

Loving

Allah

(SWT)

PodSeries - Vol 193



Achieve Noble Character

Loving Allah (SWT)

ShaykhPod Books

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

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

Compiler's Notes

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

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

Introduction

The following short book discusses the concept of Loving Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This discussion is based on Chapter 9 At Tawbah, Verses 23-24 of the Holy Quran:

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

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.

Loving Allah (SWT)

Chapter 9 – At Tawbah, Verses 23-24

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا ءَابَاءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ
عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنكُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ أُقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا
وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ؕ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

﴿٢٤﴾

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers.

Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people."”

“O you who have believed...”

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

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

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

number 5421, that whoever illegally takes someone else's property, through a false oath, even if it is as small as a twig of a tree will go to Hell.

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

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives...are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

This verse does not mean a Muslim cannot befriend a non-Muslim as this particular verse refers to the non-Muslims in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Becoming intimately friendly to a non-Muslim who desired the destruction of Islam was especially dangerous at that time as the non-Muslims would spy on the Muslim community in order to gain vital intelligence which could aid them in their fight against Islam.

Generally speaking, the Holy Quran clearly advises that Allah, the Exalted, does not forbid befriending non-Muslims. Chapter 60 Al Mumtahanah, verse 8:

“Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.”

In reality, the main verse warns Muslims not to befriend those who direct them away from the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This in reality can apply to both Muslims and non-Muslims. As warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4833, a Muslim is on the religion of their friend. This means a person will adopt the characteristics, good or bad, which their companions possess.

In addition, treating all people kindly, Muslims and non-Muslims, is the characteristic of a true Muslim and true believer. A Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, advises that a true Muslim is the one who keeps other people, including non-Muslims, safe from their evil speech and actions. And a true believer does not harm people or their possessions through their speech or actions. So this verse warns Muslims to accompany the pious as they will direct them towards the mercy and obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to understand that there is a difference between healthy social conduct with others and deep friendship with others. Deep friendship can lead one to compromising on their faith out of love for their companion whereas, good social conduct with others will never take one to this level. Therefore, Muslims must adopt good character and manners towards everyone but reserve deep friendship for those who will encourage them towards the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This, only a Muslim can do for another Muslim. A non-Muslim on the other hand, will either directly or indirectly encourage a Muslim to disobey Allah, the Exalted, even if they do not intend this. This is because a non-Muslim lives by a

separate code of conduct than a Muslim. And the behaviour which is acceptable to a non-Muslim may not be acceptable in the eyes of Islam.

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives...are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

These verses indicate the importance of good companionship and avoiding bad companions.

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.”

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives...are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

This indicates that a muslim’s relationship with others must be based on their mutual obedience to Allah, the Exalted. It should not be based on blood or anything else.

With the passing of time people often 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...”

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives...are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

This indicates that a muslim’s relationship with others must be based on their mutual obedience to Allah, the Exalted. It should not be based on blood or anything else. Chapter 80 Abasa, verses 34-37:

“On the Day a man will flee from his brother. And his mother and his father. And his wife and his children. For every man, that Day, will be a matter adequate for him.”

This is when each person will flee from their relatives on Judgment Day out of concern for their own wellbeing. It is important for muslims to understand that Islam does not advise them to abandon their relatives as upholding the ties of kinship is an extremely important aspect of Islam. But it encourages them to put everyone in their rightful place within their life. This means that they should fulfil the rights of others without going overboard meaning, without compromising on the duties set by Allah, the Exalted, and following the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Unfortunately, some go too far and abandon these more important duties out of misplaced love and loyalty to their relatives.

Some even strive to obtain unlawful provision and commit sins for the sake of pleasing their relatives. This great event clearly shows the downside of doing this. A muslim should always support others especially, their relatives in what is good but never support them in bad things irrespective of how close their bond with them maybe as there is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

In addition, this great event will occur between the people who, in most cases, share a deeper connection than a person does with their friends. So if this is the outcome of relatives on Judgment Day can one imagine the outcome of friends? Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 28:

"Oh, woe to me! I wish I had not taken that one as a friend."

The only way people can truly benefit each other in this world or in the next is when they prioritise the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience, over all else and aid each other in this ultimate goal. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

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

“O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives...are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

Islam teaches muslims that they too should adopt this mentality and 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.

“Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives...are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

When a muslim observes the teachings of Islam they will find that certain worldly blessings have been described in a positive way but in other places it has been described in a negative way. This is because in reality most things are not innately good or bad. What makes them good or bad is whether they take one towards the obedience and pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, or not. For example, the Holy Quran has described a spouse as a way of finding tranquillity, mercy and affection. Chapter 30 Ar Rum, verse 21:

“And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy...”

But the same Holy Quran has also warned that a spouse and children can be enemies to a muslim as well. Chapter 64 At Taghabun, verse 14:

“O you who have believed, indeed, among your spouses and your children are enemies to you, so beware of them...”

This indicates that they become a source of tranquillity when they encourage one towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. But one's family can become an enemy to them if they divert them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

So muslims should regularly assess and judge the worldly blessings they possess in order to determine whether they encourage them towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, or divert them from it. And if necessary take steps in order to benefit themselves in both worlds. Whoever does this self-assessment regularly during their lives will find that their final judgment on the Day of Resurrection will be easy as they remained obedient to Allah, the Exalted. But if they fail to do this self-assessment they will get lost in the material world and fail to prepare for the hereafter adequately which will lead to a difficult accountability and a potential severe punishment.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

The proof that one’s sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, supersedes everything else is when they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

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.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

The proof that one’s sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, supersedes everything else is when they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. One can adopt this correct attitude when they understand the purpose of these blessings.

Every worldly blessing a muslim possesses is only a means which should aid them in reaching the hereafter safely. It is not an end in itself. For example, wealth is a means one should use in order to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, fulfilling their necessities and the necessities of their dependents. It is not an end or an ultimate goal in itself.

This not only aids a muslim in maintaining their focus on the hereafter but it also aids them whenever they lose worldly blessings. When a muslim treats each worldly blessing, such as a child, as a means to please Allah, the Exalted, and reach the hereafter safely then losing it will not have such a detrimental impact on them. They may become sad, which is an acceptable emotion, but they will not become grieved which leads to impatience and other mental problems, such as depression. This is because they firmly

believe the worldly blessing they possessed was only a means so losing it does not cause a loss in the ultimate goal namely, Paradise, the loss of which is disastrous. Therefore, still possessing and concentrating on the ultimate goal will prevent them from becoming grieved.

In addition, they will understand that just like the thing they lost was only a means they firmly believe they will be provided with another means to reach and fulfil their ultimate goal by Allah, the Exalted. This will also prevent them from grieving. Whereas, the one who believes their worldly blessing is the end instead of a means will experience severe grief when losing it as their whole purpose and objective has been lost. This grief will lead to depression and other mental issues.

To conclude, muslims should treat each blessing they possess as a means to reach the hereafter safely not as an end in itself. This is how one can possess things without being possessed by them. This is how they can keep worldly things in their hands and not in their hearts.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

The proof that one’s sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, supersedes everything else is when they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. One can adopt this correct attitude when they understand the realities 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.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

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

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

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

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2322, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that everything in this material world is cursed except the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, what is connected to it, the knowledgeable person and the student of knowledge.

The remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, encompasses all the levels of remembrance. Namely, internal silent remembrance, which includes correcting one’s intention so that they only act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Remembering Allah, the Exalted, via the tongue and the most important is practically remembering Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

Anything which leads to the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, includes the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, such as striving in the material world in order to fulfill one's necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. In reality, this includes any action which appears worldly or religious as long as it involves the obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

Both the knowledgeable person and the student of knowledge are the only people in reality who will obey Allah, the Exalted, correctly as this is not possible to achieve without knowledge. An ignorant person disobeys Allah, the Exalted, without even realizing it as they are unaware of what counts as a sin or a righteous deed. In some cases, one may even believe they are strictly obeying Him even though they are far from it.

To conclude, in reality nothing is really cursed in the material world in itself. It is how a thing is used which determines if it is cursed or not. For example, if wealth is used correctly according to the teachings of Islam then it is a great blessing in both worlds. But if it is misused or hoarded then it will become a curse for its owner in both worlds. This can be applied to all things in this world.

“Say, “If your...dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

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.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh...then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

Love of Allah, the Exalted, is rooted in sincerity to 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.

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.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than...His Messenger...then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

Love of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is rooted in sincerity to 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.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than...striving in His cause then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

This verse 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.

“Say, “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than...striving in His cause then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.””

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.”

“...then wait until Allāh executes His command...”

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 Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.”

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.

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