

Reflecting on the Creation

PodSeries - Vol 162



Achieve Noble Character

Reflecting on the Creation

ShaykhPod Books

Published by ShaykhPod Books, 2023

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Reflecting on the Creation

First edition. April 11, 2023.

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Acknowledgements

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

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the entire ShaykhPod family, especially our little star, Yusuf, whose continued support and advice has inspired the development of ShaykhPod Books.

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 importance of Reflecting on the Creation. This discussion is based on Chapter 3 Alee Imran, Verses 190-192 of the Holy Quran:

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.””

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.

Reflecting on the Creation

Chapter 3 - Alee Imran, Verses 190-192

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ

وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجْتَهُ، وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أَنْصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.

Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.”

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding...and [they] give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]...””

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 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.

The Earth was created in a balanced way so that the weak branches and shoots of seeds can penetrate through it in order to provide crops for the creation yet the same ground is tough enough to withstand heavy buildings being built on top of it. This balanced quality cannot be a random thing and therefore indicates a Creator.

Similarly, the water cycle, which involves the evaporation of water from the ocean into the atmosphere which is then condensed in order to produce rain, is perfectly balanced so that the creation can continue living on Earth.

Allah, the Exalted, has subjugated the clouds so that they send down rain in specific places and times so that crops can be grown and harvested for the benefit of the creation. Many areas are such that they have no source of water except the rain since their wells have either too little water or are too deep. The rainwater has to be used for drinking, bathing and watering fields. The people of these areas remain hopeful of rain. Even those areas which depend on fresh water and rivers for irrigation need rainfall. This is because rainwater falls upon the mountains, freezes and melts to form rivers.

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...”

There are many such examples within the Heavens and Earth which clearly indicate the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted.

Finally, these verses can mean that those who reflect on the creation of the Heavens and the Earth understand that the changes which occur within them, such as the Sun rising and setting, must have a Changer namely, Allah, the Exalted. That Changer must have the power to achieve it in perfection which is obvious when one observes the perfect balance and timings of the creations within the universe. That Changer therefore can send Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. If He sends a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, whose truthfulness is indicated by a single miracle, the greatest of which is the Holy Quran, then no one has an excuse to reject Allah, the Exalted.

“Who remember Allāh while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides...”

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6407, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the difference between the person who remembers Allah, the Exalted, and the one who does not is like a living person compared to a dead person.

It is important for Muslims who desire to create a strong connection with Allah, the Exalted, so that they can overcome all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter successfully to remember Allah, the Exalted, as much as possible. Put simply, the more they remember Him the more they will achieve this vital goal.

This is achieved by practically acting on the three levels of the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The first level is to remember Allah, the Exalted, internally and silently. This includes correcting one's intention so that they only act in order to please Allah, the Exalted. The second is by remembering Allah, the Exalted, through one's tongue. But the highest and most effective way of strengthening one's bond with Allah, the Exalted, is practically remembering Him with one's limbs. This is achieved by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This requires one to gain and act on Islamic knowledge which in turn is the root of all good and success in both worlds.

Those who remain on the first two levels will receive reward depending on their intention but they are unlikely to increase the strength of their faith and piety unless they move to the third and highest level of the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted.

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth...”

A branch of this is reflecting on one's own life and actions meaning, self-reflection, as a person and their actions are part of the creation.

Merely performing worship will not raise someone to the highest levels of faith. Muslims can only reach this level by purifying their inner beings. This is achieved by removing the negative characteristics they possess and replacing them with good characteristics. But this is only achieved through serious reflection and self-assessment.

When one recognises their own reality this will encourage them to live like a servant and fulfil the purpose of their creation. This will lead them to recognising Allah, the Exalted, as their Lord, which is the ultimate goal. Chapter 51 Adh Dhariyat, verse 56:

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

This self-assessment is vital for triggering one to take the steps needed to purify their character and soul of evil characteristics which is the path of success in both worlds. Some are so lost in the material world they never perform this important deed and therefore decades pass by without them changing one single bit. Muslims must use the time of strength they have been given in order to self-assess and change for the

better before they reach the final stage of weakness. At this point they will desire to change but they will not possess the intelligence or strength to do so. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6412.

One only needs to turn the pages of history to observe those who were given great power and wealth but eventually a time came when their moment of strength ran out and because of their persistent disobedience they were destroyed.

Those who used their moments of strength in the correct way by pleasing Allah, the Exalted, will be blessed by Him in such a way that even after departing from this world they will still be honoured by society.

As the majority of Muslims do not understand the Arabic language an abundant amount of worship will not trigger this inner purification. One can only reach it by reflecting on this material world, death, the grave and Hell. Because of this a single moment of reflection can become better than sixty years of voluntary worship.

Those who live without wisdom or reflection habitually make mistakes which only lead to constant stress. It is these people who lead an aimless life with no higher aspirations and move through each day without understanding their true purpose.

The pious always take time out of their day to reflect on their aims, what actions they have performed and whether they have pleased Allah, the exalted, or not. This mentality will ensure that one avoids sins, performs righteous deeds and if they happen to commit sins to sincerely repent. This mentality fits the advice given by the second rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Omar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him, which is recorded in Imam Asfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, number 98. He advised that one should judge their own actions before someone else judges them namely, Allah, the exalted, on the Day of Judgement.

This self-assessment is the key which inspires one to sincerely repent and change for the better. This is the best stage compared to the stage where one only realises their mistakes when another points it out to them. But even this stage requires one to possess good friends and relatives who are wise and sincerely concerned over their eternal welfare instead of only being concerned with the material world. A truly blessed Muslim is the one who possesses these types of relatives and friends who aid them to adopt piety.

Reflecting at the start of one's day also ensures a person prioritises their daily tasks and saves time by avoiding those tasks which should be delayed.

The following verse describes the state of successful Muslims. They reflect on and are deeply affected by the teachings of Islam and strive to implement them in their lives. If one is affected in this way they should be grateful to Allah, the Exalted, and show no signs of pride. But if one is not affected in this way they must repent and change before it is too late. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 83:

“And when they hear what has been revealed to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of what they have recognized of the truth...”

A lack of self-reflection has caused Muslims to become lost in the material world even though Islamic knowledge is more readily available than it ever was. Voluntary worship will only take one so far but to reach the height of faith they must reflect and assess their character. This will inspire them to abandon their evil traits and replace them with good ones. The vital ingredient needed to stimulate this self-assessment and reflection is Islamic knowledge which must be obtained from a reliable source. This is one of the reasons the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, that obtaining this type of knowledge is obligatory on all Muslims.

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You..."”

It is important for a Muslim to be observant in their daily life and avoid being too self-absorbed in their own worldly matters so that they become heedless over the things which are occurring around them. This is an important quality to possess as it is an excellent way to strengthen one's faith which in turn helps one to remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, at all times. For example, when a Muslim observes a sick person they should not only aid them by whatever means they possess, even if it is only a supplication, but they should reflect on their own health and understand that they too will eventually lose their good health either by an illness, ageing or even death. This should inspire them to be grateful for their good health and show this through their actions by taking advantage of their good health in both worldly and religious matters which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

When they observe the death of a rich person they should not only feel sad for the deceased and their family but realise that one day which is unknown to them they will die also. They should understand that just like the rich person was abandoned by their wealth, fame and family at their grave so will they too be left only with their deeds in their grave. This will encourage them to prepare for their grave and the hereafter.

This attitude can and should be applied to all things one observes. A Muslim should learn a lesson from everything around them which has been advised in the Holy Quran. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 191:

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.””

Those who behave in this manner will strengthen their faith on a daily basis whereas those who are too self-absorbed in their worldly life will remain heedless which may lead them to their destruction.

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You..."”

Generally speaking, the Holy Quran clearly declared the purpose of mankind in chapter 51 Adh Dhariyat, verse 56:

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

Before one can worship Allah, the Exalted, they must first recognise Him as it is not possible to obey someone without knowledge. In addition, people must first learn how to worship Allah, the Exalted, before they can fulfil this task. Therefore, worship is followed by knowledge. This is why in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared seeking useful knowledge a duty on all Muslims. Without knowledge one will never be able to worship Allah, the Exalted, correctly. Few good deeds performed with knowledge are far superior to many good deeds performed incorrectly because of ignorance.

As Allah, the Exalted, is the One who created mankind no one has the right to be served and worshipped except Him. If an employer easily dismisses their employee for abandoning the duty they have been hired for, how can it be correct to abandon serving and worshipping Allah, the Exalted, when He alone created and sustains the creation? All of mankind have been granted free will and the ability to obey and worship Allah, the Exalted. So each person must decide whether they desire to

fulfil their purpose of creation thereby receiving eternal reward or reject it and face punishment in both worlds. The same way a device, such as a mobile phone, which does not fulfil its primary purpose is discarded people may well be discarded on the Day of Judgement into Hell for failing to fulfil their primary purpose of existence.

It is important to note, that worship refers to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This obedience must encompass every part of one's life and body, such as their tongue. It includes a person's duty towards Allah, the Exalted, such as offering the prayer and treating the creation with kindness.

Those who obey Allah, the Exalted, will be given the best rewards while those who disobey Him will receive the worst punishment in this world and the next. In a divine Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2466, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, narrates from Allah, the Exalted, who declares that if one busies themselves in worshipping Him, through sincere obedience, He will fill their heart with richness and remove their poverty. But if they turn away from His worship and obedience Allah, the Exalted, will fill their life with problems and not remove their poverty.

It is important to note, that Allah, the Exalted, does not need the creation in anyway whatsoever. As clearly mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6572, people only benefit themselves with their good deeds as it raises their ranks. And they only harm themselves with their sins as they will be held accountable for them. The infinite status of

Allah, the Exalted, does not change at all irrespective of if the entire creation worshipped Him or not. Allah, the Exalted, is the sole Creator and sole Provider. It is people who are completely and utterly in need of Him. Whoever understands this and sincerely obeys Allah, the Exalted, will fulfil the purpose of their creation and will therefore be given an eternal reward.

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You..."”

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

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

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

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You...””

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

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

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

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

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

“...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You...””

This verse also indicates the importance of strengthening one’s faith through knowledge instead of believing through blind imitation.

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.

“...exalted are You...”

Allah, the Exalted, is the One who is sanctified and free of all possible flaws and deficiencies and the One who deserves to be described with every attribute of perfection.

A Muslim should plead to Allah, the Exalted, to sanctify and purify them of all their sins and bestow them with attributes He loves. A Muslim should therefore actively purify their body from sins. Purify themselves from following evil desires. Purify their wealth by not seeking it from doubtful or unlawful sources. Purify their minds from heedlessness of the divine law. Purify their intention so they only act for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, even in worldly deeds as these are recorded as good deeds for example, providing for one's family in a lawful manner. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, Number 4006.

“...then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him...”

This supplication reminds Muslims that true lasting success is in avoiding Hell and achieving Paradise meaning, it lies in the hereafter not in this material world. This is obvious as true success endures whereas any worldly success achieved never endures even if it is obtained and maintained in a lawful way. But those who compromise on the teachings of Allah, the Exalted, while obtaining worldly success will find that it eventually becomes a curse and the source of their misery. Even though, achieving lawful worldly success is not unlawful yet a Muslim must understand that it will ultimately fade away with this world and it will not benefit them in the hereafter. The person who ends up in Hell has failed even if they were regarded the most successful person in the world. And the one who obtains Paradise is truly successful even if they did not achieve worldly success during their lives on Earth.

“...then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.”

The thing to remember is that in reality each person who will end up in Hell takes the fire, which they will encounter in Hell, with them from this world in the form of their sins. When a Muslim engraves this reality into their mind they will observe each sin, major or minor, as a piece of unbearable fire. The same way a person avoids fire in this world they should avoid sins as in reality sins are like hidden fire which will be shown to them in the hereafter.

In addition, a Muslim should not live in heedlessness and believe they can simply claim love for Allah, the Exalted, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, without supporting this verbal declaration with actions. If this was true then the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would not have strived so hard in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and they undoubtedly understood Islam and Judgment Day better than the people after them. Simply put, a declaration of love without actions will not save one from Hell. In fact, it has been made clear that some Muslims will enter Hell on Judgment Day. The Muslim who abandons acting on Islamic teachings should understand that their attitude may cause them to lose their faith before their death so that they enter Judgment Day as a non-Muslim, which is the greatest loss.

The same way one would not enter a battle without armour and a shield a Muslim should not enter Judgment Day without the armour and shield

of righteous deeds. Otherwise, the same way the soldier who has no protection will most likely be harmed so will a Muslim who reaches Judgment Day without the protection provided by the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. A Muslim should remember that the luxuries and pleasures of the material world they enjoyed will not make them feel better if they end up in Hell. In fact, it will only make them feel worse.

“...then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.”

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2447, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that oppression will become a darkness on the Day of Judgment.

This is vital to avoid as those who find themselves plunged in darkness are unlikely to find their way to Paradise. Only those who will be provided a guiding light will be able to do this successfully.

Oppression can take many forms. The first type is when one fails to fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, and refrain from His prohibitions. Even though this has no effect on the infinite status of Allah, the Exalted, it will cause the person to become submerged into darkness in both worlds. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, whenever a person commits a sin a black spot is etched on their spiritual heart. The more they sin the more their heart will become encompassed by darkness. This will prevent them from accepting and following true guidance in this world which will ultimately lead to darkness in the next world. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

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

The next type of oppression is when one oppresses themselves by not fulfilling the trust they have been granted by Allah, the Exalted, in the form of their body and other worldly blessings they possess. The greatest of which is one's faith. This must be protected and strengthened through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

The final type of oppression is when one mistreats others. Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive these sins until the oppressor's victim forgives them first. As people are not so merciful this is unlikely to happen. Then justice will be established on Judgment Day where the oppressor's righteous deeds will be given to their victim and if necessary the victim's sins will be given to the oppressor. This may lead to the oppressor being hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. One should therefore treat others how they wish to be treated by people. A Muslim should avoid all forms of oppression if they desire a guiding light in this world and in the next.

“...then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.”

It is important to learn that no matter how much physical or social strength a person has a day will certainly come when they face the consequences of their actions. In most cases, this occurs during their life where the actions of a person leads them to trouble, such as prison and eventually they will face the consequences of their actions in the hereafter as well. This applies to all people not just leaders.

A Muslim should therefore never mistreat others, such as their relatives. They should learn a lesson from the tyrannical leaders of history who were greater in strength than them yet, a day certainly came when their strength did not benefit them and they faced the consequences of their evil deeds. Social influence and strength are fickle things as they quickly pass from person to person thereby, never remaining with anyone for long. Therefore, a Muslim who possesses such strength should use it in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, by benefiting themselves and others. But if they abuse their authority then they will eventually face a punishment which no one can protect them from.

In addition, it is important not to abuse one's authority as it may cause them to be hurled into Hell on Judgment Day. Every oppressor will have to give their righteous deeds to their victims and if necessary take the sins of their victims until justice is established. This will cause many oppressors to be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a Muslim should never forget to hold themselves accountable for their deeds. Those who do will avoid disobeying Allah, the Exalted, and harming others. But those who do not judge themselves will continue disobeying Allah, the Exalted, and harming others heedlessly not knowing that in actual fact they are only harming themselves. But when they realize this fact it will be too late for them to escape punishment.

“...and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.”

It is important for Muslims to understand a simple yet profound lesson namely, they will never succeed in this world or the next in worldly or religious matters through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Since the dawn of time to this age and till the end of time no person has ever achieved true success nor will they ever through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious when one turns the pages of history. Therefore, when a Muslim is in a situation which they desire to achieve a positive and successful outcome from they should never choose to disobey Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of how tempting or easy it may seem to be. Even if one is advised by their close friends and relatives to do so as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. And in truth they will never be able to protect them from Allah, the Exalted, and His punishment in either this world or the next. The same way Allah, the Exalted, grants success to those who obey Him He removes a successful outcome from those who disobey Him even if this removal takes time to witness. A Muslim should not be fooled as this will occur sooner or later. The Holy Quran has made it extremely clear that an evil plan or action only encompasses the doer even if this punishment is delayed. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

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

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

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