

# Inheriting Religion

**PodSeries - Vol 98**



**Achieve Noble Character**

**Inheriting Religion**

**ShaykhPod Books**

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Inheriting Religion

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## **Acknowledgements**

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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

The following short book discusses some aspects of Inheriting Religion from one's elders. This discussion is based on Chapter 42 Ash Shuraa, Verses 13-14 of the Holy Quran:

*“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him]. And they did not become divided until after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And if not for a word that preceded from your Lord [postponing the penalty] until a specified time, it would have been concluded between them. And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt.”*

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

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

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



## Inheriting Religion

### Chapter 42 – Ash Shuraa, Verses 13-14

﴿ شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي  
أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى  
أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا  
نَدَعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي  
إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ ﴾

﴿ وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ  
وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَفُضِيَ  
بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُورِثُوا الْكُتُبَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِي  
شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ﴾

*“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus -*

*to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him].*

*And they did not become divided until after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And if not for a word<sup>1</sup> that preceded from your Lord [postponing the penalty] until a specified time, it would have been concluded between them. And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt.”*

***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion...”***

This involves sincerity. In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards: Allah, the Exalted, His book, meaning, the Holy Quran, 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...”*

***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein...Allah chooses for Himself whom He will...”***

Generally speaking, the scholars from the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) living in Medina were fully aware of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as they had been described in their divine scriptures. Chapter 6 Al An'am, verse 20:

*“Those to whom We have given the Scripture recognize it [the Holy Quran] as they recognize their [own] sons...”*

And chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 146:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him [Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him] as they know their own sons...”*

It is important to note, that all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, came with the same religion, Islam – submission to Allah, the Exalted. The only thing they differed in were smaller issues but their core and

fundamental teachings were one in the same. As the Holy Quran was in harmony with the unaltered teachings of the previous divine scriptures there was no good reason why the people of the book should have rejected the Holy Quran and the one to whom it was given namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In fact, it was more appropriate for them to accept Islam as the scholars of the people of the book possessed knowledge which allowed them to recognize the truth easily.

In addition, the fact that the Holy Quran confirmed the unaltered teachings of the previous divine scriptures meant that when one rejected the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they were in essence rejecting their previous divine scriptures and their Holy Prophets, such as the Holy Prophet Musa, peace be upon them, also.

After all these signs verifying the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, many of the scholars of the people of the book still concealed and misinterpreted their divine teachings out of envy and fear of losing the social status and wealth they had obtained as leaders of their societies.

For example, 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.

***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein...”***

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.

***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein...”***

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.



***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein...”***

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.

***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein...”***

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.

***“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein...”***

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.

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The scholars from the children of Israel fell into disputes regarding the Torah as many of them desired leadership. They understood that the only way to achieve their goal was to separate from the main body so that they could create and lead their own faction. They achieved their goal by disputing over the Torah. As their attitude led to in-fighting, never-ending debates and contradictions in their religious teachings because of what they fabricated, the following generations turned away from religion out of aversion to their behaviour and contradictive religious teachings.

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.

Whoever conceals knowledge without a valid reason will be bridled with fire on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi,

number 2649. Therefore, muslims must share the useful knowledge their gain with others. It is simply foolish not to as this is one of the righteous deeds which will benefit a muslim even after they die. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 241. Those who hoarded knowledge were forgotten by history but those who shared it with others became known as the scholars and teachers of mankind.

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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.

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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.



***“...Difficult for those who associate others with Allāh is that to which you invite them...”***

The truth is that each worshipper of false gods only worships their own desires. Their deities are just a physical manifestation of their desires which they worship. This is obvious as a person who worships a deity in the form of an idol knows that the lifeless idol cannot command them to live their life a certain way so the worshiper themselves decides how they imagine their lifeless idol would like them to live. And this code of conduct is based on nothing but their own desires. Therefore, their worship of their desires is the root of their worship. The influential and rich are more drowned in this mentality as they are aware that accepting the truth meaning, Islam, will force them to live according to a specific code of conduct which will prevent them from acting on their misguided desires. They advise others to follow them as they do not wish to lose their influence and authority. This is why history as shown they were the first to reject and oppose the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them.

First of all, it is important to understand, that the major thing which separates a human from an animal is the fact that people live by a higher moral code. If people abandoned this and simply acted on their desires then they would be no difference between them and animals. In fact, people would be worse as they possess the higher level of thinking yet, still choose to live like animals.

Secondly, whether people want to admit it or not in reality, every person is a 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.

***“...Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him].”***

This verse 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.

***“...Allāh chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him].”***

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 when one strives in fulfilling the obligatory duties and performing voluntary righteous deeds He 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.

***“...Allāh chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him].”***

Allah, the Exalted, guides those who sincerely try to obey Him. But those who persistently disobey Him are left to wander blindly in misguidance. Therefore, it is vital for Muslims to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, as persistent disobedience leads to corruption of the spiritual heart and one's actions.

This is similar to a person who is warned by a judge not to behave in an unlawful way but after the person persists on this behaviour the judge gives the order for them to be locked up in prison. Therefore, Allah, the Exalted, has not wronged them they have only wronged themselves.

But it is important to note that as being abandoned in misguidance is a spiritual thing and therefore hidden to mankind, it is important for Muslims not to assume certain people have reached this point. Instead they should think positively about all people and therefore sincerely practically aid them in reforming their belief and behaviour.

Allah, the Exalted, has created human beings with the best possible capabilities. He gave them knowledge and power to differentiate between good and evil and even placed in them an innate inclination to like what is good and to dislike and avoid what is evil. This has been indicated in a



Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2389. Allah, the Exalted, has also granted mankind free will to choose between good and evil. This choice plays a role in enhancing or diminishing a person's natural faculties of reason. Chapter 91 Ash Shams, verses 9-10:

*“He has succeeded who purifies it [the spiritual heart – the greatest faculty of reason]. And he has failed who instills it [with corruption].”*

When a person chooses a path of goodness their natural potential develops and Allah, the Exalted, grants them further support in their efforts. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

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

But if one follows their evil desires and chooses the evil path gradually their spiritual hearts will become engrossed with darkness and no good will remain therein. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3334. If a person fails to repent then the main verse under discussion comes into effect. This person becomes so engrossed in evil that they find joy in their evil mentality and actions. They absolutely hate anything good.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 52, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that if one's spiritual heart is sound the whole body will become sound but if their spiritual heart is corrupt then the whole body will become corrupt.

First of all, this Hadith refutes the foolish belief where one claims to have a purified heart even though their speech and actions are bad. This is because what is inside will eventually manifest outwardly.

The purification of the spiritual heart is only possible when one eliminates evil characteristics from themselves and replaces them with good characteristics discussed in Islamic teachings. This is only possible when one learns and acts on Islamic teachings so that they can sincerely 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. Behaving in this manner will lead to a purified spiritual heart. This purification will then reflect in the outward limbs of the body, such as one's tongue and eyes. Meaning, they will only use their organs in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This is in fact a sign showing the love Allah, the Exalted, has for His righteous servant according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502.

It is important to note, that this purification will guide one through all worldly difficulties successfully so that they achieve both worldly and religious success.

***“...And if not for a word that preceded from your Lord [postponing the penalty] until a specified time, it would have been concluded between them...”***

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.”*

***“...And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt.”***

A root cause of this doubt is ignorance. Muslims must gain and act on religious knowledge themselves so that they guide the next generation to do the same.

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.

***“...And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt.”***

A root cause of this doubt is ignorance as this leads to weakness of faith. Muslims must gain and act on religious knowledge themselves so that they guide the next generation to do the same.

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 desires. 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.



***“...And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt.”***

This can only be prevented when the older generation leads by example.

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 and guide the next generation 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]...”*

***“...And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt.”***

This also occurs when one blindly imitates their forefathers instead of gaining and acting on religious knowledge in order to obtain certainty of faith.

A person should utilize their common sense and choose a way of life based on evidence and clear signs and not blindly imitate others like cattle. Behaving in this manner leads to deviation.

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.

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A person should utilize their common sense and choose a way of life based on evidence and clear signs and not blindly imitate others like cattle. Behaving in this manner leads to deviation. Blind imitation is even disliked within Islam.

A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4049, indicates the importance of not blindly imitating others in accepting Islam, such as one's family, without gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge so that one surpasses blind imitation and obeys Allah, the Exalted, while truly recognising his Lordship and their own servanthood. This is in fact the purpose of mankind. Chapter 51 Adh Dhariyat, verse 56:

*“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.”*

How can one truly worship someone they do not even recognize? Blind imitation is acceptable for children but adults must follow in the footsteps of the righteous predecessors by truly understanding the purpose of their

creation through knowledge. Ignorance is the very reason why the Muslims who fulfil their obligatory duties still feel disconnected from Allah, the Exalted. This recognition aids a Muslim to behave as a true servant of Allah, the Exalted, throughout the day not just during the five daily obligatory prayers. Only through this will Muslims fulfil true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. And this is the weapon which overcomes all difficulties a Muslim faces during their life. If they do not possess this they will face difficulties without gaining reward. In fact, it will only lead to more difficulties in both worlds. Performing the obligatory duties through blind imitation may fulfil the obligation but it will not safely guide one through every difficulty in order to reach the proximity of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. In fact, in most cases blind imitation will lead to one eventually abandoning their obligatory duties. This Muslim will only fulfil their duties in times of difficulty and turn away from them in times of ease or vice versa.

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