

# Divine Knowledge Summarized

**PodSeries - Vol 430**



**Achieve Noble Character**

**Divine Knowledge Summarized**

**ShaykhPod Books**

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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.

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

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

## **Compiler's Notes**

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

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

## Introduction

The following short book discusses some advice which Summarizes Divine Knowledge. This discussion is based on the advice given by Tawus Ibn Kaysan, may Allah have mercy on him, and is recorded in Harith Al Muhasibi's, Risalah Al Mustarshidin.

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.

## **Divine Knowledge Summarized**

***A man came to Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, and asked for some general advice. Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, replied, "I advise you to love Allah, the Exalted, so much that nothing is more beloved to you than Him..."***

It has been made clear in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is an important part of faith. In fact, one Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 165, advises that a person will only taste the sweetness of faith when they love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, more than the entire creation. Another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 168, clearly warns that a person cannot be a believer until they love the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, more than the entire creation. Because of this fact Muslims all claim they love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But this is a claim which must be supported by evidence. Otherwise, it will have no value with Allah, the Exalted.

The first sign of love has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. It clearly advises that if one loves Allah, the Exalted, and desires His love and forgiveness they must practically follow the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:



*“Say, [O Mohammad], “If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.””*

This means a muslim must strive to emulate the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by applying his traditions into their lives through following his words and deeds. They must obey his commands and avoid his prohibitions. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 7:

*“...And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from...”*

One must not pick and choose from his traditions and only apply them in their behaviour when it suits them. The one who does this is only following their desires while claiming to follow the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One clear sign of this incorrect attitude is that a person changes the priority of actions set by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, they will give priority to the actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which are less important than his other actions. For example, according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5363, while at home the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, would help his family with the house chores but when the time of prayer came he would leave to lead the congregational prayer at the Mosque. If someone helps their family with the chores of the house but does not attend the Mosque to offer the prayer with the congregation without a valid excuse then they

are not following the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is because they have reordered the priority of actions. The prayer at the Mosque with congregation takes priority over helping with house chores according to the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. And if a person reorders this priority they are not following his tradition. Helping one's family with the house chores is undoubtedly a good deed but if they behave in this manner they are not following the tradition of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, even if it appears so. They are in fact only following their own desires. This is an important point muslims must understand. But it is vital to note, this does not mean muslims should stop doing righteous deeds. It means they should try their best to follow the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, correctly.

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is that one will prefer the commands and prohibitions delivered in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, over their own desires and opinions. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 24:

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

A person only inclines towards the things mentioned in this verse out of love for them. But when one chooses the obedience to Islam over these things it proves their love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A true lover only desires to obey their beloved and keep them pleased at all times. This is only possible when a muslim obeys the teachings of Islam.

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Another sign of loving Allah, the Exalted, is that their anger towards people will only be for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Meaning, they will dislike the things which Allah, the Exalted, dislikes. This prevents a muslim adopting ill feelings towards others and inspires them to respect others as Islam commands. Even if another person sins they should dislike the sin but not hate the sinner as they can sincerely repent at any time. In fact, Allah, the Exalted, does not hate a sinner. This is proven by the fact that the door of repentance is always open for the sinner until their death. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 17:

*"The repentance accepted by Allah is only for those who do wrong in ignorance [or carelessness] and then repent soon [after]. It is those to whom Allah will turn in forgiveness..."*

If Allah, the Exalted, hated the sinner He would not have given them a chance to repent. Disliking sins and not the sinner is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and whoever acts on his traditions truly loves him and whoever truly loves the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, will be in Paradise with him. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2678. The more a muslim controls their emotions so that they are only angered for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, the more they truly love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad,

peace and blessings be upon him. The muslim who does not act in this way possesses incomplete love.

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is that a muslim will mention Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, often. It is commonly known that the one a person often remembers is the one they love, the greater the love the greater the remembrance. This is indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 826, which advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used to remember Allah, the Exalted, in every moment. This is a sign of the deep love the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has for Allah, the Exalted. Those who prove their love by remembering Allah, the Exalted, often have been given the glad tidings of forgiveness and a great reward. Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 35:

*"...and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward."*

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Another sign of loving Allah, the Exalted, is a strong desire to meet Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. It is not possible to love someone and not desire their constant company. The one who desires this meeting will dedicate great effort in preparing for it. This is quite obvious even in worldly matters, the more important a meeting the greater the preparation. So those who desire to meet Allah, the Exalted, will strive in His sincere obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This has been indicated in the Holy Quran. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verse 110:

*"...So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone."*

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is to show great respect when mentioning Allah, the Exalted or the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When one remembers Allah, the Exalted, it should not be done in heedlessness meaning, when one remembers Allah, the Exalted, with the tongue but not with the heart. This can often occur during the prayer where a muslim may appear to be worshipping Allah, the Exalted, yet, their mind is wondering around the material world. When one performs the prayer they are talking intimately with their Lord. So they should not be heedless during this divine communication. A person dislikes when another person acts heedless during their conversation so how could Allah, the Exalted, be pleased with someone who remembers Him like this? When one remembers Allah, the Exalted, in the correct way it will strengthen their spiritual connection with Him. This will inspire them towards greater obedience in the form of fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

It is important to note, even though a muslim should strive to remember Allah, the Exalted, with their heart as well as their tongue they should never abandon remembering Allah, the Exalted, if they struggle to include their heart. As remembering Allah, the Exalted, with only the tongue is far better than not remembering Him at all.



When a muslim recites the Holy Quran they should be fully aware that these are the words of the Lord of the worlds and therefore recite them with awe and respect. A part of this respect is to try one's best to pronounce each word correctly. This is why learning how to recite correctly is so important. As mispronouncing words can in some cases change the meaning of the word or verse, which is a serious issue. Another part of respect is to strive to understand the teachings of the Holy Quran and apply them into one's life. Wrapping up the Holy Quran in a nice cloth and placing it on a high shelf is not true respect. Reciting correctly, understanding and acting on it is.

In addition, one should not use the name of Allah, the Exalted, in vain, such as taking empty oaths. Muslims should have more respect for the blessed name of Allah, the Exalted.

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is to love all those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even if this contradicts one's personal opinion about them. This love includes those who proclaim love through their words and more importantly through their actions. For example, it is obvious to all that all the household of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors possessed this true love. So loving each of them is a duty upon the one who claims love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been proven through many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 17. It advises that love for the helpers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, meaning, the residents of the Holy city of Medina is a part of faith and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy. In another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3862, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has clearly warned muslims not to criticize any of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as loving them is a sign of loving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and hating them is a sign of hating the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and Allah, the Exalted. This person will not succeed unless they sincerely repent. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned a similar statement regarding his blessed household, may Allah be pleased with them, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 143.

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

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

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, is loving the Holy Quran. This must be shown through actions by acting on its teachings not by simply kissing it, wrapping it in a nice cloth and then placing it on a high shelf in one's home. One must fulfil the aspects of the Holy Quran in order to prove their love for it. Firstly, they must recite it correctly and regularly with respect and concentration. Secondly, they must study the Holy Quran from a reliable source in order to understand its teachings. Lastly, they must strive to act on its teachings in their everyday life. A muslim must always act on its teachings and not only when it suits their desires or in a specific situation or time, such as during the Holy month of Ramadan.

In addition, a part of true love for the Holy Quran is not to use it as a tool to fix one's worldly problems. Unfortunately, some have adopted this attitude and only take out the Holy Quran to recite it when they encounter a worldly problem. And the moment their problem is fixed they put it away not to be looked at again until their next worldly problem. They treat it like a tool which is only taken out of the toolbox in order to fix something. Even though, the Holy Quran is a cure for worldly problems but this is not its main function. Its main purpose is true guidance so that one can reach the hereafter safely. It is foolish to ignore its main function and only use it for something else. This is the like one who buys an expensive car which does not have engine in it only to watch the television that has been fitted inside it. Wouldn't this person be labelled a fool? If a muslim treats the Holy Quran correctly they will find it not only guides them to Paradise but it also fixes their worldly problems also. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

*“And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.”*

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is having sincere love for the creation as they are the creation of Allah, the Exalted. And having sincere love in particular with muslims as they are the nation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In fact, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has indicated this in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1926, when he advised that faith is being sincere to all people. Another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, warns that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves. As Allah, the Exalted, is merciful to the creation according to His infinite dignity muslims should love the creation by being merciful to them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to note, this love should be shown through one's actions not just through words. Having sincere love for the creation includes desiring good for them and doing what one can in order to make things better for them, such as financial and emotional support.

It is a part of love towards people that one is pleased when they are happy and sad whenever they are grieved as long as their attitude does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A high level of love includes one going to extreme limits to make the lives of others better solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, even if this puts themselves in difficulty. For

example, one may place restrictions on their own demands in order to donate more wealth to the needy.

Desiring and striving to always unite people on good is a part of love towards people whereas dividing others is a characteristic of the Devil. One way of achieving this is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426.

Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve.

A proof of one's love for others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the backbiting of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a muslim. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them.

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Another sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is loving the hereafter and turning away from the material world. This is because the material world encourages one to turn away from the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Whereas, the hereafter encourages one to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In addition, it is in the hereafter a muslim will meet Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Therefore, true love would encourage one to turn towards the hereafter. Detachment from the material world does not mean one should completely abandon the world and live in a cave. But it means they should take what they need from this world in order to fulfil their requirements and responsibilities without waste and extravagance and turn away from the excess of this material world by dedicating their time to preparing for the hereafter.

Doing without this world was not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but as mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2352, the Holy Prophet, peace



and blessings be upon him, desired to depart the world in this way and be resurrected in this way.

The human heart has been created in such a way that it must contain something in it. So if one fills it with the material world then there will be no space in it for the love of the hereafter. If one turns away from the excess of this material world their heart will become full with the hereafter. This will encourage them to prepare for it through sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted. This will give rise to the true love of Allah, the Exalted and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

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This includes sincerely obeying Him at all times.

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.

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Piety/Fearing Allah, the Exalted, cannot be achieved without gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge so that one can fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2451, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, advised that a muslim cannot become pious until they avoid something which is not harmful to their religion out of caution that it will lead to something which is harmful. Therefore, an aspect of piety is to avoid things which are doubtful not just unlawful. This is because doubtful things takes a muslim one step closer to the unlawful and the closer one is to the unlawful the easier it is to fall into it. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205, advises that the one who avoids unlawful and doubtful things will protect their religion and honor. If one observes those who have become misguided in society, in most cases, this occurred gradually not in one sudden step. Meaning, the person first indulged in doubtful things before falling into the unlawful. This is the reason why Islam stresses the need to avoid unnecessary and vain things in one's life as they can lead them to the unlawful. For example, vain and useless speech which is not

classified sinful by Islam often leads to evil speech, such as backbiting, lying and slander. If a person avoids the first step by not indulging in vain speech they will undoubtedly avoid evil speech. This process can be applied to all things which are vain, unnecessary and especially, doubtful.

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Fear prevents wishful thinking.

Even though there is no doubt that the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, is infinite and can overcome all sins. And giving up hope in the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted, is defined as unbelief in chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 87:

*"...Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people."*

Yet, none the less it is extremely important for muslims to understand a fact. Namely, a muslim has not been guaranteed to leave this world with their faith meaning, a muslim is in danger of dying as a non-muslim. This is the greatest loss. If this happens it does not take a scholar to conclude where this person will reside in the hereafter. This can occur when a muslim persists on sins especially, major sins, such as drinking alcohol and failing to offer their obligatory prayers and reaches their end without sincerely repenting from their sins. This is the reason why muslims must sincerely repent from all their sins and strive to fulfil all their obligatory duties as this is a task they can undoubtedly fulfil. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

*“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...”*

They should not be fooled into believing they possess hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. As true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, is supported by obedience to Allah, the Exalted, through actions. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. Failing to do this and then expecting the mercy and forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, is not hope in His mercy it is merely wishful thinking which has no weight or significance. This has been clearly warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459.

***A man came to Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, and asked for some general advice. Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, replied, "I advise you to...fear Allah, the Exalted, until there is nothing more feared by you than Him and that you hope for His mercy so much that it prevents your fear from overwhelming you..."***

In a long divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, Allah, the Exalted, advises that He acts and treats His servant according to their perception of Him. This means if a muslim has good thoughts and expects good from Allah, the Exalted, He in turn will not disappoint them. Similarly, if a person harbours negative thoughts about Allah, the Exalted, such as believing they will not be forgiven then Allah, the Exalted, may act according to their belief.

It is important to note, there is a vast difference between true hope in Allah, the Exalted, which this Hadith refers to and wishful thinking. Wishful thinking is when one fails to strive in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience and then expects Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them. This is not true hope it is merely wishful thinking. This is like a farmer who fails to plant any seeds, fails to water their crop and still hopes to reap a large harvest. True hope is when one strives to obey Allah, the Exalted, and whenever they slip up they sincerely repent and then hope for the mercy and forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted. This is like a farmer who plants seeds, waters their crop, dedicates effort to keeping the crop healthy and then hopes for a large harvest. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has summarised this explanation in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459.



Generally speaking, a muslim should harbour more fear of Allah, the Exalted, during their life as it prevents sins which is superior to hope which inspires one to perform righteous deeds especially, the voluntary type. But during periods of illness and difficulty and especially at the time of death a muslim should have nothing but hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, even if they have spent their life disobeying Him as this has specifically been commanded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2877.

***A man came to Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, and asked for some general advice. Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, replied, "I advise you to...love for others what you love for yourself..."***

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 13, that a person cannot become a true believer until they love for others what they love for themselves.

This does not mean a muslim will lose their faith if they fail to adopt this characteristic. It means that a muslim's faith will not be complete until they act on this advice. This Hadith also indicates that a muslim will not perfect their faith until they also dislike for others what they dislike for themselves. This is supported by another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6586. It advises that the muslim nation is like one body. If one part of the body is in pain the rest of the body shares the pain. This mutual feeling includes loving and hating for others what one loves and hates for themselves.

A muslim can only achieve this status when their heart is free from evil traits, such as envy. These evil traits will always cause one to desire better for themselves. So in reality, this Hadith is an indication that one should purify their heart by adopting good characteristics, such as being forgiving, and eliminate evil traits, such as envy. This is only possible through learning and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is important for muslims to understand that desiring good for others will cause them to lose out on good things. The treasury of Allah, the Exalted, has no limits so there is no need to adopt a selfish and greedy mentality.

Desiring good for others includes striving to aid others in anyway one can, such as financial or emotional support, in the same way a person would desire others to aid them in their moment of need. Therefore, this love must be shown through actions not just words. Even when a muslim forbids evil and offers advice which contradicts the desire of others they should do so gently just like they would want others to advise them kindly.

As mentioned earlier, the main Hadith under discussion indicates the importance of eliminating all bad characteristics which contradict mutual love and care, such as envy. Envy is when a person desires to possess a specific blessing which is only obtainable when it is taken away from someone else. This attitude is a direct challenge to the distribution of blessings chosen by Allah, the Exalted. This is why it is a major sin and leads to the destruction of the envier's good deeds. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903. If a Muslim must desire the lawful things others possess they should wish and supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, to grant them the same or similar thing without the other person losing the blessing. This type of jealousy is lawful and is praiseworthy in aspects of religion. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that muslims should only be jealous of a wealthy person who uses their wealth correctly. And be jealous of a knowledgeable person who uses their knowledge to benefit themselves and others.

A Muslim should not only love for others to obtain lawful worldly blessings but also for them to gain religious blessings in both worlds. In fact, when one wishes this for others it encourages them to strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This type of healthy competition is welcomed in Islam. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 26:

*“...So for this let the competitors compete.”*

This encouragement will also inspire a muslim to assess themselves in order to find and eliminate any faults in their character. When these two elements combine meaning, striving in sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and purifying one's character, it leads to success in both worlds.

A Muslim must therefore not only claim to love for others what they desire for themselves verbally but show it through their actions. It is hoped that the one who is concerned for others in this way will receive the concern of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1930.

***A man came to Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, and asked for some general advice. Tawus, may Allah have mercy on him, replied, "I advise you to love Allah, the Exalted, so much that nothing is more beloved to you than Him; that you fear Him until there is nothing more feared by you than Him; that you hope for His mercy so much that it prevents your fear from overwhelming you and that you love for others what you love for yourself. Now stand and leave for I have summarized for you the knowledge of the Torah, the Bible, the Psalms and the Holy Quran."***

The essence of this advice and all the divine scriptures is sincerity.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards: Allah, the Exalted, His book, meaning, the Holy Quran, to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to the leaders of society and to the general public.

Sincerity towards Allah, the Exalted, includes fulfilling all the duties given by Him in the form of commands and prohibitions, solely for His pleasure. As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1, all will be judged by their intention. So if one is not sincere towards Allah, the Exalted, when performing good deeds they will gain no reward in this world or in the next. In fact, according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, those who performed insincere deeds will be told on Judgement Day to seek their reward from those who they acted for, which will not be possible. Chapter 98 Al Bayyinah, verse 5.

*"And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion....."*

If one is lax in fulfilling their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, it proves a lack of sincerity. Therefore, they should sincerely repent and struggle to fulfil them all. It is important to bear in mind Allah, the Exalted, never burdens one with duties they cannot perform or handle. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286.

*"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...."*

Being sincere towards Allah, the Exalted, means that one should always choose His pleasure over the pleasure of themselves and others. A Muslim should always give priority to those actions which are for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, over all else. One should love others and dislike their sins for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not for the sake of their own desires. When they help others or refuse to take part in sins it should be for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The one who adopts this mentality has perfected their faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

Sincerity towards the Holy Quran includes having deep respect and love for the words of Allah, the Exalted. This sincerity is proven when one fulfils the three aspects of the Holy Quran. The first is to recite it correctly and regularly. The second is to understand its teachings through a

reliable source and teacher. The final aspect is to act on the teachings of the Holy Quran with the aim of pleasing Allah, the Exalted. The sincere muslim gives priority to acting on its teachings over acting on their desires which contradict the Holy Quran. Modelling one's character on the Holy Quran is the sign of true sincerity towards the book of Allah, the Exalted. This is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1342.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is sincerity towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes striving to acquire knowledge in order to act on his traditions. These traditions include the ones related to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship, and his blessed noble character towards the creation. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verse 4:

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

It includes to accept his commands and prohibitions at all times. This has been made a duty by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 7:

*"...And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from..."*

Sincerity includes to give priority to his traditions over the actions of anyone else as all paths to Allah, the Exalted, are closed except the path of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

*"Say, [O Muḥammad], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins..."*

One must love all those who supported him during his life and after his passing, whether they are from his Family or his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all. Supporting those who walk on his path and teach his traditions is a duty on those who desire to be sincere to him. Sincerity also includes loving those who love him and disliking those who criticise him irrespective, of one's relationship with these people. This is all summarised in a single Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 16. It advises that a person cannot have true faith until they love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, more than the entire creation. This love must be shown through actions not just words.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is being sincere to the leaders of the community. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:



*"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you..."*

This makes it clear that it is a duty to obey the leaders of society. But it is important to note, this obedience is a duty as long as one does not disobey Allah, the Exalted. There is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of the Creator. In cases like this, revolting against leaders should be avoided as it only leads to the harm of innocent people. Instead, the leaders should be gently advised good and forbidden evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should advise others to act accordingly and always supplicate for the leaders to remain on the correct path. If the leaders remain straight the general public will remain straight, also.

To be deceitful towards the leaders is a sign of hypocrisy, which one must avoid at all times. Sincerity also includes striving to obey them in matters which unite society on good and warning against anything which causes disruption in society.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is sincerity towards the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themselves.

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

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

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

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for

example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

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

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds and may peace and blessings be upon His final Messenger, Muhammad, his noble Family and Companions.

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