Jacob] said, “Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting...”*

The more one plots evil the more Allah, the Exalted, will put them further from their goal. Even if they outwardly achieve their desire Allah, the Exalted, will cause the very thing they desired to become a curse for them in both worlds unless they sincerely repent. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

*“...but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples?...”*

## **The 7<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Gaining the Love of Allah, the Exalted**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. When reaching their forts he declared that the next day he was going to give his banner to someone who loved Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and that this man was also a beloved of Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He concluded that this man would conquer Khaybar. The next day he called for Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and entrusted him with the banner and Khaybar was then conquered. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 251.

It is important for Muslims to follow in the footsteps of Ali Bin Abu Talib and the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, by sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that they too become a beloved of Allah, the Exalted.

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 that a Muslim can only draw close to Him 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.



## **Guiding Others**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. When reaching their forts he declared that the next day he was going to give his banner to someone who loved Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and that this man was also a beloved of Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He concluded that this man would conquer Khaybar. The next day he called for Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and entrusted him with the banner. He was commanded to ride close to their fort and call them towards Islam before fighting them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then advised that if a single person accepted guidance through him that would be better than the most expensive and treasured herd of camels known to the Arabs. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 251.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2674, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who guides others to something good will receive the same reward as those who act on their advice. And those who guide others to sins will be held accountable as if they committed the sins.

It is important for Muslims to be careful when advising and guiding others. A Muslim should only advise others in matters of good so that they gain reward from it and avoid advising others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. A person will not escape punishment on Judgment Day by simply claiming they are only inviting others towards sins even if they did not commit the sins themselves. Allah, the Exalted, will hold both the guide and the follower accountable for their actions. Muslims should therefore only advise others to do the things they would do themselves. If they dislike an action being recorded in their book of deeds they should not advise others to perform that action.

Because of this Islamic principle Muslims should ensure they gain the adequate knowledge before advising others as they can easily multiply their own sins if they incorrectly advise others.

In addition, this principle is an extremely easy way for Muslims to gain reward for actions they cannot perform themselves due to a lack of means, such as wealth. For example, a person who is not financially able to donate charity can encourage others to do so and this will result in them gaining the same reward as the one who gave charity.

## **Effects of Intention**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. A hypocrite was fighting fiercely against the non-Muslims during this battle but when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of his outward bravery he commented that the man would go to Hell. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, then observed that the man was injured during the battle and ultimately killed himself, which is prohibited in Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 258.

One of the main reasons why people who do good things, such as buying gifts for others, do not receive the same level of respect and love from people than some who do not do these things is because of their intention. When these people perform righteous deeds in respect to people, such as visiting the sick, they do so either for the sake of people meaning, to please them or they mix this intention by also aiming to please Allah, the Exalted. First of all, the one who acts for the sake of people will gain no reward from Allah, the Exalted. They will be told to gain their reward from the people they acted for on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154. Scholars are divided on whether those who mix their intention by aiming to please Allah, the Exalted, and people will receive a partial reward or none at all. In order to be on the safe side a wise Muslim should only act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

On the other hand, the other people who gain more respect and love from others do so because they solely act for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. When they treat others kindly they do not do it for the sake of people. Because of their sincerity Allah, the Exalted, places more love and respect in the hearts of the people compared to those who do more acts of kindness to people but are less sincere in their deeds.

So if people desire reward from Allah, the Exalted, and respect from people they should correct their intention and only perform righteous deeds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. One sign of this correct intention is that this person will aim to please Allah, the Exalted, even if it displeases people. Meaning, they do not pay attention to the attitude and reactions of people.

## **What You Give is What You Get**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. During this time a Bedouin accepted Islam and took part in the battle. During the battle he was assigned some spoils of war by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but he refused to accept it. He declared that his purpose in taking part in this battle was to achieve Paradise through martyrdom. He even pointed to his throat showing that he desired an arrow to hit him there. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told him that if he fulfils his contract with Allah, the Exalted, then Allah, the Exalted, will fulfill His contract with him. Later on while fighting the man was shot in the throat and was martyred. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed he replied that the man fulfilled his contract with Allah, the Exalted, and so Allah, the Exalted, fulfilled His contract with him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 259-260.

This incident is connected to chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

*“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.”*

This verse means that if one aids Islam then Allah, the Exalted, will help them in both worlds. It is strange how countless people desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet do not fulfil the first part of this verse through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. The excuse most people give is that they do not have time to perform righteous deeds. They desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet will not make time to do the things which please Him. Does this make sense? Those who do not fulfil the obligatory duties and then expect the aid of Allah, the Exalted, in their moment of need are quite foolish. And those who do fulfil the obligatory duties yet refuse to go beyond them will find that the aid they receive is limited. How one behaves is how they are treated. The more time and energy dedicated to Allah, the Exalted, the more support they will receive. It really is that simple.

A Muslim needs to understand that the majority of the obligatory duties, such as the five daily prayers, only takes a small amount of time in one's day. A Muslim cannot expect to barely dedicate an hour a day to offering the obligatory prayers and then neglect Allah, the Exalted, for the rest of the day and still expect His continuous support through all difficulties. A person would dislike a friend who treated them in such a manner. How then can one treat Allah, the Exalted, the Lord of the worlds, like this then?

Some only dedicate extra time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, when they encounter a worldly problem then demand Him to fix it as if they done Allah, the Exalted, a favour by performing voluntary good deeds. This foolish mentality clearly contradicts servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. It is amazing

how this type of person finds time to do all their other leisurely activities, such as spending time with family and friends, watching TV and attending social functions yet finds no time to dedicate to pleasing Allah, the Exalted. They cannot seem to find time to recite and adopt the teachings of the Holy Quran. They do not seem to find time to study and act on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people somehow find wealth to spend on their unnecessary luxuries yet seem to find no wealth to donate in voluntary charity.

It is important to understand that a Muslim will be treated according to how they behave. Meaning, if a Muslim dedicates extra time to please Allah, the Exalted, then they will find the support they need to journey through all difficulties safely. But if they fail to fulfil the obligatory duties or only fulfil them without dedicating any other time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, then they will find a similar response from Allah, the Exalted. Put simply, the more one gives the more they shall receive. If one does not give much they should not expect much in return.

## **Hold onto Justice**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. The non-Muslims of Khaybar took refuge in one of their forts and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took control of their farmlands. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, desired to expel them from his territory they struck a deal with him. They would take care of the farmlands and hand over half the harvest to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on the condition that they were not to be expelled from the land. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed and deputized a Companion, Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him, to visit them each year and take their payment. These non-Muslims tried to bribe Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him, so that he would allow them to keep more than the half which was agreed upon. He replied that even though no one on Earth was more dearer to him than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and they, the non-Muslims, were most disliked by him, he would not let the love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, nor his dislike for them prevent him from treating them fairly and doing justice. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 270-271.



In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for Muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach Muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themselves harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.<sup>1</sup> So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just...”*

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

## **Being Merciful**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. After the land of Khaybar was conquered a Jewish woman presented poisoned food to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After eating some he was divinely informed that the food was poisoned. When he interrogated the Jewish woman she replied that if he was really a Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, then Allah, the Exalted, would have informed him of the poison but if he was an imposter then she would be doing the world a favor by getting rid of him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, released the woman and did not punish her. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 283-284.

All Muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same Muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many Muslims

often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a Muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

## **Utilizing the Unlawful**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca. While returning to Medina a stray arrow struck and killed a person fighting on the side of the Muslims. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, declared that he was blessed with Paradise. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, responded that the man would be punished as he unlawfully took a cloak at Khaybar instead of handing it over to the man in charge of distributing the spoils of war. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 287-288.

It is a major sin to obtain and utilise the unlawful. This includes using unlawful wealth, using items which are unlawful and eating unlawful foods. It is important to note, that the specific things which have been labelled unlawful by Islam such as alcohol is not the only things which are unlawful. In fact, even lawful things can become unlawful if they have been gained through unlawful things. For example, a lawful food can become unlawful if it is bought with unlawful wealth. Therefore, it is important for Muslims to ensure they only deal with lawful things as it only takes one element of the unlawful to ruin someone.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2346, that the one who utilises the unlawful will have all their supplications rejected. If their supplications are rejected by Allah, the Exalted, can one expect any of their good deeds to be accepted? This in fact has been answered in another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1410. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that Allah, the Exalted, only accepts the lawful. Therefore, any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful such as performing the Holy Pilgrimage with unlawful wealth will be rejected.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3118, that this type of person will be sent to Hell on Judgement Day. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 188:

*“And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]. “*

## **Interpreting things Positively**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he sent out a force to confront an enemy. An enemy soldier fought against the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, until he was subdued. When the soldier was about to be killed he declared the Islamic testimony of faith. This caused some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to back away from him but one Companion, Usama Bin Zayd, may Allah be pleased with him, killed the man believing he only declared faith in Islam in order to save his life. When news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he became extremely upset at Usama Bin Zayd, may Allah be pleased with him. He kept asking Usama, may Allah be pleased with him, why he killed someone who declared the Islamic testimony of faith even after Usama, may Allah be pleased with him, gave his reasoning. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 301.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4993, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking well about people is an aspect of worshipping Allah, the Exalted, correctly. Meaning, it is an aspect of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Interpreting things in a negative way often leads to sins such as backbiting and slander. In all cases a Muslim should interpret things where possible in a positive way in order to give the benefit of the doubt to others. Unfortunately, adopting a negative mind-set effects people from a family unit

to a national level. For example, how many times has a nation gone to war over an assumption and suspicion? The vast majority of scandals which are found in the media are based on assumptions. Even laws have been created which support the use of assumptions and suspicion. This often leads to fractured and broken relationships as people with this mind-set always believe others are taking a dig at them through their words or actions. This prevents one from taking advice from others as they believe they are only being mocked by the one giving advice and it prevents one from giving advice as they believe the other person will not pay any attention to what they say. And a person will refrain from advising the one who possesses this negative mind-set as they believe it will only lead to an argument. This leads to other negative traits such as bitterness.

It is important for Muslims to understand that even if they assume someone is taking a dig at them they should still accept their advice if it is based on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They should strive to interpret things where possible in a positive way which leads to a positive mentality. And a positive mindset leads to healthy relationships and feelings. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*



## **No Obedience in Disobedience to Allah, the Exalted**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he sent out an expedition and put a certain Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, in charge and ordered the others to obey him. During the expedition this leader became angered at the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and then ordered them to create a fire and enter it. But they replied that they turned to Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to escape fire and punishment. The leader's anger then subsided and the fire was extinguished. When news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he warned them that if they had entered the fire they would have remained in it and concluded that obedience to people is only in things which are good meaning, in things which do not lead to the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 306.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world or in order to please others. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam. Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who

compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## **Humility without Weakness**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he headed to Mecca to perform the Visitation (Umra) as agreed with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in the previous year. Word reached him that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca were spreading news that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were under great difficulty and distress. The non-Muslims lined up close to the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, to witness the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then supplicated for the blessings of Allah, the Exalted, on those who demonstrated strength on that day. In order to show their strength they partially jogged around the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, while circumambulating it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 308.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 2556, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings to the one who adopts humility without a shortcoming meaning, weakness. The humble one submits, accepts and acts on the commands and prohibitions of Allah, the Exalted, thereby proving their servanthood to Him. They readily accept the truth when it is presented to them even if it contradicts their desires and irrespective of who delivers it to them. Meaning, they do not reject the truth believing they know best. They do not look down at others believing they are superior to them because of any worldly thing they possess or because of their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, as they understand that their final outcome or the final outcome of others is unknown

to them. Meaning, they may die while Allah, the Exalted, is not pleased with them. This reality should prevent a person from the deadly sin of pride. An atom's worth of which is enough to take one to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265. Humility without weakness means that a Muslim always demonstrates kindness to others but is not afraid to defend themselves if necessary nor does their humility cause them to appear disgraced and dishonored.

## **Kindness is Preferred**

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he headed to Mecca to perform the Visitation (Umra) as agreed with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in the previous year. After the agreed time of three days passed the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca demanded that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, leave Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told them that as he had proposed marriage to someone in Mecca he desired to hold the wedding feast there and wanted the non-Muslims to join him in the feast. But they rudely demanded that he leave Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted their response and gave the order to leave Mecca. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 310-311.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2701, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves gentleness in all matters.

This is an important characteristic which must be adopted by all Muslims. It should be used in all aspects of one's life. It is important to understand that being gentle benefits the Muslim themselves more than anyone else. Not only will they receive blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, and minimize the amount of sins they commit, as a gentle person is less likely to commit sins through their speech and actions, but it benefits them in worldly affairs

also. For example, the person who treats their spouse gently will gain more love and respect in return than if they treated their spouse in a harsh manner. Children are more likely to obey and treat their parents with respect when they are treated gently. Colleagues at work are more likely to help the one who is gentle with them. The examples are endless. Only in very rare cases is a harsh attitude required. In most cases, gentle behaviour will be much more effective than a harsh attitude.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possesses countless good qualities yet, Allah, the exalted, specifically highlighted his gentleness in the Holy Quran as it is a key ingredient required to affect others in a positive way. Chapter 3 Al Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

A Muslim must remember that they will never be better than a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, nor will the person they interact with be worse than Pharaoh yet, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them, to deal with Pharaoh in a kind manner. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:

*“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].”*

Therefore, a Muslim should adopt gentleness in all affairs as it leads to much reward and affects others, such as one's family, in a positive way.



## **The 8<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Void in Life**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a non-Muslim nobleman of Mecca, Khalid Bin Walid, may Allah be pleased with him, decided to travel to Medina and accept Islam. He explained that at this time Allah, the Exalted, placed the desire for Islam into his heart and gave him the ability to reflect on it. He then mentioned how he witnessed the lands of Arabia against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, even though the things which these non-Muslims did in their lands was reprehensible and he felt as if he did not belong there amongst them. He concluded that he knew the truth namely, Islam, would eventually prevail so he decided to head for Medina and accept Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 323.

Many people in all ages experience this type of emptiness from within their lives. Some even connect this feeling to a mid-life crisis. A person who experiences this often questions their purpose and seems to feel a huge void in their life even though they may possess many things and achieved much worldly success. This often occurs as these people are not fulfilling the purpose of their creation which is to gain knowledge about Allah, the Exalted, so that they can obey and worship Him correctly. This is similar to a person who owns the latest mobile phone which has many features yet, due to a fault it fails to fulfil its primary goal which is to make phone calls. No matter how good these other features are the owner will always feel a void in respect

to it as the phone does not fulfil its primary goal of existence. Similarly, a person will feel a void in their life even if they possess many worldly things. This feeling affects Muslims and non-Muslims. It is obvious why non-Muslims feel like this as they could not be further from fulfilling the purpose of their creation so no matter what they achieve they eventually feel this void in their life. It occurs to those Muslims who may even fulfil their obligatory duties but as they fail to strive to gain and act on the vital knowledge needed to fulfil their purpose correctly they experience this void. In most cases, they do not even understand the Arabic language so performing worship simply does not fill this void. One will not fill this void until they strive to fulfil the purpose of creation which is to gain knowledge on Allah, the Exalted, so that they can obey and worship Him correctly throughout every moment of their life.

## Correct Perception

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a force to take part in the Battle of Muta. He named a commander of this army and two more successors one after the other. The people understood from this that these specific Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would be martyred. Even a Jewish man confirmed from the previous divine teachings that whenever a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, named successors to a commander it meant that they would surely be martyred. One of the successors to the first commander was Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him. Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him, wept when bidding farewell to the people. When he was questioned about his action he replied that his weeping was not due to the love of the world or people but he remembered the hereafter and the promise of Allah, the Exalted, that everyone will encounter Hell but he was not sure how he was going to escape it. Chapter 19 Maryam, verse 71:

*“And there is none of you except he will come to it [Hell]. This is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 326-327.

This incident indicates the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They were always focused on the hereafter and prioritized preparing for it over gathering and hoarding the luxuries of the material world. It is important for Muslims to adopt this correct perception and attitude by understanding the nature of this world and the next.

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.

## **Following is Best**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a force to take part in the Battle of Muta. A member of this force was a Companion, Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered the force to leave early in the morning but Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him, decided to delay his departure so he could offer a prayer behind the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and then catch up to the rest of the army. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, witnessed him present in the Mosque for the prayer he questioned his actions. After learning of his intention he told him that following the order given to him was greater in reward than the entire world. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 327.

This incident indicates the importance of adhering to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, instead of following other teachings and actions even if these are considered good in Islam.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If Muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many Muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied Muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a Muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

## **Strength in Faith**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a force of 3000 soldiers to take part in the Battle of Muta. The army reached and encamped close to Muta where they were informed that the enemy force was around 200,000 in number. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, debated whether to continue with the mission or send a message to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, informing him of the situation and requesting further orders. But Abdullah Bin Rawaha, may Allah be pleased with him, rose and encouraged the army to fight by reminding them that their strength was not in numbers or weapons but it came from Allah, the Exalted, and in His sincere obedience. He promised the army martyrdom or victory. The army agreed and went forth remaining steadfast and eventually they were granted victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 328.

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.”*

## **Consoling Others**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a force of 3000 soldiers to take part in the Battle of Muta. The army reached and encamped close to Muta where they were informed that the enemy force was around 200,000 in number. Many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were martyred but they remained firm and eventually were granted victory. One of their commanders, Jafar Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, was martyred. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of the battle by Allah, the Exalted, even before this news reached Medina. When he visited the family of Jafar Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and informed them of his martyrdom his family began to grieve. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, consoled them and left their house telling the people to attend to the family of Jafar Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and make them food as they were grieving over his loss. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 339.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1601, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who consoles a grief stricken person will be clothed with a garment of honor on Judgment Day.

As facing difficulties is guaranteed for all this is an extremely simple way of obtaining a great reward which does not require much time, energy or

money. This includes striving to aid the family facing a difficulty according to one's means, such as emotional, financial and physical support. A Muslim must gently encourage those facing difficulties to remain patient throughout the ordeal and remind them of the verses of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which discuss the importance and great reward of being patient. They should speak positively by reminding them that things only occur for a good reason even if people fail to understand the wisdom behind them. In reality, a person does not to be a scholar to perform this righteous deed as in most cases a few kind words of support are enough to make someone facing difficulties feel better. And in some cases just physically being there is enough to provide them with the feeling of support even if no words are spoken.

Finally, it is important Muslims correct their intention when performing this righteous deed meaning, do it for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not do it in order to show off to others, such as their relatives, nor do it out of fear of being criticized by others if they fail to do it. Those who act for the sake of others will be told on Judgment Day to gain their reward from those they acted for which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

## **Mourning for Others**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a force of 3000 soldiers to take part in the Battle of Muta. The army reached and encamped close to Muta where they were informed that the enemy force was around 200,000 in number. Many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were martyred but they remained firm and eventually were granted victory. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of the battle by Allah, the Exalted, even before this news reached Medina. When some people of Medina found out about those who were martyred they began to wail out of grief. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed he told people to forbid them from doing so. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 340.

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3127, warns that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade people from wailing.

Unfortunately, some believe it is not permitted to cry in times of difficulty, such as losing a loved one. This is incorrect as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, cried on many occasions when someone passed away. For example, he wept when his son Ibrahim, may Allah be pleased with him, passed away. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3126.

In fact, crying on someone's death is a sign of mercy which Allah, the Exalted, has placed in the hearts of His servants. And only those who show mercy to others will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1284. This same Hadith clearly mentions that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, cried over his grandson who passed away.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2137, advises that a person will not be punished for crying over the death of someone or the grief they feel in their heart. But they may well face punishment if they utter words showing their impatience with the choice of Allah, the Exalted.

It is clear that feeling grief in one's heart or shedding tears is not prohibited in Islam. The things which are prohibited are wailing, showing one's impatience through words or actions, such as tearing one's clothes or shaving one's head in grief. They are severe warnings against those who act in this way. Therefore, one should avoid these actions at all costs. Not only may a person face punishment for acting in this way but if the deceased desired and commanded others to act like this when they passed away they too will be held accountable. But if the deceased did not desire this then they are free of any accountability. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1006. It is common sense to understand that Allah, the Exalted, would not punish someone because of the actions of another when the former did not advise them to act in that manner. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 18:

*“And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another...”*



## **Divine Protection in Both Worlds**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a force of 3000 soldiers to take part in the Battle of Muta. The army reached and encamped close to Muta where they were informed that the enemy force was around 200,000 in number. Many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were martyred but they remained firm and eventually were granted victory. One of their commanders, Jafar Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, was martyred. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of the battle by Allah, the Exalted, even before this news reached Medina. When he visited the family of Jafar Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and informed them of his martyrdom his family began to grieve. The wife of Jafar Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, began to speak about her orphaned children and the lack of support for them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that how could she worry about her family when he was their protector in this world and in the next. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 341.

A Muslim can obtain divine support in this world by sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1081, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims how to gain blessings in their provision, divine support and an improvement in their condition and state.

The first thing is to sincerely repent to Allah, the Exalted, before one dies. As the time of death is unknown this Hadith actually indicates sincerely repenting whenever one commits a sin meaning, repenting without delay. This consists of seeking forgiveness from Allah, the Exalted, and whoever else has been wronged, feeling regret, making a firm promise not to commit the same or a similar sin again. And finally, if possible, to make up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

The next thing advised in the main Hadith is that a Muslim must make use of their time before they become preoccupied with responsibilities, an illness or a difficulty. A Muslim can achieve this by obeying Allah, the Exalted, through fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must hasten to perform righteous deeds within their means as much as possible without delay as the tomorrow they hope for may never come. It is hoped that the one who behaves in this manner will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, when they are no longer in a position to perform extra righteous deeds due to a change in circumstances.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a Muslim must strengthen their bond with Allah, the Exalted, by remembering Him much. True remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, consists of three levels. The first is internal remembrance meaning, sincerity to Him. The second level consists of remembering Allah, the Exalted, by speaking good words and avoiding vain and sinful speech. And the highest level is to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, through one's actions as outlined earlier.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith is giving much charity both hidden and open. This includes both the obligatory and voluntary charity. It is important to note, this means giving charity according to one's means whether it is much or little. Allah, the Exalted, does not observe quantity He observes and judges actions based on quality meaning, one's sincerity. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. This leaves Muslims with no excuses but to give charity according to their means. In addition, it is important to give charity regularly instead of once in a while as regular deeds are more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, even if they are little. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6465. Finally, those who desire to encourage others to give charity can give it publicly. This will lead to them gaining the same reward as those who donate because of their inspiration. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2351. But those who are fearful of showing off, which cancels their reward, should do so privately. Islam has provided many options and opportunities for Muslims to gain much reward which lead to the removal of their burdens in both worlds.

Finally, a Muslim can obtain divine support in the hereafter such as the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4308, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that he is the first person to intercede and the first person whose intercession will be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.

A Muslim should therefore strive to make themselves worthy of the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by performing the actions which result in this such as supplicating for it after hearing the call to prayer. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 679. But this would require one to regularly attend the obligatory prayers at a Mosque instead of offering them at home. The greatest action which will result in the intercession is learning and acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A Muslim should not live in heedlessness by rejecting this duty and then expect intercession on Judgment Day as this is closer to wishful thinking which is blame worthy and of no real value compared to true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted.

Unfortunately, some Muslims who have adopted this wishful thinking expect to obtain Paradise through this intercession even though they do not obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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. These Muslims must realise that even though the intercession is a fact some Muslims who will have their punishment reduced through intercession will still enter Hell. Even a single moment in Hell is truly unbearable. So one should abandon wishful thinking and instead adopt true hope by practically striving in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

## **Ashamed to Lie**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Roman Emperor Heraclius had a dream which indicated that his kingdom would eventually be overcome by a foreign nation. When he investigated he suspected that this indicated the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. At the time he was in Palestine and ordered his men to bring him a man who was related to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who he could question. At the time Abu Sufyan was there on a trading expedition. He and his men were found and brought to Heraclius. Heraclius asked Abu Sufyan to sit in front of him and seated the companions of Abu Sufyan behind him and ordered them to object if Abu Sufyan lied to any of the questions he was asked. Abu Sufyan, who later became Muslim, narrates that even if he lied his men would never have refuted him but he still told the truth as he was a man of dignity and honor and he was therefore ashamed of lying. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 354-356.

It is important to note, at this time Abu Sufyan was not a Muslim yet still disliked lying. Lying is unacceptable whether it is a small lie which is often called a white lie or when one lies as a joke. All of these types of lies are forbidden. In fact, the one who lies to make people laugh, so their aim is not to deceive someone, has been cursed three times in one Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2315.

Another popular lie people often speak believing it is not a sin is when they lie to children. This is undoubtedly a sin according to Hadiths such as the one found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4991. It is plain foolishness to lie to children as they will only adopt this sinful habit from the elder who lies to them. Behaving in this manner shows children lying is acceptable when it is not acceptable according to the teachings of Islam. Only in very rare and extreme cases is lying acceptable for example, lying in order to protect the life of an innocent person.

It is vital to avoid lying as according to one Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, it leads to other sins such as backbiting and mocking people. This behaviour leads one to the gates of Hell. When a person continues to lie they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a great liar. It does not take a scholar to predict what will happen to a person on Judgment day who has been recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a great liar.

All Muslims desire the company of the Angels yet when a person lies they are deprived of their company. In fact, the stench that is omitted from the mouth of a liar causes the Angels to move a mile away from them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1972.

Telling lies which spread to others in society is a such a serious sin that according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7047, if a person does this and fails to repent they will be punished after their death to such an extent that an iron hook will be placed in their mouth and their facial skin will be torn off. Their face will regenerate instantly and the process will then be repeated. This will continuously occur until the Day of Judgment.

To conclude, all Muslims should avoid all forms of lying irrespective of who they are conversing with.

## **A Proof of Prophethood**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Roman Emperor Heraclius had a dream which indicated that his kingdom would eventually be overcome by a foreign nation. When he investigated he suspected that this indicated the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. At the time he was in Palestine and ordered his men to bring him a man who was related to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who he could question. At the time Abu Sufyan was there on a trading expedition. He and his men were found and brought to Heraclius. Heraclius asked Abu Sufyan to sit in front of him and seated the companions of Abu Sufyan behind him and ordered them to object if Abu Sufyan lied to any of the questions he was asked. Abu Sufyan, who later became Muslim, narrates that even if he lied his men would never have refuted him but he still told the truth as he was a man of dignity and honor and he was therefore ashamed of lying. After questioning Abu Sufyan, Heraclius commented, "You (Abu Sufyan) say he (the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him) is of your purest lineage. Allah, the Exalted, selects Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, that way; He only takes men from the purest lines in their people. I asked you whether any other of his (the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him) family members were saying similar things meaning, he is imitating them, you (Abu Sufyan) said no. I asked whether he had some property you might have seized and suggested he might be saying what he is to get you to return it to him. But you said no. I asked you about his followers and you maintain that they are young, powerless and poor. That is how the followers of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, are in every age. I asked you whether those who follow him like and respect him or despise and abandon him. You replied that only rarely does someone follow him then abandon him. In such circumstances the sweetness of faith does not enter a person's heart then leave again. I (Heraclius) asked you about the warfare between you two. You (Abu Sufyan) replied that sometimes it



favors you, sometimes him (the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him). That is how warfare is for the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, yet they win in the end. I asked you if he betrays his word and you said he did not. If what you have said is the truth he will conquer the land beneath these feet of mine.” This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 356-357.

It is important for Muslims to strive to strengthen their faith so that they reach certainty of faith. All Muslims have faith in Islam but the strength of their faith varies from person to person. For example, the one who follows the teachings of Islam because their family told them to is not the same as the one who believes in it through evidence. A person who has heard about something will not believe in it in the same way as the one who has witnessed the thing with their own eyes.

As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all Muslims. One of the reasons for this is that it is the best way a Muslim can strengthen their faith in Islam. This is important to pursue as the stronger one’s certainty of faith the greater the chance they will remain steadfast on the correct path, especially when facing difficulties. In addition, having certainty of faith has been described as one of the best things one can possess in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3849. This knowledge should be obtained by studying the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through a reliable source.

Allah, the Exalted, did not only declare a truth in the Holy Quran but He also provided evidence for it through examples. Not only examples which are to be found in the past nations but examples which have been placed in one's very own life. For example, in the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that sometimes a person loves a thing even though it will cause them trouble if they obtained it. Similarly, they might hate a thing while there is much hidden good in it for them. 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.”*

There are many examples of this truth in history such as the Pact of Hudaibiya. Some Muslims believed this pact, which was made with the non-Muslims of Mecca, would completely favour the latter group. Yet, history clearly shows that it favoured Islam and the Muslims. This event is discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731 and 2732.

If one reflects on their own life they will find many examples when they believed something was good when it was actually bad for them and vice versa. These examples prove the authenticity of this verse and help one's faith strengthen.

Another example is found in chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 46:

*“It will be, on the Day they see it (Judgement Day) as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof.”*

If one turns the pages of history they will clearly observe how great empires came and went. But when they left they passed away in such a way as if they were only on Earth for a moment. All but a few of their signs have faded away as if they were never present on Earth in the first place. Similarly, when one reflects on their own life they will realise that no matter how old they are and no matter how slow certain days might have felt overall their life so far has passed in a flash. Understanding the truthfulness of this verse strengthens one's certainty of faith and this inspires them to prepare for the hereafter before their time runs out.

The Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, are full of such examples. Therefore, one should strive to learn and act on these divine teachings so that they adopt certainty of faith. The one who achieves this will not be shaken by any difficulty they face and will remain steadfast on the path which leads to the gates of Paradise. 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...”*

## **Compromising on the Truth**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Roman Emperor Heraclius had a dream which indicated that his kingdom would eventually be overcome by a foreign nation. When he investigated he suspected that this indicated the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. At the time he was in Palestine and ordered his men to bring him a man who was related to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who he could question. After questioning the non-Muslim leader of Mecca Abu Sufyan he became further convinced at the authenticity of the claim of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Eventually, Heraclius received a letter from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, inviting him to accept Islam. Heraclius questioned a Christian scholar who could read Hebrew about his views. The scholar told Heraclius that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was indeed the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, who they were waiting for. Heraclius became convinced of Islam and then summoned the leaders of his nation into his capital chamber while he himself was seated in a higher room out of fear of them. He told them that they should all follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as he is the promised final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, their divine scriptures have spoken of in detail. He urged them to accept him so that they succeed in this world and the next. But all of the leaders rejected his plea and began to leave the chamber. He summoned them back and then declared that he was only testing their loyalty to their faith and him. They then fell in prostration to him in happiness and left. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, *the Life of the Prophet*, Volume 3, Page 357.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam.

Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## **Seek Unity**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched a force under the command of Amr Bin Al As, may Allah be pleased with him. When he reached Dhu Al Salalsil he noted the enemy number and sent a message to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, requesting reinforcements. He dispatched another force under the command of Abu Ubayda Bin Jarrah, may Allah be pleased with him. When the second force reached Dhu Al Salalsil the two forces disagreed on who would lead them and declared that each force should be led separately. But Abu Ubayda Bin Jarrah, may Allah be pleased with him, was a man of fine disposition and easy-going nature and so he agreed to let Amr Bin Al As, may Allah be pleased with him, command both forces as he desired to unify the men and avoid arguing. When this news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he supplicated for the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, on behalf of Abu Ubayda Bin Harrah, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 370-372.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6541, discusses some aspects of creating unity within society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, firstly advised Muslims not to envy each other.

This is when a person desires to obtain the very blessing someone else possesses meaning, they desire for the owner to lose the blessing. And it involves disliking the fact that the owner was given the blessing by Allah, the Exalted, instead of them. Some only desire this to occur in their hearts without showing it through their actions or speech. If they dislike their thought and feeling it is hoped that they will not be held accountable for their envy. Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when a person strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing.

Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feeling and if they strive to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing they possess. Even though this type is not sinful yet it is disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and only praiseworthy if it involves a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first is when a person envies the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second is when a person envies the one who uses their wisdom and knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

The evil type of envy, as mentioned earlier, directly challenges the choice of Allah, the Exalted. The envious person behaves as if Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake giving a particular blessing to someone else instead of them. This is why it is a major sin. In fact, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903, envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.



An envious Muslim must strive to act on the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. It advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. An envious Muslim should therefore, strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person they envy, such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

Another thing advised in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is that Muslims should not hate each other. This means one should only dislike something if Allah, the Exalted, dislikes it. This has been described as an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. A Muslim should therefore, not dislike things or people according to their own desires. If one dislikes another according to their own desires they should never allow it to affect their speech or actions as it is sinful. A Muslim should strive to remove the feeling by treating the other according to the teachings of Islam meaning, with respect and kindness. A Muslim should remember that other people are not perfect just like they are not perfect. And if others possess a bad characteristic they will undoubtedly possess good qualities also. Therefore, a Muslim should advise others to abandon their bad characteristics but continue to love the good qualities they possess.

Another point must be made on this topic. A Muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their

scholar's opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a Muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims should not turn away from each other. This means they should not sever ties with other Muslims over worldly issues thereby refusing to support them according to the teachings of Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6077, it is unlawful for a Muslim to sever ties with another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. In fact, the one who severs ties for more than a year over a worldly issue is considered like the one who has killed another Muslim. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4915. Severing ties with others is only lawful in matters of faith. But even then a Muslim should continue to advise the other Muslim to sincerely repent and only avoid their company if they refuse to change for the better. They should still support them on lawful things when they are requested to do so as this act of kindness may inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims are commanded to be like brothers to one another. This is only achievable if they obey the previous advice given in this Hadith and strive to fulfil their duty towards other Muslims according to the teachings of Islam, such as helping others in matters of good and warning them from evil matters. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, advises that a Muslim should fulfil the following rights of other Muslims: they are to return the Islamic greeting of peace, to visit the sick, to take part in their funeral prayers and to reply to the sneezer who praises Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim must learn and fulfil all the rights other people, especially other Muslims, have over them.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a Muslim should not wrong, forsake or hate another Muslim. The sins a person commits should be hated but the sinner should not be as they may sincerely repent at any time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4884, that whoever humiliates another Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will humiliate them. And whoever protects a Muslim from humiliation will be protected by Allah, the Exalted.

The negative characteristics mentioned in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning can develop when one adopts pride. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, pride is when one looks down on others in

contempt. The proud person sees themselves as perfect while seeing others as imperfect. This prevents them from fulfilling the rights of others and encourages them to dislike others.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that true piety is not in one's physical appearance, such as wearing beautiful clothes, but it is an internal characteristic. This internal characteristic manifests outwardly in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is purified the whole body becomes purified but when the spiritual heart is corrupt the whole body becomes corrupt. It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge based on outward appearances, such as wealth, but He considers the intentions and actions of people. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6542. Therefore, a Muslim must strive to adopt internal piety through learning and acting on the teachings of Islam so that it manifests outwardly in the way they interact with Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that it is a sin for a Muslim to hate another Muslim. This hatred applies to worldly things and not disliking others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, loving and hating for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of perfecting one's faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. But even then a Muslim must show respect to others in all cases and dislike only their sins without actually hating the person. In addition, their dislike must never cause them to act against the teachings of Islam as this would prove their hatred is based on their own desires and not for the sake of Allah, the

Exalted. The root cause of despising others for worldly reasons is pride. It is vital to understand that an atom's worth of pride is enough to take one to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a Muslim's life, property and honour are all sacred. A Muslim must not violate any of these rights without a just reason. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true Muslim until they protect other people, including non-Muslims, from their harmful speech and actions. And a true believer is the one who keeps their evil away from the lives and property of others. Whoever violates these rights will not be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then justice will be established on Judgment Day whereby the good deeds of the oppressor will be given to the victim and if necessary the sins of the victim will be given to the oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should treat others exactly how they want people to treat them. This will lead to much blessings for an individual and create unity within their society.

## **Failing to Uphold Agreements**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 377.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that breaking promises is an aspect of hypocrisy.

The greatest of promises a Muslim has made is with Allah, the Exalted, which is to obey Him sincerely. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. All other promises made with people must also be kept unless one has a valid excuse especially, the ones a parent makes with children. Breaking promises only teaches children bad character and encourages them to believe being deceitful is an acceptable characteristic to possess. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2227, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will be against the one who makes a promise in His name and then breaks it without a valid excuse. How can the one who has Allah, the Exalted, against them on Judgment Day possibly succeed?

## **Thinking Things Through**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca became aware that this news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they dispatched one of their leaders to Medina, Abu Sufyan, in order to reaffirm and extend the pact as they became extremely worried about the consequences of their treachery. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 379.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2012, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking things through is from Allah, the Exalted, while being hasty is from the Devil.

This is an extremely important teaching to understand and act on as Muslims who perform much righteous deeds often destroy them through hastiness. For example, they may utter some evil words in a fit of rage which may cause them to plunge into Hell on Judgment Day. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

The vast majority of sins and difficulties, such as arguments, occur because people fail to think things through and instead act in a hasty way. The sign of intelligence is when one thinks before speaking or acting and only precedes when they know their speech or action is good and beneficial in worldly or religious matters.

Even though, a Muslim should not delay in performing righteous deeds yet, they should still think things through before performing them. This is because a righteous deed may receive no reward simply because its conditions and etiquettes have not been fulfilled because of one's hastiness. In this respect, one should only move forward in any matter after they have thought things through.

The one who behaves in this manner will not only minimize their sins and increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, but they will minimize the difficulties they encounter, such as arguments and disagreements, in all aspects of their life.



## **Sincerity to Islam First**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting another tribe who attacked a tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca became aware that this news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they dispatched one of their leaders to Medina, Abu Sufyan, in order to reaffirm and extend the pact as they became extremely worried about the consequences of their treachery. Abu Sufyan spoke to many of the senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, urging them to intercede on his behalf to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He listed the different affiliations he had with them in order to win them over such as tribal and kinship affiliations but they all replied in the same way. They refused to compromise on their faith in order to please him and did not desire to convince the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to renew the pact or not to renew it. They instead left the decision to their leader trusting in his divinely guided choice. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 381-382.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam. Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## **Private Conversations**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. He often withheld military tactical information from the general public in order to protect the city of Medina so he informed his wife, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, to prepare food for his expedition but told her to keep it a secret. When her father, Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, visited his daughter while the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had left the house, he observed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, preparing food. He questioned her over her actions but she remained silent. He kept asking if the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to leave for an expedition and listed many locations. But Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, remained silent. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 382.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1959, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that private conversations are a trust which must be protected.

Unfortunately, many have the bad habit of divulging the private conversations of people to others. This is an incredibly bad characteristic to possess as it contradicts the attitude of a true Muslim. Many do this with their close relatives believing it is acceptable when it is clearly not. A Muslim should always keep the words spoken in a conversation secret unless they are fully sure the person they conversed with would not mind the information being mentioned to a third party. If they would then doing this betrays them which contradicts being sincere to them. Being sincere to others has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. It is important to act on the main Hadith as it prevents sins such as backbiting and gossiping and prevents negative feelings being developed for each other. These all only lead to fractured and broken relationships. If one honestly reflects on their life they will realize that the majority of the people they have felt negative feelings towards occurred because of what they were told about them not what they directly witnessed about them. Divulging private conversations prevents unity amongst people especially relatives. And unity has been commanded in many teachings of Islam such as the one declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6065. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 58:

*“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due...”*

## **Greatness is in Following**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. The army left during the Holy month of Ramadan so they were all fasting. As the journey was long and difficult the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed that some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were suffering from the fasting but they were waiting to see what he would do. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, broke his fast publicly by calling for a vessel of water and drinking from it. Some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, followed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and broke their fast as well but some continued fasting. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of this he criticized those who continued fasting as they did not follow what he had done. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 388.

Even though breaking or continuing fasting were not sins those who continued fasting were criticized. This is because superiority lies in strictly following the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If Muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many Muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied Muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a Muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

## **Superiority is Not in Appearance**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. The army made several stops before reaching Mecca one of these places was Al Aqaba. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched some men to gather fruit from the local trees. While one of the Companions, Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, was climbing a tree picking its fruits some men poked fun at him when they observed his small and thin legs. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commented that his thin legs were going to weigh more in the Scales of Judgement Day than the mountain of Uhud. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 390.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6543, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge people based on their outward appearance or their wealth instead He observes and judges people's inward intention and their physical actions.



The first thing to note is that a Muslim should always correct their intention when performing any deed as Allah, the Exalted, will only reward them when they perform righteous deeds for His sake. Those who perform deeds for the sake of other people and things will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for on Judgment Day, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this Hadith indicates the importance of equality in Islam. A person is not superior to others by worldly things such as their ethnicity or wealth. Even though, many Muslims have erected these barriers such as social castes and sects thereby believing some are better than others Islam has clearly rejected this concept and declared that in this respect all people are equal in the sight of Islam. The only thing which makes one Muslim superior to another is their piety meaning, how much they fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. 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 busy themselves in obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His rights and the rights of people and not believe that something they possess or belong to will somehow save them from punishment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, that the Muslim who lacks in righteous deeds meaning, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, will not be increased in rank because of their lineage. In reality, this applies to all

worldly things such as wealth, ethnicity, gender or social brotherhoods and castes.

## **Sanctuary not Vengeance**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. The army made several stops before reaching Mecca one of these places was Marr Al Zahran, close to Mecca. Some senior members of Mecca travelled to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and accepted Islam. One of these men was Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, also declared that whoever out of the non-Muslims of Mecca entered the homes of these senior members of Mecca would be safe from the Muslim army. And whoever entered their own homes and locked their doors would be safe and finally whoever sought refuge in the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, would be safe from the Muslim army. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 391-392.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

*“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”*

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted,

does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

## **Islam is Sincere Obedience**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. The army made several stops before reaching Mecca one of these places was Marr Al Zahran, close to Mecca. Here some senior members of Mecca travelled to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and accepted Islam. One of these men was Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him. During this visit Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, observed the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, taking part in the congregational prayer behind the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He asked the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, that would the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, do anything the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded? Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, replied in the affirmative and added that if he ordered them to give up food and drink they would obey him. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, performed ablution the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, scrambled for the leftover ablution water in order to derive blessings from it. Witnessing this Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, declared that he had never seen anything like this before not even in the palaces of the Persian or Roman Kings. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 394.

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 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.



## **Disobedience Leads to Failure**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, a leader of Mecca became astonished at their power and number. He commented that he saw many faces he did not recognize who had come to conquer Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that this was only a consequence of the actions of the non-Muslims. The Muslim army believed in him when the non-Muslims of Mecca called him a liar and they assisted him when the non-Muslims of Mecca exiled him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 393.

It is important for Muslims to understand a simple yet profound lesson namely, they will never succeed in this world or the next in worldly or religious matters through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Since the dawn of time to this age and till the end of time no person has ever achieved true success nor will they ever through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious when one turns the pages of history. Therefore, when a Muslim is in a situation which they desire to achieve a positive and successful outcome from they should never choose to disobey Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of how tempting or easy it may seem to be. Even if one is advised by their close friends and relatives to do so as there is no

obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. And in truth they will never be able to protect them from Allah, the Exalted, and His punishment in either this world or the next. The same way Allah, the Exalted, grants success to those who obey Him He removes a successful outcome from those who disobey Him even if this removal takes time to witness. A Muslim should not be fooled as this will occur sooner or later. The Holy Quran has made it extremely clear that an evil plan or action only encompasses the doer even if this punishment is delayed. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

*“...but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people...”*

Therefore, no matter how difficult the situation and choice Muslims should always choose the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters as this alone will lead to true success in both worlds even if this success is not obvious immediately.

## **Obedience in Ease and Success**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. One of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, declared that this day was a day of great battle where sanctuary for their enemies was disallowed. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of this he corrected his words by declaring that today was in fact the day Allah, the Exalted, glorifies His House, the Kaaba, a day by which the Kaaba will be adorned meaning, with sincere worship of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 394.

This declaration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reminds Muslims that they should maintain sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, in times of ease and success. Muslims often increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, such as attending the Mosques for the congregational prayers or reciting more spiritual exercises in times of difficulty. But in times of ease they often relax and become lazy. But it is important to note, that generally it is more important to be more on guard and increase one's obedience during times of ease than times of difficulty. This is because one often sins more during times of ease than difficulty, such as

abandoning their obligatory duties. If one reviews the different misguided people in history, such as Pharaoh and Quroon they will observe that their sins only multiplied during times of ease. Someone who is facing a difficulty where they are stuck and have no option but to patiently wait for relief is less likely to sin as they desire to be relieved of their difficulty. Whereas, a person experiencing times of ease will be in a better position to enjoy and over indulge in worldly things which often leads to sins. For example, a person facing poverty is less likely to sin as many sins require wealth. Whereas, a wealthy person is in an easier position to commit those sins, such as purchasing alcohol or drugs. Therefore, Muslims should take note of this and ensure they maintain or even increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, during times of ease so that they do not fall into sins and disobedience.

In addition, the one who is obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands and refraining from His prohibitions during times of ease will gain the support of Allah, the Exalted, during their times of difficulty which will aid them to overcome them successfully. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

*“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.”*

## **Pinnacle of Humility**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, rode into the proximity of the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, he bowed so low out of humility to Allah, the Exalted, that his face almost touched his saddle. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 397.

The servants of Allah, the Exalted, have understood that anything good they possess is solely because Allah, the Exalted, granted it to them. And any evil they are saved from is because Allah, the Exalted, protected them. Is it not foolish to be proud of something that does not belong to someone? Just like a person does not boast about a sports car which does not belong to them Muslims must realize nothing in reality belongs to them. This attitude ensures one remains humble at all times. The humble servants of Allah, the Exalted, fully believe in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673, which declares that the righteous deeds of a person will not take them to Paradise. Only the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, can cause this to occur. This is because every righteous deed is only possible when Allah, the Exalted, provides one with

the knowledge, strength, opportunity and inspiration to perform it. Even the acceptance of the deed is dependent on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. When one bears this in mind it saves them from pride and inspires them to adopt humility. One should always remember that being humble is not a sign of weakness as Islam has encouraged one to defend themselves if necessary. In other words, Islam teaches Muslims to be humble without weakness. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, that whoever humbles themselves before Allah, the Exalted, will be raised by Him. So in reality, humility leads to honor in both worlds. One only needs to reflect on the most humble of the creation to understand this fact namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Allah, the Exalted, has clearly ordered people by ordering the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to adopt this important quality. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verse 215:

*“And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers.”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led a humble life. For example, he happily carried out the domestic duties at home thereby proving these chores are gender-neutral. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 538.

Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63, shows that humility is an inner characteristic that manifests outwards such as the way one walks. This is discussed in another verse chapter 31 Luqman, verse 18:

*“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly...”*

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Paradise is for the humble servants who possess no trace of pride. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 83:

*“That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1998, that whoever possesses an atom’s worth of pride will not enter Paradise. Only Allah, the Exalted, has the right to be proud as He is the Creator, Sustainer and Owner of the entire universe.

It is important to note, pride is when one believes they are superior to others and rejects the truth when it is presented to them as they dislike accepting the truth when it comes from other than them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4092.





## **Make Things Easy**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, led his elderly father to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that he could accept Islam. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, saw them coming he asked Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, why did he not leave his elderly father at home and he himself would have gone to visit him. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that it was more fitting for his father to come to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then the other way round. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 398-399.

Even though Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, spoke the truth the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated the importance of making things easy for others. Unfortunately, some Muslims always strive to extract their full rights and more from others. In this day and age due to ignorance it has become more difficult to fulfil the rights of people, such as one's parents. Even though a Muslim has no excuse but to strive to fulfil them it is important for Muslims to be merciful with each other. As

advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6655, Allah, the Exalted, shows mercy to those who are merciful to others.

One aspect of this mercy is for a Muslim not to demand their full rights from others. Instead, they should use the means such as their physical or financial strength to help themselves and make things easy for others. In some cases, when a Muslim demands their full rights from others and they fail to fulfil them it may lead to their punishment. In order to be merciful to others they should therefore only demand their rights in some cases. This does not mean a Muslim should not strive to fulfil the rights of others but it means they should try to overlook and excuse the people they have rights over. For example, a parent can excuse their adult child from a particular house chore and do it themselves if they possess the means to do so without troubling themselves, especially if their child returns home from work exhausted. This leniency and mercy will not only cause Allah, the Exalted, to be more merciful to them but it will also increase the love and respect people have for them. The one who always demands their full rights is not a sinner but they will lose out on this reward and outcome if they behave in this manner.

Muslims should make things easy for others and hope Allah, the Exalted, will make things easy for them in this world and in the next.

## Compassion

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had previously declared that whoever out of the non-Muslims of Mecca entered the home of Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, would be safe from the Muslim army. And whoever entered their own homes and locked their doors would be safe and finally whoever sought refuge in the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, would be safe from the Muslim army. He ordered the army to only fight those who fought them but listed a few people who were to be executed if found. These people were not extended security as their crimes were too enormous such as treason, which even in this day and age is a capital crime. But when the Muslim army entered Mecca one of these men fled to a Companion, Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, begging him for security. He in turn took the man to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and pleaded on his behalf. Even though his crimes were serious the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, still pardoned him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 402.

Throughout the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Muslims have been advised to be merciful to others. For example, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924, advises that those who show mercy to the creation will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to note, that showing mercy is not only through one's actions, such as donating wealth to the poor. It in fact encompasses every aspect of one's life and interaction with others, such as one's words. This is why Allah, the Exalted, warns those who show mercy to others by donating charity that failing to show mercy through their speech, such as counting their favours done to others, only cancels their reward. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

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

True mercy is shown in everything: one's facial expression, one's glance and the tone of their speech. This was the full mercy shown by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is therefore how Muslims must act.

In addition, showing mercy is so important that Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear in the Holy Quran that even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possessed countless beautiful and noble

characteristics yet, the one which attracted the hearts of people towards him and Islam was mercy. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

It clearly warns that without mercy people would have fled from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If this was the case in respect to him even though he possessed countless other beautiful characteristics how can Muslims, who do not possess such noble characteristics, expect to have a positive impact on others, such as their children, without showing true mercy?

Simply put, Muslims should treat others how they wish to be treated by Allah, the Exalted, and others, which is undoubtedly with true and full mercy.

## **Forgiving and Moving On**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. A staunch enemy of Islam who from day one took every opportunity to harm the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Ikrima Bin Abu Jahl, fled Mecca on the day it was conquered. His wife accepted Islam and requested for his protection from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which he granted. She located Ikrima and told him what occurred. Even though he found it difficult to believe he returned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and accepted Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, overlooked and forgave his past behaviour against him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 403-404.

All Muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same Muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car

accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many Muslims often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a Muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*



## **True Nobility**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the door of the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, he declared that every advantage of ancestry or wealth that might be claimed had been destroyed beneath his feet. He added that Allah, the Exalted, had removed pride of the age of ignorance and veneration of ancestors. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 407-408.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant Muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

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

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one's race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a Muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of

Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these Muslims.

## **Forgiving Leads to Elevation**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the door of the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, he questioned the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca about what they hoped from him. They replied that they expected good treatment from him as he was their noble brother and a son of a noble man. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that they were free to leave unharmed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 407-408.

This event is connected to chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 92:

*"He said, "No blame will there be upon you today. May Allah forgive you; and He is the most merciful of the merciful."*

This verse mentions an incredibly important characteristic to adopt. This is to be forbearing when one encounters difficulties especially, difficulties from people. One should never reply evil with evil as this contradicts the behaviour of a successful Muslim. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

Replying good with good is nothing special as even animals show kindness in return for kindness. What is special is showing good in reply to evil especially, when a person is in a position to take revenge, just like the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, was. In reality, behaving in this positive manner benefits oneself as the one who learns to let things go and forgive others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

In fact, as proven by this great event according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, the one who forgives others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be raised in honour by Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, this verse indicates that a person should not believe they are superior to the people they have forgiven. As in reality the superior one is the person who is forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. The one who adopts this type of pride and fails to repent will enter Hell according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4174.

Finally, this verse indicates that a person should never lose hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. As long as a Muslim sincerely repents and strives to be better they should hope for forgiveness. But a Muslim should not continue sinning without trying to change and expect Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them as this is not hope it is merely wishful thinking.

Sincere repentance includes feeling remorse, seeking forgiveness from Allah, the Exalted, and if necessary from people, sincerely promising not to return to the same or similar sin and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

## **Islam is Gentleness**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, carrying the keys to the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, after taking it from the non-Muslim who was previously in charge of the keys, Uthman Bin Talha. Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, requested to keep the keys with himself so that he could become the custodian of the Kaaba. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, summoned Uthman Bin Talha, and returned the keys to him and told him that this day was a day of piety and good faith. Uthman Bin Talha, may Allah be pleased with him, then accepted Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 408.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2701, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves gentleness in all matters.

This is an important characteristic which must be adopted by all Muslims. It should be used in all aspects of one's life. It is important to understand that being gentle benefits the Muslim themselves more than anyone else. Not only will they receive blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, and minimize the amount of sins they commit, as a gentle person is less likely to commit sins through their speech and actions, but it benefits them in worldly affairs also. For example, the person who treats their spouse gently will gain more love and respect in return than if they treated their spouse in a harsh manner. Children are more likely to obey and treat their parents with respect when they are treated gently. Colleagues at work are more likely to help the one who is gentle with them. The examples are endless. Only in very rare cases is a harsh attitude required. In most cases, gentle behaviour will be much more effective than a harsh attitude.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possesses countless good qualities yet, Allah, the exalted, specifically highlighted his gentleness in the Holy Quran as it is a key ingredient required to affect others in a positive way. Chapter 3 Al Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

A Muslim must remember that they will never be better than a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, nor will the person they interact with be worse than Pharaoh yet, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Musa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them, to deal with Pharaoh in a kind manner. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:



*“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].”*

Therefore, a Muslim should adopt gentleness in all affairs as it leads to much reward and affects others, such as one's family, in a positive way.

## **Adhere to Islamic Teachings**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, entered the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, he witnessed physical representations of the Angels and people. He saw how the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, had been drawn holding a divining arrow (something associated with polytheism). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, became angry and declared that the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, had nothing to do with these things and that he was neither a Christian nor a Jew. He added that he was an upright Muslim and not a polytheist. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then gave the command for these physical representations to be destroyed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 408.

Muslims should not follow and adopt the customary practices of non-Muslims. The more Muslims do this the less they will follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is quite evident in this day and age as many Muslims have adopted the cultural practices of other nations which has caused them to become distant from the teachings of Islam. For example, one only needs to observe the modern Muslim wedding to

observe how many non-Muslim cultural practices have been adopted by Muslims. What makes this worse is that many Muslims cannot differentiate between Islamic practices based on the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Because of this non-Muslims cannot differentiate between them either which has caused great problems for Islam. For example, honour killings is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam yet because of the ignorance of Muslims and their habit of adopting non-Muslim cultural practices Islam is blamed every time an honour killing occurs in society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, removed the social barriers in the form of casts and brotherhoods in order to unite people yet ignorant Muslims have resurrected them by adopting the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Simply put, the more cultural practices Muslims adopt the less they will act on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

## Superiority and Success

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. At the time 360 idols of worship were placed around the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, struck each one with his staff while declaring that the truth had come and falsehood had gone. The truth had come and falsehood was powerless. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 408-409.

Even though the number of Muslims have increased over time it is obvious that the strength of Muslims has only decreased. Each Muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith believes in the authenticity of the Holy Quran as doubting it would cause them to lose their faith. In the following verse Allah, the Exalted, has given the key to obtaining superiority and success which would remove the weakness and grief Muslims are experiencing all around the world. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 139:

*“So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.”*

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Muslims only need to become true believers in order to achieve this superiority and success in both worlds. True belief involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and those towards people, such as loving for others what one loves for themselves which has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. This requires one to learn and act on Islamic teachings. Through this attitude was success and superiority granted to the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. And if Muslims desire to achieve it then they must return to this rightly guided attitude. As Muslims believe in the Holy Quran they should understand this simple teaching and act on it.

## **No Racism in Islam**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him, to announce the Call to Prayer from the roof of the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 411.

It is important to note that Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him, was an Ethiopian and former slave and therefore was regarded as lowly and insignificant according to the society of that time. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have easily given someone who was regarded noble by the society of that time the order to announce the Call to Prayer but he specifically chose Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6543, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge people based on their outward appearance or

their wealth instead He observes and judges people's inward intention and their physical actions.

The first thing to note is that a Muslim should always correct their intention when performing any deed as Allah, the Exalted, will only reward them when they perform righteous deeds for His sake. Those who perform deeds for the sake of other people and things will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for on Judgment Day, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this Hadith indicates the importance of equality in Islam. A person is not superior to others by worldly things such as their ethnicity or wealth. Even though, many Muslims have erected these barriers such as social castes and sects thereby believing some are better than others Islam has clearly rejected this concept and declared that in this respect all people are equal in the sight of Islam. The only thing which makes one Muslim superior to another is their piety meaning, how much they fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. 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 busy themselves in obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His rights and the rights of people and not believe that something they possess or belong to will somehow save them from punishment. The

Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, that the Muslim who lacks in righteous deeds meaning, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, will not be increased in rank because of their lineage. In reality, this applies to all worldly things such as wealth, ethnicity, gender or social brotherhoods and castes.



## **The Friends of Prophethood**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. After witnessing this great victory the Companions of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, sadly questioned each other whether the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would now stay in Mecca or return with them to Medina. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was notified of this he told them that he would live where they lived and die where they died. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 415-416.

This was a demonstration of the great love the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had for the Companions of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, in particular. They helped and aided him when his own relatives turned on him. They offered him security and sanctuary in their city when his own people exiled him. Muslims must strive to adopt the characteristics that are beloved to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, if they wish to follow in the footsteps of these great Companions, may Allah be pleased with them.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2347, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that his true friend is the one who possesses the following characteristics.

The first characteristic is that they strive and obtain only what they require in order to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents while avoiding excessiveness, waste and extravagance.

The next characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith is that they have a good share in the prayer. This means they establish their obligatory prayers by fulfilling them correctly with all their conditions and etiquettes, such as offering them on time. This also includes establishing the voluntary prayers which are based on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as the voluntary night prayer. This is in fact the best prayer after the obligatory prayers according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1614.

The next thing characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that this Muslim obeys Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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, in public and in private. Doing so in private indicates a person's sincerity to Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they only perform righteous deeds for His sake. This is the one who firmly remembers that no matter where they are the inner and outer aspects of their being is constantly being observed by Allah, the Exalted. If one persists on this belief they will adopt excellence of faith which is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. It means they act, such as

performing the prayer, as if they can observe Allah, the Exalted, watching them. This encourages righteous deeds and prevents sins.

The next characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith is that they avoid obtaining any type of fame or social honor. According to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, this desire is more destructive to a Muslim's faith than the destruction two hungry wolves would cause to a herd of sheep. A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than their craving for wealth. A person will even spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and prestige.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise the hereafter over the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but the one who receives it without asking for it will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment.

This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worse type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, warns that this person will go to Hell.

Therefore, it is safer for a Muslim to avoid the craving for excess wealth and status as they are two things which can lead to the destruction of their faith by distracting them from preparing adequately for the hereafter.

The final characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith is that their death comes quickly, their mourners are few and the inheritance they leave behind is small.

Their mourners are few as they avoided seeking social honor and preferred to remain anonymous as they feared showing off their righteous deeds to others. But the few mourners they do have are far better than the many the rich and famous have. Their few mourners are sincere in their sadness and genuinely supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, for their forgiveness whereas the many mourners of the rich and famous do not behave in this manner.

Their inheritance is small as they directed the vast majority of their blessings towards the hereafter by using them in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. They understood that anything they left behind would fall into the hands of others who would enjoy the blessings while they, the deceased, will be held accountable for obtaining it. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, warns that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds accompany them in

their lonely grave. Therefore, they concentrate on obtaining righteous deeds by using their blessings correctly and avoid misusing them thereby committing sins. Even though, they leave little behind as inheritance they in fact take a lot with them to the hereafter in order to support themselves in their moment of need. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 18:

*“O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow...”*

## **Objecting to Error**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched a group as missionaries and not as soldiers to nearby areas in order to invite people towards Islam and to alert all the non-Muslims that warfare between Islam and non-Muslims had ended. The leader of this group approached a tribe but was met with verbal resistance. He made an error in judgement and ordered that some of the tribesmen be arrested and executed perhaps for their past crimes. Some of the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, strongly objected to this command. When this news eventually reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he was greatly annoyed at the leader and ordered for the tribe to be financially compensated. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 423-424.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised the importance of objecting to evil things in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4340. This Hadith clearly shows that it is a duty on all Muslims to object to all forms of evil according to their strength and means. The lowest level, as mentioned in this Hadith, is rejecting the evil with one's heart.

This shows internally approving evil actions is one of the ugliest of those things which are forbidden. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4345, that the one who is present when an evil is

committed and denounces it is like the one who was not present. But the one who was absent and approved the evil deed is like the one who was present when it was committed.

The first two aspects of objecting to evil, mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion, are through one's physical actions and speech. This is only a duty on a Muslim who has the strength to do so for example, they will not be harmed by their actions or words.

It is important to note, objecting to evil with one's hand does not refer to fighting. It refers to correcting the evil actions of others, such as returning the rights of someone which have been unlawfully violated. The one who is in a position to do so yet, refrains from doing so has been warned of a punishment in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4338.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised Muslims in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2191, that they should not fear the creation in respect to speaking the truth. In fact, the one who allows the fear of the creation to prevent them from objecting to evil things has been described as the one who hates themselves and will be criticized by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4008. It is important to note, this does not refer to the one who remains silent out of fear of being harmed as this is an acceptable excuse but it refers to the person who remains silent because of the status people hold in their eyes.

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4341, advises that a person can give up objecting to evil things through their actions and speech when others obey their greed, follow their incorrect opinions and desires and when they prefer the material world over the hereafter. It does not take a scholar to conclude this time has arrived. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 105.

*“O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided...”*

But it is important to note, a Muslim should continue with this important duty in respect to their dependents as this is a duty on them according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928, and in respect to those they feel physically and verbally safe from, as this is the superior attitude.

Objecting to evil things which are apparent is what the main Hadith under discussion refers to. Meaning, it does not grant permission to Muslims to spy on others in order to find evil things to object to. Spying and anything associated with it in this respect are forbidden. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed...do not spy...”*



It is important to note, that a Muslim must object to evil according to the teachings of Islam and not their own desires. A Muslim may believe they are acting for sake of Allah, the Exalted, when they are not. This is proven when they object to evil in a way which contradicts the teachings of Islam. In fact, what is considered a good deed may well become a sin because of this negative attitude.

A Muslim must object to evil in a gentle and fair way preferably in private in accordance to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The opposite of these characteristics will only push people away from sincerely repenting and may lead to further sins as a result of angering them.

## **Justice for All**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. While he was still in Mecca a woman from a noble family was caught committing theft which was serious enough to warrant the legal punishment of Islam. The noble family approached a Companion, Usama Bin Zayd, may Allah be pleased with him, and urged him to intercede on her behalf to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When this occurred the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, became greatly angered and criticized Usama, may Allah be pleased with him, for trying to reduce the legal punishment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then addressed the community and warned them that the previous nations were destroyed as the authorities would punish the weak when they broke the law but would pardon the rich and influential. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, being the head of state declared that if his own daughter committed a crime he would enforce the full legal punishment on her. Then he commanded for the woman to be punished according to the law. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 348-349 and in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6787.

One of the major reasons why society seems to be digressing is because people have abandoned acting justly. Even though members of the general public might not be in a position to advise their leaders to remain just in their actions but they can influence them indirectly by acting justly in all their dealings and actions. For example, a Muslim must act justly in respect to their dependents, such as their children, by treating them equally. This has been specifically advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3544. They should act justly in all their business dealings irrespective of who they deal with. If people act with justice on an

individual level then communities can change for the better and in turn those who are in influential positions, such as politicians, will act justly whether they desire to or not.

## **Striving and Good Intention**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that there was no longer any migration from Mecca meaning, migration from there was no longer a duty on Muslims as it had now become an abode of Islam. But there was only striving in the cause of Allah, the Exalted, and a Muslim's intentions that remained in effect. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 433.

This incident reminds Muslims the importance of remaining steadfast whenever they are attacked by their enemies namely, the Devil, their inner Devil and those who invite them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should not turn their back on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whenever they are tempted by these enemies. They should instead remain steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is achieved by avoiding the places, things and people who invite and tempt them towards sins and the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Avoiding the traps of the Devil is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. The same way traps on a path are only avoided by possessing knowledge of them similarly; Islamic knowledge is required to avoid the traps of the Devil. For example, a Muslim might spend much time reciting the Holy Quran but because of their ignorance they might destroy their righteous deeds without realising it through sins such as, backbiting. A Muslim is bound to face these attacks so they should therefore prepare for them through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return gain an uncountable reward. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed right guidance for those who struggle in this way for His sake. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

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

Whereas facing these attacks with ignorance and disobedience will only lead one to difficulties and disgrace in both worlds. The same way a soldier that possesses no weapons to defend himself would be defeated; an ignorant Muslim will have no weapon to defend himself when facing these attacks which will result in their defeat. Whereas, the knowledgeable Muslim is provided with the most powerful weapon which cannot be overcome or beaten namely, sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved through sincerely gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

In addition, the importance of intention is also highlighted in this incident.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number

1. A Muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all Muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

## **Eliminating Corruption**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, requested a non-Muslim, Safwan Bin Umayya, to loan the Muslim army weapons and armor for the battle. Safwan asked if the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was planning on taking the equipment by force as he had now control over Mecca. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, promised him that it was only a loan and he would return everything back to him. After the battle ended he did fulfill his promise and Safwan Bin Umayya, may Allah be pleased with him, then accepted Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 439-440.

A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4019, warns that when the general public cheats each other financially Allah, the Exalted, punishes them by appointing oppressive leaders over them. One aspect of this oppression is corruption which causes the general public great distress. The same Hadith warns that when the general public break their covenant of sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, then they will be overpowered by their enemies who will illegally confiscate their wealth and property from them. Again, this is an aspect of corruption where people of influence, such as government officials, freely take the belongings of others without any fear of the consequences. When the general public becomes corrupt then their leaders and other people in influential social positions are inspired to act in the same way believing this behaviour is accepted by the general public. This leads to corruption on a national

level. But if the general public obeyed Allah, the Exalted, and avoided mistreating others through corruption then their leaders and those in an influential social position would not dare act in a corrupt way full well knowing the general public would not stand for it. And according to the Hadith quoted earlier, if the general public remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, He would protect them from corrupt officials by appointing people into influential positions who are just in their affairs.

Instead of taking the immature path of blaming others for the widespread corruption observed in the world Muslims should truly reflect on their own behaviour and if necessary adjust their attitude. Otherwise, corruption in society will only increase with the passing of time. No one should believe that as they are not in an influential social position they have no effect on the corruption which occurs in society. As proven by this discussion corruption occurs because of the negative behaviour of the general public and it therefore can only be removed by the good behaviour of the general public. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 11:

*“...Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves...”*



## **Maintain the Purity of Islam**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. On the way to Hunayn the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was accompanied by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who conquered Mecca with him and those Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who very recently accepted Islam after the conquest of Mecca. These new converts used to revere a great green tree called Dhat Anwat. They would journey to it each year and hang their weapons on it, make sacrifices near it and spend the day there. When these converts passed by a large green tree on the way to Hunayn they remembered the Dhat Anwat and requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to establish them a tree in Islam which was like Dhat Anwat. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, criticized them and warned them that these ancient cultural and religious practices had no value. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 441.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If Muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even

though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many Muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied Muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a Muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

## Victory in Obedience

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. During the battle the Muslim army was overwhelmed and some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, temporarily retreated from the battlefield. But after they were summoned at the command of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, all of them pushed forward until Allah, the Exalted, granted them victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 451.

This initial difficulty occurred as some of the younger Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, prior to the battle declared that their large army would not be defeated. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verses 25-26:

*“Allah has already given you victory in many regions and [even] on the day of Hunayn, when your great number pleased you, but it did not avail you at all, and the earth was confining for you with [i.e., in spite of] its vastness; then you turned back, fleeing. Then Allah sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the believers and sent down soldiers [i.e., angels] whom you did not see and punished those who disbelieved. And that is the recompense of the disbelievers.”*

This incident indicates the importance of understanding that true success is only granted to those who remain steadfast on the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions, facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. True success is not linked to worldly possessions, great numbers or physical strength.

Even though tests and trials have affected believers since the dawn of time particularly in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet it seems like the modern day tests only lead to more difficulties and humiliation for Muslims. Whereas, the tests which the righteous predecessors faced only led to their honour in both worlds. The main reason for this difference in the outcome and result of tests is that when the righteous predecessors faced tests in fact, greater tests than the modern day Muslims, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, they faced their tests and difficulties while sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny. This resulted in them safely passing the test and receiving great honour and blessings from Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. Whereas, many Muslims in this day and age face tests but do not remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They fail to understand that success and honour through tests is only granted to those who remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whereas, being disobedient only leads to disgrace. Therefore, Muslims should not worship Allah, the Exalted, on an edge whereby they are only obedient to Him in times of ease and turn away from Him angrily and disobediently in times of difficulty. This is not real servant hood or obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Simply put, no action will aid Muslims in the long run if it is not based on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Disobedience will only lead from one difficulty to another, one disgrace to another. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 147:

*“What would Allah do with [i.e., gain from] your punishment if you are grateful and believe?...”*

## **Steadfast in Difficulty**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. During the battle the Muslim army was overwhelmed and some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, temporarily retreated from the battlefield. But after they were summoned at the command of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, all of them pushed forward until Allah, the Exalted, granted them victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 451.

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.”*

## **Freedom from Humiliating Slavery**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, announced to the enemy that every slave who leaves the enemy and accepts Islam will be set free from their slavery. Some of the enemy slaves left Taif and joined the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and he set them free. This was in fact his usual practice when dealing with slaves. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 471.

Whether people want to admit it or not in reality, every person is a slave/servant of something or someone. Some are servants of others, such as Hollywood executives and do whatever they command them to do even if it challenges modesty and shame. Others are servants of their relatives and friends and do whatever it takes to please them. Others are the worse by being servants of their own desires as this is the attitude of animals who generally act to please themselves. The best and highest form of servanthood is being a servant of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite evident if one turns the pages of history which clearly shows that those who were the servants of Allah, the Exalted, such as the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were granted the highest honour and respect in this world and will be granted this in the next. Centuries and millennia have passed yet their names are remembered as the pillars and beacons of history. Whereas those who became servants of others especially, their own desires were eventually disgraced in this world even if they achieved

some worldly status and they became mere footnotes in history. The media barely remembers those who pass away for more than a few days before moving onto the next person to report on. During their lives these people eventually become sad, lonely, depressed and even suicidal as selling their souls and decency to their worldly masters did not grant them the contentment they were looking for. One does not need to be a scholar to understand this obvious truth. So if people must be servants they should be the servants of Allah, the Exalted, as lasting honour, greatness and true success lies only in this.

## **Dangers of Being Two-Faced**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. When Taif was besieged a man requested and was granted permission to speak to the people of Taif and to invite them towards Islam. This man instead betrayed Islam by telling the people of Taif to remain firm against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When he returned to the camp of the Muslims he told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that he had invited the people of Taif towards Islam but the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, rebuked him and recounted what he actually said. This man understood the truth and sincerely repented and accepted Islam with conviction. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 473.

Being two-faced is when a person changes their behaviour depending on who they are interacting with in order to please them so that they gain worldly things, such as respect and fame. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4873, that whoever adopts a two faced mentality will have two tongues of fire on the Day of Judgment. It is the duty of a Muslim to remain honest and consistent in their speech and actions and only seek the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted in all their activities. The one who behaves in this manner will be protected by Allah, the Exalted, from any long-term negative effects which can result from being consistently

honest. But the one who follows the path of the hypocrites will lose out on the mercy and protection of Allah, the Exalted, so that they are left to wander blindly in misguidance. Allah, the Exalted, will ensure that, sooner or later, their evil intentions are exposed to the people they aim to please so that they lose out on obtaining worldly blessings and become loathed by their society. This worldly punishment is small compared to the punishment reserved for them in the hereafter unless they sincerely repent.

## **Leniency & Second Chances**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. The non-Muslims of Taif were besieged for approximately 30 days but they were not conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the Muslim army to withdraw from Taif and supplicated for their guidance. They did eventually take this second chance given to them by Allah, the Exalted, to accept the truth and sent a delegation to Medina to visit the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and to accept Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 476.

Allah, the Exalted, does not hasten the punishment for the one who deserves it out of leniency. Instead He gives them an opportunity to sincerely repent and rectify their behaviour. The Muslim who understands this will never give up hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, but will not also cross the limits and adopt wishful thinking by believing Allah, the Exalted, will never punish them. They understand that punishment is only delayed not abandoned unless they sincerely repent. So this divine name creates hope and fear in a Muslim. A Muslim should use this delay in order to repent and hasten towards good deeds.

A Muslim should act on this divine attribute by being lenient with people especially, when they demonstrate bad character. They should show leniency towards others just as they desire Allah, the Exalted, to be lenient with them in their moments of heedlessness. But at the same time they should not be lenient with their own bad characteristics knowing that punishment for sins is delayed not permanently abandoned until they sincerely repent. They should also remain steadfast in leniency by replying evil with good according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

## **Extreme Kindness**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. A man reported that after this expedition he was riding next to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, while wearing heavy boots. His camel accidentally bumped into the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his toe struck and hurt the leg of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, tapped the man's foot with his whip and told him to ride slightly away from him as he caused him pain. The next day the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, summoned the man and told him as he had tapped his foot with his whip he decided to compensate him. He then gifted the man 80 sheep. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 481-482.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that Allah, the Exalted, will not show mercy to the one who does not show mercy to others.

Islam is a very simple religion. One of its fundamental teachings is so simple that even uneducated people can understand and act on them



namely, how people treat others is how they will be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, those who learn to overlook and forgive the mistakes of others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Those who support others in beneficial worldly and religious matters such as emotional or financial aid will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. This same Hadith advises that the one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, if one treats others with kindness and respect according to the teachings of Islam they will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted. And those who mistreat others will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted, even if they fulfill the obligatory duties which are connected to Him such as the obligatory prayers. This is because a Muslim must fulfill both duties in order to achieve success namely, the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Finally, it is important to note a Muslim will only be treated kindly by Allah, the Exalted, if they treat others kindly for His sake. If they do it for any other reason than they will undoubtedly forfeit the reward mentioned in these teachings. The foundation of all acts and Islam itself is one's

intention. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

## **What Do You Seek**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. After this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Mecca. While distributing the spoils of war the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, often gave more to the newly converted Muslims in order to strengthen their hearts. Some of the Companions of Medina, the Helpers, may Allah be pleased with them, felt neglected in this particular case. When the news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he summoned them and questioned whether they were not satisfied with the fact that while other people took home spoils of war they would take home the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They replied in unison that they were satisfied with this. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 483.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why they worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

To conclude, it is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.



## Good Against Evil

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was once walking along when a Bedouin came up to him and pulled on his mantle so roughly that it left a mark on the shoulder of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Bedouin then rudely demanded that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, give him some wealth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, smiled and ordered for the Bedouin to be given some wealth. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 489.

It is easy to reply evil with evil. But what makes a Muslim special is when they reply evil with good. This is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. It is important to understand that behaving in this manner will never reduce a person's rank in anyway. Otherwise the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not have acted in this way. In fact, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, advises that when one replies evil with good, such as forgiving others, Allah, the Exalted, raises them in honour. So this attitude does not only benefit others but more importantly it benefits the Muslim themselves. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

In addition, as advised by this verse if someone adopts this attitude they will find that those who do not treat them well will eventually become ashamed of their actions and change their attitude. Even the most toughest hearts eventually become affected when treated in this manner. For example, when a husband mistreats his wife then it is best for her to rise above a negative reply and instead reply in a nice manner. This will cause the husband to respect and love his wife more. When a colleague at work shows bad manners it is best to show them the quality of a true Muslim by replying with good manners. When one behaves like this the people around them will respect and love them more which will cause their life to become easier. But when a person replies evil with evil they will always face more evil from others which will only make their life harder in both worlds. This is quite obvious if one reflects over this for a moment. It is important to note, when others exceed the limits then one should defend themselves and detach from the person. But in most cases bad character should be replied with good character.

## **Make Problems Small**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. After this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Mecca. While distributing the spoils of war an ignorant person commented that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not seeking to serve Allah, the Exalted, in this distribution. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of this he became angry and then supplicated for the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, on the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, and then commented that he suffered more distress from his people but still remained patient. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 492.

One of the ways of achieving patience during difficulties is by always comparing one's difficulty to harder and more severe difficulties. When one does this it will make their problem seem small and less significant. This change in focus can aid a Muslim to be patient and remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted. This can be explained through a worldly example. A person suffering from a severe migraine can be effected in such a way that it seems to them that the world is collapsing around them. But if this same person was on a ship which is about to hit an iceberg and sink in the middle of a freezing ocean then their severe migraine will not seem like a big deal. In fact, they would probably not even be effected by it at all as their whole focus would become shifted to the imminent life



threatening danger namely, the sinking ship. This is how a Muslim should behave during difficulties. When they encounter a difficulty they should realise it could have been much worse and try to shift their focus on greater difficulties they could have encountered. This can be achieved by observing others who are in more difficult situations than them. For example, a person who suffers from back pain can ponder over the person who is physically disabled. Or they could ponder over much greater difficulties such as death and Judgment Day. This comparison will reduce the significance of their difficulty and its effects, which in turn will aid them in remaining patient and steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience.

## **The Rebels**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. After this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Mecca. While distributing the spoils of war a hypocrite named Dhu Al Khuwaysira commented that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not acting justly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, grew angry and replied that if he did not act with justice then who would. When Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, sought permission to kill this obvious hypocrite the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, refused him and commented that this man would eventually lead a rebellious faction who will enter and exit the faith of Islam just like an arrow enters and emerges from its target. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 492-493.

Many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6934, discuss these rebels. These rebels challenged the leadership of the fourth rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. This Hadith, like many others, indicates that the rebels in most cases were devoted worshippers of Allah, the Exalted, but the thing which caused them to deviate from the true teachings of Islam was their ignorance. They foolishly gave worship more value than gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. Their ignorance caused them to misinterpret

the teachings of Islam which led to their heinous sins. If they possessed true knowledge this would not have happened.

It is important for Muslims to understand how knowledge can prevent sins especially, towards others, such as domestic abuse. One only refrains from wronging others when they fear the consequences of their actions meaning, being held accountable and punished by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. But the foundation and root of fear of the consequences of one's actions is knowledge. Without knowledge one will never fear the consequences of their actions. This will allow their ignorance to encourage them towards committing sins and wronging others.

If society desires to reduce the cases of domestic abuse and other crimes against people they must give priority to gaining and acting on knowledge as worship alone will not cause this to happen just like it did not prevent the rebels from deviating from Islam and causing great distress for innocent people. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

## **Failing the Holy Quran**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. After this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Mecca. While distributing the spoils of war a hypocrite named Dhu Al Khuwaysira commented that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not acting justly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, grew angry and replied that if he did not act with justice then who would. When Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, sought permission to kill this obvious hypocrite the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, refused him and commented that this man would eventually lead a rebellious faction who will enter and exit the faith of Islam just like an arrow enters and emerges from its target. He concluded that when these people recite the Holy Quran it does not descend beyond their throats meaning, it does not reach their spiritual hearts. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 493.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 30, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the Holy Quran will intercede on Judgment Day. Those who follow it during their lives on Earth will be led to Paradise on Judgment Day. But those who neglect it during their lives on Earth will find that it pushes them into Hell on Judgment Day.

The Holy Quran is a book of guidance. It is not merely a book of recitation. Muslims must therefore strive to fulfill all aspects of the Holy Quran to ensure that it guides them to success in both worlds. The first aspect is reciting it correctly and regularly. The second aspect is to understand it. And the final aspect is to act on its teachings according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who behave in such a manner are the ones who are given glad tidings of right guidance through every difficulty in this world and its intercession on the Day of Judgment. But as warned by this Hadith the Holy Quran is only guidance and a mercy for those who correctly act on its aspects according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But those who misinterpret it and instead act according to their desires in order to gain worldly things, such as fame, will be deprived of this right guidance and its intercession on Judgment Day. In fact, their complete loss in both worlds will only increase until they sincerely repent. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

*“And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.”*

## **A Successful Pilgrimage**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. After this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, perform the Visitation (Umra) and then headed back to Medina. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 500.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1773, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the reward for an accepted Holy Pilgrimage is nothing except Paradise.

The real purpose of the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj) and the Visitation (Umra) is to prepare Muslims for their final journey to the hereafter. The same way a Muslim leaves behind their home, business, wealth, family, friends and social status in order to perform the Holy Pilgrimage this will occur at the time of their death when they take their final journey to the hereafter. In fact, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, advises that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds, good and bad, accompany them.

When a Muslim bears this in mind during their Holy Pilgrimage they will fulfil all the aspects of this duty correctly. This Muslim will return back home a changed person as they will prioritise preparing for their final journey to the hereafter over amassing the excess aspects of this material world. They will strive in fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which includes taking from this world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance.

Muslims should not treat the Holy Pilgrimage as a holiday and a place to shop as this attitude defeats the purpose of it. It must remind Muslims of their final journey to the hereafter a journey which has no return and no second chances. Only this will inspire one to fulfil the Holy Pilgrimage correctly and prepare adequately for the hereafter.

## **A Simple Life**

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. After this expedition the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, perform the Visitation (Umra) and then headed back to Medina. When leaving Mecca the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed Attab Bin Asid, may Allah be pleased with him, in charge of Mecca and gave him a salary of one silver coin a day. Attab, may Allah be pleased with him, supplicated for Allah, the Exalted, to keep a person hungry and greedy if they failed to be satisfied with one silver coin a day. He concluded that he did not require anyone after that day meaning, in respect to earning wealth. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 500-501.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that simplicity is a part of faith.

Islam does not teach Muslims to give up all their wealth and lawful desires but it instead teaches them to adopt a simple lifestyle in all aspects of their life, such as their food, clothing, housing and business, so that it provides them free time to prepare for the hereafter adequately. This involves



fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This simple life includes striving in this world in order to fulfill one's needs and the needs of their dependents without excessiveness, waste or extravagance.

A Muslim should understand that the simpler life they lead the less they will stress over worldly things and therefore the more they will be able to strive for the hereafter thereby, obtaining peace of mind, body and soul. But the more complicated a person's life is the more they will stress, encounter difficulties and strive less for their hereafter as their preoccupations with worldly things will never seem to end. This attitude will prevent them from obtaining peace of mind, body and soul.

Simplicity leads to a life of ease in this world and a straight forward accounting on the Day of Judgment. Whereas, a complicated and indulgent life will only lead to a stressful life and a severe and difficult accounting on the Day of Judgment.

## The 9<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration

### Do Not Fear Poverty

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, decreed that the polytheists should not enter the sacred area around the House of Allah, the Exalted, in Mecca, the Kaaba, during the Holy Pilgrimage or at other times. Some people of Mecca became worried as they relied on the Muslim and non-Muslim pilgrims for trading during the Pilgrimage season. But Allah, the Exalted, promised to provide for them in all situations. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 28:

*“O you who have believed, indeed the polytheists are [spiritually] unclean, so let them not approach al-Masjid al-Ḥarām after this, their [final] year. And if you fear privation, Allah will enrich you from His bounty if He wills...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 1.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, allocated all things, such as provision, to all creatures over fifty thousand years before He created the Heavens and the Earth.

It is important to understand that there are two aspects in respect to all situations, such as gaining one's provision. The first aspect is what Allah, the Exalted, has decided meaning, destiny; this will occur and nothing in creation can prevent this from occurring. As this is out of a person's hands it makes no sense to stress over this aspect as they have no influence on destiny irrespective of what they or anybody else does.

The second aspect is one's own efforts. This aspect a person has full control over and they should therefore concentrate on this aspect by using the means they have been provided such as their physical strength to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, which they have no control over, according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes striving to gain lawful provision in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents while avoiding the unlawful, excess, waste and extravagance.

To conclude, a Muslim should never waste time stressing over things they have no control or influence over instead they should use the means they possess and act on those things which they have control over according to the teachings of Islam. This is what Allah, the Exalted, has commanded.

## **Obedience in Ease and Difficulty**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. Allah, the Exalted, revealed many verses of the Holy Quran criticizing them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 1.

In life a Muslim will always face either times of ease or times of difficulty. No one only experiences times of ease without experiencing some difficulties. But the thing to note is that even though difficulties by definition are hard to deal with they are in fact a means to obtain and demonstrate one's true greatness and servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. In addition, in the majority of cases people learn more important life lessons when they face difficulties than when they face times of ease. And people often change for the better after experiencing times of difficulty than times of ease. One only needs to reflect on this in order to understand this truth. In fact, if one studies the Holy Quran they will realise the majority of the events discussed, such as this one, involve difficulties. This indicates that true greatness does not lie in always experiencing times of ease. It in fact, lies in experiencing difficulties while remaining obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is proven by the fact that each of the

great difficulties discussed in Islamic teachings end with ultimate success for those who obeyed Allah, the Exalted. So a Muslim should not be bothered about facing difficulties as these are just moments for them to shine while acknowledging their true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience. This is the key to ultimate success in both worlds.

## **Poor Excuses**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The hypocrites made many foolish and poor excuses in order to refrain from taking part in this difficult battle even though it was obligatory on them to respond and take part. For example, a man pleaded to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to excuse him from taking part as he was afraid he would not be able to resist the Byzantine women they would encounter while travelling. As this man would clearly be a liability and not an asset to the expedition he was excused from participating. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 2.

Muslims should not compromise on any duty for worldly things as these things will eventually become a burden for them let alone the punishment which awaits them in the next world if they do not sincerely repent.

A Muslim should not be fooled into believing that if they fail to fulfil their obligatory duties they will somehow find a way out of the judgment and punishment of Allah, the Exalted. Simply ignoring one's disobedience and the reality of Judgment Day will not make it go away. When one accepted Islam as their faith and became a Muslim this included accepting the responsibility of fulfilling the duties which accompany Islam. A person who accepts a job by definition accepts the duties which come with it. If they simply refuse to fulfil their duties they will undoubtedly be sacked. Similarly, the one who refuses to fulfil their obligatory duties after

accepting Islam as their religion may well find themselves surrounded by punishment and difficulties in both worlds.

In reality, the obligatory duties are not many and do not require that much time or effort. In fact, Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear in the Holy Quran that He does not burden someone with more than they can handle. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

*“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...”*

So any duty which is obligatory on a person can be carried out by them. It is only their extreme laziness and poor judgment which prevents them from doing it. Muslims must therefore change their attitude and fulfil their duties according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

## Useful Wealth

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, urged people to donate towards the expedition. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, assisted according to their strength and did not hold back in the least. For example, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3701, discusses when Usman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, donated 1000 gold coins. He poured them in the lap of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who commented that from then on nothing could harm his faith. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 3.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6444, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the rich in this world will be poor in the hereafter unless they spend their wealth correctly but these people are a few in number.

This means that the majority of wealthy people incorrectly spend their wealth meaning, on things which are either vain and therefore provide them with no benefit in the hereafter, or they spend on sinful things which will become a burden for them in both worlds or they spend on lawful things in a way disliked by Islam such as being wasteful or extravagant. Because of these reasons the rich will become poor on Judgment Day as they will be held accountable and even punished over them.



In addition, those who fail to spend their wealth correctly will find that their wealth abandons them at their grave and so they will reach the hereafter empty handed meaning, as a pauper. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379. The deceased will leave the wealth behind for others to enjoy while they are held accountable for it.

Finally, as the wealthy are distracted by gaining, hoarding, safeguarding and increasing their wealth it distracts them from performing righteous deeds which is the thing that will make someone rich on Judgment Day. In reality, losing out on this will make them poor.

It is important to note, spending wealth correctly is not only donating charity but includes one's spending on their necessities and the necessities of their dependents without being wasteful or extravagant.

The truly rich person is the one who uses their wealth correctly as prescribed by Islam. This person will be rich in this world and in the next. And this attitude is not dependent of having much wealth. Any amount of wealth used correctly will cause one to become rich even if they possess little wealth. In reality, this person takes their wealth with them to the hereafter and this attitude provides them free time which allows them to perform righteous deeds which only increases their richness in the hereafter.

## Genuine Sincerity

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. Some of the more poorer Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did not possess the resources to take part in this long and difficult expedition and in some cases the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not possess the resources to give to them either. Even though Allah, the Exalted, Himself excused them they were so grieved that they would weep for not being able to take part in the expedition. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 92:

*“Nor [is there blame] upon those who, when they came to you for you to take them along, you said, “I can find nothing upon which to carry you.” They turned back while their eyes overflowed with tears out of grief that they could not find something to spend [for the cause of Allah].”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 5.

Their grief and weeping was only due to their sincerity to Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

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, and 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 Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, 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.

## The Reward for Guidance

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. Some of the more poorer Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did not possess the resources to take part in this long and difficult expedition and in some cases the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not possess the resources to give to them either. Even though Allah, the Exalted, Himself excused them they were so grieved that they would weep for not being able to take part in the expedition. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 92:

*“Nor [is there blame] upon those who, when they came to you for you to take them along, you said, “I can find nothing upon which to carry you.” They turned back while their eyes overflowed with tears out of grief that they could not find something to spend [for the cause of Allah].”*

Two of these poor Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were seen weeping by another, Ibn Yamin, may Allah be pleased with him. Ibn Yamin, may Allah be pleased with him, then gave them his camel and provided them with some dates so that they could join the expedition. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 5.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2674, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who guides others to something good will receive the same reward as those who act on their advice. And those who guide others to sins will be held accountable as if they committed the sins.

It is important for Muslims to be careful when advising and guiding others. A Muslim should only advise others in matters of good so that they gain reward from it and avoid advising others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. A person will not escape punishment on Judgment Day by simply claiming they are only inviting others towards sins even if they did not commit the sins themselves. Allah, the Exalted, will hold both the guide and the follower accountable for their actions. Muslims should therefore only advise others to do the things they would do themselves. If they dislike an action being recorded in their book of deeds they should not advise others to perform that action.

Because of this Islamic principle Muslims should ensure they gain the adequate knowledge before advising others as they can easily multiply their own sins if they incorrectly advise others.

In addition, this principle is an extremely easy way for Muslims to gain reward for actions they cannot perform themselves due to a lack of means, such as wealth. For example, a person who is not financially able to donate charity can encourage others to do so and this will result in them gaining the same reward as the one who gave charity.

## **Much Talk Little Action**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed Medina and setup camp at Thaniyyat Al Wada. The leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, and his followers were with the Muslim army but they setup camp away from the main camp. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, set forth again Abdullah Bin Ubayy stealthily remained behind with the hypocrites and did not join the expedition as they promised. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 7.

An aspect of hypocrisy is when one verbally shows support for others and their good projects such as, building a mosque but when the time comes to take part in the project such as, donating wealth they seem to disappear. Similarly, when people are facing good times they verbally support them reminding others of their loyalty to them. But the moment the people face difficulties these hypocrites offer no emotional or physical support. Instead they criticize them. This was the attitude of the hypocrites in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 62:

*"So how [will it be] when disaster strikes them because of what their hands have put forth and then they come to you swearing by Allah, "We intended nothing but good conduct and accommodation.""*



## **Trouble Makers**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, behind in Medina to look after the people. The hypocrites spread lies about the reason why he stayed behind and claimed that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left behind Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, as he disliked him. Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, was distressed by this and then left Medina and caught up with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and discussed this issue with him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reassured him and asked him to return to Medina to take care of the people there. He concluded that Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, was to him similar to how the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon him, was deputized by his brother the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him. The obvious difference was that there would be no Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, after the final Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 7-8.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 290, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who spreads malicious gossip will not enter Paradise.

This is the one who spreads gossip whether it is true or not and it leads to problems between people, fractured and broken relationships. This is an evil characteristic and those who behave in such a manner are in fact human devils as this mentality belongs to none other than the Devil as he always strives to cause separation between people. Allah, the Exalted has cursed this type of person in the Holy Quran. Chapter 104 Al Humazah, verse 1:

*“Woe to every scorner and mocker.”*

How can one expect Allah, the Exalted, to fix their problems and bestow them with blessings if this curse has surrounded them? The only time tale bearing is acceptable is when one is warning others of a danger.

It is a duty on a Muslim not to pay any attention to a tale bearer as they are wicked people who should not be trusted or believed. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 6:

*“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance...”*

A Muslim should forbid the tale bearer from continuing with this evil characteristic and urge them to sincerely repent. As commanded in the Holy Quran a Muslim should not harbour any ill will against the person that

supposedly said something bad about them. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*

This same verse teaches Muslims not to try to prove or disprove the tale bearer by spying on others. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“...And do not spy...”*

Instead the tale bearer should be ignored. A Muslim should not mention the information given to them by the tale bearer to another person or mention the tale bearer as this would make them a tale bearer as well.

Muslims should avoid tale bearing and the company of tale bearers as they can never be worthy of trust or companionship until they sincerely repent.

## **No Demand for Perfection**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. A few of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, remained behind after the departure of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, out of laziness. One of them was Abu Khaythama, may Allah be pleased with him. Several days after the army had departed he returned home to find cool drinks and food prepared for him. He rebuked himself when remembering the difficulty the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was facing on this expedition while he was resting at home. He commanded his family to prepare for his departure and hurriedly caught up with the expedition which had setup camp at Tabuk. When Abu Khaythama, may Allah be pleased with him, reported to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the latter supplicated on his behalf. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 8-9.

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, by fulfilling His commands, 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, 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.

## **Excellence in Islam**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. During the expedition whenever anyone fell behind from the army people would inform the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would simply tell the informant to leave the absent person alone and if there was good in them then Allah, the Exalted, would inspire them to join the army otherwise the army has been relieved of that person. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 9.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a Muslim cannot make their Islam excellent until they avoid the things which do not concern them.

This Hadith contains an all-encompassing advice which should be applied to every aspect of one's life. It includes a person's speech as well as their other physical actions. It means that a Muslim who desires to perfect their

faith must avoid those things, through speech and actions, which do not concern them. And instead they must occupy themselves with those things that do. One should take the things that concern them very seriously and strive to fulfil the responsibilities which accompany them according to the teachings of Islam solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. It is important to note, that one would not be perfecting their faith if they avoided things according to their own thinking or desires. But the one who perfects their faith avoids the things which Islam has advised to avoid. Meaning, one should strive to fulfil all their duties, avoid all sins and the things which are disliked in Islam and even avoid the excess use of unnecessary lawful things. Achieving this excellence is a characteristic of the excellence of faith mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This is when one acts and worships Allah, the Exalted, as if they can observe Him or they at least become fully aware of Allah, the Exalted, observing their every thought and action. Being aware of this divine surveillance will encourage a Muslim to always abstain from sins and hasten towards righteous deeds. The one who does not avoid the things which do not concern them will not reach this level of excellence.

A major aspect of avoiding the things which do not concern a person is linked to speech. The majority of sins occur when a person utters words which do not concern them, such as backbiting and slander. The definition of vain talk is when a person utters words which may not be sinful but are useless and therefore not their concern. As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2408, vain speech is hated by Allah, the Exalted. Countless arguments, fights and even physical harm have occurred simply because someone spoke about something which did not concern them. Many families have become divided; many marriages have ended because someone did not mind their business. It is why Allah, the Exalted, has advised in the Holy Quran the different types of useful speech which people should concern themselves with. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114:

*“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”*

In fact, uttering words which are not a person's concern will be the main reason people enter Hell. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2412, that all speech will be counted against a person unless it is connected to advising good, forbidding evil or the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. This means that all other forms of speech are not a person's concern as they will not benefit them. It is important to note, that advising good encompasses anything which is beneficial in one's worldly and religious life, such as they occupation.

Therefore, Muslims should strive to avoid the things which do not concern them through words and actions so that they can perfect their faith. Put simply, the one who dedicates time to the things which do not concern them will fail in the things which do concern them. And the one who occupies themselves with the things which do concern them will not find time to spend on the things which do not concern them. Meaning, they will achieve success through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds.



## **Blind to the Truth**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. During the journey the army suffered great hunger and thirst. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was requested to supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, for aid. Before he lowered his hands from his supplication it began to rain and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, noted that it only rained on their camp and not beyond it. When a hypocrite was asked if he still desired more proof of Islam after this he replied that it was only a passing cloud. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 10-11.

The Holy Quran teaches mankind that certain people are so drowned in the material world no advice will penetrate their veiled hearts. The Holy Quran describes how this group of people possesses hearts harder than rocks. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 74:

*“Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder...”*

At this point those who desire to spread the word of Islam should separate from this type of person and instead concentrate on others. But it is important to note, even in this case a Muslim should always demonstrate good character towards the sinful as they can repent at anytime. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

*“...and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.”*

Similarly, in another verse of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that when a limit is reached it is best to separate and leave the stubborn and misguided people to their false beliefs. A day will undoubtedly come when Allah, the Exalted, will inform mankind who was rightly guided and who was lost in darkness. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 55:

*“And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, "For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.””*

Muslims should never get depressed and confused when their good advice does not affect others. In some cases, these people are drowned in sins to such an extent their heart becomes veiled. This veil prevents the good advice affecting them in a positive way. A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, explains how a sin causes a black spot to be etched

onto the spiritual heart. The more one sins the more their spiritual heart becomes engrossed by this darkness. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

*“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.”*

This is similar to another verse where Allah, the Exalted, declares that their ears, eyes and hearts have been veiled from the truth and they therefore cannot be guided to the truth. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 7:

*“Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil...”*

The fault does not lie with the message of Islam but in the hearts of the misguided. Just like the fault lies in the eyes of a blind person and not the bright Sun. Unfortunately, this stubborn attitude has become a widespread problem within society. Some of these people believe in Islam yet have closed their hearts and minds to the teachings of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They refuse to accept any good advice which would benefit them in both worlds.

Those who choose to spread the word of Islam should understand that there are two types of mind-sets people can adopt. The first is when

someone makes their mind up beforehand about an issue and then searches and accepts only those things which support their predetermined belief. Whereas, the correct attitude is to live with an open mind by searching and accepting strong evidence regarding different issues. The first mentality will only cause problems from a personal level right up to a national level. Unfortunately, this is how some aspects of the media work. They predetermine the information they would like to publish, find bits of weak supporting evidence and then blow it out of proportion for the world to see. Those spreading the word of Islam should avoid the first type of people and instead concentrate on inviting the second group towards the truth.

## **Patience and Contentment**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. During the journey the army suffered great hunger and thirst. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, requested permission to slaughter and eat their water-transport camels. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, granted them permission to do so but before they could Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, advised that this would lead to a shortage of transport. He advised the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to gather all the food available and supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, for blessings in it. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, again agreed to this suggestion and miraculously a small amount of food filled all their containers and they all ate to satisfaction. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 11-12.

One of the things to note is that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have easily suggested to supplicate instead of slaughtering their camels himself. One of the wisdoms behind his behaviour is to teach the importance of contentment with the choices and decrees of Allah, the Exalted.

The difference between patience and contentment is that the one who is patient does not complain about a situation but desires and even supplicates for the situation to change. Whereas, the one who is content prefers the choice of Allah, the Exalted, over their own choice and therefore does not desire things to change. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have easily supplicated to Allah, the Exalted, instead of giving permission to slaughter the camels. But he did not desire to potentially contradict the will of Allah, the Exalted, as Allah, the Exalted, may have wanted him to remain content. Even though a supplication would have been lawful yet he desired to perfect servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, and therefore remained silent trusting in the choice of Allah, the Exalted. Only after being requested to do so did he supplicate. The lesson to learn is that even though some situations appear and feel distressing in the long run the things which occur are better for a Muslim than what they desire even if they do not immediately observe the wisdom behind them. Perhaps experiencing a difficulty may well be the reason a Muslim is admitted into Paradise. So it is important to at least be patient if one cannot be content with the decree of Allah, the Exalted. 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...”*

A Muslim should also remember that the one who chose the situation for them namely, Allah, the Exalted, is the only One who can take them safely out of it. This is only achieved through obedience to Him by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

*“...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”*

## **Being Observant**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. During the journey the expedition passed through the old desolate dwellings of a very powerful ancient nation, Thamud. Their persistent disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, and ultimate destruction has been discussed throughout Islamic teachings. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the army not to enter the desolate homes of those who harmed themselves unless they do so while weeping otherwise they may be struck with the punishment that affected Thamud. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 12.

It is important for a Muslim to be observant in their daily life and avoid being too self-absorbed in their own worldly matters so that they become heedless over the things which are occurring around them and the things which have already occurred. This is an important quality to possess as it is an excellent way to strengthen one's faith which in turn helps one to remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, at all times. For example, when a Muslim observes a sick person they should not only aid them by whatever means they possess, even if it is only a supplication, but they should reflect on their own health and understand that they too will eventually lose their good health either by an illness, ageing or even death. This should inspire them to be grateful for their good health and show this through their actions by taking advantage of their good health in both worldly and religious matters which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.



When they observe the death of a rich person they should not only feel sad for the deceased and their family but realise that one day which is unknown to them they will die also. They should understand that just like the rich person was abandoned by their wealth, fame and family at their grave so will they too be left only with their deeds in their grave. This will encourage them to prepare for their grave and the hereafter.

This attitude can and should be applied to all things one observes. A Muslim should learn a lesson from everything around them which has been advised in the Holy Quran. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 191:

*"...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.""*

Those who behave in this manner will strengthen their faith on a daily basis whereas those who are too self-absorbed in their worldly life will remain heedless which may lead them to their destruction.

## Questions

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. During the journey the expedition passed through the old desolate dwellings of a very powerful ancient nation, Thamud. Their persistent disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, and ultimate destruction has been discussed throughout Islamic teachings. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commented that people should not ask for signs (miracles) as the nation of Thamud did. Thamud then disbelieved after signs were given to them and thus they were destroyed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 13.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 3257, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against asking too many questions as this led to the destruction of the past nations. Muslims should instead do what they have been commanded according to their capacity and refrain from what they have been prohibited from.

Muslims should not adopt this mentality as people who have a habit of asking too many questions often fail in fulfilling their duties and acquiring beneficial knowledge as they are too busy asking and researching about less important and sometimes irrelevant information. This mentality can inspire a person to argue and debate over these types of issues also. Unfortunately, this attitude is quite widespread amongst Muslims today as they often argue about non obligatory and less important issues instead

of concentrating on fulfilling their obligatory duties and the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, correctly meaning, fulfilling them with their full etiquettes and conditions.

A Muslim should instead research and query about topics which are relevant and important to understand for both worldly and religious matters otherwise they will follow in the footsteps of the people mentioned in this Hadith and only make their own lives more difficult.

## **A Comprehensive Advice**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the expedition reached Tabuk the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave the following speech: "People, the most truthful speech is that of the Book of Allah, the Exalted. The firmest of bonds is the word (testification of faith). The best of religions is that of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him. The best of ways of life is the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The most noble of speech is the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The finest of narratives is the Holy Quran. The best of practices are those sanctioned by Allah, the Exalted. The worse of practices are those innovated. The best guidance is that of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. The most noble of deaths is being killed as a martyr. The most blind thing of all is going astray after guidance. The best of deeds are those that are beneficial. The best guidance is that which is followed (not innovated). The worse blindness is that of the (spiritual) heart. The upper hand (giving charity) is better than the lower hand (the one who receives charity). That which is little yet suffices is better than that which is much but wasteful. The worse apology is when death is at hand. The worse repentance is on Judgement Day. There are those people who only attend the Friday prayers at its end. There are those people who only mention Allah, the Exalted, in vain. The worse of sins is a lying tongue. The best riches are those of the soul (contentment). The best of qualities is piety. The pinnacle of wisdom is the fear of Allah, the Exalted. The best quality within the heart is that of certainty (of faith). Doubting is from disbelief. Wailing in mourning is an act from the age of ignorance (pre-Islamic era). Fraud is of the soil spread in Hell. (Most) Poetry comes from Satan. Wine is the aggregate of sin. Women (for men and men for women) are the snares of Satan. Youth is an offshoot of madness (due to lack of control). The worse income is from

interest. The worse food is consuming the wealth of orphans. The happy man is he who is warned by (the actions of) others. One of you has only to move four arm lengths away for the matter (death) to lead on to the hereafter. The fundamental of an action is determined by its results. The worse of narratives are those of untruth. All that is to come is near at hand. To swear at a believer is an outrage. To fight a believer is disbelief. To eat his flesh (backbiting) is disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. The sanctity of his property is as the sanctity of his blood. Whoever takes an (false) oath by Allah, the Exalted, gives the lie to Him. Whoever seeks His forgiveness shall be forgiven. Whoever gives pardon Allah, the Exalted, will pardon. Whoever suppresses anger, Allah, the Exalted, will reward. Whoever remains firm against calamity, Allah, the Exalted, will compensate. He who desires fame, Allah, the Exalted, will discredit. He who remains firm Allah, the Exalted, will doubly reward. He who disobeys Allah, the Exalted, Allah, the Exalted, will punish. O Allah, the Exalted, forgive me and my people. O Allah, the Exalted, forgive me and my people. O Allah, the Exalted, forgive me and my people. I seek forgiveness for myself and for you.” This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 16-17.

## **A Blessed Grave**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. During the expedition a Companion, Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that he once got up in the middle of the night and noticed a light. When he went over to it to investigate he found the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Bakr Siddique and Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, digging a grave for a Companion, Dhu Al Bijadayn, may Allah be pleased with him, who had passed away. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was in the grave while Abu Bakr and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, lowered the body of Dhu Al Bijadayn, may Allah be pleased with him, into the grave. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, positioned his body correctly in the grave he asked Allah, the Exalted, to be pleased with him just like he was pleased with him. After witnessing this event Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, would often say that he wished that was his grave. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 22-23.

Many verses and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discuss the grave which all people will face in some form or fashion. As it is inevitable Muslims must prepare for it as the light or darkness of the grave does not come from the grave itself. It is one's deeds which either darkens or illuminates their grave. Similarly, it is one's deeds which will determine if they face punishment or mercy in their grave. The only way to prepare for it is through piety which consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His

prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Muslims often journey to cemeteries in order to bury their relatives and friends. But very few truly realize that one day, sooner or later, their turn will come. Even though, the majority of Muslims dedicate the majority of their efforts to pleasing their family and earning wealth over pleasing Allah, the Exalted, through righteous deeds a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, warns that these two things which Muslims give priority to will abandon them at their grave and only their deeds will remain with them. Therefore, it makes sense for a Muslim to give priority to obtaining righteous deeds to pleasing their family and obtaining excess wealth. This does not mean one should abandon their family and wealth. But it means they should fulfil their duty to their family according to the teachings of Islam without going overboard by neglecting their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and only obtain the wealth they require to achieve this. When this is done correctly it becomes a righteous deed as well. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006. One should never abandon their duties to Allah, the Exalted, for the sake of their family or wealth as this will only lead to an isolated, lonely and dark grave.

## **Forgiveness Against Evil**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. While returning from this expedition a group of hypocrites attempted to assassinate the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Two of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, while they were travelling on a narrow steep ridge. The hypocrites concealed their faces and attempted to push the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, off the ridge but were driven away by the two Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was divinely informed of their evil plan and their names. He did not punish the hypocrites and instead covered their grievous sin. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 23-24.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:



*“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”*

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted, does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

## **A Foundation Built on Evil**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. While returning from this expedition Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to destroy a building which the hypocrites had constructed near Quba. They called it a Mosque but in fact their intention was to build a base where they could meet and plot against Islam while feeling secure from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They desired to create division within the community of Quba in order to turn the local Muslims away from Islam. The leader of this plan was an evil man named Abu Amir who rejected Islam and migrated to Mecca where he incited them to war. When this failed he traveled to the Byzantine king and encouraged him to attack the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, also. These hypocrites desired the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to bless the building by praying inside it. This action would have encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to also pray inside it thereby giving the hypocrites an opportunity to misguide them. Allah, the Exalted, forbade the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, from standing inside it and instead commanded him to destroy the building. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verses 107-110:

*“And [there are] those [hypocrites] who took for themselves a mosque for causing harm and disbelief and division among the believers and as a station for whoever had warred against Allah and His Messenger before. And they will surely swear, “We intended only the best.” And Allah testifies that indeed they are liars. Do not stand [for prayer] within it - ever...And Allah is Knowing and Wise.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 26-27.

A sign of hypocrisy is that a person spreads corruption in society. This negative characteristic affects all social levels beginning from a family unit and ending at the international level. This type of person dislikes seeing people uniting on good as this may cause the worldly status of others to increase beyond their own. This drives them to backbiting and slander in order to cause people to turn against each other. Their evil attitude destroys their own ties of kinship and when they observe other families who are happy it drives them to destroy their happiness also. They are fault finders who dedicate their time unveiling the mistakes of others in order to drag their social status down. They are the first people to begin gossiping about others and act deaf whenever good things are spoken about. Peace and quiet disturbs them so they seek to create problems in order to entertain themselves. They fail to remember the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546. It advises that whoever covers the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will cover their faults. But whoever seeks out and unveils the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults to the people. So in reality, this type of person is only unveiling their own faults to society even though they believe they are exposing the faults of others.

## The Best Places

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. While returning from this expedition Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to destroy a building which the hypocrites had constructed near Quba. They called it a Mosque but in fact their intention was to build a base where they could meet and plot against Islam while feeling secure from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They desired to create division within the community of Quba in order to turn the local Muslims away from Islam. The leader of this plan was an evil man named Abu Amir who rejected Islam and migrated to Mecca where he incited them to war. When this failed he traveled to the Byzantine king and encouraged him to attack the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, also. These hypocrites desired the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to bless the building by praying inside it. This action would have encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to also pray inside it thereby giving the hypocrites an opportunity to misguide them. Allah, the Exalted, forbade the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, from standing inside it and instead commanded him to destroy the building. In addition, Allah, the Exalted, encouraged the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and indirectly all Muslims to occupy the true Houses of Allah, the Exalted, the Mosques, which were founded on piety meaning, the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verses 107-110:

*“And [there are] those [hypocrites] who took for themselves a mosque for causing harm and disbelief and division among the believers and as a*

*station for whoever had warred against Allah and His Messenger before. And they will surely swear, "We intended only the best." And Allah testifies that indeed they are liars. Do not stand [for prayer] within it - ever. A mosque founded on righteousness from the first day is more worthy for you to stand in. Within it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves... And Allah is Knowing and Wise."*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 26-27.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1528, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the most beloved places to Allah, the Exalted, are the Mosques and the most hated places to Him are the market places.

Islam does not prohibit Muslims from going to places other than the Mosques. Nor does it command them to always inhabit the Mosques. But it is important that they prioritize attending Mosques for the congregational prayers and attending religious gatherings over visiting the market places unnecessarily.

When a need arises there is no harm to attend other places, such as shopping centers, but a Muslim should avoid going to them unnecessarily as they are places where sins more often occur. Whereas, the Mosques are meant to be a sanctuary from sins and a comfortable place to obey Allah, the Exalted, in. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience.

Just like a student benefits from a library as it is an environment created for studying similarly, Muslims can benefit from Mosques as their very purpose is to encourage Muslims to obtain and act on useful knowledge so that they can obey Allah, the Exalted.

Not only should a Muslim prioritize the Mosques over other places but they should encourage others such as their children to do the same. In fact, it is an excellent place for the youth to avoid sins, crimes and bad company, which lead to nothing but trouble and regret in both worlds.

## **Use Your Means**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. While returning from this expedition and approaching Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that there were people who stayed in Medina during the expedition but were counted as those who were with the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who took part in the expedition as they had valid excuses for not joining them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 28.

Unfortunately, some Muslims have adopted a weak characteristic which only hinders them from improving for the better. Namely, they compare their situation and circumstances to others who are facing easier circumstances and use this as an excuse not to increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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. For example, a person who works full time excuses their lack of striving in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by comparing themselves to someone who works part time and simply claims it is easier for them to increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, as they have more free time. Or a poorer Muslim turns away from giving any form of charity by observing those who possess more wealth and claims that the wealthy person can more easily give charity than them. They fail to understand that these excuses may make their souls feel better but it does not aid them in this world or in the next. Allah, the Exalted, does not desire people to act according to the means of others He only desires people to act in His obedience according

to their own means. For example, a person who works full time can dedicate whatever free time they possess in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even if that is less than someone who works part time. In this respect what the part timer does has no effect on the one who works full time so using them as an excuse not to strive harder is simply a lame excuse. The poor Muslim should simply donate according to their means even if that is much less than the wealthy person as Allah, the Exalted, will judge them on their intention and what they do, He will not judge them according to what other Muslims do.

Muslims should give up these useless excuses and simply obey Allah, the Exalted, according to their own means.



## **Gentle Behaviour is Best**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina those who failed to take part in the expedition came to him repeating their excuses and declaring their allegiance to him. He accepted all their excuses and supplicated on their behalf. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 30.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2701, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves gentleness in all matters.

This is an important characteristic which must be adopted by all Muslims. It should be used in all aspects of one's life. It is important to understand that being gentle benefits the Muslim themselves more than anyone else. Not only will they receive blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, and minimize the amount of sins they commit, as a gentle person is less likely to commit sins through their speech and actions, but it benefits them in worldly affairs also. For example, the person who treats their spouse gently will gain more love and respect in return than if they treated their spouse in a harsh manner. Children are more likely to obey and treat their parents with respect when they are treated gently. Colleagues at work are more likely to help the one who is gentle with them. The examples are endless. Only in very rare cases is a harsh attitude required.

In most cases, gentle behaviour will be much more effective than a harsh attitude.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possesses countless good qualities yet, Allah, the exalted, specifically highlighted his gentleness in the Holy Quran as it is a key ingredient required to affect others in a positive way. Chapter 3 Al Imran, verse 159:

*“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”*

A Muslim must remember that they will never be better than a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, nor will the person they interact with be worse than Pharaoh yet, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them, to deal with Pharaoh in a kind manner. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:

*“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].”*

Therefore, a Muslim should adopt gentleness in all affairs as it leads to much reward and affects others, such as one's family, in a positive way.



## **Accepting Outward Behaviour Positively**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina those who failed to take part in the expedition came to him repeating their excuses and declaring their allegiance to him. He accepted all their excuses, supplicated on their behalf and left their hidden intentions between them and Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 30.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4993, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking well about people is an aspect of worshipping Allah, the Exalted, correctly. Meaning, it is an aspect of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Interpreting things in a negative way often leads to sins such as backbiting and slander. In all cases a Muslim should interpret things where possible in a positive way in order to give the benefit of the doubt to others. Unfortunately, adopting a negative mind-set effects people from a family unit to a national level. For example, how many times has a nation gone to war over an assumption and suspicion? The vast majority of scandals which are found in the media are based on assumptions. Even laws have been created which support the use of assumptions and suspicion. This often leads to fractured and broken relationships as people with this mind-set always believe others are taking a dig at them through their words or

actions. This prevents one from taking advice from others as they believe they are only being mocked by the one giving advice and it prevents one from giving advice as they believe the other person will not pay any attention to what they say. And a person will refrain from advising the one who possesses this negative mind-set as they believe it will only lead to an argument. This leads to other negative traits such as bitterness.

It is important for Muslims to understand that even if they assume someone is taking a dig at them they should still accept their advice if it is based on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They should strive to interpret things where possible in a positive way which leads to a positive mentality. And a positive mindset leads to healthy relationships and feelings. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*

## **Obedience on the Edge**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina those who failed to take part in the expedition came to him repeating their excuses and declaring their allegiance to him. He accepted all their excuses, supplicated on their behalf and left their hidden intentions between them and Allah, the Exalted. One Companion, Ka'b Bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, only stayed behind out of negligence and laziness. Even though he observed others making excuses and being pardoned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he still declared the truth to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, knowing that Allah, the Exalted, would be angered at him for lying even if he temporarily escaped the anger of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by lying. Two other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, also admitted the truth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that Allah, the Exalted, would decide the outcome of their situation. The people of Medina were told to socially boycott the three until the decision about them was made. During this time a non-Muslim ruler sent a letter to Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with him, advising him that he was being treated harshly and he should leave Medina and come to him where he would be treated with great honor and respect. Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with him, understood that this was a test and burned the letter. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 31-32.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why they worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

To conclude, it is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.



## Truth Leads to Success

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina those who failed to take part in the expedition came to him repeating their excuses and declaring their allegiance to him. He accepted all their excuses, supplicated on their behalf and left their hidden intentions between them and Allah, the Exalted. One Companion, Ka'b Bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, only stayed behind out of negligence and laziness. Even though he observed others making excuses and being pardoned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he still declared the truth to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, knowing that Allah, the Exalted, would be angered at him for lying even if he temporarily escaped the anger of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by lying. Two other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, also admitted the truth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that Allah, the Exalted, would decide the outcome of their situation. The people of Medina were told to socially boycott the three until the decision about them was made. After 50 difficult days Allah, the Exalted, revealed their forgiveness in the Holy Quran, a very special blessing for them in particular for adhering to the truth. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 118:

*“And [He also forgave] the three who were left alone [i.e., boycotted, regretting their error] to the point that the earth closed in on them in spite of its vastness and their souls confined [i.e., anguished] them and they were certain that there is no refuge from Allah except in Him. Then He*

*turned to them so they could repent. Indeed, Allah is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, *the Life of the Prophet*, Volume 4, Pages 30-33.

In a Hadith found in *Jami At Tirmidhi*, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness has three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in *Sahih Bukhari*, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in *Jami At Tirmidhi*, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a Muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according

to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

## **Balanced Spending According to Means**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina those who failed to take part in the expedition came to him repeating their excuses and declaring their allegiance to him. He accepted all their excuses, supplicated on their behalf and left their hidden intentions between them and Allah, the Exalted. One Companion, Ka'b Bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, only stayed behind out of negligence and laziness. Even though he observed others making excuses and being pardoned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he still declared the truth to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, knowing that Allah, the Exalted, would be angered at him for lying even if he temporarily escaped the anger of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by lying. Two other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, also admitted the truth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that Allah, the Exalted, would decide the outcome of their situation. The people of Medina were told to socially boycott the three until the decision about them was made. After 50 difficult days Allah, the Exalted, revealed their forgiveness in the Holy Quran, a very special blessing for them in particular for adhering to the truth. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 118:

*“And [He also forgave] the three who were left alone [i.e., boycotted, regretting their error] to the point that the earth closed in on them in spite of its vastness and their souls confined [i.e., anguished] them and they were certain that there is no refuge from Allah except in Him. Then He*

*turned to them so they could repent. Indeed, Allah is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.”*

Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with him, then visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who with the rest of Medina congratulated him. Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with him, offered all his wealth in charity out of gratitude to Allah, the Exalted. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told him that it was best if he only donated some and kept the rest. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 30-33.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that the one who spends in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, will be rewarded according to what they give. And he warned not to hoard otherwise Allah, the Exalted, will withhold His blessings.

It is important to note, that one must only obtain and spend lawful wealth as any righteous deed which has a foundation in the unlawful will be rejected by Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of one's intention. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2342.

In addition, this spending is not only through charity but includes spending on one's own necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. This is in fact a righteous deed according to a Hadith found

in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006. A Muslim should spend in a balanced way whereby they help others without becoming needy themselves. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 29:

*“And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent.”*

A Muslim should donate regularly according to their means even if it is a little as Allah, the Exalted, observes one's quality meaning, their sincerity, not the quantity of a deed. Regularly donating a little is far better and more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, than donating a larger amount once in a while. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6465.

It is important to note, as mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion when one gives according to their means Allah, the Exalted, will reward them according to His infinite status. But the one who holds back will find a similar response from Allah, the Exalted. If a Muslim hoards their wealth they will leave it behind for others to enjoy while they are held accountable for it. If they misuse their wealth it will become a curse and burden for them in this world and a punishment in the next.

## Obtaining Forgiveness

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to firstly preach Islam and if necessary fight against the great Byzantine empire. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, returned to Medina those who failed to take part in the expedition came to him repeating their excuses and declaring their allegiance to him. He accepted all their excuses, supplicated on their behalf and left their hidden intentions between them and Allah, the Exalted. Seven Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who remained behind out of negligence did not present excuses and instead tied themselves to the pillars of the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in an act of repentance. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, saw what they had done he left their decision to Allah, the Exalted. Eventually, Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 102, which indicated the acceptance of their repentance:

*“And [there are] others who have acknowledged their sins. They had mixed [i.e., polluted] a righteous deed with another that was bad. Perhaps Allah will turn to them in forgiveness. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 34.

A divine Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3540, advises the importance and vastness of the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted. The first part of the Hadith declares that as long as a Muslim sincerely supplicates to Allah, the Exalted, and hope's in His mercy they will be forgiven by Him.

This response has in fact been guaranteed for all lawful supplications in the Holy Quran not just for the supplication of forgiveness. Chapter 40 Ghafir, verse 60:

*“And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.”...”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned this verse and declared that supplication is an act of worship meaning, a righteous deed. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1479. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3604, advises that every supplication is accepted in different ways as long as it is a lawful one. The person is either granted what they requested or a reward will be reserved for them in the hereafter or they will be forgiven an equivalent sin. But it is important to note, that in order to receive a positive response a Muslim must fulfil the conditions and the etiquettes of the supplication.

One of the greatest supplications a Muslim can make is for forgiveness as it is a means for one obtaining blessings, avoiding difficulties in this world



and a means to obtaining Paradise and escaping Hell in the next world. Chapter 71 Nuh, verses 10-12:

*“And said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers. And give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers.’”*

As indicated by the main Hadith under discussion having hope in the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted, when supplicating is a condition for forgiveness. In fact, Allah, the Exalted, acts according to His servant's opinion of Him, which has been confirmed in a divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405.

One of the greatest causes of forgiveness is when a Muslim only hopes in Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them full well knowing no one can forgive them or protect them from punishment except Allah, the Exalted.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that no matter how many sins a person commits the mercy and forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, is greater. In fact, it is unlimited therefore a person's limited sins will never be able to overcome it. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to magnify what they supplicate for as nothing is too great for Allah, the Exalted, to grant. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6812.

The next part of the main Hadith under discussion indicates the importance of sincerely seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, which has been mentioned in many verses and other Hadiths. This act of seeking forgiveness is a part of sincere repentance. It can be understood that seeking forgiveness is an act of the tongue while the rest of sincere repentance involves turning away from the sin through actions. It also includes feeling genuine remorse, making a firm promise not to commit the sin again and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people. It is important to note, that not persisting on the same sin is a condition for the repentance to be accepted. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 135:

*“And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can forgive sins except Allah? - and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know.”*

It is extremely important for a Muslim to be persistent in seeking forgiveness as this leads to deliverance from every worry, a way out from every difficulty and support from places where one would not expect. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1518.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is the greatest cause of forgiveness namely, not associating anything to Allah, the Exalted. There are two types of associating things with Allah, the Exalted: major polytheism and minor polytheism. The major type is when

one worships things other than Allah, the Exalted, or in addition to Him. The minor version is when one acts for the sake of anyone except Allah, the Exalted, such as showing off. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. In fact, the one who acts for the sake of people will be told by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day to seek their reward from those they acted for, which will not be possible. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154. The one who acts in this way will find that they will eventually be exposed in this world and no matter how well they treat others they will never gain their real love or respect because of their bad intention. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6705.

When one realises the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, they only think, act and speak for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, out of fear and love for Him. This behaviour minimises the chances of committing sins and whatever sins do occur will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. It is the reason why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3797, that the statement there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the Exalted, removes all wrong actions.

This is the behaviour all Muslims must strive to adopt. The foundation of it is fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny.

## **Compromising Leads to Failure**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. But their acceptance of Islam included some conditions which they expected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to accept. One of these conditions was that they desired to keep one of their idols of worship for three years within their land. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing be upon him, blankly refused this condition even though they kept reducing the time period. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 38-39.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the

hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam. Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## **The Prayers Lead to Paradise**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. But their acceptance of Islam included some conditions which they expected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to accept. One of these conditions was that they would be excused from offering the five daily obligatory prayers. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that there was no good in faith which is devoid of the prayers. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 39.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 574, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever establishes the two cool obligatory prayers will enter Paradise.

The two cool obligatory prayers refer to the dawn and late afternoon obligatory prayers as during these two times the weather is cooler than at other times meaning, before sunrise and before sunset.

Establishing the obligatory prayers includes fulfilling all their conditions and etiquettes correctly according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as offering them on time. In fact, offering them as soon as they occur is one of the most

beloved deeds to Allah, the Exalted. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 252.

Even though, there are five obligatory prayers which must be established yet, only two have been mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion. This is because these two prayers are arguably the two hardest to establish. The obligatory dawn prayer occurs at a time when most people are asleep. Therefore, it requires much energy and motivation in order to leave one's comfortable bed in order to offer it correctly. The obligatory late afternoon prayer mostly occurs at a time where most people have completed their working day and have returned home tired. So to leave one's relaxation after a tiring and even stressful day of work in order to correctly offer their obligatory prayer is difficult. Therefore, if one correctly establishes these two prayers they will through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, find it easier to establish the other obligatory prayers, which usually occur at more convenient times.

Muslims should therefore strive to establish all their obligatory prayers as it is the very essence of Islam and it in fact separates belief from disbelief. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2618.



## **Flexibility Without Compromise**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. But their acceptance of Islam included some conditions which they expected the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to accept. Two of these conditions were that their tribe would not be required to take part in battles and no person from a different tribe would be put in charge of their tribe. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted these two conditions. He did however comment afterwards that once they became true Muslims they would undoubtedly take part in battles out of their own free will. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 39.

These two conditions were accepted as they were not so significant nor did they challenge the fundamental teachings of Islam. In addition, accepting some of their conditions was the best way of encouraging them to accept Islam.

Some adopt stubbornness in worldly matters and as a result they do not change their character for the better. Instead, they remain steadfast on their attitude believing this is somehow a sign of their great strength and wisdom. Steadfastness in matters of faith is a praiseworthy attitude but in most worldly matters it is only called stubbornness, which is blameworthy.

Unfortunately, some believe if they change their attitude it demonstrates weakness or it shows that they are admitting their fault and because of this they stubbornly fail to change for the better. Adults behave like immature children by believing that if they change their behaviour it means they have lost while others who remain steadfast on their attitude have won. This is simply childish.

In reality, an intelligent person will remain steadfast on matters of faith but in worldly matters they will change their attitude, as long as it is not sinful, in order to make their life easier. So changing to improve one's life is not a sign of weakness it is in fact a sign of intelligence.

In many cases, a person refuses to change their attitude and expects others in their life to change theirs, such as their relatives. But what often occurs is that due to stubbornness all remain in the same state which only leads to regular disagreements and arguments. A wise person understands that if the people around them do not change for the better than they should. This change will improve the quality of their life and their relationship with others which is much better than going around in circular arguments with people. This positive attitude will eventually cause others to respect them as it takes real strength to change one's character for the better.

Those who remain stubborn will always find something to be annoyed about which will remove peace from their life. This will cause further difficulties in all aspects of their life, such as their mental health. But those who adapt and change for the better will always move from one station of peace to another. If one achieves this peace does it really matter if others believe they only changed because they were wrong?

To conclude, to remain steadfast on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is praiseworthy. But in worldly matters and in cases where no sin is committed a person should learn to adapt and change their attitude so that they find some peace in this world.

## **True Good**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. After they accepted Islam the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed one of their tribesmen as their commander, Uthman Bin Abu Al As, may Allah be pleased with him. He did this even though he was one of the youngest men as he showed a great eagerness to understand the Holy Quran. He eventually became an expert in the Holy Quran and was much liked by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 40.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2645, that when Allah, the Exalted, desires to give someone good He provides them with Islamic knowledge.

There is no doubt that every Muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith desires good in both worlds. Even though many Muslims incorrectly believe that this good which they desire lies in fame, wealth, authority, companionship and their career this Hadith makes it crystal clear that true lasting good lies in gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. It is important to note a branch of religious knowledge is useful worldly knowledge whereby one earns lawful provision in order to fulfil their necessities and the necessities of their dependents. Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has pointed out where

good lies yet it is a shame how many Muslims do not place much value in this. They in most cases only strive to obtain the bare minimum of Islamic knowledge in order to fulfil their obligatory duties and fail to acquire and act on more such as the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Instead they dedicate their efforts on worldly things believing true good is found there. Many Muslims fail to appreciate that the righteous predecessors had to journey for weeks on end just to learn a single verse or Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, whereas today one can study Islamic teachings without leaving their home. Yet, many fail to make use of this blessing given to the modern day Muslims. Out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, through his Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has not only pointed out where true good lies but He has also placed this good at one's finger tips. Allah, the Exalted, has informed mankind of where an eternal buried treasure is located which can solve all the problems they may encounter in both worlds. But Muslims will only obtain this good once they struggle to acquire and act on it.

## **A Good Leader**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. After they accepted Islam the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed one of their tribesmen as their commander, Uthman Bin Abu Al As, may Allah be pleased with him. He did this even though he was one of the youngest men as he showed a great eagerness to understand the Holy Quran. He eventually became an expert in the Holy Quran and was much liked by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When departing Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, to be concise in the prayer and to evaluate the people by their weakest member for they would include the old, the young, the weak and those in need. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 40.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2409, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that each person is a guardian and responsible for the things under their care.

The greatest thing a Muslim is a guardian of is their faith. Therefore, they must strive to fulfill its responsibility 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.

This guardianship also includes every blessing one has been granted by Allah, the Exalted, which includes external things such as wealth and internal things such as one's body. A Muslim must fulfill the responsibility of these things by using them in the way prescribed by Islam. For example, a Muslim should only use their eyes to look at lawful things and their tongue to utter only lawful and useful words.

This guardianship also extends to others within one's life such as relatives and friends. A Muslim must fulfill this responsibility by fulfilling their rights such as providing for them and gently commanding good and forbidding evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should not cut off from others especially over worldly issues. Instead, they should continue to treat them kindly hoping they will change for the better. This guardianship includes one's children. A Muslim must guide them by leading by example as this by far is the most effective way in guiding children. They must obey Allah, the Exalted, practically as discussed earlier and teach their children to do the same. A separate audio/video podcast series titled: Raising Pious Children, has been produced which discusses this aspect in detail and can be viewed using the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK-9u2mv2fs&list=PLt1Vizm7rRKbi8Dxr6UJJ6AcUExTo8Ib9>

and

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/108539593905598/225085248658377/>

A free PDF version has also been produced which can be accessed using the following link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:1122ebc4-72ab-4384-9198-7a93e45f53b3>

To conclude, according to this Hadith everyone has some sort of responsibility they have been entrusted with. So they should gain and act on the relevant knowledge in order to fulfill them as this is a part of obeying Allah, the Exalted.



## **Make Things Simple**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. After they accepted Islam the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed one of their tribesmen as their commander, Uthman Bin Abu Al As, may Allah be pleased with him. He did this even though he was one of the youngest men as he showed a great eagerness to understand the Holy Quran. He eventually became an expert in the Holy Quran and was much liked by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When departing Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, to recite the shorter chapters of the Holy Quran when he leads the congregational prayers in order to make things easy for the people. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 40.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6125, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to make things easy for others instead of making things difficult. And to give glad tidings to others and not scare them.

A Muslim should always make things easy firstly for themselves by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge so that they can fulfill their obligatory duties, act on the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents. This will provide them with plenty of time to enjoy lawful

things without being wasteful or extravagant. A Muslim should act according to their strength in respect to voluntary righteous deeds and not over burden themselves as this is disliked in Islam. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6465. A balanced approach is always best.

In addition, Muslims should make things easy for others especially, in religious matters so that people do not grow averse to Islam believing it is a burdensome religion when it in fact is a simple and easy religion. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 287. This is important to teach others, especially children. If children wrongfully believe Islam is a difficult religion they will turn away from it when they get older. Children should be taught that Islam has some obligations which do not take much time to fulfill and leaves plenty of time for them to have fun in good ways.

But it is important to note, making things easy for oneself or others in religious matters does not mean a Muslim should be lazy and teach others to be lazy as the minimum obligations must be fulfilled at all times unless one is exempt by Islam. The one who acts lazily is not obeying Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires.

Another aspect of making things easy for others includes a Muslim not demanding their full rights from others. Instead, they should use the means, such as their physical or financial strength, to help themselves and make things easy for others. In some cases, failing to fulfill the rights of others can lead to punishment. In order to make things easy for others a Muslim should therefore only demand their rights in some cases. This does not mean a Muslim should not strive to fulfill the rights of others but

it means they should try to overlook and excuse the people they have rights over. For example, a parent can excuse their adult child from a particular house chore and do it themselves if they possess the means to do so without trouble especially if they child returns home from work exhausted. This leniency and mercy will not only cause Allah, the Exalted, to be more merciful to them but it will also increase the love and respect people have for them. The one who always demands their full rights is not a sinner but they will lose out on this reward and outcome if they behave in this manner.

Muslims should make things easy for others and hope Allah, the Exalted, will make things easy for them in this world and in the next. But those who make things difficult for others may find that Allah, the Exalted, makes things difficult for them in both worlds.

A Muslim must remind themselves and others of the countless blessings of Allah, the Exalted, and the great reward He bestows on Muslims in this world and in the next on those who obey Him by fulfilling His commands, 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. This approach, in most cases, is more effective in encouraging people towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Only in some cases when someone is indulging in wishful thinking and disobeying Allah, the Exalted, while expecting they will succeed should a Muslim warn them of the consequences of their actions thereby, inspiring the fear of Allah, the Exalted, in them.

A balance is best whereby one uses hope in Allah, the Exalted, to encourage His obedience and fear of Him in order to prevent sins. And

whenever one feels imbalanced or observes others who have become imbalanced a Muslim should act appropriately in order to adjust themselves and others back to the correct middle path.

## Gentle Persistence

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, died. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, regularly visited him during his final illness in the hope he would sincerely repent and become a true Muslim. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 45.

The one who desires to spread the word of Islam should strive to frequently remind others of good. People can become heedless quickly therefore, reminding them consistently is important. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 51:

*“And We have [repeatedly] conveyed to them the word [i.e., the Qur’ān] that they might be reminded.”*

Just like students who revise their notes repeatedly in order to reinforce its knowledge into their minds one will benefit from being frequently reminded of the true word of Islam. One should not just offer good advice once and then give up. Repeating good words is like continuous drops of water which with time penetrates the toughest of structures. This is the tradition of Allah, the Exalted, and all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them all. For example, Allah, the Exalted, only needed to command Muslims to establish the obligatory prayers once yet He has done it many times throughout the Holy Quran.

The Holy Prophet Nuh, peace be upon him, spent approximately 950 years continuously spreading the word of faith to his people. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 14:

*“And We certainly sent Noah to his people, and he remained among them a thousand years minus fifty years...”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used every moment to spread the word of Islam and even in his last moments advised the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, to adhere to Islamic teachings. This has been recorded in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2697. Therefore, one should adopt this attitude and not fall prey to the whisperings of the Devil by giving up offering advice after a few occasions. The duty of a Muslim who invites others to Islam is to do it consistently but whether this effects the hearts of the people is out of their control.

But it is important to stress there is a difference between being regular and hounding others. A Muslim should not constantly command others to good as this can become overbearing and burdensome for others. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, refrained from giving too many lectures as he did not want the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, becoming bored and overburdened. This is why the Companion, Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, only gave lectures on Thursdays even though

he was requested to give more. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7127.

## **Show Gratitude to All**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, died. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, regularly visited him during his final illness in the hope he would sincerely repent and become a true Muslim. He however did not repent and died a hypocrite. His son Abdullah Bin Abdullah Bin Ubayy, may Allah be pleased with him, requested the shirt of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so he could wrap his father's body with it. In addition, he requested him to lead the funeral prayer for his father. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave his shirt and rose to lead the funeral prayer. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not only fulfill the wish of his son, Abdullah Bin Abdullah Bin Ubayy, who was a Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, but he also reciprocated the favor of Abdullah Bin Ubayy when he gave his shirt to the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Al Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, after the Battle of Badr, as no other shirt would fit him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 46-47.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1954, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever is not grateful to people cannot be grateful to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though there is no doubt that the source of all blessings is none other than Allah, the Exalted, none the less showing gratitude to people is an important aspect of Islam. This is because Allah, the Exalted,



sometimes uses a person as a means to help others such as one's parents. As the means has been created and used by Allah, the Exalted, being grateful to them is in fact being grateful to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, Muslims must show good character and always show appreciation for any aid or support they receive from others irrespective of its size. They should show gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessing according to His commands as He is the source of the blessing and show gratitude to the person as they are the means which was created and chosen by Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should show gratitude verbally to people and practically by repaying their act of kindness according to their means even if it is only a supplication on their behalf. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 216.

The person who does not show gratitude to people cannot show true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, and therefore they will not be given an increase in blessings. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

If a Muslim desires an increase in blessings they must fulfill both aspects of gratitude namely, to Allah, the Exalted, and to people.

## Mercy Leads to Success

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, died. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, regularly visited him during his final illness in the hope he would sincerely repent and become a true Muslim. He however did not repent and died a hypocrite. His son Abdullah Bin Abdullah Bin Ubayy, may Allah be pleased with him, requested the shirt of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so he could wrap his father's body with it. In addition, he requested him to lead the funeral prayer for his father. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave his shirt and rose to lead the funeral prayer. Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, took hold of his gown and urged him not to lead the funeral prayer of the man who stopped at nothing in trying to destroy Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, even reminded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of the verse which clearly states that even if he sought forgiveness for the hypocrites seventy times Allah, the Exalted, would not forgive them. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 80:

*“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.”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he would seek forgiveness for him more than seventy times. He then

led his funeral prayer. Allah, the Exalted, then forbade him from doing this in the future. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 84:

*“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.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 46-47.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that Allah, the Exalted, will not show mercy to the one who does not show mercy to others.

Islam is a very simple religion. One of its fundamental teachings is so simple that even uneducated people can understand and act on them namely, how people treat others is how they will be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, those who learn to overlook and forgive the mistakes of others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

Those who support others in beneficial worldly and religious matters such as emotional or financial aid will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. This same Hadith advises that the one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, if one treats others with kindness and respect according to the teachings of Islam they will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted. And those who mistreat others will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted, even if they fulfill the obligatory duties which are connected to Him such as the obligatory prayers. This is because a Muslim must fulfill both duties in order to achieve success namely, the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Finally, it is important to note a Muslim will only be treated kindly by Allah, the Exalted, if they treat others kindly for His sake. If they do it for any other reason than they will undoubtedly forfeit the reward mentioned in these teachings. The foundation of all acts and Islam itself is one's intention. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

## **Purifying the Holy Pilgrimage**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to announce that only a Muslim could take part in the Holy Pilgrimage after that year. Previous to this non-Muslims would perform the Holy Pilgrimage but according to their own misguided customs. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 48-49.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1773, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the reward for an accepted Holy Pilgrimage is nothing except Paradise.

The real purpose of the Holy Pilgrimage is to prepare Muslims for their final journey to the hereafter. The same way a Muslim leaves behind their home, business, wealth, family, friends and social status in order to perform the Holy Pilgrimage this will occur at the time of their death when they take their final journey to the hereafter. In fact, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, advises that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds, good and bad, accompany them.

When a Muslim bears this in mind during their Holy Pilgrimage they will fulfil all the aspects of this duty correctly. This Muslim will return back home a changed person as they will prioritise preparing for their final

journey to the hereafter over amassing the excess aspects of this material world. They will strive in fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which includes taking from this world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance.

Muslims should not treat the Holy Pilgrimage as a holiday and a place to shop as this attitude defeats the purpose of it. It must remind Muslims of their final journey to the hereafter a journey which has no return and no second chances. Only this will inspire one to fulfil the Holy Pilgrimage correctly and prepare adequately for the hereafter.

## **Be a Good Guest**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people hurried over and called out to him in a loud and rude manner from behind his apartment. Then Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verses 4-5:

*“Indeed, those who call you from behind the chambers - most of them do not use reason. And if they had been patient until you [could] come out to them, it would have been better for them. But Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 60.

It is important for a Muslim to fulfil the etiquettes and conditions of visiting others according to the teachings of Islam in order to obtain their reward. They should not stay long thereby, causing trouble to the host and their relatives. In this day and age it is easy to contact the host and their family beforehand in order to ensure they visit them at the appropriate time. They should control their actions and speech so that they avoid all types of sins such as gossiping, backbiting and slandering others. They should discuss beneficial matters in respect to the world and the hereafter. Only when one behaves in this manner will they obtain the reward outlined in the

Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If they fail in this they will either gain no reward or they may well be left with sins depending on how they behaved. Unfortunately, many Muslims enjoy performing this righteous deed but fail to fulfill its conditions correctly. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114:

*“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”*



## **Two Blessed Qualities**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Having reached and seen the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, all except one man jumped down from their mounts and proceeded to him in haste. The man who remained behind, Al Ashajj Al Mundhir Bin Amir, may Allah be pleased with him, dismounted and tied his camel. He then took out and put on two white garments which he kept in his baggage. He then tied up the camels of the other delegates and then moved forward to meet the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then told him he had two qualities which Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, loved namely, discernment and deliberation. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 63.

True discernment can only be obtained through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. It is important for Muslims to understand that their worldly knowledge irrespective of how much they possess is not enough to gain success in their religious life. Even though, gaining useful worldly knowledge is praiseworthy according to the teachings of Islam as it is an excellent means for one to obtain lawful provision for themselves and their dependents yet, it is not enough to safely guide them through their religious life. For example, in most cases, worldly knowledge will not teach someone how to safely journey through a difficulty or a test in a way which pleases Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward in both worlds. The obligatory duties and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, cannot be acted on by a Muslim who only possesses worldly knowledge. In fact, religious knowledge has the power to guide one to success in both worlds whereas worldly knowledge will

only aid someone in this world. The one who possesses religious knowledge will adhere to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which will result in such blessings and grace that they will find success in both worlds. Whereas, worldly knowledge will inspire one to deduce their own path in religion instead of acting according to the teachings of the rightly guided namely, the righteous predecessors. Religion is not to about creating one's own path it is simply to adhere to Islamic teachings.

Unfortunately, many Muslims who possess worldly knowledge do not realise this important point which only reduces their chances of achieving success in both worlds. Therefore, Muslims should strive to obtain and act on both religious and useful worldly knowledge if they desire success in both worlds. This is why gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all Muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

In addition, deliberation is extremely important as it prevents sins. In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2012, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking things through is from Allah, the Exalted, while being hasty is from the Devil.

This is an extremely important teaching to understand and act on as Muslims who perform much righteous deeds often destroy them through hastiness. For example, they may utter some evil words in a fit of rage which may cause them to plunge into Hell on Judgment Day. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

The vast majority of sins and difficulties, such as arguments, occur because people fail to think things through and instead act in a hasty way. The sign of intelligence is when one thinks before speaking or acting and only precedes when they know their speech or action is good and beneficial in worldly or religious matters.

Even though, a Muslim should not delay in performing righteous deeds yet, they should still think things through before performing them. This is because a righteous deed may receive no reward simply because its conditions and etiquettes have not been fulfilled because of one's hastiness. In this respect, one should only move forward in any matter after they have thought things through.

The one who behaves in this manner will not only minimize their sins and increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, but they will minimize the difficulties they encounter, such as arguments and disagreements, in all aspects of their life.

## **Aiming for Worldly Gain**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Amongst them was Musaylima the liar who after arriving to Medina said he would only follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, if he was appointed leader of the Islamic nation after him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned in a dream that Musaylima the liar would eventually falsely claim Prophethood. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave him a stern warning instead of punishing him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 66.

Like Musaylima the liar a person can be encouraged to cross all lawful limits when they have extreme love for wealth and social status.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that craving for wealth and status is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are set free on a herd of sheep.

This shows that hardly any of a Muslim's faith remains secure if they crave after wealth and fame in this world just as hardly any of the sheep will be saved from two hungry wolves. So this great similitude contains a severe

warning against the evil of craving after excess wealth and social status in the world.

The first type of craving for wealth is when one has extreme love for wealth and strives without fatigue to acquire it through lawful means. To behave in such a manner is not the sign of wise person as a Muslim should firmly believe their provision is guaranteed to them and this allotment can never change. In fact, the provision of the creation was allocated over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. This person will undoubtedly neglect their duties as they are too preoccupied with obtaining wealth. A body which is too busy acquiring wealth will never prepare adequately for the hereafter. In fact, this person will dedicate so much effort to acquiring wealth that they may not even get a chance to enjoy it. Instead, they will depart this world and leave it behind for other people to enjoy even though they will be held accountable for it. This person may acquire wealth lawfully but they will still not find peace of mind as no matter how much they obtain they will only desire more. This person is needy and therefore, a real pauper even if they possess much wealth.

The only craving which is beneficial is craving for accumulating true wealth namely, righteous deeds in order to prepare for one's day of return.

The second type of craving for wealth is similar to the first type but in addition to it this type of person acquires wealth through unlawful means and fails to fulfil the rights of people, such as the obligatory charity. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned against this in many Hadiths. For example, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6576, he warned that this attitude destroyed the past

nations as they made unlawful things lawful, withheld the rights of others and killed others for the sake of excess wealth. This person strives for the wealth they are not entitled to which leads to countless major sins. When one adopts this attitude they become intensely greedy. As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1961, the greedy person is far from Allah, the Exalted, far from Paradise, far from people and close to Hell. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3114, warns that extreme greed and true faith will never combine in the heart of a true Muslim.

If a Muslim adopts this type of craving then the extreme danger of it is clear even to an uneducated Muslim. It will destroy their faith until nothing except a little remains just like the main Hadith under discussion warns that this destruction to one's faith is more severe than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are let loose on a herd of sheep. This Muslim risks losing the little faith they possess at the moment of their death, which is the greatest loss. A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than craving for excess wealth. A person will often spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and prestige.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise the hereafter over the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but if someone receives it without asking for it they will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. This is the reason the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not appoint a person who requested to be appointed in a position of authority or even showed desire for it. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6923. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain

status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment. This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worse type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, that this person will go to Hell.

Therefore, it is safer for a Muslim to avoid the craving for excess wealth and high social status as they are two things which can lead to the destruction of their faith by distracting them from preparing adequately for the hereafter.

## Trustworthy

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This delegation from Najran requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to send a trustworthy person to them in order to answer their questions. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, desired to be this person but the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, chose Abu Ubayda Bin Al Jarrah, may Allah be pleased with him, and declared that he was the most trustworthy person in his nation. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 71.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:



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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst Muslims.

## **True Beauty**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The delegation consisted of two men who after reaching Medina changed their travelling clothes for expensive and extravagant clothes and also put on gold rings. When they greeted the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he did not reply to them nor speak to them. The delegates then questioned the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who advised them to change back into their traveling clothes and take off their gold rings. When they did so and returned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he replied to their greeting and spoke to them. He told them that when they first came to him in their extravagant clothes the Devil was with them so he ignored them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 72.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1999, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves beauty.

Islam does not prohibit a Muslim from dedicating energy, time and money in beautifying themselves as this can be considered fulfilling the rights of their body. This has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5199. But the key thing which differentiates acting in this manner to acting in a disliked or even sinful manner is when one is excessive, wasteful or extravagant when beautifying themselves. A good way to determine this is that beautifying oneself should never cause one to neglect fulfilling one's duty to Allah, the Exalted, or people which is not

possible to fulfill without gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. And in reality correcting one's physical appearance so that they appear clean and smart is not expensive nor does it take much time or effort.

In addition, it is more important to understand that true beauty which Allah, the Exalted, loves is connected to internal beauty meaning, one's character. This beauty will endure in both worlds whereas one's outer beauty will eventually fade away with the passing of time. One should therefore prioritize obtaining this true beauty over external beauty by striving to gain and act on Islamic knowledge so that they eliminate any bad traits, such as envy, from their character and adopt good characteristics, such as generosity. This will aid one in fulfilling the rights of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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, and will aid them in fulfilling the rights of people, such as their dependents.

## **Slaves of the World**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This Christian delegation did not accept Islam but agreed to a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When the delegation left Medina two brothers, Abu Haritha and Kurz Bin Alqama, were riding near each other. The mule of Abu Haritha stumbled and Kurz in frustration rebuked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indirectly. Abu Haritha in response rebuked him. When Kurz asked about his response Abu Haritha told him that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was undoubtedly the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, they had been waiting for and who had been described in their divine scriptures. When Kurz asked him why he rejected Islam even though he knew it was the truth Abu Haritha replied that he did so because of the honor, wealth and authority their people had given them and he was afraid he would lose it all if he accepted Islam. Kurz gave much thought to what Abu Haritha said and he eventually returned to Medina and accepted Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 75-76.

Islam teaches Muslims that they should never compromise on their faith in order to gain something from the material world. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives...”*

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a Muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a Muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a Muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

In times like this it is important to remember that ultimate victory and success will only be granted to those who remain steadfast on the teachings of Islam. Those who act in this way will be granted worldly and religious success. But more importantly their worldly success will not become a burden for them. In fact, it will become a means for Allah, the Exalted, to increase their rank and remembrance amongst mankind. Examples of this are the rightly guided Caliphs of Islam. They did not compromise on their faith and instead remained steadfast throughout their

lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

All other forms of success are very temporal and sooner or later they become a difficulty for its bearer. One only needs to observe the many celebrities who compromised on their ideals and belief in order to obtain fame and fortune only for these things to become a cause of their sadness, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even suicide.

Reflect on these two paths for a moment and then decide which one should be preferred and chosen.

## **Evil Plans Backfire**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation from Banu Amir visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Three men came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with the intention to betray and martyr him. Amir Bin Al Tufayl planned to distract the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to give the opportunity to his evil friend Al Arbad to attack him. When Al Arbad failed to launch the attack Amir Bin Al Tufayl gave up the plot and instead verbally threatened the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who in turn asked Allah, the Exalted, to take care of Amir Bin Al Tufayl. After the two left Medina Amir rebuked Al Arbad for not launching the attack but he replied that every time he decided to attack he could only see Amir standing in front of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This was in fact nothing but divine protection. On the way home Amir gained an infection his neck which ultimately led to his death. Al Arbad was eventually struck by lightning and died. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 66-79.

One should never plot to do an evil thing as it will always, one way or another, backfire on them. Even if these consequences are delayed to the next world they will face them eventually. For example, the brothers of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, desired to harm him as they desired the love, respect and affection of their father the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him. But it is clear that their scheming only put them further away from their desire. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 18:

*“And they brought upon his shirt false blood. [Jacob] said, “Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting...”*

The more one plots evil the more Allah, the Exalted, will put them further from their goal. Even if they outwardly achieve their desire Allah, the Exalted, will cause the very thing they desired to become a curse for them in both worlds unless they sincerely repent. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

*“...but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples?...”*



## **True Honor in Humility**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a well-known Christian who eventually became a Muslim, Adi Bin Hatim, may Allah be pleased with him, prior to accepting Islam visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After meeting him the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took him to his home. On the way the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was stopped by an old disabled woman. He stood with her for a long time discussing and solving her problem. During this long conversation Adi Bin Hatim, may Allah be pleased with him, told himself that this was not the behaviour of a worldly king. After reaching home the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, insisted that Adi, may Allah be pleased with him, sit on a pillow while he himself sat on the floor. Adi, may Allah be pleased with him, again told himself that this was not the behaviour of a worldly king. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 87-88.

The servants of Allah, the Exalted, have understood that anything good they possess is solely because Allah, the Exalted, granted it to them. And any evil they are saved from is because Allah, the Exalted, protected them. Is it not foolish to be proud of something that does not belong to someone? Just like a person does not boast about a sports car which does not belong to them Muslims must realize nothing in reality belongs to them. This attitude ensures one remains humble at all times. The humble servants of Allah, the Exalted, fully believe in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673, which declares that the righteous deeds of a person will not take them to Paradise. Only the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, can cause this to occur. This is because every righteous deed is only possible when Allah, the Exalted, provides one with the knowledge,

strength, opportunity and inspiration to perform it. Even the acceptance of the deed is dependent on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. When one bares this in mind it saves them from pride and inspires them to adopt humility. One should always remember that being humble is not a sign of weakness as Islam has encouraged one to defend themselves if necessary. In other words, Islam teaches Muslims to be humble without weakness. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, that whoever humbles themselves before Allah, the Exalted, will be raised by Him. So in reality, humility leads to honor in both worlds. One only needs to reflect on the most humble of the creation to understand this fact namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Allah, the Exalted, has clearly ordered people by ordering the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to adopt this important quality. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verse 215:

*“And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers.”*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led a humble life. For example, he happily carried out the domestic duties at home thereby proving these chores are gender-neutral. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 538.

Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63, shows that humility is an inner characteristic that manifests outwards such as the way one walks. This is discussed in another verse chapter 31 Luqman, verse 18:

*“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly...”*

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Paradise is for the humble servants who possess no trace of pride. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 83:

*“That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1998, that whoever possesses an atom's worth of pride will not enter Paradise. Only Allah, the Exalted, has the right to be proud as He is the Creator, Sustainer and Owner of the entire universe.

It is important to note, pride is when one believes they are superior to others and rejects the truth when it is presented to them as they dislike accepting the truth when it comes from other than them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4092.

## **Noble Character Leads to Paradise**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a non-Muslim tribe was taken as prisoners of war and brought to Medina. The daughter of Hatim Al Tai was amongst them. When she saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, walk pass she asked him to release her and spare her the malicious gloating of the Arab tribes as she was the daughter of the leader of her people. She then mentioned some of her father's qualities. He was the guardian of their sacred objects, he relieved the distressed, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, gave generous hospitality, provided the best of food, he spread peace and never refused the request of the needy. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that this was indeed the description of a true believer even though Hatim Al Tai was not a Muslim. He then declared the release of his daughter and commented that her father was a man who loved noble character traits and Allah, the Exalted, loves noble character traits. He concluded that no one will enter Paradise except by noble character. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 92.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the heaviest thing in the scales of Judgment Day will be good character. This includes showing good character towards Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. It also includes showing good character towards people. Unfortunately, many Muslims strive to fulfil the obligatory duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, but neglect the second aspect by mistreating others. They fail to understand its importance. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, clearly advises that a person will not be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. Meaning, the same way

a person desires to be treated kindly they must also treat others with good character otherwise they will not succeed as the only truly successful people are the believers.

In addition, a person cannot be a true believer until they keep their verbal and physical harm away from others and their possessions irrespective of their faith. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3318, that a woman will enter Hell because she mistreated a cat which led to its death. And another Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2550, advises that a man was forgiven because he fed a thirsty dog. If this is the outcome of showing good character and the consequences of showing evil character to animals can one imagine the importance of showing good character towards Allah, the Exalted, and people? In fact, the main Hadith under discussion concludes by advising that the one who possesses good character will be rewarded like the Muslim who persistently worships Allah, the Exalted, and regularly fasts.

## **Rights of Muslims**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a man named Jarir Bin Abdullah Al Bajali visited Medina and accepted Islam. When accepting Islam the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked him to pledge that he would perform the obligatory prayers, pay the obligatory charity and be loyal to all Muslims. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 106.

In this day and age Muslims often give much attention to the first two things mentioned in this pledge namely, the obligatory prayers and the obligatory charity but they often overlook being sincere and loyal to all Muslims. The fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty with two pillars of Islam indicates how important it is to fulfill. Therefore, Muslims should always strive to uphold the ties to other Muslims. This applies to all Muslims whether they are related or not and if they know each other or not. Many rights of Muslims have been mentioned in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and each Muslim should strive to learn and fulfill them. For example, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, listed five rights a Muslim owes another Muslim.

Firstly, they are to respond to the greeting of peace even if replying contradicts their desire. More importantly a Muslim must fulfill the Islamic greeting of peace practically by showing peace and kindness towards others through their speech and actions. This is the true meaning of the Islamic greeting of peace.

A Muslim should try to visit sick Muslims in order to provide them physical and psychological support. It would be difficult to visit all sick Muslims but if each Muslim at least visited their sick relatives then the vast majority of the sick would obtain this support. All forms of vain or sinful speech and actions must be avoided such as, gossiping otherwise a Muslim will only earn sins instead of blessings.

A Muslim when possible should attend the funeral of other Muslims as each attendee supplicates for the deceased to be forgiven. Therefore, the more Muslims in attendance the better. Just like one desires others to attend their funeral and supplicate for them they too should do this for others. In this particular deed is a good reminder for a Muslim that they too will eventually die. Hopefully, this will alter their behaviour for the better so that they better prepare for their own death by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims should accept the invitation for meals and social events as long as no unlawful or disliked activities take place, which in this day and age is quite rare. An important point to note is that some Muslims attend social events where unlawful or disliked things occur and cite this Hadith to support their actions. One should not misinterpret the divine teachings in order to fulfil their own desires as this is clear misguidance and an invitation to divine punishment.

Finally, the main Hadith concludes by advising Muslims to supplicate for the Muslim who praises Allah, the Exalted, after they sneeze.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated an extremely important duty in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2714, which is to offer good and sincere advice to other Muslims.

Firstly, it is important to note good advice should be offered to all irrespective of their faith. This is clearly advised in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. Muslims should advise others the way they wish people to advise them. One should never let their ill feelings prevent them from fulfilling this duty as one who purposely offers bad advice will find that people give them incorrect advice. Offering sincere advice is so important that as mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1925, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would take a pledge from people to fulfil this duty along with fulfilling the obligatory duties such as the prayer. The fact that sincerely advising others has been placed with these obligatory duties highlights its importance. So a Muslim should never overlook this fact.

Every person, irrespective of faith, loves to obtain the things which would benefit them and protect them from harmful things. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly declared in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for other Muslims what they love for themselves. This should be shown through one's actions by striving to ensure others obtain those things they love for themselves by any means available to them. A Muslim should not merely claim this through their words.



Another right all Muslims have is that one should sincerely supplicate for them. This is an aspect of being merciful to each other which has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 29:

*“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are...merciful among themselves...”*

In fact, when a Muslim supplicates for another they themselves benefit from it. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6927, when a Muslim secretly supplicates for other Muslims an Angel supplicates for them.

Another important right is that a Muslim should love and hate for other Muslims what they love and hate for themselves. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made this a condition of sincere belief in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

A Muslim should be happy at the lawful joy of another Muslim and hope it lasts for them. They should get sad when another Muslim faces a difficulty and help them through it even if it is just a supplication on their behalf. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6011, that Muslims are like one body. If a part of the body is ill then the rest of the body shares in the pain.

A Muslim should never cause unjustified harm to another Muslim or non-Muslim through their words or actions as this is the very definition of a Muslim given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2627. In fact, keeping people safe from one's harm is an act of charity a person does to themselves. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 250. This is an act of charity to oneself as it protects them from the punishment of Allah, the Exalted.

The rights of other Muslims include removing any obstacles from their path. This includes physical obstacles as well as figurative obstacles which can cause them harm. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6670, advises that a person will be granted Paradise for removing a tree which was blocking the path used by fellow Muslims.

It is the right of a Muslim that other Muslims help them when they are oppressed by any means necessary such as, financial help, and help those Muslims who commit oppression by warning them about the consequences of this behaviour. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6952. It is important to note, advice should only be given if the adviser is safe from the oppressor's harm.

A Muslim is not allowed to sever ties with another Muslim for more than three days over a worldly reason. This has been made clear in many Hadiths such as the one found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1932. Turning away from another Muslim in such a manner is such a serious issue that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1740, that Allah,

the Exalted, forgives all Muslims every Monday and Thursday except those who have forsaken another Muslim until they reconcile.

Another right is that a Muslim should not behave arrogantly with other Muslims. Instead, they should demonstrate humility which always leads to affection and the spread of love within society. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4895. Conversely, arrogance and pride only lead to social barriers and segregation of societies. If a Muslim is treated with arrogance they should not reply in the same manner instead they should hold to patience and forgiveness.

In fact, being humble towards others irrespective of their social status is a characteristic of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. As advised in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1415, he would never dislike walking with the poor and needy in order to fulfil their needs.

It is important for a Muslim to never pay any attention to rumours or gossip about other Muslims as in most cases they are either completely untrue or contain a few facts mixed with a lot of fiction. In many cases, even the truth has been twisted out of context in order to fulfil someone's evil desires. A Muslim should disregard what has been said and advise the gossiper to sincerely repent. They should never repeat the gossip to others nor mention the gossiper to others. By concealing this they should hope Allah, the Exalted, will conceal their faults in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1930.

In addition, a Muslim should never backbite or slander other Muslims as this is a major sin. In fact, one Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 290, warns that the tale bearer will not enter Paradise.

It is a duty of a Muslim to strive within their means to aid other Muslims from any distress. It is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 225, that whoever does this will be relieved of a hardship on the Day of Judgment. The same Hadith advises that whoever relieves the financial burden of another Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will relieve them in both worlds. So Muslims should be kind towards those who are indebted to them.

Another right a Muslim has over other Muslims is that if a Muslim wrongs another Muslim and then seeks forgiveness from them the victim should forgive them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This will result in Allah, the Exalted, forgiving the victim of their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6592, that whoever forgives others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be blessed with more honour.

In addition, a Muslim should treat other Muslims according to their status which has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1921. Meaning, elders should be treated with respect and the young with mercy. This Hadith warns that those who do not behave in this manner do not belong to the way of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In fact, a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 357, advises that a part of respecting Allah, the Exalted, is showing respect to the elderly. All people are a part of the creation of Allah, the Exalted, so respecting them according to the teachings of Islam is in fact respecting the Creator namely, Allah, the Exalted.

Islam teaches Muslims that what they give is what they shall receive. According to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2022, when a young person honours and respects an elderly person because of their age Allah, the Exalted, will appoint someone to honour them if and when they reach elderly age.

Another right a Muslim owes to other Muslims is to be cheerful with them as long as sins are avoided. In fact, smiling to another Muslim in order to comfort them is recorded as a charity. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1956.

The one who is easy to deal with, soft and mild mannered towards other Muslims has been given the glad tidings of protection from the fire of Hell in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2488. A part of being cheerful is speaking kindly to others. This is so important that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7512, that this is a deed which protects one from the fire of Hell. In fact, a person who acts on this has

been promised a beautiful chamber in Paradise in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1984.

It is a duty on Muslims to correct the problems between other Muslims according to their capacity. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2509, that doing this is better than voluntary prayer, fasting or charity.

Another right a Muslim has over other Muslims is that one should conceal their faults. It has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1930, that Allah, the Exalted, will cover the faults of a Muslim who conceals the faults of others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546, warns that whoever exposes the faults of others will have their faults exposed by Allah, the Exalted. This does not mean a Muslim should ignore the sins of others. But it means they should gently and privately advise the sinner to sincerely repent and not mention their sin to others. Even if a Muslim desires to teach others not to commit a similar sin they should follow the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and advise others without naming people. An example of this is recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6979. A Muslim should therefore screen the defects of others just as Allah, the Exalted, screens their defects and the mistakes of all others.

A Muslim should always avoid any situation which causes suspicion and doubt in the mind of other Muslims. This is in order to protect them from sins which others who are suspicious might commit such as backbiting and slander. Extending this protection to other Muslims is a part of loving

good for them just as one loves good for themselves. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3101, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once met his wife during the night. At the same time two Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, walked by hurriedly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, called and informed them he was meeting his wife and not a strange woman. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, made it clear that an incorrect thought did not even cross their minds. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, only responded in this manner in order to teach all Muslims that one should clarify any activity which could be seen as suspicious in order to protect the thoughts of other Muslims.

This is connected to another pious characteristic. It is when one avoids doing things which are lawful in order to prevent other Muslims feeling bad. For example, a husband not publically showing affection to his wife in front of other Muslims, such as his sister. Even though, this is completely lawful but doing it in front of his sister might make her feel bad especially if her husband does not do things like that with her. This is a higher level of noble character which is not obligatory but a great virtue.

Another right Muslims have over other Muslims is that they should be greeted with the Islamic greeting of peace. This should include the Muslims one knows and those a Muslim does not know. Many Hadiths discuss the importance and virtue of doing this good deed. For example, a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 68, links spreading the greeting of peace to other Muslims to gaining entry into Paradise. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 86:

*“And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]...”*

A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2706, advises that a Muslim should extend the greeting of peace when they meet another Muslim and when they leave them.

It is important to note, the Islamic greeting of peace is an indication that a Muslim should not only welcome a Muslim with peaceful words but they must maintain kind words throughout every conversation. In addition, this spreading of peace should be shown through a Muslim's actions not just words. This is the true meaning of extending the Islamic greeting of peace to others.

A Muslim should also follow the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by shaking hands with other Muslims when they extend the greeting of peace to them. In fact, the Muslims who do this and avoid any sins during their conversation will have their minor sins forgiven before they separate. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5212.

It is a duty on all Muslims to defend the rights of other Muslims as much as they can without committing sins or harming themselves. For example, they should protect the honour of other Muslims which are often violated behind their backs in the form of backbiting and slander. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1931, that whoever protects



the honour of another Muslim will be protected from the fire of Hell on Judgment Day.

If another Muslim shows bad manners it is a duty on other Muslims to maintain good manners with them. In addition, they should advise them in private to change their character for the better. Doing so in public can lead to their embarrassment and it is a duty of a Muslim not to embarrass other Muslims. In addition, a person who is embarrassed will more likely become angered and they therefore are less likely to accept the good advice which has been given to them.

## Let Things Go

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a prince from Hadramawt in Yemen, Wa'il Bin Hujr, came to Medina and accepted Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then appointed him the commander of the other princes of Hadramawt and put him in charge of a specific territory. He dispatched the Companion, Mu'awiya Bin Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, to accompany Wa'il, may Allah be pleased with him, home. Mu'awiya, may Allah be pleased with him, had no camel to ride on and was forced to walk alongside Wa'il, may Allah be pleased with him, while he rode his camel. He asked to ride behind Wa'il, may Allah be pleased with him, but he refused declaring that he was not fit enough to ride behind kings. Years later Mu'awiya, may Allah be pleased with him, became the Caliph of Islam and when Wa'il, may Allah be pleased with him, visited him he honored him greatly and jokingly reminded him of what he said to him during that journey. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 108.

All Muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same Muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many Muslims often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving

and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a Muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

## **Sincerity in Leadership**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a family complained to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, about a governor he appointed over them. They accused the governor of behaving negatively towards them as they had problems with each other prior to the coming of Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commented that there was no material worldly benefit in having command for a true believer. Meaning, a true believer would not take advantage of their position of authority for worldly reasons. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 113.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for Muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach Muslims to

push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themselves harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.<sup>1</sup> So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just...”*

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

## **The Independent**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that those who unnecessarily beg from others are an ache in the head and a pain in the stomach. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 113.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7432, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves the servant who is independent of the creation. This means that a Muslim should fully utilize the means they have been provided by Allah, the Exalted, such as their physical strength in order to fulfill their duties. They should not behave lazily and seek things from people as this habit leads to dependence on them and reduces trusting in Allah, the Exalted. One should firmly believe that no matter what happens whatever is destined to be their provision was allocated to them over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. A Muslim should focus on their efforts and trust that Allah, the Exalted, will grant them what is best for them.

## **The Love of Allah, the Exalted and People**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a non-Muslim delegation visited Medina. A man amongst them, Abdul Rahman Bin Abu Aqil, commented that prior to visiting Medina they hated no one more than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But after meeting him they loved no one more than they loved him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 116.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4102, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised how to obtain the love of Allah, the Exalted, and the love of people.

The love of Allah, the Exalted, is obtained when one avoids the excess of this material world which are beyond their needs. Meaning, a Muslim should strive in this world in order to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam. And they should strive in the obedience of 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. Anything from the material world which aids one in these things is not in reality a worldly thing. Therefore, avoiding them is not required. But one must avoid those things which either hinder or prevent them from fulfilling these duties. This is how a Muslim can keep the world in their hand and not in their heart. This is how a Muslim obtains the love of Allah, the Exalted, as this attitude causes them to strive in His obedience which attracts the love of Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502.



Finally, a Muslim can obtain the love of people by avoiding and desiring their worldly possessions. In reality, a person only behaves negatively towards others when they feel others actively desire their possessions or when others actively compete for the worldly things they themselves desire. Meaning, the fear of losing what one possesses and losing out on the things which they desire through competition with others can lead to negative feelings towards others. If a Muslim instead occupies themselves with acting on the first part of this Hadith it will prevent them from competing for the excess worldly things others desire as the vast majority of these desires are for unnecessary worldly things. And if a Muslim keeps their harm away from the self and possessions of others which according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, is the sign of a true believer, then they will gain the love of people also.

## Intercession

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited Medina in order to accept Islam. One of the men asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, why he had not asked Allah, the Exalted, for a physical kingdom like the Holy Prophet Suleiman, peace be upon him, asked for. Chapter 38 Sad, verse 35:

*“He said, “My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom such as will not belong to anyone after me. Indeed, You are the Bestower.””*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, laughed and replied that perhaps he was given a status by Allah, the Exalted, which is higher than the status of the Holy Prophet Suleiman, peace be upon him. He added that Allah, the Exalted, granted a special supplication to every Holy Prophet, peace be upon them. Each one of them used this special supplication during their lives on Earth but he has reserved his supplication for the Day of Judgement when he will supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, to allow him to intercede on behalf of his nation.

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 116.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4308, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that he is the first person to intercede and the first person whose intercession will be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.

A Muslim should therefore strive to make themselves worthy of the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by performing the actions which result in this such as supplicating for it after hearing the call to prayer. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 679. But this would require one to regularly attend the obligatory prayers at a Mosque instead of offering them at home. The greatest action which will result in the intercession is learning and acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A Muslim should not live in heedlessness by rejecting this duty and then expect intercession on Judgment Day as this is closer to wishful thinking which is blame worthy and of no real value compared to true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted.

Unfortunately, some Muslims who have adopted this wishful thinking expect to obtain Paradise through this intercession even though they do not obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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. These Muslims must realise that even though the intercession is a fact some Muslims who will have their punishment reduced through intercession will still enter Hell. Even a single moment in Hell is truly unbearable. So one should abandon wishful thinking and instead adopt true hope by practically striving in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

## **Honesty in All Aspects of Life**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a man named Tariq Bin Abdullah and his companions visited Medina in order to purchase dates. When they reached Medina a stranger greeted them and asked about their journey. The stranger then offered to buy their camel in exchange for dates. Tariq agreed to the sale and the stranger took the camel and told them he would bring the dates to them shortly. When the stranger walked beyond their gaze they began to suspect they had been conned. But a woman with them commented that they should not blame themselves as the stranger's face was more handsome than the full moon and he did not look like a deceiver. Moments later the stranger reappeared and announced to them that he was the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He then invited them to eat as many dates as they desired and to take the full measure they had earlier agreed to. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 117.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2146, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that merchants will be raised as immoral people on Judgment Day except those who fear Allah, the Exalted, act righteously and speak the truth.

This Hadith applies to all those who take part in business transactions. It is extremely important to fear Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes treating others kindly according to the teachings of Islam. In respect to business dealings a Muslim should be honest in their speech by disclosing all the details of the transaction to all who are

involved. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2079, warns that when Muslims hide things in financial transactions, such as defects in their goods, it will lead to a loss in blessings.

Acting righteously includes not striving to con others by making them pay excessively for goods. A Muslim should simply treat others how they desire to be treated meaning, with honesty and full disclosure. The same way, a Muslim would not like to be mistreated in financial matters they should not mistreat others.

Those conducting business should always avoid lying as it leads to immorality and immortality leads to Hell. In fact, a person will keep telling and acting on lies until they are recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971.

## **Dealing with Trials**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a Companion named Tamim Al Dari, may Allah be pleased with him, visited Medina and told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, of his strange journey. Tamim, may Allah be pleased with him, was travelling on a ship when it went off course. The crew ended up being cast upon an unknown island. They left the ship seeking drinking water and eventually came across a man who was bound in chains. The prisoner asked them who they were and they replied that they were Arabs. The prisoner asked them if a man had come forth proclaiming to be the final Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. They replied that they had and people were believing in him, following him and considering him truthful. The prisoner commented that this was best for them. He then asked for news about Ayn Za'r a location in Hijaz. The men told him and the prisoner became overjoyed. The prisoner then asked if the date palms at Baysan, located in Al Yamama, were bearing fruits. The men replied that they were and he again became overjoyed. The prisoner finally commented that if he was allowed to do so he would travel the land except for the land of Tayba. After Tamim, may Allah be pleased with him, recounted this story the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commented that the prisoner was the Anti-Christ and the land of Tayba was Medina. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 119.

The trial of the Anti-Christ has been described by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4077, as the greatest trial Muslims will face during their lives on Earth. Therefore, Muslims should learn some important lessons from this future event. The first is the importance of possessing strong faith. Only those who possess weak faith will be

misguided by him. Strong faith is extremely important as it is a weapon against every trial or difficulty one faces during their life. The one who possesses strong faith will always, through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, overcome every difficulty with reward and the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, as they understand the behaviour they must demonstrate in each situation. Whereas, those who possess weak faith are easily misguided and put off from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by the tests and trials they face during their life just like the people of weak faith will be misguided by the Anti-Christ. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

The best way to achieve strong faith is through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. This will allow a Muslim to understand the reason and wisdom of tests and trials. This in turn will allow them to overcome them successfully.

The other thing to learn from this great event is the importance of avoiding doubtful things. Just like a person who journeys close to a border is more likely to cross it similarly, a Muslim who is surrounded by temptations will more likely be led astray. The one who avoids places and things which tempt them towards sins will protect their faith and honour. This advice has been given in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205. Muslims should therefore guard their faith by avoiding things, places and people who invite or tempt them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, and ensure their dependents, such as their children do the same.





## **Favoring Yourself**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation, the Banu Asad, visited Medina in order to accept Islam. Their commander made a comment which suggested that they were doing the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, a favor by accepting Islam. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 17:

*“They consider it a favor to you that they have accepted Islam. Say, “Do not consider your Islam a favor to me. Rather, Allah has conferred favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith, if you should be truthful.””*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 120.

It is important for Muslims to understand that when they obey Allah, the Exalted, such as treating others kindly it in reality benefits themselves and not others. This is because treating others kindly has been commanded by Allah, the Exalted, and fulfilling this important duty gains one reward.

In addition, when one is kind to others they will supplicate for them while they are alive which will benefit them. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found

in Sahih Muslim, number 6929, that a supplication done for a person in secret is always answered.

In addition, the people will supplicate for them after they pass away which is definitely answered as it has been recorded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 10:

*“...saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith...”*

Finally, a person who treated others kindly will gain their intercession on the Day of Judgment, which is a day people will be desperate for the intercession of others. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7439.

But those who mistreat others even if they fulfil their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, will miss out on the benefits mentioned earlier. And on Judgment Day they will find that Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive them until their victim forgives them first. If they choose not to then the oppressor's good deeds will be given to their victim and if needed the victim's sins will be given to their oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

Therefore, a Muslim should be kind to themselves by being kind to others as in reality they are only benefiting themselves in this world and the next. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 6:

*“And whoever strives only strives for [the benefit of] himself...”*

## **Acting for Allah, the Exalted**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a man named Wa'ila Bin Al Asqa, may Allah be pleased with him, accepted Islam. He joined the Battle of Tabuk only because he was given a camel to ride on by another Companion, Ka'b Bin Ujra, may Allah be pleased with him. When Wa'ila, may Allah be pleased with him, returned from the Battle of Tabuk he offered his own share of the spoils of war to Ka'b Bin Ujra, may Allah be pleased with him, as he gave him the camel to ride on. But Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with him, refused to take anything and replied that the camel was given to him so that he could strive in the path of Allah, the Exalted, meaning, for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 124.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. A Muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them

for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all Muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

## Where Greatness Lies

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation came to Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave them large gifts. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked a youth among them what gift he wanted. The youth replied that he wanted the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, to forgive him, to grant him mercy and place wealth in his heart meaning, contentment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, fulfilled his request and the youth became one of the most pious and ascetic of men. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 127.

This incident is connected to chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 247:

*"And their prophet said to them, "Indeed, Allah has sent to you Saul as a king." They said, "How can he have kingship over us while we are more worthy of kingship than him and he has not been given any measure of wealth?" He said, "Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature..."*

This great event reminds Muslims that 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, [O Muhammad], "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.””*



## **True Devotion**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a non-Muslim delegation came to Medina and accepted Islam. According to their former faith they were prohibited from eating a specific type of meat which was lawful in Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had this meat cooked and presented it to their leader and told him his faith would not be complete until he ate the food. The leader did eat the meat even though he showed some hesitation. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 127.

Muslims should not follow and adopt the customary practices of non-Muslims. The more Muslims do this the less they will follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is quite evident in this day and age as many Muslims have adopted the cultural practices of other nations which has caused them to become distant from the teachings of Islam. For example, one only needs to observe the modern Muslim wedding to observe how many non-Muslim cultural practices have been adopted by Muslims. What makes this worse is that many Muslims cannot differentiate between Islamic practices based on the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Because of this non-Muslims cannot differentiate between them either which has caused great problems for Islam. For example, honour killings is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam yet because of the ignorance of Muslims and their habit of adopting non-Muslim cultural practices Islam is blamed every time an honour killing occurs in society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, removed the social barriers in the form of casts and brotherhoods in order to unite people yet ignorant Muslims have resurrected them by adopting the cultural practices

of non-Muslims. Simply put, the more cultural practices Muslims adopt the less they will act on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

## **True Belief**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited Medina after accepting Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked them what they were. They replied that they were believers. He then replied that every truthful statement is supported by evidence and so what was the evidence of their statement and claim to faith. They replied that there were fifteen things that they acted upon. Five things the representatives of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told them to believe in. Five things that they were ordered to act upon and five things they themselves developed prior to accepting Islam which they would only leave if commanded so by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked them to name these fifteen things. They replied that the five things they were commanded to believe in were to believe in Allah, the Exalted, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, peace be upon them, and the Day of Resurrection. The five things they were ordered to act upon were to verbally declare that there was none worthy of worship except Allah, the Exalted, pray the obligatory prayers, to donate the obligatory charity, to fast in Ramadan and to perform the Holy Pilgrimage if one is able to. The last five things they themselves developed prior to accepting Islam were being thankful when prosperous, being forbearing in the face of difficulty, being pleased with whatever fate brings, being truthful at social gatherings and refraining from cursing enemies. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, greatly praised them after hearing this and then told them five more things they should act upon to make the total twenty. He told them not to accumulate what they would not use themselves, not to build what they would not inhabit, for them not to compete for something they will shortly leave behind in this world, to fear Allah, the Exalted, to Whom they will be returning to in the hereafter and Whom before they will be exposed and to strongly desire the place they were heading towards and will remain forever in namely, the hereafter.

The delegation then left Medina and acted on this advice thereby practically proving their faith. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 128.

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.

## **Greetings of Peace**

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a Muslim delegation from Al Sadif visited Medina. They entered the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, while he was on his pulpit giving a speech. They sat down without giving the Islamic greeting of peace. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked them if they were Muslims to which they replied in the affirmative. He then asked whether they will give the Islamic greeting of peace. They arose and extended the Islamic greeting of peace to all. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 129.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 12, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised a good quality found within Islam. Namely, to spread the Islamic greeting of peace to people one knows and to those they do not know.

It is important to act on this good characteristic as nowadays Muslims often only spread the Islamic greeting of peace to those they know. It is important to spread it to all as this leads to love between people and strengthens Islam. In fact, this characteristic leads to Paradise according to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 194.

A Muslim should never forget that they will receive a minimum of ten rewards for every greeting of peace they extend to others even if others

fail to reply to them. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5195.

Finally, a Muslim should fulfill the Islamic greeting of peace correctly by demonstrating this peace in their other speech and actions towards others by keeping their verbal and physical harm away from the self and possessions of others. This is in fact, the definition of a true Muslim and believer according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

## **The 10<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Overcoming Foes**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched a group who were led by Khalid Bin Walid, may Allah be pleased with him, to a non-Muslim tribe, the Banu Al Harith Bin Ka'b, to invite them towards Islam. They did accept Islam and a delegation from them then visited Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked them how they persistently overcame their enemies prior to accepting Islam. They replied they achieved this by remaining united and by never initiating any injustice to anyone. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 135.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6541, discusses some aspects of creating unity within society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, firstly advised Muslims not to envy each other.

This is when a person desires to obtain the very blessing someone else possesses meaning, they desire for the owner to lose the blessing. And it involves disliking the fact that the owner was given the blessing by Allah, the Exalted, instead of them. Some only desire this to occur in their hearts without showing it through their actions or speech. If they dislike their thought and feeling it is hoped that they will not be held accountable for their envy. Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a

sin. The worse kind is when a person strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing.

Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feeling and if they strive to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing they possess. Even though this type is not sinful yet it is disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and only praiseworthy if it involves a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first is when a person envies the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second is when a person envies the one who uses their wisdom and knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

The evil type of envy, as mentioned earlier, directly challenges the choice of Allah, the Exalted. The envious person behaves as if Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake giving a particular blessing to someone else instead of them. This is why it is a major sin. In fact, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903, envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

An envious Muslim must strive to act on the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. It advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. An envious Muslim should therefore, strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person they envy, such as



praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

Another thing advised in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is that Muslims should not hate each other. This means one should only dislike something if Allah, the Exalted, dislikes it. This has been described as an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. A Muslim should therefore, not dislike things or people according to their own desires. If one dislikes another according to their own desires they should never allow it to affect their speech or actions as it is sinful. A Muslim should strive to remove the feeling by treating the other according to the teachings of Islam meaning, with respect and kindness. A Muslim should remember that other people are not perfect just like they are not perfect. And if others possess a bad characteristic they will undoubtedly possess good qualities also. Therefore, a Muslim should advise others to abandon their bad characteristics but continue to love the good qualities they possess.

Another point must be made on this topic. A Muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their scholar's opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a Muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims should not turn away from each other. This means they should

not sever ties with other Muslims over worldly issues thereby refusing to support them according to the teachings of Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6077, it is unlawful for a Muslim to sever ties with another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. In fact, the one who severs ties for more than a year over a worldly issue is considered like the one who has killed another Muslim. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4915. Severing ties with others is only lawful in matters of faith. But even then a Muslim should continue to advise the other Muslim to sincerely repent and only avoid their company if they refuse to change for the better. They should still support them on lawful things when they are requested to do so as this act of kindness may inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims are commanded to be like brothers to one another. This is only achievable if they obey the previous advice given in this Hadith and strive to fulfil their duty towards other Muslims according to the teachings of Islam, such as helping others in matters of good and warning them from evil matters. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, advises that a Muslim should fulfil the following rights of other Muslims: they are to return the Islamic greeting of peace, to visit the sick, to take part in their funeral prayers and to reply to the sneezer who praises Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim must learn and fulfil all the rights other people, especially other Muslims, have over them.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a Muslim should not wrong, forsake or hate another Muslim. The sins a person commits should be hated but the sinner should not be as they may sincerely repent at any time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4884, that whoever humiliates another Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will humiliate them. And whoever protects a Muslim from humiliation will be protected by Allah, the Exalted.

The negative characteristics mentioned in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning can develop when one adopts pride. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, pride is when one looks down on others in contempt. The proud person sees themselves as perfect while seeing others as imperfect. This prevents them from fulfilling the rights of others and encourages them to dislike others.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that true piety is not in one's physical appearance, such as wearing beautiful clothes, but it is an internal characteristic. This internal characteristic manifests outwardly in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is purified the whole body becomes purified but when the spiritual

heart is corrupt the whole body becomes corrupt. It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge based on outward appearances, such as wealth, but He considers the intentions and actions of people. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6542. Therefore, a Muslim must strive to adopt internal piety through learning and acting on the teachings of Islam so that it manifests outwardly in the way they interact with Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that it is a sin for a Muslim to hate another Muslim. This hatred applies to worldly things and not disliking others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, loving and hating for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of perfecting one's faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. But even then a Muslim must show respect to others in all cases and dislike only their sins without actually hating the person. In addition, their dislike must never cause them to act against the teachings of Islam as this would prove their hatred is based on their own desires and not for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The root cause of despising others for worldly reasons is pride. It is vital to understand that an atom's worth of pride is enough to take one to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a Muslim's life, property and honour are all sacred. A Muslim must not violate any of these rights without a just reason. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true Muslim until they protect other people, including non-Muslims, from their harmful speech and actions. And a true believer is the one who keeps their evil away from the lives and property of others. Whoever violates these rights will not be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then justice will be established on Judgment Day whereby the good

deeds of the oppressor will be given to the victim and if necessary the sins of the victim will be given to the oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should treat others exactly how they want people to treat them. This will lead to much blessings for an individual and create unity within their society.

In addition, this incident also mentions avoiding initiating injustice to anyone as a characteristic of overcoming enemies.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 2556, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings to the one who possesses humility without a shortcoming meaning, weakness. The humble one submits, accepts and acts on the commands and prohibitions of Allah, the Exalted, thereby proving their servanthood to Him. They readily accept the truth when it is presented to them even if it contradicts their desires and irrespective of who delivers it to them. Meaning, they do not reject the truth believing they know best. They do not look down at others believing they are superior to them because of any worldly thing they possess or because of their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, as they understand that their final outcome or the final outcome of others is unknown to them. Meaning, they may die while Allah, the Exalted, is not pleased with them. This reality should prevent a person from the deadly sin of pride. An atom's worth of which is enough to take one to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265. Humility without weakness means that a Muslim always demonstrates kindness to others but is not afraid to

defend themselves if necessary nor does their humility cause them to appear disgraced and dishonored.

## **Ease and Glad Tidings**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Abu Musa and Mu'adh Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with them, to govern over two provinces of Yemen. He advised them to be lenient, not harsh and to give glad tidings and not scare people. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 135-136.

A Muslim should always make things easy firstly for themselves by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge so that they can fulfill their obligatory duties, act on the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents. This will provide them with plenty of time to enjoy lawful things without being wasteful or extravagant. A Muslim should act according to their strength in respect to voluntary righteous deeds and not overburden themselves as this is disliked in Islam. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6465. A balanced approach is always best.

In addition, Muslims should make things easy for others especially, in religious matters so that people do not grow averse to Islam believing it is a burdensome religion when it in fact is a simple and easy religion. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 287. This is important to teach others, especially children. If children wrongfully believe Islam is a difficult religion they will turn away from it when they get older. Children should be taught that Islam has some obligations which do not take much time to fulfill and leaves plenty of time for them to have fun in good ways.

But it is important to note, making things easy for oneself or others in religious matters does not mean a Muslim should be lazy and teach others to be lazy as the minimum obligations must be fulfilled at all times unless one is exempt by Islam. The one who acts lazily is not obeying Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires.

Another aspect of making things easy for others includes a Muslim not demanding their full rights from others. Instead, they should use the means, such as their physical or financial strength, to help themselves and make things easy for others. In some cases, failing to fulfil the rights of others can lead to punishment. In order to make things easy for others a Muslim should therefore only demand their rights in some cases. This does not mean a Muslim should not strive to fulfil the rights of others but it means they should try to overlook and excuse the people they have rights over. For example, a parent can excuse their adult child from a particular house chore and do it themselves if they possess the means to do so without trouble especially if their child returns home from work exhausted. This leniency and mercy will not only cause Allah, the Exalted, to be more merciful to them but it will also increase the love and respect people have for them. The one who always demands their full rights is not a sinner but they will lose out on this reward and outcome if they behave in this manner.

Muslims should make things easy for others and hope Allah, the Exalted, will make things easy for them in this world and in the next. But those who make things difficult for others may find that Allah, the Exalted, makes things difficult for them in both worlds.



A Muslim must remind themselves and others of the countless blessings of Allah, the Exalted, and the great reward He bestows on Muslims in this world and in the next on those who obey Him by fulfilling His commands, 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. This approach, in most cases, is more effective in encouraging people towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Only in some cases when someone is indulging in wishful thinking and disobeying Allah, the Exalted, while expecting they will succeed should a Muslim warn them of the consequences of their actions thereby, inspiring the fear of Allah, the Exalted, in them.

A balance is best whereby one uses hope in Allah, the Exalted, to encourage His obedience and fear of Him in order to prevent sins. And whenever one feels imbalanced or observes others who have become imbalanced a Muslim should act appropriately in order to adjust themselves and others back to the correct middle path.

## **Gaining Reward from All Things**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Abu Musa and Mu'adh Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with them, to govern over two provinces of Yemen. Once Mu'adh visited Abu Musa, may Allah be pleased with them, and they began discussing good deeds such as reciting the Holy Quran. While mentioning his nightly routine Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him, commented that he would sleep for the first part of the night then he would rise and recite the Holy Quran. He concluded that from this routine he hoped for reward from Allah, the Exalted, for both his sleeping and recitation. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 136.

He expected this reward as his intention for sleeping was to give his body enough rest so that he could later wake up in the night in order to recite the Holy Quran. This pious intention caused him to gain reward for both his sleeping and recitation.

In reality, in most cases nothing in this material world in itself is good or bad, such as wealth. What makes a thing good or bad is the way it is used. It is important to understand that the very purpose of everything which was created by Allah, the Exalted, was for it to be used correctly according to the teachings of Islam. When something is not used correctly it in reality becomes useless. For example, wealth is useful in both worlds when it is used correctly such as being spent on the necessities of a person and their dependents. But it can become useless and even a curse for its bearer if it is not used correctly, such as being hoarded or spent on sinful things. Simply hoarding wealth causes wealth to lose value. How can

paper and metal coins one tucks away be useful? In this respect, there is no difference between a blank piece of paper and a note of money. It is only useful when it is used correctly.

So if a Muslim desires all their worldly possessions to become a blessing for them in both worlds all they have to do is use them correctly according to the teachings found in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But if they use them incorrectly then the same blessing will become a burden and curse for them in both worlds. It is as simple as that.

## **Avoid Darkness**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Abu Musa and Mu'adh Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with them, to govern over two provinces of Yemen. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave some commands to them one of which was to fear the curse of the oppressed as there is no barrier between them and Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 136.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2447, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that oppression will become a darkness on the Day of Judgment.

This is vital to avoid as those who find themselves plunged in darkness are unlikely to find their way to Paradise. Only those who will be provided a guiding light will be able to do this successfully.

Oppression can take many forms. The first type is when one fails to fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, and refrain from His prohibitions. Even though this has no effect on the infinite status of Allah, the Exalted, it will cause the person to become submerged into darkness in both worlds. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, whenever a person commits a sin a black spot is etched on their spiritual heart. The more they sin the more their heart will become encompassed

by darkness. This will prevent them from accepting and following true guidance in this world which will ultimately lead to darkness in the next world. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

*“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.”*

The next type of oppression is when one oppresses themselves by not fulfilling the trust they have been granted by Allah, the Exalted, in the form of their body and other worldly blessings they possess. The greatest of which is one's faith. This must be protected and strengthened through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

The final type of oppression is when one mistreats others. Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive these sins until the oppressor's victim forgives them first. As people are not so merciful this is unlikely to happen. Then justice will be established on Judgment Day where the oppressor's righteous deeds will be given to their victim and if necessary the victim's sins will be given to the oppressor. This may lead to the oppressor being hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. One should therefore treat others how they wish to be treated by people. A Muslim should avoid all forms of oppression if they desire a guiding light in this world and in the next.

## **Closest to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Mu'adth Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, to govern a province of Yemen. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, walked alongside his mount as he rode out of Medina. After giving some farewell advice to him the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, turned towards Medina and declared that the people who are closest to him are the pious, whoever and wherever they maybe. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 137.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6543, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge people based on their outward appearance or their wealth instead He observes and judges people's inward intention and their physical actions.

The first thing to note is that a Muslim should always correct their intention when performing any deed as Allah, the Exalted, will only reward them when they perform righteous deeds for His sake. Those who perform deeds for the sake of other people and things will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for on Judgment Day, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this Hadith indicates the importance of equality in Islam. A person is not superior to others by worldly things such as their ethnicity or wealth. Even though, many Muslims have erected these barriers such as social castes and sects thereby believing some are better than others Islam has clearly rejected this concept and declared that in this respect all people are equal in the sight of Islam. The only thing which makes one Muslim superior to another is their piety meaning, how much they fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. 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 busy themselves in obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His rights and the rights of people and not believe that something they possess or belong to will somehow save them from punishment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, that the Muslim who lacks in righteous deeds meaning, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, will not be increased in rank because of their lineage. In reality, this applies to all worldly things such as wealth, ethnicity, gender or social brotherhoods and castes.

## **Dealing with Allah, the Exalted, and People**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Mu'adh Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, to govern a province of Yemen. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised him the following things: to fear Allah, the Exalted, wherever he may be, to follow up a sin with a good deed so that it erases the former and finally to treat people with good character. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 138.

The first mentioned is to fear Allah, the Exalted, through piety. This is achieved when one fulfils the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This in fact encompasses all the teachings and duties of Islam. When one strives in this manner they will eventually reach the high level of faith called excellence. This is when one acts, such as performing the prayer, as if they witness Allah, the Exalted, observing them. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This ensures one fulfils their duties both to Allah, the Exalted, and to the creation.

The second advice given is that a Muslim should follow up a sin with a righteous deed so that it wipes out the sin. This refers to minor sins only as major sins require sincere repentance. If one adds sincere repentance to their righteous deed then it will erase any sin, minor or major. But a part of acting rightly is to strive not to repeat the sin again as sinning with the intention of following it up with a righteous deed is a dangerous misleading



mentality. One should strive not to commit sins and when they do occur to sincerely repent.

Finally, the last thing mentioned is to treat people with good character. This is extremely important as good character will be the heaviest thing in the scales of Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003. One should adopt this by learning and acting on the character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who mistreat others even if they fulfil their duties to Allah, the Exalted, will find that on Judgment Day their good deeds are given to their victims and if necessary their victim's sins will be given to them. This might cause them to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. Simply put, a Muslim should treat others exactly how they desire people to treat them.

## **A Luxurious Life**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Mu'adh Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, to govern a province of Yemen. When he was leaving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised him to beware of luxury as the servants of Allah, the Exalted, do not seek after luxury. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 138.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that simplicity is a part of faith.

Islam does not teach Muslims to give up all their wealth and lawful desires but it instead teaches them to adopt a simple lifestyle in all aspects of their life, such as their food, clothing, housing and business, so that it provides them free time to prepare for the hereafter adequately. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This simple life includes striving in this world in order to fulfill one's needs and the needs of their dependents without excessiveness, waste or extravagance.

A Muslim should understand that the simpler life they lead the less they will stress over worldly things and therefore the more they will be able to strive for the hereafter thereby, obtaining peace of mind, body and soul. But the more complicated a person's life is the more they will stress, encounter difficulties and strive less for their hereafter as their preoccupations with worldly things will never seem to end. This attitude will prevent them from obtaining peace of mind, body and soul.

Simplicity leads to a life of ease in this world and a straight forward accounting on the Day of Judgment. Whereas, a complicated and indulgent life will only lead to a stressful life and a severe and difficult accounting on the Day of Judgment.

## Using Knowledge Correctly

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Mu'adth Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, to govern a province of Yemen. When leaving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked what he would do if he was brought a case to judge. Mu'adth, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he would judge according to the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that what if he did not find the case and its judgement in the Holy Quran. He then replied he would judge according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then replied that what if he did not find the case and its judgement in his traditions. Mu'adth, may Allah be pleased with him, finally replied that he would use independent reasoning meaning, a judgement which runs in line with the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, praised Allah, the Exalted, for giving him a representative that pleased him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 140-141.

Whenever a scholar masters the different sciences of Islam they may reach a level called independent reasoning. This allows them to apply the teachings of the Holy Quran, the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with their professional unbiased judgement in order to derive a ruling within Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4487, when this scholar makes an incorrect ruling they will be rewarded a single time for their effort. If they make a correct ruling they will be rewarded twice over.

In addition, it is important to gain and act on knowledge with the correct intention. In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 253, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who obtains religious knowledge in order to show off to scholars, argue with others or attract attention to themselves will go to Hell.

Even though, the foundation of all good in both worldly and religious matters is knowledge Muslims must understand that knowledge will only benefit them when they firstly correct their intention. Meaning, they strive to obtain and act on knowledge in order to please Allah, the Exalted. All other reasons will only lead to a loss of reward and even punishment if a Muslim fails to sincerely repent.

In reality, knowledge is like rain water which falls on different types of trees. Some trees grow by this water in order to benefit others such as a fruit tree. Whereas, other trees grow by this water and become a nuisance to others such as a thorny tree. Even though, the rain water is the same in both cases but the outcome is very different. Similarly, religious knowledge is the same for people but if one adopts the incorrect intention then it will become a means of their destruction. Conversely, if one adopts the correct intention it will become a means of their salvation.

Muslims should therefore correct their intention in all matters as they will be judged on this. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. And they should remember that one of the first people to enter Hell will be a scholar who only obtained knowledge in order to show off to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4923.

To conclude, only obtaining and acting on useful knowledge with the correct intention is true beneficial knowledge.

## **Be the Best**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition to Yemen. Amongst them was a Companion, Burayda, may Allah be pleased with him, who admitted that at the time he had ill feelings towards another Companion, Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. After this expedition the spoils of war needed to be distributed and so the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, for this task. After this occurred Burayda, may Allah be pleased with him, returned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and criticized Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, even though he did nothing wrong. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked Burayda, may Allah be pleased with him, if he disliked Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, to which he replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then told him not to dislike him and to instead increase the love he had for him as he was worthy of it. After this comment Burayda, may Allah be pleased with him, sincerely declared that he loved no one more than he loved Ali, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 142-143.

The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, are the best group ever created after the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. The fact they physically observed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his lifetime is definitely one factor. But anyone who knows about their life and their righteous deeds understands that their superiority is due to more than just this unique and great deed.

One of the main reasons for their superiority is shown in this event and in a Hadith involving the Companion Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, which is found in Sahih Muslim, number 6515. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was once riding on his conveyance in the desert when he came across a Bedouin. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted the Bedouin, placed his turban on the Bedouin's head and insisted that the Bedouin ride on his conveyance. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was told that the greeting he gave the Bedouin was more than enough as the Bedouin would have been greatly pleased at the fact that the great Companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted him. Yet, Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, went much further than this and showed the Bedouin great respect. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he only did this because the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that one of the best ways a person can honour their parent is by showing love and respect to their parent's relatives and friends. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, added that the Bedouin's father was a friend of his father the Commander of the Faithful, Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him.

This incident indicates the superiority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They completely submitted to the teachings of Islam. They not only fulfilled the obligatory duties and avoided all sins but completely fulfilled all acts which were recommended to them to the highest possible degree. Their submission caused them to put aside their own desires and only act to please Allah, the Exalted. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily ignored the Bedouin as none of the actions he done were obligatory yet, unlike many Muslims who would use this excuse, he completely submitted to the teachings of Islam and acted the way he did.



It is the lack of submission to the teachings of Islam which has weakened the faith of Muslims. Some only fulfil the obligatory duties and turn away from other righteous deeds, such as voluntary charity, which contradict their desires by claiming the actions are not obligatory. All Muslims desire to end up with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. But how is this possible if they do not follow their path or way? If a Muslim follows a path other than theirs then how can they end up with them? To end up with them one must follow their path. But this is only possible if one completely submits to the teachings of Islam like they did instead of cherry picking the deeds which suit their desires.

## **Harming the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition to Yemen led by Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. A Companion, Amr Bin Shas Al Aslami, may Allah be pleased with him, who was part of this expedition felt that Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, had treated him harshly. When Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, returned to Medina he criticized Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, in various meetings and to different people he had spoken with. One day he entered the Mosque and found the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who stared at him until he sat down next to him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then told Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, that he had harmed him. Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, expressed his remorse at harming him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, finally commented that whoever harmed Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, harmed him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 143.

First of all it is important for Muslims to overlook the insignificant negative behaviour of others. All Muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same Muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many Muslims often latch on to the mistakes of

others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a Muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

*“...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

In addition, this incident highlights a sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, namely, to love all those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even if this contradicts one's personal opinion about them. This love includes those who proclaim love through their words and more importantly through their actions. For example, it is obvious to all that all the household of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors possessed this true love. So loving each of them is a duty upon the one who claims love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been proven through many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 17. It advises that love for the helpers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, meaning, the residents of the Holy city of Medina is a part of faith and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy. In another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3862, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has clearly warned Muslims not to criticize any of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as loving them is a sign of loving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and hating them is a sign of hating the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and Allah, the Exalted. This person will not succeed unless they sincerely repent. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned a similar statement regarding his blessed household, may Allah be pleased with them, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 143.

If a Muslim unjustifiably criticises any Muslim who demonstrates their love for Allah, the Exalted, it proves their lack of love for Allah, the Exalted. If a Muslim commits a sin other Muslims should hate the sin but they should, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, still have love for the sinful Muslim because of their love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The sign of loving others

is to treat them kindly and respectfully. Simply put, one should treat others how they wish people to treat them.

## **Being True**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition to Yemen led by Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. During this expedition Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, selected some camels as charitable donations for the needy. Some of his men asked if they could ride these camels thereby giving rest to their own camels. But he refused by stating that as they were selected for charitable donations only those entitled could make use of them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 144.

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 the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

It is a part of sincerity towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of sincerity includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For example, one may sacrifice purchasing certain things in order to donate the wealth to the needy. Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of sincerity towards others. Whereas, dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 53:

*“...Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them...”*

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a Muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

*“...And do good as Allah has done good to you...”*

## Showing Trust

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition to Yemen led by Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, sent back a chunk of gold to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which he divided amongst four people. Someone commented that they had more right to the gold than those men. When this reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he questioned whether the people trusted him and added that he was trusted by the One who sends down to him news from Heaven, morning and evening. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 146.

A Muslim must show their trust in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by sincerely following and obeying him even if the wisdoms behind his traditions are not apparent to them. 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 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.



## **Judging Actions Positively**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition to Yemen led by Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, sent back a chunk of gold to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which he divided amongst four people. Someone commented that they had more right to the gold than those men. When this reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he questioned whether the people trusted him and added that he was trusted by the One who sends down to him news from Heaven, morning and evening. After this a man rudely told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to fear Allah, the Exalted. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, rebuked him reminding him and others that he feared Allah, the Exalted, the most. The man then walked away. Khalid Bin Walid, may Allah be pleased with him, asked permission to execute the man for his blasphemy but the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, refused him commenting that the man might be someone who offers the obligatory prayers. Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, then commented that they were plenty of people who prayed yet were hypocrites as they declared things verbally which contradicted what was in their hearts. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then responded that he was not commanded to search the hearts of people nor to cut open their stomachs searching for their intention. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 146.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4993, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking well about people is an aspect of worshipping Allah, the Exalted, correctly. Meaning, it is an aspect of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Interpreting things in a negative way often leads to sins such as backbiting and slander. In all cases a Muslim should interpret things where possible in a positive way in order to give the benefit of the doubt to others. Unfortunately, adopting a negative mind-set affects people from a family unit to a national level. For example, how many times has a nation gone to war over an assumption and suspicion? The vast majority of scandals which are found in the media are based on assumptions. Even laws have been created which support the use of assumptions and suspicion. This often leads to fractured and broken relationships as people with this mind-set always believe others are taking a dig at them through their words or actions. This prevents one from taking advice from others as they believe they are only being mocked by the one giving advice and it prevents one from giving advice as they believe the other person will not pay any attention to what they say. And a person will refrain from advising the one who possesses this negative mind-set as they believe it will only lead to an argument. This leads to other negative traits such as bitterness.

It is important for Muslims to understand that even if they assume someone is taking a dig at them they should still accept their advice if it is based on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They should strive to interpret things where possible in a positive way which leads to a positive mentality. And a positive mindset leads to healthy relationships and feelings. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

*“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin...”*



## **Be Just**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched an expedition to Yemen led by Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. He mentioned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that as he was young and lacked knowledge how would he correctly judge the cases that were brought to him in Yemen. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed his hand on Ali's chest, may Allah be pleased with him, and supplicated for Allah, the Exalted, to make his tongue firm and guide his heart. He then advised him that if two rivals came to him for judgement he should not make a judgement until he heard from both sides. He concluded that behaving in this manner would make things clear to him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 147.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for Muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using

each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach Muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themselves harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

*“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.<sup>1</sup> So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just...”*

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.



## **The Great Holy Pilgrimage**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 152.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1773, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the reward for an accepted Holy Pilgrimage is nothing except Paradise.

The real purpose of the Holy Pilgrimage is to prepare Muslims for their final journey to the hereafter. The same way a Muslim leaves behind their home, business, wealth, family, friends and social status in order to perform the Holy Pilgrimage this will occur at the time of their death when they take their final journey to the hereafter. In fact, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, advises that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds, good and bad, accompany them.

When a Muslim bears this in mind during their Holy Pilgrimage they will fulfil all the aspects of this duty correctly. This Muslim will return back home a changed person as they will prioritise preparing for their final journey to the hereafter over amassing the excess aspects of this material world. They will strive in fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according

to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which includes taking from this world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance.

Muslims should not treat the Holy Pilgrimage as a holiday and a place to shop as this attitude defeats the purpose of it. It must remind Muslims of their final journey to the hereafter a journey which has no return and no second chances. Only this will inspire one to fulfil the Holy Pilgrimage correctly and prepare adequately for the hereafter.

## **Sincerity in Actions**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left Medina he was riding on a tattered saddle beneath which was an inexpensive piece of cloth. His entire baggage was mounted with him. He then commented that the Holy Pilgrimage is to be devoid of showing off and reputation-seeking. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 155.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that even slightly showing off is polytheism.

This is a minor type of polytheism which does not cause one to lose their faith. Instead it leads to the loss of reward as this Muslim acted for the sake of pleasing people when they should have acted to please Allah, the Exalted. In fact, these people will be told on Judgment Day to seek their reward from those they acted for, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

If the Devil cannot prevent one from performing righteous deeds he will attempt to corrupt their intention thereby destroying their reward. If he cannot corrupt their intention in an obvious way he tries to corrupt it

through subtle ways. This includes when people subtly show off their righteous deeds to others. Sometimes it is so subtle that the person themselves are not fully aware of what they are doing. As gaining and acting on knowledge is a duty on all, according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, claiming ignorance will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.

Subtly showing off often occurs through social media and one's speech. For example, a Muslim might inform others they are fasting even though no one directly asked them if they were fasting. Another example is when one publically recites the Holy Quran from memory in front of others thereby showing others they have memorized the Holy Quran. Even criticizing oneself publically can be considered showing off one's humility to others.

To conclude, showing off subtly destroys a Muslim's reward and must be avoided in order to safeguard their righteous deeds. This is only possible by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge, such as how to safeguard one's speech.

## **What is Sacred**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When he reached a valley called Wadi Al Aqiq the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that he received a visitation from a spirit from Allah, the Exalted, meaning, an Angel, who told him to pray in this sacred valley. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 162.

Most Muslims show great respect to sacred places and Islamic artefacts but often neglect the other things Allah, the Exalted, has made sacred.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 67, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that the blood, property and honor of a Muslim are sacred in Islam.

This Hadith, like many others, teaches Muslims that success can only be obtained when one fulfills the rights of Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayers, and the rights of people. One without the other is not good enough.

A true believer and Muslim is the one who keeps their verbal and physical harm away from the self and possessions of others. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998. Therefore, it is vital for Muslims not to harm others through their actions or words.

A Muslim must respect the possessions of others and not try to wrongfully acquire them for example, in a legal case. A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 353, warns that someone who does this will go to Hell even if the thing they acquired was as insignificant as a twig of a tree. Muslims should only use the possessions of others according to their wishes and return them in a way pleasing to its owner.

The honor of a Muslim should not be violated through actions or speech, such as backbiting or slander. A Muslim should instead defend the honor of others whether in their presence or absence as this will lead to their protection from the fire of Hell. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1931.

To conclude, one should avoid wronging the self, possessions or honor of others by treating others exactly how they desire others to treat them. Just like one loves this for themselves they should love it for others and prove this through their actions and speech. This is the sign of a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

## **Religion Over Culture**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the land of Arafat he gave a sermon. One of the things he said was that he had destroyed everything relating to the ignorant practices which were common prior to Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 210-211.

Muslims should not follow and adopt the customary practices of non-Muslims. The more Muslims do this the less they will follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is quite evident in this day and age as many Muslims have adopted the cultural practices of other nations which has caused them to become distant from the teachings of Islam. For example, one only needs to observe the modern Muslim wedding to observe how many non-Muslim cultural practices have been adopted by Muslims. What makes this worse is that many Muslims cannot differentiate between Islamic practices based on the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Because of this non-Muslims cannot differentiate between them either which has caused great problems for Islam. For example, honour killings is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam yet because of the ignorance of Muslims and their habit of adopting non-Muslim cultural practices Islam is blamed every time an honour killing occurs in society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, removed the social barriers in the form of casts and brotherhoods in order to unite people yet ignorant Muslims have resurrected them by adopting the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Simply put, the more cultural practices Muslims adopt the

less they will act on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.



## **The Law Applies to All**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the land of Arafat he gave a sermon. One of the things he said was that he had abolished the usury charges people agreed to prior to Islam as it was unlawful. The first usury charge he declared abolished was that of his own uncle, Al-Abbas Bin Abdul Muttalib, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 210-211.

One of the major reasons why society seems to be digressing is because people have abandoned acting justly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6787, that previous nations were destroyed as the authorities would punish the weak when they broke the law but would pardon the rich and influential. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, being the head of state even declared in this Hadith that if his own daughter committed a crime he would enforce the full legal punishment on her. Even though members of the general public might not be in a position to advise their leaders to remain just in their actions but they can influence them indirectly by acting justly in all their dealings and actions. For example, a Muslim must act justly in respect to their dependents, such as their children, by treating them equally. This has been specifically advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3544. They should act justly in all their business dealings irrespective of who they deal with. If people act with justice on an individual level then communities can change for the better and in turn those who are in influential positions, such as politicians, will act justly whether they desire to or not.

## Harmony in Marriage

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the land of Arafat he gave a sermon. One of the things he said was that Muslims should fear Allah, the Exalted, in respect to their wives by treating them kindly at all times. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 210-211.

If both women and men desire to experience a successful marriage they must find a spouse based on the teachings of Islam. Failing to follow this important advice is one of the main reasons why domestic violence and divorces amongst Muslims has increased over time. For example, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person is married for four reasons: their wealth, lineage, beauty or for their piety. He concluded by warning that a person should marry for the sake of piety otherwise they will be a loser.

It is important to understand that the first three things mentioned in this Hadith are very transient and imperfect. They may give someone temporary happiness but ultimately these things will become a burden for them as they are linked to the material world and not to the thing which grants ultimate and permanent success namely, faith. One only needs to observe the rich and famous in order to understand that wealth does not bring happiness. In fact, the rich are the most unsatisfied and unhappy people on Earth. Marrying someone for the sake of their lineage is foolish

as it does not guarantee the person will make a good spouse. In fact, if the marriage does not work out it destroys the family bond the two families possessed before the marriage. Marrying only for the sake of beauty meaning, love is not wise as this is a fickle emotion which changes with the passing of time and with one's mood. How many couples supposedly drowned in love ended up hating each other?

But it is important to note, that this Hadith does not mean one should find a spouse who is poor as it is important to get married to someone who can financially support a family. Neither does it mean one should not be attracted to their spouse as this is an important aspect of a healthy marriage. But this Hadith means that these things should not be the main or ultimate reason someone gets married. The main and ultimate quality a Muslim should look for in a spouse is piety. This is when a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience. Put simply, the one who fears Allah, the Exalted, will treat their spouse well in both times of happiness and difficulty. On the other hand, those who are irreligious will mistreat their spouse whenever they are upset. This is one of the main reasons why domestic violence has increased amongst Muslims in recent years.

Finally, if a Muslim desires to get married they should firstly obtain the knowledge associated with it, such as the rights they owe their spouse, the rights they are owed from their spouse and how to correctly deal with one's spouse in different situations. Unfortunately, ignorance of this leads to many arguments and divorces as people demand things which their spouse is not obliged to fulfill. Knowledge is the foundation of a healthy and successful marriage.

## **Hold onto Success**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the land of Arafat he gave a sermon. One of the things he said was that he was leaving behind for them the Holy Quran which will keep them rightly guided as long as they held onto it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 210-211.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 30, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the Holy Quran will intercede on Judgment Day. Those who follow it during their lives on Earth will be led to Paradise on Judgment Day. But those who neglect it during their lives on Earth will find that it pushes them into Hell on Judgment Day.

The Holy Quran is a book of guidance. It is not merely a book of recitation. Muslims must therefore strive to fulfill all aspects of the Holy Quran to ensure that it guides them to success in both worlds. The first aspect is reciting it correctly and regularly. The second aspect is to understand it. And the final aspect is to act on its teachings according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who behave in such a manner are the ones who are given glad tidings of right guidance through every difficulty in this world and its intercession on the Day of Judgment. But as warned by this Hadith the Holy Quran is only guidance and a mercy for those who correctly act on its aspects according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be

upon him. But those who misinterpret it and instead act according to their desires in order to gain worldly things, such as fame, will be deprived of this right guidance and its intercession on Judgment Day. In fact, their complete loss in both worlds will only increase until they sincerely repent. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

*“And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.”*

## **Do No Harm**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). An aspect of the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj) is to touch and kiss the black stone which is attached to the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once told Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, that even though he was a strong man he should not jostle in order to reach the black stone as this may cause harm to others. If he could not find a way to the black stone because of a rush of people he should salute it from a distance. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 228.

Even though reaching the black stone is an act of worship yet a Muslim is not allowed to harm others in the process. This indicates the importance of refraining from harming others. 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.

## **A Sublime Revelation**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). On the Day of Arafat, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah, the following divine revelation was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him: chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 3:

*“...This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion...”*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 254.

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, to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to the leaders of society and to the general public.

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.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is being sincere to the leaders of the community. This includes kindly offering them

the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

*"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you..."*

This makes it clear that it is a duty to obey the leaders of society. But it is important to note, this obedience is a duty as long as one does not disobey Allah, the Exalted. There is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of the Creator. In cases like this, revolting against leaders should be avoided as it only leads to the harm of innocent people. Instead, the leaders should be gently advised good and forbidden evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should advise others to act accordingly and always supplicate for the leaders to remain on the correct path. If the leaders remain straight the general public will remain straight, also.

To be deceitful towards the leaders is a sign of hypocrisy, which one must avoid at all times. Sincerity also includes striving to obey them in matters which unite society on good and warning against anything which causes disruption in society.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is sincerity towards the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and

kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

It is a part of sincerity towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of sincerity includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For example, one may sacrifice purchasing certain things in order to donate the wealth to the needy. Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of sincerity towards others. Whereas, dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 53:

*“...Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them...”*

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach

the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a Muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

*“...And do good as Allah has done good to you...”*

## **Hold onto Faith**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). On the Day of Arafat, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah, the following divine revelation was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him: chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 3:

*"...This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion..."*

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 309.

After hearing this Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, wept. When he was questioned about his reaction he replied that after perfection there can only be decline.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3997, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that he did not fear poverty for the Muslim nation. Instead he feared that the world would become easy to obtain and plentiful for them. This would cause them to

compete for it which would lead to their destruction as this same competition destroyed the previous nations.

It is important to understand that this does not only apply to wealth. But this warning applies to all aspects of people's worldly desires which can be encompassed by the desire for fame, wealth, authority and the social aspects of one's life, such as family, friends and a career. Whenever one aims to fulfil their desires by pursuing these things, even if they are lawful, beyond their needs it will distract them from preparing for the hereafter. It will lead them to bad character such as being wasteful and extravagant and may even take them towards sins in order to obtain these things. Failing to obtain them may lead to impatience and other acts of defiance and disobedience towards Allah, the Exalted. It is obvious these desires have taken control over many Muslims as they would happily get up in the middle of the night in order to obtain these things such as wealth or go on a holiday but will fail to do so when advised to offer the voluntary night prayer or attend the morning obligatory prayer at the Mosque with congregation.

There is no harm in obtaining these things as long as they are lawful and required in order to fulfil a person's needs and the needs of their dependents. But when a person goes beyond this then they will become preoccupied with them at the loss of their hereafter as the more one pursues their desires the less they will strive in preparing for the hereafter. And therefore, the warning given in this Hadith will apply to them.



## What is Piety

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, set off from Arafat the people hurried after him. He then ordered someone to declare to the people that piety is not measured by speed. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 257.

The aspects of piety have been discussed in great detail in a free eBook which can be accessed directly using the following link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:f2696fd3-6f1b-4d27-919e-202045f8b0c4>

But to sum up, piety 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.

## **The Correct Way**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When he reached Wadi Muhassir he threw pebbles at the Jamarat and ordered the people to do the same. He then advised them that they should adopt their rites from him as they may not see him after that year. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 264.

Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, specifically mentioned the rites of the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj) yet his words indirectly mean that a Muslim must follow his traditions in all aspects of their lives. This has been made crystal clear by the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If Muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is

important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many Muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied Muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a Muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

## Controlling Temptations

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the station of sacrificing animals in Mina he had his young cousin Al Fadl Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, mounted behind him on his camel. A young woman approached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and asked him a question. While answering her question he physically turned his cousin's head away from the young woman so that he could not see her. When he was questioned about this he replied that he saw a young man and woman in close proximity to one another and he could not trust the Devil with them meaning, negatively influencing them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 265.

Muslims should take precautions in order to avoid being tempted into illegal relationships. Firstly, they should learn to lower their gaze. This does not mean one should always stare at their shoes but it means they should avoid looking around unnecessary especially in public places. They should avoid staring at others and maintain respect for the opposite gender. Just like a Muslim would not like someone staring at their sister or daughter they should not stare at other people's sisters and daughters. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 30:

*“Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision<sup>1</sup> and guard their private parts. That is purer for them...”*

Whenever possible a Muslim should avoid spending time alone with the opposite gender unless they are related in a way which prohibits marriage. This has been advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1862.

Muslims should dress and behave with modesty. Dressing modestly avoids attracting the glances of strangers and behaving modestly prevents one from taking the initial steps which could lead to an illegal relationship such as talking unnecessarily to the opposite gender.

Understanding the blessings of avoiding illegal relationships is another way to protect oneself from them. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has guaranteed Paradise to the one who safeguards their tongue and chastity. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2408.

Fearing the punishment of being involved in illegal relationships will also aid a Muslim to avoid them. For example, faith will depart from the person who is committing fornication. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4690.

In reality, a Muslim does not need illegal relationships as Islam prescribes marriage. Those who cannot afford to marry should fast often as this also helps to control one's desires and actions. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 3398.



## **Religion of Ease**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). On the morning of the day of sacrifice the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked his cousin, Al Fadl Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, to gather some pebbles for him which are used to stone the Jamarat at Mina. Al Fadl, may Allah be pleased with him, chose small pebbles which could be used in a sling shot and gave them to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who was pleased with his selection. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then advised that one should beware of excess as it was excess in religion which destroyed the former nations. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 267.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 39, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that religion is simple and straight forward. And a Muslim should not over burden themselves as they will not be able to keep up with it.

This means that a Muslim should always lead a simple religious and worldly life. Islam does not demand Muslims to overburden themselves in performing righteous deeds. But it in fact teaches simplicity which is the most beloved religion to Allah, the Exalted, according to a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 287. A Muslim should firstly strive to fulfil their obligatory duties which are undoubtedly within their strength to fulfil as Allah, the Exalted, does not burden a Muslim with more



than they can bear. This is confirmed in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286 of the Holy Quran:

*“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...”*

Next, they should take some time out of their day to study Islamic teachings so that they can act on the Holy Quran and the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, according to their strength. This attracts the love of Allah, the Exalted, which has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502.

If a Muslim persists on this behaviour they will be provided with such mercy that they will fulfil all their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people and find time to enjoy the lawful pleasures of this world without excess, waste or extravagance.

This is how a Muslim makes things easier for themselves. And if they possess dependents, such as children, they should teach them the same thereby, making things easier for them also. Overburdening oneself makes things hard and can push one to completely quit. And relaxing too much will make things hard as one will lose out on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds through laziness.

## True Sacrifice

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sacrificed a total of 100 camels for his Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 209.

The sacrifice is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, which Muslims imitate during the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj) season. The Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, was commanded to sacrifice his son the Holy Prophet Ismaeel, peace be upon him. Chapter 37 As Saffat, verse 102:

*"And when he reached with him [the age of] exertion, he said, "O my son, indeed I have seen in a dream that I [must] sacrifice you, so see what you think." He said, "O my father, do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah wills, of the steadfast.""*

The first lesson to understand is the importance of patience when facing tests and trials. A Muslim should always remember that those more beloved than them to Allah, the Exalted, namely, the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were put through much more severe tests than them. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him,

confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2472, that no one has been tested more for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, than him.

Muslims should also bear in mind that no matter what situation they find themselves in it is beneficial for them. As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500, that if a Muslim faces a difficulty and shows patience they will be rewarded for it. And if they face times of ease and show gratitude they will be rewarded for it. So according to this Hadith every situation a Muslim encounters is beneficial, even if they do not observe the wisdom behind it. 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.”*

Muslims should also understand that they will encounter a situation which has been decreed for them by Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of how they react to it. If they face it with patience they will find an uncountable reward in this world and in the next. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

But if they face it with impatience then they will face more difficulties. So either way they have to face the difficulty so they might as well gain benefit from it.

In addition, a Muslim should not be naïve and realize that this world is not Paradise. It is a world created in order to test mankind so it therefore can never be free of tests and trials. When a Muslim recognizes its innate nature facing difficulties and tests does not surprise them as they expect this from the world. The same way a person expects to get attacked if they find themselves with a wild animal they should expect tests and trials in this world. Mentally preparing in this way will prevent a Muslim being caught off guard which is a cause of impatience.

Another lesson to learn from this great event is that the same way a person cannot gain things in this material world, such as wealth without sacrifice neither can a Muslim obtain the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, without sacrifice. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 2:

*“Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe” and they will not be tried?”*

Muslims should be grateful that Allah, the Exalted, does not require them to make big sacrifices like the ones made by the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, and the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. Nor is Allah, the Exalted, demanding Muslims to sacrifice in the way the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did. They sacrificed their wealth, homes, families and lives. Instead, Allah, the

Exalted, has entrusted Muslims with a few obligatory duties which require little sacrifice of their time, energy and wealth. If one ponders over the greatness of Paradise they will realise the sacrifices they have been encouraged to make are very small compared to the promised reward. Therefore, Muslims should show gratitude for this by submitting obediently to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

The sacrifice of the Holy Prophet Ismaeel, peace be upon him, is an indication that a Muslim should always be ready to sacrifice their desires, love and wishes for the command of Allah, the Exalted. The ritual of sacrificing animals for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, Muslims perform annually stands for this. It is not simply a sacrifice of an animal but much more. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 37:

*“Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you. Thus have We subjected them to you that you may glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you;...”*

Muslims should adopt the piety mentioned in this verse all year round by placing the commands of Allah, the Exalted, before their desires. Only then will they be able to truly follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, correctly.

Another important lesson to learn from this great event is trusting in Allah, the Exalted. Even in situations which appear inescapable and disastrous, like this great event, a Muslim should always trust in the choice of Allah,

the Exalted. Muslims must understand that their knowledge is very limited and that they are extremely short sighted. Meaning, they cannot fully perceive the wisdoms behind the choices of Allah the Exalted. On the other hand, the knowledge and the divine perception of Allah, the Exalted, is unlimited. Therefore, a Muslim should trust in the choices of Allah, the Exalted, just like a blind person trusts the guidance of their physical guide. No matter what the attitude of a Muslim the choice of Allah, the Exalted, will occur so it is best to trust in His wisdom rather than showing impatience which only leads to further trouble.

In addition, it is important to remember the countless examples within one's life when a person desired something only to regret it after obtaining it. And when they disliked something from occurring only to change their mind later on. 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.”*

As destiny is out of people's hands it is important for Muslims to concentrate on the thing which is in their control if they desire to be rescued from difficulties namely, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Allah, the Exalted, has already guaranteed that He will save a Muslim from all difficulties in both worlds. All they have to do is remain obedient to Him. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

*“...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”*

It is foolish to stress about the thing which is not in one's control meaning, destiny, and remain heedless to the thing which is in one's control namely, obeying Allah, the Exalted.

## **Love is in Actions**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). After performing the sacrifice the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded a barber to shave his head, starting with the right side. He then commanded the shaved hair to be distributed to the people. His Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, encircled him while his head was being shaved so that none of his hair would fall onto the floor. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 272.

It is obvious that they behaved in this manner out of love and respect for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Every Muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?



In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

## **Prioritising Correctly**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, stopped at the well of Zamzam near the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. He observed the tribe of Abdul Muttalib serving water to the pilgrims from the well which they had done for many years. He advised them to continue in this manner as they were doing proper work. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 277-278.

Islam does not teach mankind to abandon the material world as it is a source of resources which need to be utilized in the correct way in order to reach the hereafter safely. Islam teaches Muslims to prioritize their activities in the correct way so that they achieve true peace in both worlds.

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.

## **Use Your Energy**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, stopped at the well of Zamzam near the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba. He observed the tribe of Abdul Muttalib serving water to the pilgrims from the well which they had done for many years. He advised them to continue in this manner as they were doing proper work. He commented that if it were not for people who would prevent the tribe from drawing water from the well by doing it themselves in emulation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he would have drawn water from the well himself. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 277-278.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7432, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves the servant who is independent of the creation. This means that a Muslim should fully utilize the means they have been provided by Allah, the Exalted, such as their physical strength in order to fulfill their duties. They should not behave lazily and seek things from people as this habit leads to dependence on them and reduces trusting in Allah, the Exalted. One should firmly believe that no matter what happens whatever is destined to be their provision was allocated to them over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. A Muslim should focus on their efforts and trust that Allah, the Exalted, will grant them what is best for them.

## **Passing on Correct Knowledge**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during the days at Mina. One of the things he said was that those present and listening should inform those who are absent. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 280.

When spreading the awareness of Islam within society it is vital one ensures that the correct knowledge is passed on. Otherwise, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 206, a person may not only get punished for passing on incorrect knowledge but that punishment will increase depending on how many people act on it. Unfortunately, this Hadith is very commonly overlooked resulting in the spread of unreliable and incorrect knowledge. The lack of correct knowledge can open the door to unbelief. For example, some people label everything they do not understand as innovation or polytheism. They even happily label Muslims as apostates without realizing a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 216. It clearly warns that if one falsely accuses a Muslim of disbelief the accuser loses their faith. Ignorance is one of the weapons of the Devil and one can only avoid this trap by gaining correct knowledge from a reliable scholar before spreading it. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 9:

*"...Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?"..."*

## **Refrain from Harm**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during the days at Mina. One of the things he said was that the blood and possessions of a Muslim are sacred. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 280.

A Muslim can fulfill this command by treating others how they themselves wish to be treated by people. This is in fact the sign of a true believer according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 13.

This does not mean a Muslim will lose their faith if they fail to adopt this characteristic. It means that a Muslim's faith will not be complete until they act on this advice. This Hadith also indicates that a Muslim will not perfect their faith until they also dislike for others what they dislike for themselves. This is supported by another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6586. It advises that the Muslim nation is like one body. If one part of the body is in pain the rest of the body shares the pain. This mutual feeling includes loving and hating for others what one loves and hates for themselves.

A Muslim can only achieve this status when their heart is free from evil traits, such as envy. These evil traits will always cause one to desire better for themselves. So in reality, this Hadith is an indication that one should purify

their heart by adopting good characteristics, such as being forgiving, and eliminate evil traits, such as envy. This is only possible through learning and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is important for Muslims to understand that desiring good for others will cause them to lose out on good things. The treasury of Allah, the Exalted, has no limits so there is no need to adopt a selfish and greedy mentality.

Desiring good for others includes striving to aid others in anyway one can, such as financial or emotional support, in the same way a person would desire others to aid them in their moment of need. Therefore, this love must be shown through actions not just words. Even when a Muslim forbids evil and offers advice which contradicts the desire of others they should do so gently just like they would want others to advise them kindly.

As mentioned earlier, the main Hadith under discussion indicates the importance of eliminating all bad characteristics which contradict mutual love and care, such as envy. Envy is when a person desires to possess a specific blessing which is only obtainable when it is taken away from someone else. This attitude is a direct challenge to the distribution of blessings chosen by Allah, the Exalted. This is why it is a major sin and leads to the destruction of the envier's good deeds. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903. If a Muslim must desire the lawful things others possess they should wish and supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, to grant them the same or similar thing without the other person losing the blessing. This type of jealousy is lawful and is praiseworthy in aspects of religion. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The Holy Prophet Muhammad,

peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Muslims should only be jealous of a wealthy person who uses their wealth correctly. And be jealous of a knowledgeable person who uses their knowledge to benefit themselves and others.

A Muslim should not only love for others to obtain lawful worldly blessings but also for them to gain religious blessings in both worlds. In fact, when one wishes this for others it encourages them to strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This type of healthy competition is welcomed in Islam. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 26:

*“...So for this let the competitors compete.”*

This encouragement will also inspire a Muslim to assess themselves in order to find and eliminate any faults in their character. When these two elements combine meaning, striving in sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and purifying one's character, it leads to success in both worlds.

A Muslim must therefore not only claim to love for others what they desire for themselves verbally but show it through their actions. It is hoped that the one who is concerned for others in this way will receive the concern of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1930.



## Hear and Obey

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during the days at Mina. One of the things he urged the Muslims to do was to listen and obey their commander who guided them with the Holy Quran irrespective of their social status, such as being a slave. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 282-283.

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 the leaders of society. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

*"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you..."*

This makes it clear that it is a duty to obey the leaders of society. But it is important to note, this obedience is a duty as long as one does not disobey Allah, the Exalted. There is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of the Creator. In cases like this, revolting against leaders

should be avoided as it only leads to the harm of innocent people. Instead, the leaders should be gently advised good and forbidden evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should advise others to act accordingly and always supplicate for the leaders to remain on the correct path. If the leaders remain straight the general public will remain straight, also.

To be deceitful towards the leaders is a sign of hypocrisy, which one must avoid at all times. Sincerity also includes striving to obey them in matters which unite society on good and warning against anything which causes disruption in society.

## Family Ties

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during the days at Mina. One of the things he urged Muslims to do was to fulfil the rights their relatives have over them by specifically listing one's mother, father, sister, brother and then the next closest relative. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 284.

Upholding the ties of kinship is a vital aspect of Islam which cannot be abandoned if one desires success in both worlds. A true sign of one's faith is not spending all day worshipping Allah, the Exalted, in a Mosque but it is to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and to fulfill the rights of the creation. One of the most important rights of the creation is to uphold the ties of kinship. One can feign piety by dressing Islamically but they cannot deceive Allah, the Exalted. When one turns the pages of history they will always observe that the pious servants of Allah, the Exalted, maintained their ties of kinship. Even when their relative's mistreated them they still responded with kindness. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”*

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6525, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, will always aid the one who strives to maintain their ties of kinship even if their relatives make things difficult for them.

Replying good with good is not special whereas, replying good to evil is the sign of a sincere believer. The former behavior is even seen in animals. In most cases, when one treats an animal kindly it will in turn show affection back. It is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5991, that the one who truly upholds the bonds of kinship is the one who maintains ties even when their relatives sever them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was constantly terrorized by most of his relatives but he always showed kindness towards them.

It is commonly known that one cannot achieve success without the closeness of Allah, the Exalted. But in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5987, Allah, the Exalted, has clearly declared that He will sever bonds with the one who cuts their ties of kinship over worldly reasons. Bear in mind, this is true irrespective of how much one struggles to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship such as, the obligatory prayers. If Allah, the Exalted, cuts ties with a Muslim how can they achieve His closeness and eternal success?

In addition, in most cases Allah, the Exalted, delays the punishment of sins in order to give people the opportunity to repent. But breaking the ties of kinship over worldly reasons is punished swiftly. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4212.

Unfortunately, severing ties is commonly seen in the world today. People easily sever ties of kinship over petty worldly reasons. They fail to recognize that any loss which occurs in the material world is temporary but if they are disconnected from Allah, the Exalted, they will face prolonged suffering in both worlds.

A reason for breaking the ties of kinship which is commonly seen within the Islamic community is when one reaches a higher social status through their occupation. This inspires them to discard their relatives as they believe they are not worthy of interacting with them anymore. Their love for their wealth and social status pushes them to the doors of paranoia which convinces them that their relatives only wish to take their wealth from them.

The Holy Quran indicates that these bonds will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 1:

*“...And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever over you, an Observer.”*

This verse also clearly indicates that one cannot obtain piety without upholding the ties of kinship. So those who believe they can achieve it through excess worship and fasting are proven wrong and must therefore change their behaviour.

Islam teaches Muslims to uphold all ties of kinship by aiding their relatives in matters which are good whenever and wherever possible. They have been ordered to adopt a constructive mindset which unites relatives for the benefit of society rather than a destructive mentality which only causes divisions within families. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, creating divisions amongst people leads to one's destruction.

Those who sever their ties of kinship have been cursed in the Holy Quran. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verses 22-23:

*“So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your [ties of] relationship? Those [who do so] are the ones that Allah has cursed...”*

How can one achieve their lawful desires in this world or in the next when they are encompassed with the curse of Allah, the Exalted, and deprived of His mercy?

Islam does not order one to go beyond their means in supporting their relatives nor does it ask them to sacrifice the limits of Allah, the Exalted, for their relatives as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2625. Therefore, one should never join their relatives in acts of evil. In this case, a Muslim should command their relatives to do

good and gently forbid them from evil while maintaining respect for them.  
Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Countless benefits are obtained by the one who maintains the ties of kinship for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who maintains ties will be blessed with extra grace in their provision and in their life. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1693. This means that their provision irrespective of how little it is will be enough for them and it will provide them with peace of mind and body. Grace in life means they will find time to fulfill all their religious and worldly duties. These are two blessings Muslims spend their whole life and wealth trying to obtain but many fail to recognize that Allah, the Exalted, has placed both of them in maintaining ties of kinship.

Maintaining ties of kinship is so important that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered Muslims to fulfill this vital duty even with their non-Muslim relatives. A Hadith advising this is found in Sahih Muslim, number 2324.

One of the traps of the Devil is that he aims to create dissension between relatives and within society which leads to broken families and social divisions. His ultimate goal is to weaken Islam as a nation. Unfortunately, some have become infamous for harboring grudges which go on for

decades and pass on from generation to generation. A person will treat a relative well for decades but over one mistake and argument the latter will vow never to speak to them again. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6526, that it is unlawful for a Muslim to cut off ties from another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. If this is the command regarding severing ties with a non-relative can one imagine the seriousness of severing ties with relatives? This question has been answered in Sahih Bukhari, number 5984. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared that the one who severs ties with a relative over worldly reasons will not enter Paradise.

One must reflect on the verses and Hadiths which discuss this important topic and realize that if after decades of sins Allah, the Exalted, does not close His doors or sever links with people why do people so easily turn their backs on their relatives over small worldly issues? This must change if one desires for their connection to Allah, the Exalted, to remain intact.



## **A Branch of Hypocrisy**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during the days at Mina. One of the things he said was that Allah, the Exalted, may overlook the mistakes of people except for the one who borrows wealth from a Muslim with the intention not to repay the loan. This person has a huge problem and is ruined. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 284.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that breaking promises is an aspect of hypocrisy.

The greatest of promises a Muslim has made is with Allah, the Exalted, which is to obey Him sincerely. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. All other promises made with people must also be kept unless one has a valid excuse especially, the ones a parent makes with children. Breaking promises only teaches children bad character and encourages them to believe being deceitful is an acceptable characteristic to possess. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2227, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will be against the one who makes a promise in His name and then breaks it without a valid excuse. How can the one who has Allah, the Exalted, against them on Judgment Day possibly succeed?

## **Trusting in Allah, the Exalted**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during the days at Mina. One of the things he said was that there is no disease for which Allah, the Exalted, did not provide a cure for except for senility meaning, old age. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 284.

This incident indicates a branch of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, namely, using the lawful means Allah, the Exalted, has created in the correct way. The other branch is firmly believing that the outcome of a situation, which Allah, the Exalted, has chosen, is best for all involved even if one fails to observe the wisdoms behind the choice.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2344, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that if people truly trusted Allah, the Exalted, He would provide for them just like He provides for birds. They leave their nests hungry in the morning and return in the evening satisfied.

Truly trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is something which is felt in the heart but is proven through the limbs meaning, when one sincerely obeys Allah,

the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 3:

*“...And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him...”*

The aspect of trust which is internal involves firmly believing that only Allah, the Exalted, can provide one with beneficial things and protect them from harmful things both in worldly and religious matters. A Muslim understands that no one except Allah, the Exalted, can give, withhold, harm or benefit someone.

It is important to note, that truly trusting in Allah, the Exalted, does not mean one should abandon using the means which Allah, the Exalted, has provided, such as medicine. As the main Hadith under discussion clearly mentions that the birds leave their nests actively searching for provision. When one uses the strength and means provided by Allah, the Exalted, according to the teachings of Islam they are undoubtedly obeying Him. This is in fact, the outward element of trusting in Allah, the Exalted. This has been made clear in many verses and Hadiths. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 71:

*“O you who have believed, take your precaution...”*

In reality, the outward activity is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and trusting Allah, the Exalted, inwardly is the inward state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One should not abandon the outward tradition even if they possess the inward state of trust.

Actions and using the means provided by Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of trusting Him. In this respect, actions can be split into three categories. The first are those actions of obedience which Allah, the Exalted, commands Muslims to do so that they can avoid Hell and obtain Paradise. Abandoning these while claiming trust that Allah, the Exalted, will forgive them is simply wishful thinking and is therefore blameworthy.

The second type of actions are those means which Allah, the Exalted, has created in this world in order for people to live in it safely, such as eating when hungry, drinking when thirsty and wearing warm clothes in cold weather. A person who abandons these and causes harm to himself is blameworthy. However, there are some people who have been provided special strength by Allah, the Exalted, so that they can avoid these means without harming themselves. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used to fast for days on end uninterrupted but forbade others from doing the same as Allah, the Exalted, provided for him directly without the need for food. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1922. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, prayed for the fourth rightly guided Caliph Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, so that he would not feel excess cold or heat. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 117. Therefore, if a person turns away from these means but is provided with the strength to endure without failing in their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and people then it is acceptable otherwise it is blameworthy.

The third type of actions in respect to trusting in Allah, the Exalted, are those things which have been set as a customary practice which Allah, the Exalted, sometimes breaks for certain people. An example of this are the people who become cured of illnesses without the need of medicine. This is quite common especially in poorer countries where medicine is difficult to obtain. This is linked to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2144, which advises that no person will die until they utilize every ounce of their provision which was allocated to them, which according to another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748, was over fifty thousand years before Allah, the Exalted, created the Heavens and the Earth. So the one who truly realises this Hadith might not seek provision actively knowing that what was allocated to them so long ago cannot miss them. So for this person the customary means of obtaining provision such as obtaining it through a job is broken by Allah, the Exalted. This is a high and rare rank. Only the one who can behave in such a manner without complaining or panicking nor expecting things from people is free of blame if they choose this path. It is important to note, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1692, that it is a sin for a person to fail in providing for their dependents even though they may be on this high rank.

Having real trust in Allah, the Exalted, leads to being content with destiny. Meaning, whatever Allah, the Exalted, chooses for them they accept without complaint and without desiring things to change as they firmly trust that Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the 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.”*

To conclude, it is best to follow the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by using the lawful means one has been granted firmly believing they are from Allah, the Exalted, and trust internally that only what Allah, the Exalted, decides will occur, which is undoubtedly the best choice for each person whether they observe this or not.

## **Fighting Each Other**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during these days. One of the things he said was that Muslims should not revert to disbelief after him by striking the necks of each other. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 284.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6541, discusses some aspects of creating unity within society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, firstly advised Muslims not to envy each other.

This is when a person desires to obtain the very blessing someone else possesses meaning, they desire for the owner to lose the blessing. And it involves disliking the fact that the owner was given the blessing by Allah, the Exalted, instead of them. Some only desire this to occur in their hearts without showing it through their actions or speech. If they dislike their thought and feeling it is hoped that they will not be held accountable for their envy. Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when a person strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing.

Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feeling and if they strive to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing they possess. Even though this type is not sinful yet it is disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and only praiseworthy if it involves a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first is when a person envies the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second is when a person envies the one who uses their wisdom and knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

The evil type of envy, as mentioned earlier, directly challenges the choice of Allah, the Exalted. The envious person behaves as if Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake giving a particular blessing to someone else instead of them. This is why it is a major sin. In fact, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903, envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

An envious Muslim must strive to act on the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. It advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. An envious Muslim should therefore, strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person they envy, such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.



Another thing advised in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is that Muslims should not hate each other. This means one should only dislike something if Allah, the Exalted, dislikes it. This has been described as an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. A Muslim should therefore, not dislike things or people according to their own desires. If one dislikes another according to their own desires they should never allow it to affect their speech or actions as it is sinful. A Muslim should strive to remove the feeling by treating the other according to the teachings of Islam meaning, with respect and kindness. A Muslim should remember that other people are not perfect just like they are not perfect. And if others possess a bad characteristic they will undoubtedly possess good qualities also. Therefore, a Muslim should advise others to abandon their bad characteristics but continue to love the good qualities they possess.

Another point must be made on this topic. A Muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their scholar's opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a Muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims should not turn away from each other. This means they should not sever ties with other Muslims over worldly issues thereby refusing to support them according to the teachings of Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6077, it is unlawful for a Muslim to sever ties with another Muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. In fact, the one who severs ties for more than a year over a worldly issue is considered like the one who has killed another Muslim. This has been

warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4915. Severing ties with others is only lawful in matters of faith. But even then a Muslim should continue to advise the other Muslim to sincerely repent and only avoid their company if they refuse to change for the better. They should still support them on lawful things when they are requested to do so as this act of kindness may inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Muslims are commanded to be like brothers to one another. This is only achievable if they obey the previous advice given in this Hadith and strive to fulfil their duty towards other Muslims according to the teachings of Islam, such as helping others in matters of good and warning them from evil matters. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

*"...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression..."*

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, advises that a Muslim should fulfil the following rights of other Muslims: they are to return the Islamic greeting of peace, to visit the sick, to take part in their funeral prayers and to reply to the sneezer who praises Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim must learn and fulfil all the rights other people, especially other Muslims, have over them.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a Muslim should not wrong, forsake or hate another Muslim. The sins a

person commits should be hated but the sinner should not be as they may sincerely repent at any time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4884, that whoever humiliates another Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will humiliate them. And whoever protects a Muslim from humiliation will be protected by Allah, the Exalted.

The negative characteristics mentioned in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning can develop when one adopts pride. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, pride is when one looks down on others in contempt. The proud person sees themselves as perfect while seeing others as imperfect. This prevents them from fulfilling the rights of others and encourages them to dislike others.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that true piety is not in one's physical appearance, such as wearing beautiful clothes, but it is an internal characteristic. This internal characteristic manifests outwardly in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is purified the whole body becomes purified but when the spiritual heart is corrupt the whole body becomes corrupt. It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge based on outward appearances, such as wealth, but He considers the intentions and actions of people. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6542. Therefore, a Muslim must strive to adopt internal piety through learning

and acting on the teachings of Islam so that it manifests outwardly in the way they interact with Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that it is a sin for a Muslim to hate another Muslim. This hatred applies to worldly things and not disliking others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, loving and hating for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of perfecting one's faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. But even then a Muslim must show respect to others in all cases and dislike only their sins without actually hating the person. In addition, their dislike must never cause them to act against the teachings of Islam as this would prove their hatred is based on their own desires and not for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The root cause of despising others for worldly reasons is pride. It is vital to understand that an atom's worth of pride is enough to take one to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a Muslim's life, property and honour are all sacred. A Muslim must not violate any of these rights without a just reason. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true Muslim until they protect other people, including non-Muslims, from their harmful speech and actions. And a true believer is the one who keeps their evil away from the lives and property of others. Whoever violates these rights will not be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then justice will be established on Judgment Day whereby the good deeds of the oppressor will be given to the victim and if necessary the sins of the victim will be given to the oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should treat others exactly how they want people to treat them. This will lead to much blessings for an individual and create unity within their society.

## **Protecting Children**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during these days. One of the things he said was that a Muslim should not harm their child. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 284-285.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1952, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the most virtuous gift a parent can give their child is to teach them good character.

This Hadith reminds Muslims to be more concerned about the faith of their relatives, such as their children, over acquiring and imparting wealth and properties to them. It is important to understand, worldly legacies come and go. How many rich and powerful people have built massive empires only for them to be torn apart and forgotten shortly after their death? The few signs left behind from some of these legacies only endure in order to warn people not to follow in their footsteps. An example is the great empire of Pharaoh. Unfortunately, many Muslims are so concerned about teaching their children how to build an empire and acquire much wealth and properties that they neglect teaching them the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes good manners towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation. A Muslim should not be fooled into believing they have plenty of time for teaching their

children good manners as their moment of death is unknown and often pounces on people unexpectedly.

In addition, it is extremely difficult to teach good manners to children when they get older and become set in their ways. Today is the day a Muslim should truly reflect on the gift they wish to impart to their children and relatives. This is how a Muslim sends forward good to the hereafter but also leaves good behind as a righteous child which supplicates for their deceased parent benefits them. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1376. It is hoped that the one who is surrounded by good in this way will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted.

## Step Back and Assess

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during these days. One of the things he said was that the Devil had despaired as he would no longer be worshipped in Arabia however Muslims will obey him in some actions which seem insignificant to them yet these actions will please the Devil. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 284-285.

This incident is connected to chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 38:

*"...And Satan had made pleasing to them their deeds and averted them from the path..."*

As mentioned in this verse the Devil fools people into committing sins and making wrong decisions by beautifying the incorrect choice for them. This occurs in situations when a person must make a choice between two or more options. It also occurs when the choice is between the lawful and unlawful and even between two lawful options. If the Devil cannot guide someone to a sin then he attempts to guide them to the inferior option, even if it is lawful, hoping it will lead to some sort of a sin, such as a person complaining about life and destiny. The Devil beautifies a choice by causing one to focus on its apparent benefit to such a degree that they



lose focus on the bigger picture and the consequences of the choice. An adult then behaves like a child who makes choices without reflecting over the consequences of their actions. This is one of the main reasons why people commit sins. In reality, if one truly reflected on the punishment of sins they would never commit them.

Something which helps in situations like this is to mentally take a step back and assess the options by comparing their long-term benefits and harms. Only when the lawful benefits of something outweighs the harm should a person proceed. The other thing which helps is to deeply reflect on the consequences of the potential options. Some choices might be lawful but if one goes ahead with them it may make their life difficult in the long run. For example, sometimes people rush into marriage with someone they apparently love. They base their decision solely on their feelings instead of reflecting on other more important aspects, for example, if their potential future spouse will make a good life partner or a good parent and if they will help them in their obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Many marriages have ended in divorce because the couple did not reflect on the long term implications of a potential marriage. Many people often claim their spouse was very different before they got married but in most cases they have not changed at all. The truth is that before marriage they did not spend so much time with them so they did not observe certain characteristics which became obvious after marriage.

Some often rush into action and later have regrets as their choice caused them more trouble and in many cases the issue was not a big deal in the first place. This type of action can only be avoided when one reflects on the situation and observes the bigger picture meaning, the wider and long-term implications and consequences of taking a step forward.

One should not only assess if something is lawful or unlawful before making a decision. Even though, this is the most important thing to consider yet, it is not the only thing. As many lawful incorrect choices, which are beautified by the Devil, can lead to trouble further on in life.

To sum up, before making any choice a person must take a step back and reflect deeply over its lawfulness and its potential long-term benefits and harms under the guidance of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Whoever acts like this will rarely make a wrong choice they later regret.

## **Do Not Wrong**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during these days. One of the things he advised is that a Muslim should do no wrong and they therefore will not be wronged. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 284-285.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2447, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that oppression will become a darkness on the Day of Judgment.

This is vital to avoid as those who find themselves plunged in darkness are unlikely to find their way to Paradise. Only those who will be provided a guiding light will be able to do this successfully.

Oppression can take many forms. The first type is when one fails to fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, and refrain from His prohibitions. Even though this has no effect on the infinite status of Allah, the Exalted, it will cause the person to become submerged into darkness in both worlds. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, whenever a person commits a sin a black spot is etched on their spiritual heart. The more they sin the more their heart will become encompassed by darkness. This will prevent them from accepting and following true

guidance in this world which will ultimately lead to darkness in the next world. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

*“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.”*

The next type of oppression is when one oppresses themselves by not fulfilling the trust they have been granted by Allah, the Exalted, in the form of their body and other worldly blessings they possess. The greatest of which is one's faith. This must be protected and strengthened through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

The final type of oppression is when one mistreats others. Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive these sins until the oppressor's victim forgives them first. As people are not so merciful this is unlikely to happen. Then justice will be established on Judgment Day where the oppressor's righteous deeds will be given to their victim and if necessary the victim's sins will be given to the oppressor. This may lead to the oppressor being hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. One should therefore treat others how they wish to be treated by people. A Muslim should avoid all forms of oppression if they desire a guiding light in this world and in the next.

## **One Body**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during these days. One of the things he said was that the Devil had despaired as he would no longer be worshipped in Arabia however he would still continue to sow discord amongst Muslims. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 290.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6586, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that the Muslim nation is like one body. If any part of the body suffers pain the rest of the body shares in its pain.

This Hadith, like many others, indicates the importance of not becoming so self-absorbed into one's own life thereby behaving as if the universe revolves around them and their problems. The Devil inspires a Muslim to focus so much on their own life and their problems that they lose focus on the bigger picture which leads to impatience and causes them to become heedless of others thereby failing their duty in supporting others according to their means. A Muslim should always bear this in mind and strive to aid others as much as they can. This extends to beyond financial help and includes all verbal and physical help such as good and sincere advice.

Muslims should regularly observe the news and those who are in difficult situations all over the world. This will inspire them to avoid becoming self-centered and instead aid others. In reality, the one who only cares about themselves is lower in rank than an animal as even they care about their offspring. In fact, a Muslim should be better than animals by practically caring for others beyond their own family.

Even though a Muslim cannot remove all the problems of the world but they can play their part and help others according to their means as this is what Allah, the Exalted, commands and expects.

## Repay Trusts

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a sermon during these days. One of the things he said is that Muslims should fulfill their trusts. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 291-292.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst Muslims.



## **Two Treasures of Islam**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). On the way back to Medina after completing it he gave a sermon at Ghadir Khumm. He urged the Muslims to adhere to the two treasures he was leaving behind namely, the Holy Quran and his family, may Allah be pleased with them. He concluded that these two would not separate from one another until they reach him at his celestial pool on the Day of Judgement. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 301.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 30, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the Holy Quran will intercede on Judgment Day. Those who follow it during their lives on Earth will be led to Paradise on Judgment Day. But those who neglect it during their lives on Earth will find that it pushes them into Hell on Judgment Day.

The Holy Quran is a book of guidance. It is not merely a book of recitation. Muslims must therefore strive to fulfill all aspects of the Holy Quran to ensure that it guides them to success in both worlds. The first aspect is reciting it correctly and regularly. The second aspect is to understand it. And the final aspect is to act on its teachings according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who behave in such a manner are the ones who are given glad tidings of right guidance through every difficulty in this world and its intercession on the Day of Judgment. But as warned by this Hadith the Holy Quran is only guidance and a mercy for those who correctly act on its aspects according

to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But those who misinterpret it and instead act according to their desires in order to gain worldly things, such as fame, will be deprived of this right guidance and its intercession on Judgment Day. In fact, their complete loss in both worlds will only increase until they sincerely repent. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

*“And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.”*

In addition, this incident indicates the high status of the Holy Prophet’s family, may Allah be pleased with them.

A sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is to love all those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even if this contradicts one's personal opinion about them. This love includes those who proclaim love through their words and more importantly through their actions. For example, it is obvious to all that all the household of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors possessed this true love. So loving each of them is a duty upon the one who claims love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been proven through many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 17. It advises that love for the helpers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, meaning, the residents of the Holy city of Medina is a part of faith and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy. In another Hadith found in Jami At

Tirmidhi, number 3862, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has clearly warned Muslims not to criticize any of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as loving them is a sign of loving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and hating them is a sign of hating the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and Allah, the Exalted. This person will not succeed unless they sincerely repent. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned a similar statement regarding his blessed household, may Allah be pleased with them, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 143.

If a Muslim unjustifiably criticises any Muslim who demonstrates their love for Allah, the Exalted, it proves their lack of love for Allah, the Exalted. If a Muslim commits a sin other Muslims should hate the sin but they should, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, still have love for the sinful Muslim because of their love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The sign of loving others is to treat them kindly and respectfully. Simply put, one should treat others how they wish people to treat them.

In addition, a Muslim should dislike all those who show dislike for those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, irrespective of if the person is a relative or a stranger. A Muslim's feelings should never prevent them from fulfilling this sign of true love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This does not mean they should harm them but they should make it clear to them that hating those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, is unacceptable. If they persist on this deviant attitude then one should separate from them until they sincerely repent.

## **Safeguarding Speech**

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). After returning to Medina he mounted the pulpit and gave a sermon. One of the things he said was that one should not harm Muslims through their speech and if a Muslim should die others should only speak good about them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 308-309.

It is vital for Muslims to be constantly aware of what they say as it only takes a single word to cause them to plummet into Hell on Judgement Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3970. It is important that a person thinks before speaking and only proceeds when the words will not be sinful or vain. This is the sign of an intelligent person. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 176, a way for a Muslim to escape all the dangers of the tongue namely, to either speak good or remain silent. Gaining knowledge on the dangers of the tongue will enforce this teaching. But if a Muslim remains ignorant they will commit many sins through their words without even realising it. This is why gaining knowledge has been made a duty on all Muslims which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

## **The 11<sup>th</sup> Year After Migration**

### **Remembering Others**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. When this occurred he went out to a cemetery, the Baqi Al Gharqad, in the middle of the night and prayed for the forgiveness for those buried there. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 321.

Remembering others in this way is an aspect of being sincere to them. 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 the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

It is a part of sincerity towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of sincerity includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For example, one may sacrifice purchasing certain things in order to donate the wealth to the needy. Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of sincerity towards others. Whereas, dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 53:

*“...Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them...”*

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a Muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

*“...And do good as Allah has done good to you...”*

## **Cling to Faith**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. When this occurred he went out to a cemetery, the Baqi Al Gharqad, in the middle of the night and prayed for the forgiveness for those buried there. He then commented that the people buried there should be content that they will not experience the things the living will face namely, troubles which are like dark portions of the night which will follow one another in succession, the last of them being worse than the first. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 321.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7400, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who continues worshipping Allah, the Exalted, during widespread turmoil and seditions is like the one who has emigrated to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his lifetime.

The reward of emigrating to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his life time was a great deed. In fact, it erased all of one's previous sins according to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 321.

Worshipping Allah, the Exalted, means to continue sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His



prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is obvious that the time mentioned in this Hadith has arrived. It has become very easy to become misguided from the teachings of Islam as worldly desires have opened up for the Muslim nation. Therefore, Muslims should not get distracted by them and avoid controversial issues and people and instead remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, in every aspect of their life if they desire to obtain the reward mentioned in this Hadith.

## **Fulfil Rights in Ease and Hardship**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. He would always give equal time and attention to each of his wives but when he was overcome with pain he summoned his wives and sought permission from them for him to stay and be nursed in the home of his wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 323.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2612, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who possesses complete faith is the one who is best in conduct and most kind to their family.

Unfortunately, some have adopted the bad habit of treating non-relatives in a kind manner while mistreating their own family. They behave in this manner as they do not understand the importance of treating one's own family kindly and as they fail to appreciate their family. A Muslim will never achieve success until they fulfill both aspects of faith. The first is fulfilling their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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. The second is to fulfill the rights of people which includes treating them kindly. None have more right to this kind treatment than one's own family. A Muslim must aid their family in all matters which are good and warn them against bad things and practices in a gentle way according to the teachings of Islam. They should not blindly support them

in bad things simply because they are their relatives neither should they fail to help them in good matters because of some ill feelings towards them as this contradicts Islamic teachings. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

The best way to guide others is through a practical example as this is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is much more effective than just verbal guidance.

Finally, one should generally choose gentleness in all matters especially, when dealing with their family. Even if their commit sins they should be warned in a gentle manner and still be aided in matters which are good as this kindness is more effective in bringing them back to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, than treating them harshly.

## **Nobility is in Obedience**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period his daughter, Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her, visited him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told her that his death was approaching and that she should fear Allah, the Exalted, be patient and follow his traditions as he was a worthy predecessor to her. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 325.

Even though Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her, is from the most noble family yet the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned her to remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, and follow his traditions at all times.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant Muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects

thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a Muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

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

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one’s race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a Muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard

or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these Muslims.

## **Avoid the Desire to Lead**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, was indirectly advised to ask the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who would lead the Muslims after him. He replied that he would not ask him about this nor would he ask to be appointed as the leader. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 326.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that craving for wealth and social status is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are set free on a herd of sheep.

A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than craving for excess wealth. A person will often spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and prestige.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise the hereafter over the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but if someone receives it without asking for it they

will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. This is the reason the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not appoint a person who requested to be appointed in a position of authority or even showed desire for it. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6923. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment. This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worse type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, that this person will go to Hell.

Therefore, it is safer for a Muslim to avoid the craving for excess wealth and high social status as they are two things which can lead to the destruction of their faith by distracting them from preparing adequately for the hereafter.



## **Concealing Faults**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon in which he praised the Companions especially, the Helpers of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them. He encouraged the Companions from Mecca, the Migrants, may Allah be pleased with them, to always honor the Companions of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them, and overlook their faults. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 328-329.

Perhaps the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, encouraged the Migrants from Mecca to treat well the Helpers of Medina, may Allah be pleased with them all, in this way as the leadership after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, went to the Migrants from Mecca, may Allah be pleased with them.

In addition, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted, in both this world and the next. This is quite evident if one ponders over it. The people who are accustomed to exposing the faults of others are the ones whose faults are made public by Allah, the Exalted. But the one who conceals the faults of others is considered by society as someone who has no obvious faults.

There are two types of people in respect to this advice. The first are those whose wrong actions are private meaning, this person does not commit sins openly nor exposes their sins in a boastful manner to others. If this person slips up and commits a sin which becomes known to others it should be veiled as long as this does not cause harm to others. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 19:

*“Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter...”*

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to overlook the mistakes of those who strive to obey Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4375.

The second type of person is the wicked one who commits sins openly and does not care about people finding out about them. In fact, they often boast about the sins they have committed to others. As they inspire others to act in an evil way exposing their faults in order to warn others does not contradict this Hadith. Nor will this person have their faults exposed by Allah, the Exalted, in return for exposing the faults of this wicked person, which is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546, as long as they are exposing the faults of another for the correct reason.

## **A Fine Choice**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon in which he declared that a servant of Allah, the Exalted, was given a choice between what is on Earth and what is with Allah, the Exalted, and the servant had chosen what is with Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, then wept as he knew the servant the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was referring to was himself. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 328-329.

It is important for Muslims to understand a key concept in Islam. Namely, there is nothing wrong with desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, but it is best to avoid worshipping and obeying Allah, the Exalted, in order to obtain them. This is because these types of Muslims often only worship Allah, the Exalted, and inhabit the Mosques when they desire worldly things. But if they do not receive them they become impatient and fed up which causes them to stop obeying Allah, the Exalted. Or if they obtain them then the joy of them often makes them turn away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as they believe they achieved what they desired therefore there is no need to obey Allah, the Exalted, anymore. These Muslims worship Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they obey Allah, the Exalted, only when it suits their desires. And because of this attitude they are in danger of becoming misguided. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

These Muslims may claim that they are worshipping Allah, the Exalted, but in reality, they are only worshipping their own desires and the gifts and blessings they receive.

It is praiseworthy to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to obtain religious blessings, such as Paradise, as this has been recommended by Islamic teachings. But it is far superior to worship Allah, the Exalted, as He is the only One worthy of it and because the creation are His servants.

If a Muslim must desire gifts and blessings then it is best to aim for religious blessings as aiming for worldly blessings can shift a person's intention so that they end up worshipping the gift instead of the Giver.

## **Joining the Righteous**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon in which he praised Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him. He declared that Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, was the most faithful to him in his friendship and his wealth. And if he were to take an intimate friend after Allah, the Exalted, it would be Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 329-330.

This incident makes it clear that Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, proved his love and sincerity to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through actions.

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].”*

## **A Clean Heart**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon. One of the things he said was that his absence (death) was near at hand. And if there was anyone he had unjustly physically harmed then they could take retaliation from him. And if there was anyone whose wealth he took without returning it then they should step forward for compensation. And if there was anyone whose honor he violated then they should take retaliation against his honor. He added that none of them should fear that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would hold rancor in his heart against anyone who steps forward for retaliation as this is not in his nature or character. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 331-332.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4860, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned people against speaking negatively about others as this causes ill feelings towards them in people's hearts.

It is often observed that families especially, from the Asian community, become broken over time. This is one the biggest complaints family members, such as parents often have. They wonder why their children have become separated even though they were once firmly together.

One of the main reasons the relationships between relatives become fractured is because someone has spoken negatively about a person's relative to them. This is often done by a family member. For example, a mother will speak negatively about her son to her other child. This leads to enmity between the two relatives and over time it builds up and creates a wedge between the two. Those who were once like one person become like strangers to one another.

It is important to understand that people are not Angels. Except for a very few, when a negative thing is said to a person about another they will get affected by it even if they do not desire this to occur. This enmity still occurs even if the initial person who spoke negatively about someone's relative does not intend to create a wedge between relatives. Some often act in this way out of habit and are not trying to damage relationships. For example, parents often adopt this habit and there is no doubt they do not desire the relationships of their children to become fractured or broken.

This attitude has such a serious impact on people's mentality that it also affects relatives that very rarely see or converse with each other. For example, a person will mention negative things about a person's relative to them even though their relative may not even live in the same country as them. This behaviour implants enmity within their heart and with the passing of time they will find that they dislike their distant relative even though they barely know them.

This issue often occurs when two people discuss negative things about others in front of other people. For example, parents may discuss negative things about their relatives in front of their children. Even though, they are not telling their children directly none the less it still affects their hearts. If



one truly reflected for a moment they will realise that the majority of the ill feelings they have towards others were not caused by what that person did or said to them directly. In most cases, it occurred because of a third party who mentioned something negative about that person to them.

In cases where one is trying to warn another of some danger then it is perfectly acceptable to mention another person in a negative way. If one is trying to teach another person a lesson for example, if a mother desires to teach one of her children not to behave as their sibling did they then should follow the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and mention the negative thing without naming the person. An example of this beautiful mentality is discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6979. Mentioning a negative thing without naming the person is good enough to teach someone a lesson.

To conclude, Muslims should ponder deeply before speaking negatively about their relatives or others, privately or publically. Otherwise, they may well find as time passes their family becomes separated and emotionally distant from one another.

## **The Bankrupt**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon. One of the things he said was that his absence (death) was near at hand. And if there was anyone he had unjustly physically harmed then they could take retaliation from him. And if there was anyone whose wealth he took without returning it then they should step forward for compensation. And if there was anyone whose honor he violated then they should take retaliation against his honor. He added that none of them should fear that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would hold rancor in his heart against anyone who steps forward for retaliation as this is not in his nature or character. He concluded that the best people in his sight were those who either took their retaliation from him or they forgive it as he desired to meet Allah, the Exalted, free of any injustices against the creation. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 331-332.

Even though it is clearly evident that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never wronged anyone else yet he gave this sermon out of humility and to warn Muslims of avoiding harming others.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the bankrupt Muslim is the one who accumulates many righteous deeds, such as fasting and prayer, but as they mistreated people their good deeds will be

given to their victims and if necessary their victim's sins will be given to them on Judgement Day. This will lead to them being hurled into Hell.

It is important to understand that a Muslim must fulfil two aspects of faith in order to achieve success. The first are the duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayer. The second aspect is in respect to people which includes treating them kindly. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true believer until they keep they physical and verbal harm away from the life and possessions of others.

It is important to understand that Allah, the Exalted, is infinitely forgiving meaning, He will forgive those who sincerely repent to Him. But He will not forgive the sins which involve other people until the victim forgives first. As people are not so forgiving a Muslim should be fearful that those who they have wronged will exact revenge on them by taking away their precious good deeds on Judgment Day. Even if a Muslim fulfils the rights of Allah, the Exalted, they may still end up in Hell simply because they have wronged others. It is therefore important for Muslims to strive to fulfil both aspects of their duties in order to obtain success in both worlds.

## **Types of Regrets**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon. One of the things he said was that a scandal on Earth is easier to bear than a scandal in the hereafter. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 332.

A scandal can be referring to any type of regret or failure. Muslims should understand that regrets can be classified into two categories. The first are the regrets over worldly things such as not getting married or having children. The second category are the regrets one will have in their grave and on Judgment Day, such as not making better use of their time in order to please Allah, the Exalted. The worldly regrets, irrespective of what they are, will never be permanent as they will either end when one fulfils their desire, changes their mind or dies. They are temporary in nature as the maximum time one can have this type of regret is until their death. And they are not so significant as these regrets may lead to sadness but not severe punishment or torment. In addition, these regrets will end if a person reaches Paradise through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted.

On the other hand, the regrets of the hereafter are long lasting as the time in the grave and on Judgment Day will be much longer than one's life on this Earth. They will not end until one enters Paradise which may not happen or it may occur after an extremely long time as a single day in the hereafter is equivalent to a thousand years on Earth. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 47:

*“...And indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of those which you count.”*

Finally, these regrets are very significant as they may well lead to a severe punishment and torment in the hereafter.

Therefore, a Muslim should ponder over this and be kind to themselves by striving to remove the potential regrets they will have in the grave and on Judgment Day before they try to remove the regrets of this world. Chapter 89 Al Fajr, verse 24:

*“He will say, “Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life.””*

## **Moulding Life**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. On a particular night when his illness grew intense he asked those around him if the people had prayed but they replied that they were waiting for him to lead the congregational prayer. He asked them to pour some water into a basin. He then washed himself and attempted to get up in order to lead the congregational prayer but due to his illness he fainted. When he regained consciousness the first thing he asked was whether the people had prayed or not. But his family, may Allah be pleased with them, replied that the people were still waiting for him to lead the congregational prayer. He once again washed himself and attempted to get up in order to lead the congregational prayer but due to his illness he again fainted. After this occurred again he gave the order for Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead the congregational prayer. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 334-335.

The thing to note is that even during this extreme difficulty the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was completely concerned with offering the obligatory prayer.

Muslims often question how they can mould their life to fit their faith instead of moulding their faith in order to fit their worldly life. One of the ways of achieving this is by always performing the obligatory prayers as soon as they occur for women and to offer the obligatory prayers at the Mosques for men.

As establishing the prayers is the main pillar of Islam, which has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616, when one performs it as described it forces them to arrange their worldly activities so that they fit around their obligatory prayers. Whereas, when one either offers their obligatory prayers late or at home instead of the Mosque it becomes easy to fit the obligatory prayers around one's worldly time table which in turn causes them to mould their faith around their worldly life. The correct attitude will also prevent one from indulging in unnecessary and vain activities, such as visiting the shopping centres unnecessarily, as these often prevent a Muslim from offering their obligatory prayers on time or at the Mosque. Avoiding these unnecessary things and activities allows one to mould their life around their religion.

In addition, as offering the obligatory prayers on time is one of the most beloved deeds to Allah, the Exalted, according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 611, a Muslim should adhere to this habit and not postpone offering their obligatory prayers without an extremely good reason which only occurs very rarely. If one desires to mould their life around their faith then they must fulfil their obligatory prayers on time as soon as they happen for women and men should fulfil them at the Mosque with congregation. This will ensure they prioritise preparing for the hereafter without becoming distracted by the excess of this material world.

## **A Practical Role Model**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. When his illness grew intense he ordered a Companion, Abdullah Bin Zam'a, may Allah be pleased with him, to tell Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead the congregational prayer. When Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the Mosque who could not find Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, and as he did not desire for the prayer to be delayed he told Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead the prayer instead. When Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, began the prayer the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, overheard his voice and declared that Allah, the Exalted, and the Muslims refuse anyone except Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, then arrived and prayed with the people. Later on Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, criticized Abdullah Bin Zam'a, may Allah be pleased with him, as he believed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered him to lead the prayer otherwise he would never have done so. Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, apologized but added that as Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, was absent from the Mosque at that time he believed that no one was more worthy of leading the prayer after Abu Bakr than Umar, may Allah be pleased with them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 332-333.

First of all this incident, like many others, clearly indicates that Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, was the desired choice of being the first Caliph of Islam. In addition, this particular incident played out in such a way that it even indicated that the second Caliph of Islam should be Umar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him.



The important thing to note is that these pious souls were chosen for leadership as they possessed the qualities of a good leader. The greatest of which is leading by example. This quality all Muslims should strive to adopt as every Muslim is a representative of Islam for other Muslims and non-Muslims.

In the early days of Islam to attend a gathering of Islamic knowledge one had to journey for days but now countless lectures can be found online. Yet, ignorance of the correct path has only increased since the passing of the righteous predecessors. This is because some have acquired knowledge by memorizing verses of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but have not used them to purify their character. Meaning, they did not act on their knowledge. Those who act like this will lose the power to affect the hearts of others through their advice. Some lecturers are like news bulletins that only provide information without stimulating others to act thereby failing in their duty to guide others through their God given knowledge. Non-Muslims are mainly accepting Islam through their own research of Islam instead of observing a practical example of a successful Muslim. One who desires to spread Islam must make it their priority to purify their character through knowledge. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

*“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”*

When one acts in this way then a little correct knowledge will have a massive impact on themselves and others. Whereas, those who reject this

correct attitude may possess more knowledge but it will have no positive affect on anybody. This type of person has been described in the Holy Quran. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

*“...and then did not take it on (did not act on their knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]...”*

## **All Pains**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. When his illness grew intense Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and touched him in a comforting gesture. He felt and commented that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was suffering from a very high fever. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that his fever was twice the limit other people face. Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he should be rewarded twice for it to which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed. Then the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that every single Muslim who suffers from illness shall have their sins cast away from them just like a tree drops its leaves. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 340.

In a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 492, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a Muslim does not face any type of physical difficulty, irrespective of its size, such as a prick of a thorn, or any emotional difficulty, such as stress, except Allah, the Exalted, erases their sins because of it.

This refers to minor sins as major sins require sincere repentance. This outcome occurs when a Muslim remains patient from the onset of the difficulty until the end of their life. This is important to understand as many people believe they can complain initially and then show patience after.

This is not true patience instead it is only acceptance which occurs with the passing of time. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1870. In addition, patience needs to be shown throughout one's life as a person can destroy their reward by showing impatience down the line.

A Muslim should remember that it is far better to have their minor sins erased through these difficulties than to reach the Day of Judgment while still possessing them. A Muslim should constantly repent and strive to perform righteous deeds in order to erase their minor sins. And if they encounter any physical or emotional difficulties they should remain patient hoping for their minor sins to be erased and to obtain an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

## **Thinking Well of Allah, the Exalted**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this time the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that at the time of death one should only think positively about Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 341.

In a long divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, Allah, the Exalted, advises that He acts and treats His servant according to their perception of Him. This means if a Muslim has good thoughts and expects good from Allah, the Exalted, He in turn will not disappoint them. Similarly, if a person harbours negative thoughts about Allah, the Exalted, such as believing they will not be forgiven then Allah, the Exalted, may act according to their belief.

It is important to note, there is a vast difference between true hope in Allah, the Exalted, which this Hadith refers to and wishful thinking. Wishful thinking is when one fails to strive in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience and then expects Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them. This is not true hope it is merely wishful thinking. This is like a farmer who fails to plant any seeds, fails to water their crop and still hopes to reap a large harvest. True hope is when one strives to obey Allah, the Exalted, and whenever they slip up they sincerely repent and then hope for the mercy and forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted. This is like a farmer who plants seeds, waters their crop, dedicates effort to keeping the crop

healthy and then hopes for a large harvest. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has summarised this explanation in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459.

Generally speaking, a Muslim should harbour more fear of Allah, the Exalted, during their life as it prevents sins which is superior to hope which inspires one to perform righteous deeds especially, the voluntary type. But during periods of illness and difficulty and especially at the time of death a Muslim should have nothing but hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, even if they have spent their life disobeying Him as this has specifically been commanded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2877.

## **Beautification**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During his last moments the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was wearing a simple and coarse Yemeni wrap and upper garment. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 345.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1999, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves beauty.

Islam does not prohibit a Muslim from dedicating energy, time and money in beautifying themselves as this can be considered fulfilling the rights of their body. This has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5199. But the key thing which differentiates acting in this manner to acting in a disliked or even sinful manner is when one is excessive, wasteful or extravagant when beautifying themselves. A good way to determine this is that beautifying oneself should never cause one to neglect fulfilling one's duty to Allah, the Exalted, or people which is not possible to fulfill without gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. And in reality correcting one's physical appearance so that they appear clean and smart is not expensive nor does it take much time or effort.

In addition, it is more important to understand that true beauty which Allah, the Exalted, loves is connected to internal beauty meaning, one's character. This beauty will endure in both worlds whereas one's outer beauty will eventually fade away with the passing of time. One should therefore prioritize obtaining this true beauty over external beauty by striving to gain and act on Islamic knowledge so that they eliminate any bad traits, such as envy, from their character and adopt good characteristics, such as generosity. This will aid one in fulfilling the rights of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, 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, and will aid them in fulfilling the rights of people, such as their dependents.



## Final Words

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. Some of the final words spoken by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, were on the importance of establishing the obligatory prayers. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2698.

Out of all the things he could have advised on he chose to mention the obligatory prayers. This alone should make one understand the importance of establishing the obligatory prayers. In fact, according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2618, the prayer is the thing which separates disbelief from belief. Muslims feel disconnected from Allah, the Exalted, even though they believe in Him and call upon Him. But as most of them have failed to establish their obligatory prayers they have been cut off from the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. Muslims must understand that establishing the obligatory prayers is the first barrier which protects them from misguidance. One only needs to reflect on the people they know who became misguided and in most cases the first step of their misguidance was failing to establish the obligatory prayers meaning, fulfilling them according to their etiquettes and conditions. When this barrier was destroyed then misguidance and committing major sins became easy. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 45:

*“...Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing...”*

Therefore, Muslims should act on the final words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by correctly establishing their obligatory prayers and encourage their dependents, such as their children, to do the same. It is best to encourage them before it becomes obligatory on them so that they become used to it by the time they reach this age. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 495.

Muslims should not make up lame excuses when failing this duty as Allah, the Exalted, does not burden someone with a duty they cannot fulfil. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

*“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...”*

## **Devotion to Allah, the Exalted**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. Before his illness the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that no Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, would be taken by death until he saw his resting place in Paradise and had been asked to make a choice between life and death. During his final moments he raised his sight to the sky and declared to the highest Companion meaning, to Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 343.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why their worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

It is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was transported by Allah, the Exalted, from this transient abode away into eternal ease in an elevated place on high, the most exalted and most splendid level of Paradise. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 79:

*“...it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station.”*

And chapter 93 Ad Duhaa, verses 4-5:

*“And the Hereafter is better for you than the first [life]. And your Lord is going to give you, and you will be satisfied.”*

That was after he had completed his mission that Allah, the Exalted, entrusted him with. He had given advice to his nation and had directed them to the very best in both worlds. He had warned them and restrained them from what would have harmed them here on Earth and in the Hereafter. Peace and blessings be upon him, the final Messenger of Allah, the Exalted, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

## Remaining Obedient

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away the people of Medina fell into great anxiety and confusion. Then Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, addressed the people in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He recited chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 144:

*“Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all...”*

And then said the following: “Allah, the Exalted, gave life to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and kept him alive until he had established the religion of Allah, the Exalted, made the orders of Allah, the Exalted, plain, delivered His message and fought in His cause. Thereafter Allah, the Exalted, took him to Himself and left you upon the path. And none shall perish except after clear signs and pain. Those whose Lord is Allah, the Exalted, should know that Allah, the Exalted, is alive and will never die. And those who worshipped the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, should know that he has died. Fear Allah, the Exalted, people! Hold fast to your religion and put your trust in your Lord. The religion of Allah, the Exalted, is established. The word of Allah, the Exalted, is complete. Allah, the Exalted, will help those who support Him and who revere His religion. The

Book of Allah, the Exalted, is amongst us. It is both the light and the cure. By it Allah, the Exalted, guided the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In it states what Allah, the Exalted, considers lawful and what is unlawful. We will not care who out of the creation descends upon us (to attack us). We will fight vigorously against those who oppose us just as we fought alongside the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 348-349.

## **Supporting the Truth**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away the people of Medina fell into great anxiety and confusion. At this time the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, agreed to elect Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. This has been discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 3667 and 3668.

An important lesson to learn from this event is the importance of supporting others in matters of good. It is clear from this and other Hadiths that Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, advised the people to choose someone else as their Caliph. In fact, he even named Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him. This was the perfect opportunity for Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him, to take the important role as the first representative of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without any arguments or problems. But Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, chose to do the right thing and help the Muslim nation by appointing the best person for the role. He did not worry that if he supported someone else his rank and social status would be reduced or he would be forgotten. In fact, his honour and social status only grew after this right choice.

Unfortunately, many Muslims and even Islamic institutions do not behave in this manner. They often only support those they have a relationship with instead of helping anyone who does something good. They behave as if their social status will be reduced if they support others in good things.



Some have fallen even lower and support their friends and relatives in bad things and fail to support strangers who are doing good. This is a major reason why the Islamic community has weakened over time. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were small in number but always fulfilled their duty by supporting each other in matters of good without worrying about anything else. Muslims must change their attitude and follow in their footsteps if they desire strength and respect in both worlds. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

## **Ambassadors of Islam**

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away the people of Medina fell into great anxiety and confusion. At this time the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, agreed to elect Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. In his first sermon he said the following: "O people, I have assumed authority even though I am not the best of you (this showing his modesty as the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were united in the belief of him being the best of them). If I do well, then help me. If I err, then set me straight. Honesty is loyalty; dishonesty is deceit. It is the weak among you who are powerful in my view until I can do away with their weakness. It is the strong among you who are weak until I can draw forth from them the right they owe people, if Allah, the Exalted, so wills it. No people abandons the fight for the cause of Allah, the Exalted, without Allah, the Exalted, afflicting them with degradation. Depravity never spreads over a people without Allah, the Exalted, making them experience calamity. Obey me for as long as I obey Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If I disobey Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then I should expect no obedience from you. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 355-356.

This incident reminds Muslims of the very important position they have been appointed to by Allah, the Exalted, namely, the ambassadors of Islam. It is extremely important for Muslims to fulfil this duty according to their potential. The best way to achieve this is by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with His choices. Islam spread across the entire globe because the

righteous predecessors took this duty very seriously. When they gained and acted on beneficial knowledge the outside world recognised the truthfulness of Islam through their behaviour. This caused countless people to enter the fold of Islam. Unfortunately, many Muslims today believe that showing others about Islam is merely in one's appearance, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf. This is only an aspect of representing Islam. The greatest part is by adopting the characteristics of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed in the Holy Quran and his traditions. Only with this attitude will the outside world observe the true nature of Islam. A Muslim should always remember that adopting an Islamic appearance while possessing characteristics which oppose the teachings of Islam only causes the outside world to disrespect Islam. They will be held accountable for this disrespect as they are the cause of it. A Muslim should therefore behave as a true ambassador of Islam by adopting the inward teachings of Islam as well as the outer appearance of Islam.

In addition, this important position should remind Muslims that they will be held accountable and questioned whether they fulfilled this role or not on Judgment Day. The same way a king would become angry at their diplomat and representative if they failed to fulfil their duty so will Allah, the Exalted, become angry with the Muslim who fails to fulfill their duty as an ambassador of Islam.

## **Conclusion**

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dedicated his life to guiding mankind towards the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. It is important for Muslims to follow in the footsteps of his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who remained steadfast on his teachings after his passing. All Muslims desire his company in the hereafter but they will only receive it if they follow his path. A person will not end up with their companion who journeyed along a specific path if they journey down a different path. Similarly, Muslims will not end up with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, if they walk a path other than his. This is only achieved by learning and acting on his traditions.

In addition, generally speaking, people become pleased when they inherit worldly things, such as wealth from others. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not leave behind wealth for people to inherit he, like the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, left behind knowledge. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 223. Therefore, Muslims must take a share of this inheritance if they desire to be his true heirs.

Finally, the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is the perfect example of how a Muslim must fulfil their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and to the creation. 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...”*

Therefore, Muslims must study and act on his life in order to fulfil their duties correctly. Success is not possible without this. Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 21:

*“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”*

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds and may peace and blessings be upon His final Messenger, Muhammad, his noble Family and Companions.

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