

Defining Success & Failure

PodSeries - Vol 54



Achieve Noble Character

Defining Success & Failure

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Table of Contents

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Compiler's Notes](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Defining Success & Failure](#)

[Over 400 Free eBooks on Good Character](#)

[Other ShaykhPod Media](#)

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

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

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

Compiler's Notes

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

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

Introduction

The following short book discusses how a person must define success and failure in this world. This discussion is based on Chapter 6 Al An'am, Verses 42-45 of the Holy Quran:

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us]. Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves? But their hearts became hardened, and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing. So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated. And praise to Allah, Lord of the worlds.”

Striving to act on the correct definitions of worldly success and failure 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.

Defining Success & Failure Chapter 6 Al An'am, Verses 42-45

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضُرَّعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِن قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ

مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا

فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us].

Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves? But their hearts became hardened, and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.

So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair.

So the people that committed wrong were eliminated. And praise to Allah, Lord of the worlds.”

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you...”

The purpose of sending Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, is for them to be sincerely obeyed and followed. 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.

“...then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us]. Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...”

In a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 492, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a muslim does not face any type of physical difficulty, irrespective of its size, such as a prick of a thorn, or any emotional difficulty, such as stress, except Allah, the Exalted, erases their sins because of it.

This refers to minor sins as major sins require sincere repentance. This outcome occurs when a muslim remains patient from the onset of the difficulty until the end of their life. This is important to understand as many people believe they can complain initially and then show patience after. This is not true patience instead it is only acceptance which occurs with the passing of time. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1870. In addition, patience needs to be shown throughout one's life as a person can destroy their reward by showing impatience down the line.

A muslim should remember that it is far better to have their minor sins erased through these difficulties than to reach the Day of Judgment while still possessing them. A muslim should constantly repent and strive to perform righteous deeds in order to erase their minor sins. And if they encounter any physical or emotional difficulties they should remain patient hoping for their minor sins to be erased and to obtain an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

“...then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us]. Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...”

It is important for a muslim to understand a key truth namely, nothing in creation occurs without a wise reason even if people do not observe this wisdom immediately. A muslim should treat everything which occurs, whether they are in times of ease or difficulty, as a message in a bottle. They should not get too caught up in assessing and examining the bottle as it is merely a messenger which delivers the important message. This occurs when muslims either exult over the good things which occur thereby becoming heedless to the message within the good thing. Or they become grieved during difficulties thereby becoming too distracted to understand the message within the difficulty. They should instead concentrate on following the advice of the Holy Quran and approach each situation in a balanced way. Chapter 57 Al Hadid, verse 23:

“In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you...”

This verse does not prohibit being happy or sad in different situations as this is a part of human nature. But it advises a balanced approach whereby one avoids extreme emotions namely, exultant which is excessive happiness or grief which is excessive sadness. This balanced approach will allow one to focus their mind on the more important message inside the bottle meaning, inside the situation whether it is a situation of ease or difficulty. Through assessing, understanding and acting on the hidden message a muslim can improve their worldly and religious life for the better. Sometimes the message will be a wakeup call

to turn back to Allah, the Exalted, before their time runs out. Sometimes it will be a way of raising their rank. Other times a way of erasing their sins and sometimes a reminder not to attach themselves to the temporal material world and the things in it. Without this assessment one will merely journey through events without improving their worldly or religious life.

“...then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us]. Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...”

Often when muslims receive blessings especially, beyond their need, it distracts them from the hereafter and instead focuses their minds on this material world. So in this respect, the wisdom behind a difficulty is to refocus a muslim's attention on what is truly important which is preparing for the hereafter. This is like a person who is so preoccupied with their phone that they cross a road without seeing an oncoming vehicle. Another person violently pulls them away from the oncoming car which causes them distress yet, saves their life. Even though being pulled violently causes distress and even pain but it is only done in order to refocus their attention on the life threatening danger namely, the oncoming car. Similarly, a muslim faces emotional and physical difficulties in order to refocus their attention on more important things such as the hereafter. If a muslim was left to only face times of ease without difficulties there is no doubt that they would become lost in enjoying the excess of this material world. This neglect in the long run would be disastrous for them. So they face a small difficulty in order to protect them from greater difficulties namely, the difficulties of the hereafter. Therefore, muslims should remember this truth every time they face a difficulty so that they leave the difficulty refocused on more important things and act correctly over this blessing instead of demonstrating impatience and heedlessness to this vital benefit. This is in fact one of the biggest favours of Allah, the Exalted.

“...then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us]. Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...”

The humility in these verses refers to sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, as this alone leads to peace and safety in both worlds. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 28:

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

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.

“Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves? But their hearts became hardened...”

The corruption and hardness of the spiritual heart is an extremely important matter which has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 52. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that when the spiritual heart becomes corrupt then the whole body becomes corrupt. This corruption is then reflected in one's speech and actions. Similarly, the Holy Quran has highlighted the importance of a soft and sound heart by advising that one will not derive benefit from their possessions or relatives on Judgment Day unless they possess a sound spiritual heart. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verses 88-89:

“The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children. But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.”

The one with a hard spiritual heart can be described as a person who rejects the truth when it is presented to them believing they are superior in knowledge. They lack submission and the fear of Allah, the Exalted, which leads to abandoning good deeds, committing sins, excessive love and striving for the material world while remaining heedless to preparing for the eternal hereafter. The hard hearted are easily influenced by the Devil into committing sins and rejecting good deeds. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 53:

“[That is] so He may make what Satan throws in [i.e., asserts] a trial for those within whose hearts is disease and those hard of heart...”

Two specific blameworthy characteristics are adopted by the one who possesses a hard spiritual heart. They intentionally misinterpret divine scriptures in order to fulfil their own desires such as obtaining fame. They criticise those who strive to adhere to the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as they desire people to follow their thinking and love for the material world. The second is that they cherry pick verses and Hadiths which suit their desires. They label those who strive to adopt and act on all verses and Hadiths as extremists thereby making their own attitude seem pleasing to others. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 13:

“So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hardened. They distort words from their [proper] places [i.e., usages] and have forgotten a portion of that of which they were reminded. And you will still observe deceit among them, except a few of them...”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned that those who talk excessively without mentioning Allah, the Exalted, are prone to adopting a spiritual hard heart. The one who possesses a hard spiritual heart is furthest from Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2411.

As mentioned earlier those who abandon the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience, will be cursed with a hard heart. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 13:

“So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hardened...”

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2305, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who laughs excessively will become hard hearted. It is important to understand this does not mean one cannot smile as this has been classified as an act of charity by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1970. Laughing excessively causes one to adopt a mentality whereby they only discuss funny issues. This causes one to avoid serious issues such as death and Judgment Day. If one avoids these important issues how can they prepare for them? A lack of preparation will lead to one's spiritual heart becoming hard.

Some say over eating can cause hardness of the spiritual heart. This is because over eating causes one to become lazy. Laziness leads to a reduction in good deeds which can cause the spiritual heart to become hard.

As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3334, when a

person sins a black spot is etched on their spiritual heart. If the number of sins increases then this blackness increases which leads to a hard spiritual heart. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

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

This is why it has been said persistently sinning can cause the spiritual heart to die.

It is important for muslims to strive to soften their heart as it leads to its purification. As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, when the spiritual heart is purified all the limbs of the body become purified also. This purification will encourage one to perform righteous deeds and abandon sins for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

“...and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.”

It is important to understand that no matter how much religious knowledge one obtains or how much worship and righteous deeds they perform they will never be safe from the attacks and traps of the Devil. This is because the Devil attacks each person according to how much knowledge they possess and how much righteous deeds they perform. For example, he will try to convince the muslim who is strict in offering their obligatory prayers not to offer them in congregation at the Mosque or by convincing them to delay their obligatory prayers beyond their starting times as he knows he will not be able to convince them to completely abandon the obligatory prayers. Whereas, in respect to the muslim who is struggling to establish their obligatory prayers he will attempt to convince them that they are too difficult to establish therefore they should only offer them when they are completely free. He tries to convince those who perform many voluntary righteous deeds not to gain and act on Islamic knowledge in order to improve their character so that they continue to destroy their good deeds through bad characteristics such as, lying and backing.

The Devil aims to prevent a person from reaching a higher level if he cannot convince them to fall in rank through disobedience to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, muslims should always be on guard against his attacks and traps by persistently striving to increase in rank, improve their character and avoid acts of disobedience which is all achieved by gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

“...and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.”

This verse is connected to chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 38:

“...And Satan had made pleasing to them their deeds and averted them from the path...”

As mentioned in this verse the Devil fools people into committing sins and making wrong decisions by beautifying the incorrect choice for them. This occurs in situations when a person must make a choice between two or more options. It also occurs when the choice is between the lawful and unlawful and even between two lawful options. If the Devil cannot guide someone to a sin then he attempts to guide them to the inferior option, even if it is lawful, hoping it will lead to some sort of a sin, such as a person complaining about life and destiny. The Devil beautifies a choice by causing one to focus on its apparent benefit to such a degree that they lose focus on the bigger picture and the consequences of the choice. An adult then behaves like a child who makes choices without reflecting over the consequences of their actions. This is one of the main reasons why people commit sins. In reality, if one truly reflected on the punishment of sins they would never commit them.

Something which helps in situations like this is to mentally take a step back and assess the options by comparing their long-term benefits and harms. Only when the lawful benefits of something outweighs the harm should a person proceed. The other thing which helps is to deeply reflect on the consequences of the potential options. Some choices might be

lawful but if one goes ahead with them it may make their life difficult in the long run. For example, sometimes people rush into marriage with someone they apparently love. They base their decision solely on their feelings instead of reflecting on other more important aspects, for example, if their potential future spouse will make a good life partner or a good parent and if they will help them in their obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Many marriages have ended in divorce because the couple did not reflect on the long term implications of a potential marriage. Many people often claim their spouse was very different before they got married but in most cases they have not changed at all. The truth is that before marriage they did not spend so much time with them so they did not observe certain characteristics which became obvious after marriage.

Some often rush into action and later have regrets as their choice caused them more trouble and in many cases the issue was not a big deal in the first place. This type of action can only be avoided when one reflects on the situation and observes the bigger picture meaning, the wider and long-term implications and consequences of taking a step forward.

One should not only assess if something is lawful or unlawful before making a decision. Even though, this is the most important thing to consider yet, it is not the only thing. As many lawful incorrect choices, which are beautified by the Devil, can lead to trouble further on in life.

To sum up, before making any choice a person must take a step back and reflect deeply over its lawfulness and its potential long-term benefits and harms under the guidance of the Holy Quran and the traditions of

the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.
Whoever acts like this will rarely make a wrong choice they later regret.

“...and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.”

The Devil tries to convince muslims to always observe those who are worse than them in behaviour in order to justify their lack of striving in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and improving their character and behaviour for the better. For example, a muslim who offers their obligatory prayers once in a while will observe someone who does not pray at all in order to make themselves feel better. A thief will look at a murderer and convince themselves stealing is not so bad. The examples are endless. It is very strange how these muslims so easily observe those who appear worse than them in order to justify their lack of effort in obeying Allah, the Exalted, but these same people will not observe those who are in a worse off position than them when they face difficulties. For example, the person who suffers from back pain will not observe the one who is physically disabled so that it prevents them from complaining. This attitude has specifically been advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2513.

In addition, if observing those who appear worse in their behaviour does not save one from punishment in a worldly court, such as a thief being pardoned by a judge because there are many murderers in the world, how can one imagine this excuse will hold up in the court of Allah, the Exalted?

Muslims should therefore avoid this trap of the Devil by observing those who appear better than them so that they are inspired to improve their character and behaviour progressively for the pleasure of Allah, the

Exalted. This is what Allah, the Exalted, demands meaning, He does not demand perfection.

“...and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.”

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3294, advises that whichever path the second rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him, took the Devil would take a different path, meaning, out of fear of him. One of the reasons why the Devil acted in this way was because he had little influence over Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him. The Devil cannot physically force someone to commit sins. He instead encourages them to do so through whisperings. But in order for them to be effective he requires a person to possess some sort of worldly desire. Then through his whisperings he encourages the growth of this worldly desire until it drives the person to act on it thereby committing a sin. The reason the Devil had little effect on Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him, was because he had removed worldly desires from his heart. His only desires were connected to pleasing Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, if muslims desire to minimise the effect the Devil has on them they should remove unnecessary desires from their heart. This only occurs when one refrains from indulging in the excess and unnecessary aspects of this material world. The more they do this the more these worldly desires will leave their heart until they reach a point where they only desire to please Allah, the Exalted, in all their actions. The Devil will flee from this person as he knows he will have little effect on them. But the more one indulges in the unnecessary aspects of this material world the more worldly desires they will possess and therefore, the more influence the Devil will have over them.

“...and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.”

A great obstacle to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is having false hope for a long life. It is an extremely blameworthy characteristic as it is the main cause for a muslim giving priority to amassing the material world over preparing for the hereafter. One only needs to assess their average 24 hour day and observe how much time they dedicate to the material world and how much time they dedicate to the hereafter in order to realise this truth. In fact, having false hope for a long life is one of the strongest weapons the Devil uses in order to misguide people. When a person believes they will live long they delay preparing for the hereafter falsely believing they can prepare for it in the near future. In most cases, this near future never comes and a person passes away without adequately preparing for the hereafter.

In addition, false hope for a long life causes one to delay sincere repentance and changing one's character for the better as they believe they have much time left to do this. It encourages a person to hoard the things of this material world, such as wealth, as it convinces them they will need these things during their long life on Earth. The Devil scares people into thinking they must hoard wealth for their old age as they may find no one to support them when they become physically weaker and therefore can no longer work for themselves. They forget that the same way Allah, the Exalted, took care of their provision when they were younger He will provide for them in old age too. 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. It is strange how a person will dedicate 40 years of their life saving for their retirement which very rarely lasts longer than 20 years but fails to prepare in the same way for the eternal hereafter.

Islam does not teach muslims to not prepare anything for the world. There is no harm in saving for the near future as long as priority is given to the hereafter. Even though, people admit they may die at any time yet, some behave as if they will live forever in this world. Even to the point that if they were given a promise of eternal life on Earth they would not be able to strive harder in order to accumulate more of the material world due to the restrictions of the day and night. How many people have passed away earlier than expected? And how many learn a lesson from this and change their behaviour?

In reality, one of the greatest pains a person will feel at the time of death or any other stage of the hereafter is regret for delaying their preparation for the hereafter. Chapter 63 Al Munafiqun, verses 10-11:

“And spend [in the way of Allah] from what We have provided you before death approaches one of you and he says, “My Lord, if only You would delay me for a brief term so I would give charity and be of the righteous.” But never will Allah delay a soul when its time has come. And Allah is Aware of what you do.”

A person would be labelled a fool if they dedicated more time and wealth on a house which they were only going to live in for a short while compared to a house they were planning to live in for a very long time. This is the example of giving priority to the temporal world over the eternal hereafter.

Muslims should work for both the world and the hereafter but know that death does not come to a person at a time, situation or age known to them but it is certain to come. Therefore, preparing for it and what it leads to should take priority over preparing for a future in this world which is not certain to occur.

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

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

In addition, the one who is obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands and refraining from His prohibitions during times of ease will gain the support of Allah, the Exalted, during their times of difficulty

which will aid them to overcome them successfully. Chapter 47
Muhammad, verse 7:

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

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

The only way to avoid this outcome during times of ease is for a muslim to demonstrate gratitude to Allah, the Exalted.

A muslim must ensure they fulfill all three aspects of gratitude so that they avoid becoming a denier of Allah, the Exalted, as the one who is ungrateful in reality, scorns the One who granted them the blessings. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

“...And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.”

The three aspects of gratitude are to internally acknowledge Allah, the Exalted, as the sole Creator and Provider of all blessings. An aspect of this is to correct one's intention so that they only perform actions to please Allah, the Exalted. The next aspect is to praise Allah, the Exalted, via the tongue. And the final and highest aspect is to practically show gratitude through one's actions by using each blessing as prescribed by Islam in order to please 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]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.'”

As true gratitude leads to an increase in blessings muslims should fear that showing ingratitude may cause the blessings they possess to either be taken away from them or for their blessings to be used against them by becoming a burden and a curse for them in both worlds. It is important to note, even if a muslim becomes truly grateful they will still face tests and difficulties as they are guaranteed. But if they behave in the correct way they will be guided through every situation so that they obtain peace of mind and body in this world and a great reward in the hereafter.

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

These verses indicate the importance of sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, during both times of difficulty and ease.

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 We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

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.

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

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

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

As the material world is temporary whatever one gains from it will eventually fade away and they will be held accountable for their actions and attitude in the hereafter. On the other hand, faith is the precious jewel which guides a muslim through all difficulties in this world and in the hereafter safely. Therefore, it is plain foolishness to compromise the thing which is more beneficial and lasting for the sake of a temporary thing.

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a muslim woman may believe that if she

removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a muslim might find themselves being invited to a pub or club after work.

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

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

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

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

The essence of the reminder given by the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and the divine events which occur within one's life is the importance of using the blessings one has 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.

“And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you [to warn]...Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves?...So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

The essence of the reminder given by the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and the divine events which occur within one's life is the importance of using the blessings one has 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.

“... We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

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

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

“So he came out before his people in his adornment. Those who desired the worldly life said, "Oh, would that we had like what was given to Qārūn. Indeed, he is one of great fortune. But those who had been given knowledge said, "Woe to you! The reward of Allah is better for he who believes and does righteousness. And none are granted it except the

patient." And We caused the earth to swallow him and his home. And there was for him no company to aid him other than Allah, nor was he of those who [could] defend themselves."

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

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

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

“...We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair. So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

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.

“So the people that committed wrong were eliminated...”

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.

“...And praise to Allah...”

Allah, the Exalted, is the One who is praised by His self-praise and by the praise of His creation. This also means that Allah, the Exalted, is the One who praises His righteous servants and handsomely rewards them for their efforts.

The muslim who understands this divine name will be far too busy in praising and obeying Allah, the Exalted, to praise themselves and to worry about their rights. This will keep them away from pride which is a characteristic that leads to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

A muslim must act on this divine name by only performing praiseworthy actions and adopting a praiseworthy character. This is arguably the greatest tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verse 4:

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

“...And praise to Allah...”

All praise is only for Allah, the Exalted, as He created and continuously sustains the entire creation within the Heavens and Earth without any progeny, partner, or helper. His kindness in the form of countless blessings, such as faith, to the creation has no limits. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 18:

"And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them...."

Therefore, the creation should constantly praise Him through sincere obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

Allah, the Exalted, is worthy of all praise, as He is full of perfection in terms of attributes and characteristics which are free from all shortcomings. This is still true even if He did not bestow any blessings on the creation. In addition, praising Allah, the Exalted, with the tongue and actions through sincere obedience is a means to increase the blessings one receives. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

A muslim should praise Allah, the Exalted, as much as possible as it is has been declared the best supplication by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3800. In addition, this verse reminds mankind that whatever praise-worthy quality a person observes in the creation or within themself is only possible because Allah, the Exalted, granted it. Therefore, all praise returns and solely belongs to Allah, the Exalted.

“...Allāh, Lord of the worlds.”

Allah, the Exalted, is the One who possesses all sovereignty which is free of all defects. It is a sovereignty which has no beginning, no end, no reduction and no limit. Allah, the Exalted, has complete and total control over the creation through management and judgment without any limitations, partners or helpers. The King cannot be hindered or prevented from carrying out His will.

By accepting Allah, the Exalted, as the only King a muslim indirectly accepts their servanthood to Him. Therefore, they must fulfil all His commands and avoid all His prohibitions. A true servant never questions the wise decisions of the King and instead submits with full trust to His choices knowing that the wise King only decrees the best for His servant. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

When a muslim recognises Allah, the Exalted, as the King they will not turn to another when seeking help and instead only seek His support through sincere obedience to Him. They will always remember if they obey the King He will protect them from the creation. But if they obey the creation over Allah, the Exalted, the creation will not be able to protect them from the punishment of the only King. This is indicated in a Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him,

found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2625. He declared that there is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of the Creator.

A muslim should adopt this characteristic according to their status by purifying their inner spiritual king namely, the spiritual heart through acting on the knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will cause their servants meaning, their bodily limbs, to obey their spiritual heart in acts of righteousness. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that if the spiritual heart is pure the rest of the body will be pure but if the spiritual heart is corrupt the whole body will become corrupt. One should not become a slave of their evil desires and instead become a true king which controls their desires according to the teachings of Islam.

Whoever perfects this will be given a spiritual kingdom in both worlds. The ultimate destination of the one who fulfils the rights of the King by perfecting servanthood has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. They will be granted a high station in the presence of the only Omnipotent King. Chapter 54 Al Qamar, verse 55:

“In a seat of honour near a Sovereign, Perfect in Ability.”

“...Allāh, Lord of the worlds.”

This verse is connected to chapter 7 Al A'raf, verse 172 of the Holy Quran:

“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] - lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware."”

All humans were brought forth so that they could take this pledge to Allah, the Exalted. The lesson to understand behind this incident is that all people accepted Allah, the Exalted, as their Lord. Meaning, the One who created them, sustains them and the One who will judge their deeds on the Day of Judgment. It is important for all muslims to fulfil this pledge through sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

This verse indicates that Allah, the Exalted, did not ask the creation if they were His servants instead, He asked them if He was their Lord. This is an indication that the will of Allah, the Exalted, should always come before the will and desire of a person. If a muslim has a choice between pleasing Allah, the Exalted, or someone else this pledge should remind them that the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, must come first.

This question is also an indication of the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted, as He hinted the answer to the creation by wording it as He did. This shows muslims that even though Allah, the Exalted, is the Lord who will judge their deeds yet, He is also infinitely merciful.

The effect of this covenant is deeply embedded in the hearts of all mankind. In fact, this is the nature which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6755. From this one can understand that it is important for people not to search for the truth after making their minds up beforehand and then search for evidence which supports their predetermined belief. Only those who open their minds without making a predetermined decision will unlock this covenant which has been embedded deep in their hearts. In fact, having an open mind is important in all issues not just in matters of faith as it helps one to find the truth and the best path. This attitude strengthens society and always encourages peace between people. But the stubbornness of those who predetermine their choices will always create wedges between members of a society which can affect people on a national level. It is important for muslims not to always believe they are correct in worldly matters otherwise they will adopt this stubborn attitude. This will prevent them from accepting the opinions of others which will lead to arguments, enmity and fractured relationships. Therefore, this attitude should be avoided at all costs.

Finally, the fact that this covenant is deeply embedded in a person's heart indicates that it is a duty on muslims to uncover it. This will lead one to certainty of faith which is much stronger than faith based on hearsay meaning, being told by one's family that they are a muslim. Certainty of faith allows a muslim to overcome all difficulties successfully

in this world while fulfilling their religious and worldly duties. One only fails in tests and their duties because of weakness in their faith. Certainty of faith is only obtained by gaining and acting on the knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 53:

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

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