

The Material World & the Hereafter

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Achieve Noble Character

The Material World & the Hereafter

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The Material World & the Hereafter

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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 Two Aspects of Noble Character: The Material World and the Hereafter.

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 the 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.

The Material World & the Hereafter

The Material World - 1

It is important to note, the material world which one should detach from actually refers to one's desires. It does not refer to the physical world, such as the mountains. This is indicated by chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 14:

“Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire - of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return [i.e., Paradise].”

These things are connected to the desires of people and by them one becomes distracted from preparing for the hereafter. When one abstains from their desires they are in fact detaching from the material world. This is why a muslim who does not possess worldly things can still be regarded a worldly person because of their inner desire and love for it. Whereas, a muslim who possesses worldly things, like some of the righteous predecessors, can be considered detached from the material world as they do not desire and occupy their minds, hearts and actions with them. Instead they desire lies in the eternal hereafter.

The first level of abstinence is turning away from unlawful and vain desires which are not connected to the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This person busies themselves in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities all the while focusing on the hereafter. They turn away from things and people who prevent them from fulfilling this important deed.

The next stage of abstinence is when one takes only the things they need from the material world in order to fulfil their necessities and responsibilities. They do not occupy their time on things which will not derive them benefit in the next world. This is the advice given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6416. He advised a muslim to live in this material world as a stranger or a traveller. Both types of people will only take what they need from the material world in order to reach their destination meaning, the hereafter safely. A muslim can achieve this by understanding how close their death and departure to the hereafter is. Not only can death pounce on a person at any time but even if one lives a long life it seems as though it passed in a moment. By realising this reality one sacrifices the moment for the sake of the eternal hereafter. Shortening one's hope for a long life in this material world will encourage them to perform righteous deeds, sincerely repent from their sins and prioritise preparing for the hereafter over all else. The one who hopes for a long life will be inspired to behave in the opposite manner.

The one who is truly abstinent in the material world neither blames it nor praises it. They do not rejoice when they gain it nor do they grieve when it passes them by. The mind of this pious muslim is too focused on the eternal hereafter to greedily notice the small material world.

Abstinence consists of several different levels. Some muslims abstain in order to free their hearts of every vain and useless occupation so that they can fully concentrate on obeying Allah, the Exalted, and fulfil their responsibilities towards people. According to the Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 257, the one who behaves in such a manner will find that Allah, the Exalted, will suffice them by taking care of their worldly issues. But the one who is only concerned with worldly things will be left to their devices and will find nothing but destruction. This is why it is been said that the one who pursues the excess of this material world, such as excess wealth, will find that the minimal effect it has on them is that it distracts them from the remembrance and obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is still true even if a person commits no sins in their pursuit of the excess aspects of the material world.

Some abstain from the world in order to lighten their accountability on the Day of Judgement. The more one possesses the more they will be held accountable. In fact, whoever has their deeds scrutinised by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgement Day will be punished. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6536. The lighter one's accountability the less likely this will occur. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6444, that those who possess plenty in the world will possess very little good on the Day of Rising except for those who dedicated their belongings and wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, but these are a few in number. This long accountability is the reason why each person, rich or poor, will wish on the Day of Judgement that they were only given their daily provision during their lives on Earth. This has been confirmed in Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4140.

Some muslims abstain from the excess of this material world out of desire for Paradise which will make up for losing out on the pleasures of this material world.

Some abstain from the excess of the material world out of fear of Hell. They rightfully believe that the more one indulges in the excess of this material world the closer they are to the unlawful, which leads to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205. In fact, it is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4215, that a muslim will not become pious until they abstain from something which is not a sin out of fear it may lead to a sin.

The highest degree of abstinence is to understand and act on what Allah, the Exalted, desires from His servants which has been mentioned throughout the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Namely, to abstain from the excess of the material world out of servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, knowing that their Lord does not like the material world. Allah, the Exalted, has condemned the excess of this material world and has belittled its worth. These pious servants were embarrassed that their Lord should see them inclining towards something which He dislikes. These are the greatest servants as they only act according to the wishes of their Lord even when they are given an opportunity to enjoy the lawful luxuries of this world. This is the very reason why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, chose poverty even though he was offered the treasuries of

the Earth. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6590. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, chose this as he knew it was what Allah, the Exalted, desired for His servants. As Allah, the Exalted, disliked the material world the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, rejected it out of love for His Lord. How can a true servant love and indulge in what their Lord dislikes?

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did set an example for the poor by choosing poverty and taught the rich how to live through his words and actions. He could have easily chosen the alternative and practically showed the rich how to live by taking the treasures of the world which were offered to him and he could have taught the poor how to live correctly through his words and actions. But he chose poverty for a specific reason which was out of servanthood to his Lord, Allah, the Exalted. This abstinence was adopted by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. For example, the first rightly guided Caliph of Islam Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, once cried when water sweetened with honey was given to him. He explained that he once observed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, pushing away an invisible object. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, told him the material world had come to him and he commanded it to leave him alone. The material world replied that he had escaped the material world but those after him would not. Because of this Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, wept when seeing the water sweetened with honey believing the material world had come to misguide him. This incident is recorded in Imam Ashfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, number 47.

In reality, the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, never ate or dressed to gain pleasure but only took what they needed from the material world while focusing on preparing for the hereafter. They disliked when the material world was placed at their feet being fearful that perhaps their reward had been given to them in this world instead of in the hereafter.

Anyone who is truly abstinent will follow in their footsteps. Muslims should not fool themselves by indulging in the unnecessary luxuries of this material world while claiming their heart is attached to Allah, the Exalted. If a person's heart is purified it manifests on their limbs and in their actions which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094. Whoever's heart is attached to Allah, the Exalted, follows in the footsteps of the righteous predecessors by taking what they need from the material world, spending only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and turning away from the excess of the material world while striving to prepare for the hereafter. This is true abstinence.

The Material World - 2

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6416, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, to live in this world as a stranger or a traveller. And Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, used to advise that when a person reaches the evening they should not expect to be alive in the morning. And if they reach the morning they should not expect to be alive in the evening. And that a muslim must make use of their good health before they encounter sickness and make good use of their life before their death.

This Hadith teaches muslims to limit their hopes for a long life. Hopes for a long life is the main cause of failing to prepare for the hereafter as it encourages one to dedicate their complete effort to the material world, as they are convinced they have plenty of time to prepare for the hereafter.

A muslim should not treat this temporary world as their permanent home. Instead, they should behave as someone who is about to depart it, never to return. This would inspire one to dedicate the majority of their efforts in preparing for their final destination namely, the hereafter, and to limit their efforts in obtaining the material world which is beyond their need and responsibilities. This concept has been discussed throughout the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for example chapter 40 Ghafir, verse 39:

“...this worldly life is only [temporary] enjoyment, and indeed, the Hereafter - that is the home of [permanent] settlement.”

In a similar Hadith to the main one under discussion, which is found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2377, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described himself in this world as a rider who takes a short rest under the shade of a tree and then swiftly moves on. In order to indicate the temporal nature of this world the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, compared it to shade which, as everyone knows, does not last long even though it appears to be permanent. This is how the material world can appear to some. They behave as if the world will last forever whereas in reality it will quickly fade away.

In addition, this Hadith mentions a rider and not someone who is walking. This is because a rider would rest significantly less than someone journeying on foot. This further indicates that a person's stay in this world is very short. This is quite evident to all. Even those who reach elderly age admit their life went by in a flash. So in reality, whether one reaches old age or not, life is just a moment. Chapter 10 Yunus, verse 45:

“And on the Day when He will gather them, [it will be] as if they had not remained [in the world] but an hour of the day...”

In reality, the material world is like a bridge which must be crossed and not taken as a permanent home. The same way a person does not take a bus station as their home knowing their stay there will only be for a short while similarly, the world is a short stop before one reaches the eternal hereafter.

When someone goes on a once in a lifetime holiday, in most cases, they will limit their spending on luxury household items, such as a wide screen television, and instead make do with whatever services their hotel offers. They behave in this manner as they understand that their stay in the hotel will be short and soon they will leave, never to return. This mentality prevents them from taking the holiday destination as their permanent home. Similarly, people were sent to Earth for a purpose which is definitely not to make it their permanent home. Instead, they were sent to take provisions from it so that they can safely reach their permanent home meaning, the hereafter. This involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Him.

Whenever a person intends to travel they first acquire the provision they need in order to make the journey comfortable and successful. As indicated in the Holy Quran the best provision for the hereafter is piety. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 197:

“...indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah...”

This is when a muslim fulfils the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, believing He only chooses what is best for His servants. Other provisions, such as food, are required in order to complete the journey from the world to the hereafter. But the provision which should be prioritised is piety as it is the only provision which will benefit someone in both this world and the next. It leads to peace in this world and in the next. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

As the material world is not the permanent home of a person they should therefore act on the main Hadith under discussion and either live as if they were a stranger or a traveller.

The first state of being a stranger is someone who does not attach their heart and mind to their temporary home. Their only aim is to gather enough supplies so that they can return safely to their permanent home namely, the hereafter. This is like the one who lives in a foreign country on a work visa. Their place of work is not their home; only a place to earn money so that they can return back to their homeland with it. This person will never treat the strange country as their home. Instead, they will only spend on necessary things and concentrate on saving their wealth so that they can

take as much wealth as possible back to their real and permanent home. If this person spent all or the majority of their wealth in the foreign country and returned to their home country empty handed they would undoubtedly be considered blameworthy by their relatives. This is because they have failed in their mission and purpose of living in another country on a work visa. Similarly, a muslim should dedicate the majority of their efforts in acquiring provisions to take to the hereafter. They should not compete for the luxuries of the material world with others. Instead, they must concentrate on their mission to acquire provisions for the eternal hereafter. If they dedicate too much effort in beautifying their temporary home then they will enter the hereafter unprepared and empty handed and therefore, fail in their mission which Allah, the Exalted, entrusted them with. A muslim should be honest with themselves and reflect on how many hours of the day they dedicate to the material world and preparing for the hereafter. This self-reflection will show them if they have the correct mentality or not and how strong their faith in the hereafter really is. Chapter 87 Al A'la, verses 16-17:

“But you prefer the worldly life. While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was sent to mankind when they were the most lowly of people and the vast majority of them were leading a sinful life which would have caused them to enter Hell. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, called them towards the path of truth with clear proofs. Many of these people accepted his clear message and followed him. He promised them that Islam would conquer many nations and much wealth would be obtained by the muslims. But he warned them not to become distracted by

the luxuries of the material world. An example of this warning is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3997. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that competing for the unnecessary luxuries of the material world would destroy people. Therefore, he advised muslims to content themselves with the basic necessities in order to fulfil their responsibilities and needs and instead concentrate on preparing for the hereafter. Everything the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, promised muslims came true. When the world was opened to the muslims the majority of them became busy with competing, collecting, hoarding and enjoying the excess of the material world. Thus, they gave up preparing for the hereafter correctly as they were told to by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Only a few accepted his advice and only took what they needed from the material world in order to fulfil their needs and responsibilities and dedicated the majority of their efforts in preparing for the eternal hereafter. This small party, meaning the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors, caught up with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in the hereafter, as they practically followed his advice and footsteps. On the other hand, the majority continued in their heedlessness chasing the material world until death caught them unprepared.

The second mentality muslims should adopt as advised in the main Hadith under discussion is that of a traveller. This person does not observe this material world as their home and instead journeys towards their true home meaning, the hereafter. This mentality is similar to a back packer who may sleep over in different cities but never regards them as their home. The only provision they take with them is what they can carry meaning, the essentials. This includes the things they need to survive and will help them reach their destination safely. A back packer would never pack unnecessary items knowing that these things will only be a burden for them. Nor will they fail to pack the essentials needed to complete their

journey safely. Similarly, an intelligent muslim only collects the deeds from this material world, in respect to actions and speech, which will help them reach the hereafter safely. They will turn away from all actions and speech which will become a burden for them in both this world and the next. This is the attitude the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to adopt in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4104. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verses 7-8:

“Indeed, We have made that which is on the earth adornment for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed. And indeed, We will make that which is upon it [into] a barren ground.”

A muslim must understand that the day and night are only brief stages in which people travel through, stage by stage, until they reach the hereafter. Therefore, they should use each stage by sending ahead provision to the hereafter in the form of righteous deeds. They must constantly be aware that their journey will end very soon and they will reach the hereafter. Even if the journey looks long it will ultimately feel like a moment so one should make it a moment of obedience before it ends while they are unprepared. Chapter 10 Yunus, verse 45:

“And on the Day when He will gather them, [it will be] as if they had not remained [in the world] but an hour of the day...”

With every breath one takes, they are moving towards the hereafter while leaving the world behind. Even though, one may seem not to be moving but in reality, the day and night act as their conveyance which takes them swiftly, without pause, to the next world.

Muslims must realise that as they are the servants of Allah, the Exalted, soon a day will come when they will return to Him. When they return they will be stopped for questioning. Therefore, they should prepare something good for this interrogation. They should prepare by using the blessings they were granted in this world in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. But if they continue in heedlessness and fail to prepare, then they will be taken to task for what has already occurred and for what remains.

Moving on to the advice of the Companion, Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion. The first part of it highlights the importance of shortening one's hope for a long life in this world. A muslim should not believe their stay in this world is long, as they could pass away at any moment. Even if one lives for many years, life still seems to have gone by in a flash. This is what Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, indicated by advising muslims not to believe they will be alive in the morning if they reach the evening. This mentality is the root cause of only taking what one needs from the material world in order to fulfil their worldly responsibilities and prepare for the hereafter. Whereas, having hopes for a long life is the root cause of the opposite meaning, it causes one to delay preparing for the hereafter by performing righteous deeds and refraining from sins and it encourages them to collect and hoard the material world, believing their stay in it will be extremely long.

In addition, Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised muslims to make good use of their good health before they encounter sickness. Unfortunately, most people only appreciate the value of good health after they lose it, which has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6412. Making use of good health means that a muslim should use their physical and mental strength in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by performing righteous deeds and refraining from sins before they reach a time when they might desire to perform good deeds but can no longer do them due to poor health. The one who makes good use of their good health will be given the reward of the righteous deeds they performed during their good health, even when they encounter sickness and can no longer do them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2996. Whereas, the one who does not make good use of their good health will lose this potential reward when they become sick. In fact, they will be left with nothing except regret.

The final part of the advice given by Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, is that a person should make good use of their life before death. This includes making use of all things which lead to righteous deeds, such as wealth, and avoiding all those things which prevent one from doing good deeds, such as unnecessary preoccupations. It is important for muslims to make good use of their time before they become distracted with responsibilities which naturally occur with the passing of time, such as marriage. And to make good use of their wealth before their financial responsibilities increase. Making good use of time is essential for success as it is a strange worldly blessing, which never returns after it departs, unlike all other blessings. One must make use of their time by prioritising their activities correctly according to the teachings of Islam. The one who behaves in this manner will fulfill all their responsibilities, duties and

necessities and have plenty of time to enjoy lawful pleasures in a balanced way.

As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2403, all people will have regrets at the time of their death. The good doer will regret that they did not perform more good deeds before dying. The sinful person will regret that they did not sincerely repent before their death. In this world people are often given second chances for example, redoing a driving test, but there is no do over once a person dies. Regret will not help them at all. Instead, it will only add to their pain and suffering. So muslims must use the time they are given to strive in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, before their moment ends by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. One should abandon the mentality of delaying things till tomorrow, as in most cases this tomorrow never comes. A muslim should concentrate on today and therefore, do the things which please Allah, the Exalted, as tomorrow may come in this world but they may not be alive to witness it.

The Material World - 3

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2142, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a muslim should be moderate when seeking worldly things as what is destined for them will surely reach them.

It is important to understand that Islam does not encourage muslims to completely abandon the material world, as it is a bridge which connects one to the hereafter. How can one possibly reach the hereafter without crossing this bridge? Islam instead teaches muslims to take from this world in order to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents while avoiding excess, waste and extravagance and then dedicate their efforts in preparing for the hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, 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.

It is important to remember that the things one will obtain in this world, such as their provision, have already been apportioned to them over fifty thousand years before Allah, the Exalted, created the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748.

As a person's provision is guaranteed and cannot increase or decrease, irrespective of their efforts, they should strive for it according to their necessities and responsibilities, as striving for more will only lead to stress and they may not obtain what their desire. In addition, this excess striving will distract them from practically preparing for the hereafter. This in turn will only lead to further stress for them in both worlds. Whereas, obeying the main Hadith and striving moderately for one's provision, will ensure they receive their apportioned share with minimal stress, they fulfil their responsibilities and prepare adequately for the hereafter. This leads to peace and success in both worlds.

The Material World - 4

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2380, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the importance of a balanced diet. He advised that one should split their stomach into three parts. The first part is for food, the second part is for drink and the last part should be left empty for breathing.

This diet plan can be achieved when one stops eating before they reach their fill. This was the behaviour of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them.

If people were to act on this advice they would be safe from both physical and mental illnesses. In fact, according to many knowledgeable people one of the main causes of illness is indigestion.

In respect to the spiritual heart, little food leads to a soft heart, humility of self and weakness of desires and anger. A full stomach results in laziness which prevents worship and other righteous deeds. It induces sleep which causes one to miss out on the voluntary and even the obligatory night prayers. It prevents reflection which is the key to assessing one's deeds and therefore changing one's character for the better. The one with a full stomach forgets the poor and is therefore less likely to help them. All these negative effects lead to a hard spiritual

heart. The one who possesses a hard spiritual heart will not be safe on the Day of Judgment. 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 who is only concerned about their stomach becomes distracted from more important things, such as learning and acting on religious knowledge. They become so preoccupied with gaining, preparing and eating different types of foods that it consumes a large portion of their time, energy and money. This attitude also prevents one from eating simple foods, which are easier and less time consuming to prepare and cheaper to buy. Extravagance in food also encourages one to become extravagant in other things, such as one's clothes and housing. This attitude in turn encourages one to earn more wealth in order to satisfy their extravagant lifestyle. This distracts them further from learning and acting on Islamic knowledge so that they can achieve peace and success in both worlds. It can also encourage them towards the unlawful in order to satisfy their extravagant lifestyle.

Muslims should know that the most fed in this world will be the hungriest on the Day of Judgment. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2478.

Therefore, muslims should strive to obtain a balanced diet so that they avoid the negative effects discussed which will undoubtedly hinder their success in both this world and the next.

The Material World - 5

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2465, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever prioritises preparing for the hereafter over striving for this material world will be granted contentment, their affairs will be corrected for them and they will receive their destined provision in an easy way.

This half of the Hadith means that whoever correctly fulfils their duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and to the creation, such as providing for their family in a lawful manner while avoiding the excess of this material world, will be granted contentment. This is when one is pleased with what they possess without being greedy and actively striving to obtain more worldly things. In reality, the one who is content with what they possess is a truly rich person, even if they possess little wealth, as they become independent of things. Independence of anything makes one rich in respect to it.

In addition, this attitude will allow one to comfortably deal with any worldly issues which may arise during their life. This is because the less one interacts with the material world and focuses on the hereafter, the less worldly issues they will face. The less worldly issues a person faces the more comfortable their life will become. For example, the one who possesses one house will have fewer issues to deal with in respect to it, such as a broken cooker, than the one who possesses ten houses. Finally, this person will easily and pleasantly obtain their lawful provision. Not only this, but Allah, the Exalted, will place such grace in their provision that it will

cover all their responsibilities and necessities meaning, it will satisfy them and their dependents.

Prioritising preparing for the hereafter means that one should always act and speak in a way which will benefit them in the hereafter. As explained earlier, this includes striving for one's lawful provision in order to fulfill their necessities and responsibilities without being wasteful or extravagant. Any activity which will not benefit one in the hereafter should be minimized. The more one behaves in this manner the more contentment they will be blessed with and the easier their day to day activities will become. In addition, they will adequately prepare for the hereafter also, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they achieve peace and success in both worlds.

But as mentioned in the other half of this Hadith the one who prioritises striving after the material world over preparing for the hereafter meaning, by neglecting their duties or striving for the unnecessary and excess of this material world, will find that their need, meaning greed, for worldly things is never satisfied. This, by definition, makes them poor even if they possess much wealth. These people will go from one worldly issue to another throughout the day failing to achieve contentment as they have opened too many worldly doors. And they will receive their destined provision with difficulty and it will not give them satisfaction and never seem enough to fill their greed. This may even push them towards the unlawful, which only leads to a greater loss in both worlds. Finally, because of their attitude, they will not prepare adequately for the hereafter. Therefore, this person obtains stress and discontentment in both worlds.

The Material World - 6

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 worldly blessings would become easy to obtain and plentiful for them. This would cause them to compete for it and in turn, this 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 beyond their needs, even if they are lawful, it will distract them from practically preparing for the hereafter, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. 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. Competing for worldly blessings with others, will lead them to adopting other negative characteristics, such as envy, spite and enmity, which leads to disunity, insincerity and failing to fulfil the rights of others. This competition may even cause one to harm others. This only leads to destruction in both worlds, even if this is not obvious to a person in this world.

It is obvious these worldly desires have taken control over many muslims as they would happily get up in the middle of the night in order to obtain worldly blessings, 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 it may cause them to violate the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and people. The more one pursues their worldly desires the less they will strive in preparing for the hereafter, as a person can either use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, or according to their own desires. This will lead to the destruction warned in the main Hadith under discussion. A destruction which begins with stress and anxiety in this world and leads to extreme difficulties in the hereafter. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

The Material World - 7

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2377, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that he was not concerned over the excess of this material world and his example in this world is of a rider, who takes a short rest under the shade of a tree and then leaves it behind by moving on.

In reality, each person is a traveller who stays in this world for a very limited time compared to where they came from meaning, the world of the souls, and to where they are heading, which is the eternal hereafter. In fact, this world in comparison is like waiting at a bus stop. In this Hadith this world has been compared to a shadow. This is because a shadow does not last long and fades away quickly without people even taking notice, which is exactly how a person's days and nights pass away. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not mention a traveller's inn or a hotel as these are solid structures which indicate permanence. A fading shadow better describes this material world. This is because no matter how old a person is, they always admit that their life flashed by and felt like a moment. Chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 46:

“It will be, on the Day they see it (Judgment Day), as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof.”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated a rider not someone walking, as the one who is walking would rest more under the shade of the tree than a rider. This further indicates the limited time people spend in this world.

Taking a rest in the shade indicates the importance of one correctly using the material world in order to obtain the provisions they need, just like the rider takes the provision they need namely, rest. A muslim should therefore prepare for their immediate departure from this world by preparing for the hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, 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 will ensure they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will result in them obtaining peace and success in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

As mentioned in the main Hadith, just like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not concerned about the unnecessary aspects of this world, a Muslim must also adopt this attitude, as the more one dedicates their energy and time to gaining and enjoying the unnecessary things of this world, the less time and energy they will have to use their blessings in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This

distraction will lead to nothing but stress and difficulties in both worlds.
Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

One should note that this discussion does not mean one should abandon this world, as this Hadith clearly indicates one should make use of the material world in order to prepare for the hereafter. The rider takes a rest and muslims must gather the things which will benefit them in the hereafter instead of dedicating their efforts and time to unnecessary things which will leave them empty handed on Judgment Day. Chapter 89 Al Fajar, verses 23-24:

"And brought [within view], that Day, is Hell - that Day, man will remember, but how [i.e., what good] to him will be the remembrance? He will say, "Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life.""

The Material World - 8

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4102, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised how to obtain the love of Allah, the Exalted.

The love of Allah, the Exalted, is obtained when one avoids the excess of this material world, which are beyond their needs and responsibilities. Meaning, a muslim should strive in this world in order to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam. And they should strive in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Anything from the material world which aids one in these things is not in reality a worldly thing. Therefore, avoiding them is not required. But one must avoid those things which either hinder or prevent them from fulfilling these duties. When one persists on this attitude they will only use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

This is how a muslim can keep the world in their hand and not in their heart. This is how a muslim obtains the love of Allah, the Exalted, as this attitude causes them to strive in His obedience, which attracts the love of Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502.

The Material World - 9

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2346, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever wakes up in the morning safe from danger, healthy and having food for the day, is as if the world was gathered for them.

In this day and age, where many people around the world are living in unsafe countries, a muslim who has been blessed with safety should make use of it by using their freedom 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. For example, they should take advantage of journeying to the Mosques for the congregational prayers and religious gatherings of knowledge.

In addition, muslims should extend this sense of security to others, irrespective of their faith, so that the whole society becomes secure from danger. In fact, according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, a person cannot be a true muslim or believer until they keep their verbal and physical harm away from a person and their possessions. Simply put, a muslim should treat others in the same way they desire to be treated by people.

A muslim must take advantage of their good health by obeying Allah, the Exalted, as it is a blessing which is often only truly appreciated until it is lost. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6412. Those who make good use of their good health by obeying Allah, the Exalted, will find that they will receive His support when they eventually lose their good health. For example, the one who falls sick will receive the reward for doing the same righteous deeds they used to do when they were healthy, even if they no longer do them because of their sickness. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 500. But those who fail to make use of their good health are unlikely to receive this support. It is important to note, making use of one's health includes striving in this material world in order to fulfill one's needs and the needs of their dependents, while avoiding extravagance and waste.

One of the major concerns of a person is their provision. A muslim should remember that it was allocated to them 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. The one who obtains their daily provision should concern themselves with their other duties and plan for tomorrow without stressing, as their provision is guaranteed.

Finally, the main Hadith also encourages one to adopt a simple lifestyle, as this leads to peace of mind and body. The more one strives for the unnecessary aspects of the material world, the more they will stress. For example, the one who owns one house will have less stress and things to deal with than the one who owns two houses. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that simplicity is a part of faith. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118.

The Material World - 10

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2886, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, criticized the slaves of wealth and fine clothing. These people are pleased when they receive these things and become displeased when they do not.

In reality, this applies to all non-essential worldly things. This criticism is not directed at those who strive in the material world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents, as this is a part of obeying Allah, the Exalted. But it is directed at those who either pursue the unlawful in order to obtain wealth and pursue lawful yet unnecessary worldly things in order to satisfy their desires and the desires of others. This behaviour prevents them from obeying Allah, the Exalted, correctly. This obedience involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This prevents them from using the worldly blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This leads to stress and difficulties in both worlds. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

In addition, this criticism is for those who are impatient when they do not obtain their unnecessary desires in this world. This attitude can cause a muslim to obey Allah, the Exalted, on the edge. Meaning, they obey Him when they obtain their desires but when they do not, they angrily turn away from His obedience. The Holy Quran has warned of a severe loss in both worlds for the one who adopts this attitude. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”

Muslims should instead learn to be patient and content with what they possess, as this is true richness according to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2420. In reality, the person full of desires is needy meaning, poor, even if they possess much wealth. Whereas, the satisfied person is not greedy, meaning needy, and this makes them rich, even if they possess little of this world. A muslim should know that Allah, the Exalted, grants people what is best for them and not according to their desires, as this, in most cases, would lead to their destruction. Chapter 42 Ash Shuraa, verse 27:

“And if Allah had extended [excessively] provision for His servants, they would have committed tyranny throughout the earth. But He sends [it] down

in an amount which He wills. Indeed He is, of His servants, Aware and Seeing.”

The Material World - 11

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6439, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that if a person possessed a valley of gold, they would desire another and nothing fills their stomach except dust. But Allah, the Exalted, forgives those who repent to Him.

This Hadith warns against possessing too many worldly desires. The problem with them, even if they are lawful, is that fulfilling one desire only leads to more. One door leads to ten others. And this never ends unless one repents from this behaviour or when they die and the dust of their grave finally fills their stomach. Lawful worldly desires can also lead to unlawful desires, as many people who ended up in the unlawful began by indulging in lawful desires. The more desires a person has, the more needy they become, which is another name for being poor. This poverty never ends, irrespective of how much one obtains or how many desires they fulfill. It is why it has been said that the essential needs of a pauper gets fulfilled, as this is guaranteed by Allah, the Exalted, but the desires of kings are left unfulfilled. A muslim should instead strive in this world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents without excessiveness, waste or extravagance. And they should minimize their worldly desires in order to avoid this real poverty and instead seek peace and comfort with the Controller of hearts and emotions, namely, Allah, the Exalted, through His sincere obedience, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Him. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

It does not take a scholar to conclude that those who are obsessed with fulfilling their lawful or unlawful desires, by misusing the blessings they have been granted, never find peace, irrespective of how many worldly possessions they own. In fact, those who behave in this manner are the furthest from peace of mind and are the closest to anxiety, stress and depression and are the most addicted to drugs and alcohol. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life..."

The Material World - 12

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4108, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the material world compared to the hereafter is like a drop of water compared to an ocean.

In reality, this simile was given in order for people to understand how small the material world is compared to the hereafter. But in reality they cannot be compared, as the material world is temporal whereas the hereafter is eternal. Meaning, the limited cannot be compared to the unlimited. The material world can be split into four categories: fame, fortune, authority and one's social life, such as their family and friends. No matter what worldly blessing one obtains which falls within these groups, it will always be imperfect, transient and death will cut a person off from the blessing. On the other hand, the blessings in the hereafter are lasting and perfect. So in this respect the material world is no more than a drop compared to an endless ocean.

In addition, a person is not guaranteed to experience a long life in this world, as the time of death is unknown. Whereas, everyone is guaranteed to experience death and reach the hereafter. So it is foolish to prioritize striving for a day, such as one's retirement, which they may never reach, over striving for the hereafter which they are guaranteed to reach.

This does not mean one should abandon the world as it is a bridge which must be crossed in order to reach the hereafter safely. Instead, a muslim should take from this material world enough to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. And then dedicate the rest of their efforts in preparing for the eternal hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will ensure one uses the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they obtain peace of mind and success in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

An intelligent person will not prioritize a drop of water over an endless ocean and an intelligent muslim would not prioritize the temporal material world over the eternal hereafter.

The Material World - 13

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that simplicity is a part of faith.

Islam does not teach muslims to give up all their wealth and lawful desires but it instead teaches them to adopt a simple lifestyle in all aspects of their life, such as their food, clothing, housing and business, so that it provides them free time to prepare for the hereafter adequately. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This simple life includes striving in this world in order to fulfill one's needs and the needs of their dependents without excessiveness, waste or extravagance. The more one concentrates on a simple life, the easier it becomes to use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This leads to peace and success in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

In addition, a muslim should understand that the simpler life they lead, the less they will stress over worldly things and therefore the more they will be able to strive for the hereafter thereby, obtaining peace of mind, body and soul. But the more complicated a person's life is, the more they will stress, encounter difficulties and strive less for their hereafter, as their preoccupations with worldly things will never seem to end. This attitude will prevent them from obtaining peace of mind, body and soul.

Simplicity leads to a life of ease in this world and a straight forward accounting on the Day of Judgment. Whereas, a complicated and indulgent life will only lead to a stressful life and a severe and difficult accounting on the Day of Judgment. The more strict one's accounting, the more they will be punished. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 103.

The Material World - 14

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6501, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the worldly things which are raised up in social status will eventually be lowered by Allah, the Exalted.

This does not mean that muslims should avoid the material world and trying to achieve success in it. Muslims should strive to obtain a worldly education and a lawful occupation as it helps one to avoid unlawful wealth and is required to fulfil one's responsibilities, such as fulfilling their needs and the needs of their dependents. An example describing this duty is recorded in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928.

The main Hadith means that one should not make worldly success their number one priority and instead dedicate most of their efforts to preparing for the hereafter. This involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. No matter how much worldly success one gains, eventually it will fade away. This fading will occur either when one is alive or their success will part from them when they pass away. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379. Countless people have built empires and achieved worldly success yet all of them faded away. How many people have had their names plastered across sky scrapers yet, after a short while their names were removed and they were forgotten?

This Hadith does not mean that a person will not be given success after facing trouble. Muslims should strive to achieve success in the world and not give up when they face setbacks. The key is to prioritize the success of the hereafter over the world by using the blessings and success of the material world to achieve success in the hereafter. One can achieve this by striving for lawful worldly success; fulfil their responsibilities and duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people while avoiding waste and extravagance. And they should utilise their worldly success to aid them in the hereafter, such as donating their excess wealth. If their worldly success is fame or political, then they should use their influence to benefit others, as this will help them in the hereafter. This is how one uses their worldly success to benefit their hereafter.

It is important to note, that the one who only aims to benefit themselves in this world will not gain benefit in the hereafter. But the one who aims to benefit themselves in the hereafter, by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, will gain benefit in both worlds in the form of peace and success. This is the only way one can ensure they continue to benefit from their worldly success before and after it inevitably fades away. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

The Material World - 15

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2347, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that his true friend is the one who possesses the following characteristics.

The first characteristic is that they strive and obtain only what they require in order to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents while avoiding excessiveness, waste and extravagance. One can adopt this attitude when they strive to use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

The next characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith is that they avoid obtaining any type of fame or social honor. According to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, this desire is more destructive to a muslim's faith than the destruction two hungry wolves would cause to a herd of sheep. A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than their craving for wealth. A person will even spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and prestige.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise preparing for the hereafter over

enjoying the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but the one who receives it without asking for it will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment.

This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worse type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, warns that this person will go to Hell.

Seeking repute also causes one to act in order to please people instead of acting to please Allah, the Exalted. This person will be told to gain the reward for their deeds on Judgement Day from the people they acted for, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

Seeking repute also causes one to adopt negative characteristics, such as being two-faced, in order to please everyone. This leads to many sins and

this person will ultimately be disgraced publicly by Allah, the Exalted. The very people which they aimed to please will criticize and hate them, even if they conceal this from them.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that their death comes quickly, their mourners are few and the inheritance they leave behind is small.

Their death comes suddenly so that they are taken to the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, quickly and in order to protect them from the difficulties of a slow and prolonged death.

Their mourners are few, as they avoided seeking social honor and preferred to remain anonymous, as they feared showing off their righteous deeds to others. But the few mourners they do have are far better than the many the rich and famous have. Their few mourners are sincere in their sadness and genuinely supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, for their forgiveness whereas the many mourners of the rich and famous do not behave in this manner.

The inheritance they leave behind is small, as they directed the vast majority of their blessings towards the hereafter, by using them in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. They understood that anything they left behind would fall into the hands of others who would enjoy the blessings

while they, the deceased, will be held accountable for obtaining it. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, warns that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds accompany them in their lonely grave. Therefore, they concentrate on obtaining righteous deeds by using their blessings correctly and avoid misusing them thereby committing sins. Even though, they leave little behind as inheritance they in fact take a lot with them to the hereafter in order to support themselves in their moment of need. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 18:

“O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow...”

Finally, they may not leave much worldly things behind, such as wealth and properties, but they do leave behind a huge legacy of goodness, such as ongoing charity and useful knowledge, which continues to benefit them even after their death. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1376.

To conclude, those who claim to love the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, must support this verbal claim with actions. Claims without actions have little value in both worldly and religious matters. One of these proofs is to adopt these characteristics which lead to his friendship. The one who befriends the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, will be granted his company in the hereafter. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 69:

"And whoever obeys Allāh and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allāh has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions."

The Material World - 16

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6514, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that two things abandon a deceased at their grave and only one thing remains with them. The two things which abandon them are their family and wealth and the only thing which remains with them are their deeds.

Throughout history people have always concentrated the majority of their efforts to obtaining wealth and a happy family. Even though Islam does not prohibit these things, as they may be required to fulfill one's responsibilities and duties. Islam only discourages muslims from striving for these things beyond their needs and in cases when these things prevent one from using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

One must strive to obtain the needed wealth to fulfill their responsibilities, according to the teachings of Islam, and obtain a family which will encourage them to prepare for the hereafter. These are both considered good deeds when utilized in such a manner. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6373. This is the sign of an intelligent person who gives priority to the thing which will endure and support them in their moment of need namely, righteous deeds. On the other hand, the one who allows their wealth and relatives to prevent them from using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted,

are described as losers in the Holy Quran. Chapter 63 Al Munafiqun, verse 9:

“O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. And whoever does that - then those are the losers.”

Some may incorrectly believe they are close to Allah, the Exalted, as He has bestowed them with great wealth and family. But Allah, the Exalted, clears their confusion by declaring that the one who is dearer and nearer to Him are those who believe and perform righteous deeds. Chapter 34 Saba, verse 37:

“And it is not your wealth or your children that bring you nearer to Us in position, but it is [by being] one who has believed and done righteousness...”

In another place of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, warns mankind that their wealth and relatives will not benefit them in the hereafter unless they reach the hereafter with a sound 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 definition of the sound heart is lengthy, but simply put, one cannot obtain it until they sincerely fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will ensure they adopt positive characteristics and eliminate negative characteristics. The one who possesses good character will fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and people, by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The one who behaves in this manner possesses a sound spiritual heart and body.

In addition, one's wealth can only benefit them in the hereafter if they send it ahead of them by spending it on ongoing charity projects. This is confirmed by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1376. The same Hadith informs mankind that a righteous child praying for the forgiveness of their deceased parent will be accepted also. Unfortunately, in this day and age many children are too busy seeking their inheritance to supplicate for their deceased parents. It is important to understand that raising a righteous child who supplicates for their deceased parent is not possible to achieve if the parents do not perform righteous deeds themselves during their lives i.e. leading by example. Secondly, it is not the way of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, or his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, to abstain from performing righteous deeds and hope others will pray for them after they depart from this world. One should strive for righteous deeds while they are alive and then hope others will pray for them after they pass away.

It is important to understand that only the wealth one sends forward to hereafter will benefit them. This involves spending one's wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, such as spending on fulfilling one's responsibilities and duties, such as the education of their children. All wealth spent on vain or sinful things will become a source of stress for the owner and may well lead to their punishment in both worlds. Those who withhold the obligatory charity out of greed have been warned of dreadful punishments. For example, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1403, warns that a person who commits this grave sin on the Day of Judgement will encounter a huge poisonous snake which will wrap around them and bite them continuously. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 180:

“And let not those who [greedily] withhold what Allah has given them of His bounty ever think that it is better for them. Rather, it is worse for them. Their necks will be encircled by what they withheld on the Day of Resurrection...”

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1658, warns that on the Day of Judgment the gold and silver a person owned will be heated up in the flames of Hell and their bodies will be branded with it, if they failed to donate the obligatory charity due on it.

Furthermore, any wealth left behind by the deceased will be left to others to enjoy, while the deceased is held accountable for collecting it. It is

important to note, if a person knowingly leaves wealth to someone who is not fit to possess it and thus misuses it, then the deceased may well be held accountable for this also. Conversely, if one leaves wealth behind to someone who spends it correctly then the deceased will face much regret on the Day of Judgment when they observe the great reward given to the one who spent it correctly.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7420, that a person can only use their wealth in three ways. The first is the wealth which is spent on their food. The second is the wealth spent on their clothes and the final wealth is what they spent in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. All other wealth is left behind for other people to enjoy while the deceased is held accountable for collecting it.

Hoarding and incorrectly spending wealth inspires one to love the material world and dislike the hereafter, as they dislike leaving their beloved wealth behind, which will occur when they die. The one who dislikes the hereafter will not adequately prepare for it. Meaning, they will not use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, if one desires to adopt true piety then they must be ready to spend their wealth for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 92:

“Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love...”

In reality, wealth is a strange companion as it only benefits someone when it leaves them, meaning, when it is spent in the correct way.

A person would be labelled a fool if they went on a long trip without any provisions. Similarly, the one who does not send their wealth ahead in the form of provisions for their long journey to the hereafter is also foolish.

There is no doubt that one of the greatest pains a person feels at the time of death is when they realize that they are leaving behind their hard earned wealth and journeying towards the hereafter empty handed. A muslim should avoid this outcome at all costs.

Performing righteous deeds is the only way one prepares for their grave, as no other things of comfort will be found there. It is in fact the means for preparing one's eternal home in the hereafter. Therefore, this preparation should take priority over preparing for the temporal material world.

A person would be labelled a fool if they had two homes and dedicated the majority of their efforts on beautifying the home which they will spend less

time in. Similarly, if a muslim dedicates more time and effort in beautifying their temporal home in this world over the eternal home of the hereafter, they too are simply foolish. This is the attitude of some, even though they admit and believe their stay in this world is short and for an unknown length whereas, their stay in the hereafter will be eternal.

This attitude indicates a lack of certainty of faith and it is therefore vital for anyone who shares this mentality to seek and act on Islamic knowledge in order to strengthen their certainty of faith before they reach the hereafter bereft of all good.

The one who prepares for their grave with 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, will find that their good deeds provide comfort for them whereas, the sins their accumulated will only make their stay in the dark grave worse. A muslim should therefore perform good deeds during their strength and ability before their time of weakness arrives. Each muslim should recognise the reality indicated in the main Hadith and therefore use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, before they reach a time when their request to be given more time to perform righteous deeds will be denied. 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...”

They should reflect now on their deeds so that they can sincerely repent from sins and strive harder to perform righteous deeds before a day arrives when reflecting will not benefit them. Chapter 89 Al Fajr, verse 23:

“And brought [within view], that Day, is Hell - that Day, man will remember, but how [i.e., what good] to him will be the remembrance?”

Let each one ponder over those who passed away before them and their inability to perform more righteous deeds to comfort them in their moment of need. Make haste before this time arrives and prepare for the inevitable. Chapter 15 Al Hijr, verse 99:

“And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty [i.e., death].”

The Material World - 17

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that craving for wealth and status is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are set free on a herd of sheep.

This shows that hardly any of a muslim's faith remains secure if they crave after wealth and fame in this world just as hardly any of the sheep will be saved from two hungry wolves. So this great similitude contains a severe warning against the evil of craving after excess wealth and social status in the world.

The first type of craving for wealth is when one has extreme love for wealth and strives without fatigue to acquire it through lawful means. To behave in such a manner is not the sign of a wise person, as a muslim should firmly believe their provision is guaranteed to them and this allotment can never change. In fact, the provision of the creation was allocated over fifty thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748. This person will undoubtedly neglect their duties and responsibilities as they are too preoccupied with obtaining wealth. A body which is too busy acquiring wealth will never prepare adequately for the hereafter, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. In fact, this person will dedicate so much effort to acquiring more wealth that they may not even get a chance to enjoy it. Instead, they will depart

this world and leave it behind for other people to enjoy, even though they will be held accountable for it. This person may acquire wealth lawfully but they will still not find peace of mind as no matter how much they obtain they will only desire more. This person is needy and therefore, a real pauper even if they possess much wealth. As striving for more wealth involves opening more worldly doors and preoccupations, the more they strive to increase their wealth, the less peace of mind and body they will obtain. And the more they will misuse the blessings they have been granted in their pursuit of their fortune. Only the one who forgets Allah, the Exalted, misuses the blessings they have been granted by Him. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

The only craving which is beneficial is craving for accumulating true wealth namely, righteous deeds in order to prepare for one's day of return.

The second type of craving for wealth is similar to the first type but in addition to it this type of person acquires wealth through unlawful means and fails to fulfil the rights of people, such as the obligatory charity. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned against this in many Hadiths. For example, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6576, he warned that this attitude destroyed the past nations as they made unlawful things lawful, withheld the rights of others and killed others for the sake of excess wealth. This person strives for the

wealth they are not entitled to which leads to countless major sins. When one adopts this attitude they become intensely greedy. As warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1961, the greedy person is far from Allah, the Exalted, far from Paradise, far from people and close to Hell. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3114, warns that extreme greed and true faith will never combine in the heart of a true muslim.

If a muslim adopts this type of craving then the extreme danger of it is clear even to an uneducated muslim. It will destroy their faith until nothing except a little remains. Just like the main Hadith under discussion warns, this destruction to one's faith is more severe than the destruction caused by two hungry wolves which are let loose on a herd of sheep. This muslim risks losing the little faith they possess at the moment of their death, which is the greatest loss.

A person's craving for fame and status is arguably more destructive to one's faith than craving for excess wealth. A person will often spend their beloved wealth on obtaining fame and social status.

It is rare for someone to obtain status and fame and still remain firm on the correct path whereby they prioritise the hereafter over the material world. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6723, warns that a person who seeks status in society, such as leadership, will be left to deal with it themselves but if someone receives it without asking for it, they will be aided by Allah, the Exalted, in remaining obedient to Him. This is the reason the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not

appoint a person who requested to be appointed in a position of authority or even showed desire for it. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6923. Another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7148, warns that people will be keen to obtain status and authority but it will be a great regret for them on the Day of Judgment. This is a dangerous craving as it forces one to strive intensely to obtain it and then strive further in order to hold on to it, even if it encourages them to commit oppression and other sins.

The worst type of craving for status is when one obtains this through religion. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2654, that this person will go to Hell.

Therefore, it is safer for a muslim to avoid the craving for excess wealth and high social status as they are two things which can lead to the destruction of their faith by distracting them from preparing adequately for the hereafter, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

The Material World - 18

I had a thought which I wanted to share. Some Muslims often claim that one's faith and the material world need to walk hand in hand with each other without a person being extreme in either. It is strange how most of those who claim this and use this statement as a way to enjoy the lawful luxuries and pleasures of this world do not truly understand nor adhere to it. This statement is true but applies to those worldly and religious matters which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. For example, occasionally exercising in order to keep the body healthy which is a trust given to a person. It does not mean one can enjoy the lawful pleasures of this world in excess while neglecting following the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge even if they fulfil the standard obligatory duties. As gaining knowledge in itself is a duty on all Muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

In addition, walking hand in hand would suggest that one dedicates equal attention, effort and time to each thing. How many Muslims can honestly say that they dedicate equal effort, energy and time to the material world and preparing for the hereafter? If they do not, and most do not, then how exactly are they fulfilling this statement?

A Muslim should not fool themselves as their time on Earth is limited and they will not be given a second chance once they depart from it. Therefore, they should honestly strive to fulfil this statement by at least dedicating equal

time, effort and energy to both the material world and preparing for the hereafter. It is important to note, that some would argue that treating a temporary abode and an everlasting abode equal is not wise.

The Material World - 19

I had a thought which I wanted to share. I was pondering over the importance of maintaining a balanced life whereby a Muslim fulfils their necessities and responsibilities in this world, prepares adequately for the hereafter and occasionally enjoys lawful pleasures. Even though, this is the best approach it is very difficult to fulfil just like walking a tight rope whereby a person can easily fall into either of the two extremes. One side is when one is too focused on the material world which prevents them from striving in preparing for the hereafter correctly. The other side is where one strives hard in preparing for the hereafter but struggles and even fails to fulfil their worldly duties. But it is important to note, that even though a perfect balance is best it is far better to incline towards the hereafter than this material world. As the one who favours the hereafter might find this world difficult but they are more likely to achieve eternal success in the hereafter. On the other hand, the one who inclines to the world more may find success therein but they are more likely to fail in the hereafter. In other words, inclining towards the hereafter is the safer option compared to inclining towards the material world. So if a Muslim struggles to find the perfect balance, which the vast majority do, they should be kind to themselves and incline more towards the hereafter so that they can obtain eternal success instead of temporary worldly success. Chapter 87 Al A'la, verses 16-17:

“But you prefer the worldly life, While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.”

The Material World - 20

I had a thought which I wanted to share. It is part of normal behaviour to fear losing one's possessions. In fact, generally speaking the more one possesses the more they will fear losing them and the less they possess the less they will fear. This is just like the person who goes out in the middle of the night while possessing many valuable things, such as an expensive phone and tablet. This person will obviously have more fear of losing their possessions than the one who leaves their home in the middle of the night while carrying nothing valuable. Muslims should therefore understand the reality of this in respect to this temporal world and the eternal hereafter. The one who possesses much worldly things which will not benefit them in the hereafter, such as excess wealth they have hoarded will always fear leaving this world through death and the troubles of this world more than the one who possesses less worldly things. This fear removes the very aim of these possessions which is to achieve peace of mind and body. In fact, achieving peace of mind and body is the very reason people strive in this material world. But in order to remove this fear a Muslim does not need to become physically empty handed. They only need to detach from their possessions spiritually. This is achieved when one only takes from this material world in order to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents and then dedicates the rest of their worldly blessings towards the hereafter by using them as prescribed by Islam. This will ensure that they truly own their possessions instead of their belongings possessing them. This will also remove the fear of losing their possessions as they have already sent them forward to the hereafter for safe keeping. This will allow them to achieve peace of mind and body in this world and in the next.

The Material World - 21

I had a thought which I wanted to share. According to an incident which has been recorded in Imam Asfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, number 510, the great Companion Abu Darda, may Allah be pleased with him, refused to give his daughter's hand in marriage to a rich and powerful person. He advised that he only did this as he feared his daughter would get lost in the excess and luxuries of this world which would undoubtedly damage her faith.

It is strange how the majority of Muslims have adopted the opposite mindset to this. And often seek rich and influential people in order to join ties with. They are often less concerned about the strength of their faith and therefore fail to connect with families for this reason which has been specifically advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 3635. Even though, a family should not marry in to a family which cannot financially support their relative but at the same time they should not set wealth and social status as their only benchmark for finding a suitable spouse for their relative.

This incident shows the importance of always seeking good for others by considering faith in all situations and circumstances. Meaning, one should only get into situations when they firmly believe their faith will either strengthen through it or at least not become damaged because of it. If they suspect this may occur they should avoid it at all costs as all worldly things come and go but the strength of one's faith is the thing that will define their

ultimate and permanent destination in the hereafter therefore, it should always be protected.

The Material World - 22

I had a thought which I wanted to share. It is important to understand that Allah, the Exalted, has only given one heart to each person. Therefore, two opposite things cannot be contained within it at the same time just like fire and ice cannot come together in one container. This is similar to how a traveller heading east will inevitably move further away from the west. Similarly, the hereafter and the material world are two opposites. They therefore cannot be contained at the same time in a single person's heart. The more one loves and practically strives for the excess of the material world the less they will love and practically strive for the hereafter. This is an unavoidable reality. A Muslim should not fool themselves into believing it is possible. The two can never come together in a single heart. One will always overcome the other. Even if one believes they can indulge in the lawful excess of this material world they should realise that first of all, this will distract them from preparing for the hereafter. Secondly, it will cause them to be that much closer to the unlawful as indulging in lawful things is usually the first step to the unlawful. The one who avoids this mentality will protect their faith and honour. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205. Chapter 87 Al A'la, verses 16-17:

“But you prefer the worldly life. While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.”

The Material World - 23

I had a thought which I wanted to share. If a person had to cross a country and was presented different paths to choose from such as, a path through a dangerous jungle or over a mountain or through an underground cave an intelligent person would certainly choose the simplest and easiest path. This would allow them to reach their destination safely while achieving peace of mind and body. Only a fool would choose a difficult and dangerous path thereby, unnecessarily burdening themselves.

In reality, each person is on a journey through this world and their destination is the hereafter. Therefore, an intelligent Muslim should choose the path through this world which is easy and straight forward in order to reach the hereafter safely. This path consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and only taking from this material world in order to fulfil their necessities and the necessities of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. This would allow them to reach the hereafter safely while obtaining peace of mind and body. But the more one indulges in the excess of this material world and unnecessarily devotes themselves to people and their desires the more difficult their journey will become. This attitude will only deprive them of peace of mind and body and reduce the chances of them reaching the hereafter safely.

To conclude, Muslims must understand that life is a journey so they should therefore be kind to themselves and choose the simple and easy path in order to reach the hereafter safely thereby obtaining peace of mind and body in both worlds.

The Material World - 24

I had a thought which I wanted to share. It is obvious that envy has affected many Muslims. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned this would occur in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2510. It leads to many other negative characteristics and problems. For example, it prevents Muslims from fulfilling the important duty of supporting good irrespective of who does it as the jealous person does not desire to aid others as they believe the other person's rank in society will increase beyond their own.

A Muslim must take steps to remove jealousy from their character. One thing which can aid in this goal is to become content with what a person possesses. Allah, the Exalted, does not give people according to their desires as this might lead to their destruction. He instead gives what is best for each person's faith. Understanding this can eliminate jealousy over what others possess. How many Muslims obtained wealth which destroyed their faith? And how many Muslims will be forgiven on Judgment Day because of the tests they endured patiently? 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.”

The other thing to understand is that as this material world is limited it is easy to become jealous over the things within it. But if a Muslim aims for the hereafter and prioritises it over the excess of this material world it would remove jealousy from them. This is because the blessings of the hereafter are unlimited therefore, there is no need to be jealous as there are plenty of blessings to go around in fact, they will never end. But the more one aims and desires the limited things found within the world the more jealous they will become.

The Material World - 25

I had a thought which I wanted to share. I was pondering over the material world and the amount of effort most people dedicate to it compared to the effort dedicated to one's religion. If one observes the material world, such as the movie industry, they will find that the people involved dedicate a large amount of effort in order to achieve success. For example, not only do people spend countless hours and millions of pounds making a film but after its completion they dedicate more effort and money publicising it. Celebrities travel around the world for the sake of a meeting or interview which lasts less than hour just to promote their work.

Unfortunately, it is quite obvious that most Muslims do not even dedicate a fraction of this effort in their religious affairs, such as strengthening their own faith or spreading the word of Islam. Social media is full of worldly things which people have dedicated much time and money to which is obvious to anyone who observes it. Whereas, the money and effort dedicated to Islamic education on social media is only a fraction of this. Islam does not teach Muslims to completely abandon the world as it is required in order to gather one's lawful provision. But if a Muslim honestly assesses their own life and daily activities it will be obvious to them that the majority of their effort, wealth and time is dedicated to the material world. It is very rare to observe someone who dedicates the majority of their time to Islam and preparing for the hereafter. If people can dedicate so much effort and money on worldly things, such as making movies, even though these are temporal things Muslims should work even harder for the eternal hereafter. These worldly people dedicate much effort to their worldly projects and therefore obtain success. If Muslims desire real success in this world and in the next they too must dedicate time and energy in preparing

for the hereafter. It is simply foolish to believe that a Muslim can obtain the blessings of this world and the next by either exerting minimal effort or no effort at all in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. If worldly success cannot be achieved without effort how can a Muslim believe they will obtain religious success without effort? Chapter 87 Al A'la, verses 16-17:

“But you prefer the worldly life. While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.”

The Material World - 26

I had a thought which I wanted to share. It is important to understand that even though people strive in this material world in order to achieve peace of mind it is not possible to achieve in this world as it has not been placed in the material world. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 28:

"...Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured."

Even though this fact eludes many it is quite obvious that the more one strives in this material world the more doors they open to the material world. Fulfilling one worldly task leads to ten others. So a person moves from one preoccupation to another with the no end in sight until they depart this world. The only way to obtain some peace in this world is through the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This Muslim will be granted peace of mind by Allah, the Exalted. But even then it is important to understand that true lasting peace of mind is only found in the hereafter. This is because no matter how good someone's life is even if they reach a point where they have no worldly or religious responsibilities as they have discharged them all and they have no other things to deal with even then, the reality of death, the grave and Judgment Day will prevent them from obtaining true lasting peace. Therefore, a Muslim should understand this reality as it helps one to remain patient when dealing with life and what it brings and it encourages a Muslim to strive in preparation for the hereafter

so that they can achieve true lasting peace by obtaining the gardens of refuge and an eternal resting place.

The Material World - 27

I had a thought which I wanted to share. Islam teaches Muslims that every blessing they possess, such as wealth or children, should be contained in their hand not their heart. An excellent way of achieving this is that each blessing should be used according to the commands of Allah, the Exalted, not one's own desire. For example, one should strive to only spend their wealth on things commanded and recommended by Islam, such as a person's own necessities and on the necessities of their dependents while avoiding waste, extravagance and excessiveness. This attitude will prevent one from becoming attached to the blessing meaning, it will ensure the blessing remains in their hands instead of their heart. This is an important concept to understand and act on as it prevents one from becoming too attached to the blessing. As each worldly blessing is bound to pass away this attitude will prevent one from becoming overly sad meaning, becoming grieved and depressed when it eventually does. Keeping the blessing in one's hand might lead to sadness when one eventually loses it but this sadness is acceptable in Islam and does not lead to impatience and mental disorders, such as depression, which severe sadness namely, grief, leads to.

In addition, this attitude prevents one from misusing the blessing which often occurs when it is within one's heart instead of their hands. For example, unnecessarily hoarding wealth and greedily amassing more. This concept has been indicated in 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...”

Keeping things in one's hand instead of their heart will ensure they always remember that the blessing belongs to Allah, the Exalted, and not them. This again prevents impatience when one eventually loses it. This has been indicated in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 156:

“Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return."

So a Muslim must strive to use each blessing according to the teachings of Islam thereby, ensuring it remains in their hands instead of their heart which in fact should contain only the love of Allah, the Exalted.

The Material World - 28

I had a thought which I wanted to share. When people, irrespective of their faith, go on holiday they only pack the things they need and maybe a little extra but they try to avoid over packing. Even the amount of money they take with them they limit in respect to their stay abroad. When they arrive they often stay in a hotel which usually has the main necessities of living with a few extras. If they believe they will never return to the same destination in the future they will never buy a house as they will claim their stay is short and they will not return. They do not get a job during their holiday claiming that their stay is short so they do not need to earn more money. They do not get married nor have children claiming the holiday destination is not their homeland where they would get married and have children. Generally speaking, this is the attitude and mind-set of holiday makers.

It is strange how Muslims truly believe they will depart from this world soon meaning, their stay in the world is temporary just like being on holiday, and they believe their stay in the hereafter will be permanent yet, they do not adequately prepare for it. If they truly realised the short time they have, similarly to a holiday, they would not dedicate too much effort on their homes and instead be content with a simple home just like the traveller who is content with a simple hotel. So in reality, this world is like the holiday destination in the example yet, Muslims do not treat it like one. Instead, they dedicate the majority of their efforts in beautifying their world while neglecting the eternal hereafter. It is sometimes hard to believe some Muslims actually believe in the permanent hereafter when one observes the amount of effort they dedicate to the temporal world. Muslims should

therefore strive in preparing for the hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience while being pleased with obtaining and utilising the necessities of this world. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to live in this world as travellers in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6416. They should not take this world as a permanent home and instead treat it like a holiday destination.

The Material World - 29

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the sudden death of a child celebrity. It is strange that even though people believe they can die at any moment, yet the vast majority behave as if they will live a long life. Some dedicate their efforts to this material world to such a degree that even if they were guaranteed a long life they could not exert any more effort for the sake of gaining more from this world. Unfortunately, muslims delay preparing for the hereafter believing they can do it in the future. They often keep delaying this preparation until they suddenly encounter death unprepared. This preparation involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in 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 no matter how long they live, life goes by in a flash. So they should take every opportunity they have in order to prepare for the eternal hereafter. This does not mean they should abandon the world completely. It means they should prioritize preparing for the hereafter, by only taking what they need from the material world in order to fulfil their necessities and responsibilities according to the commands of Allah, the Exalted. This attitude will allow them to enjoy the lawful pleasures of this world and prepare adequately for the next one also. A muslim only fails preparing for the hereafter correctly because of their pursuit of the excess of this material world, not by striving to fulfil their necessities and responsibilities, as this is a part of preparing for the hereafter.

A muslim should remember the Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7424, which warns that only a person's deeds will accompany them in their grave while their family and wealth abandons them at this crucial moment. Therefore, a muslim should give priority to the thing which will aid them in their moment of need.

Muslims should not delay preparing for the hereafter otherwise, they may well encounter death suddenly while unprepared, as death does not come at a particular age or time. If they fail to prepare, they will be left with nothing but regrets at a time when regrets will not benefit them. Chapter 89 Al Fajr, verses 23-24:

"And brought [within view], that Day, is Hell - that Day, man will remember, but how [i.e., what good] to him will be the remembrance? He will say, "Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life.""

The Material World - 30

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the stresses of life and how to navigate through them without becoming affected by mental disorders, such as depression. One thing which can help a muslim to achieve this is to understand that every worldly blessing they possess 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 other means by Allah,

the Exalted, to reach and fulfil their ultimate goal. This will also prevent them from grieving. Whereas, the one who believes their worldly blessing is the end goal 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 attitude is demonstrated practically when they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. 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 spiritual hearts.

The Material World - 31

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on how people strive to create the perfect life. It is quite obvious when observing most people that they strive hard in order to beautify their material world. In fact, many go beyond this by striving to mould their life so that it becomes perfect and permanent. For example, people spend large amounts of wealth on trying to build the perfect home while hoping that it will endure. Companies make billions out of this desire of people to be perfect and timeless, such as cosmetic companies. Some people endure painful operations in an attempt to defy time and achieve perfection. This shows that there is something within a person's soul which desires perfection and permanence. But the strange thing is that no matter how much resources one uses and no matter how much effort they dedicate, these two things namely, perfection and permanence, are not obtainable in this world. This internal desire was placed inside people to make them strive for perfection and permanence in a place where they do exist namely, the hereafter.

Unfortunately, some misunderstood this desire and misplaced it. Muslims should therefore not make this mistake but instead place this desire in the correct place by striving in the obedience of 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 will ensure they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Only then will they be able to fulfil this desire and achieve true perfection and permanence.

The Material World - 32

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on a gang of thieves who had been caught and sentenced to prison after the police recovered the property they had stolen.

It is important for muslims to understand that this in reality is the worse situation for the thieves, as they were not only sent to prison but they will also not be able to enjoy the wealth they had stolen after they are released. Meaning, they were judged and sentenced to prison over stealing something they no longer possess. This is the biggest loss, as one could argue if the thieves were judged and sentenced to prison for stealing property they still possess it would have been far better for them, as they could have enjoyed it after they were released from prison.

Muslims should understand the fact that on Judgment Day they will be judged over their actions, both worldly and religious. But the major and important difference is that their worldly actions, such as obtaining unnecessary and excess wealth and properties, will be turned into dust by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verses 7-8:

“Indeed, We have made that which is on the earth adornment for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed. And indeed, We will make that which is upon it [into] a barren ground.”

Just like the thieves who were punished over property they no longer possessed, so will people be judged over their worldly actions and possessions they no longer possess. Can one imagine being sent to Hell over worldly things, such as fame and fortune, they no longer possess? The only things which will still be in their possession on Judgment Day and which will aid them in their greatest moment of need are their religious actions which are the result of using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. So each muslim must decide where they should dedicate the majority of their efforts. Either to worldly things and deeds which will perish and turn into dust with this material world while they face the reckoning over them or dedicate the majority of their efforts to religious deeds which will endure and provide them company, shelter and aid on a Great Day. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verses 103-104:

“Say, “Shall we [believers] inform you of the greatest losers as to [their] deeds? [They are] those whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work.””

The Material World - 33

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the importance of having a positive mind-set when dealing with worldly issues.

It is important for muslims to develop the correct perception so that they can increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This in turn ensures one gains peace of mind and body in both worlds, as it encourages one to use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

This correct perception is what the righteous predecessors possessed and it is the thing which encouraged them to avoid the excess luxuries of the material world and instead prepare for the hereafter. This is an important

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

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

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

The Material World - 34

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on different charity projects and how people sacrificed the things they liked in order to please the needy.

It is important for muslims to understand the importance of chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 92:

“Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love. And whatever you spend - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it.”

This verse makes it clear that a person cannot be a true believer meaning, they will possess a defect in their faith, until they are willing to dedicate the things they love for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Even though many believe this verse applies to wealth but it in fact means much more. It includes every blessing which a muslim likes and loves. For example, muslims are happy to dedicate their precious time on the things which please them. But they refuse to dedicate time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, beyond the obligatory duties which barely takes an hour or two in one's day. Countless muslims are happy to dedicate their physical strength in different pleasurable activities yet, many of them refuse to dedicate it to the things which please Allah, the Exalted, such as voluntary fasting. More

commonly, people are happy to strive in things which they desire like obtaining excess wealth which they do not need, even if it means they have to do overtime and give up their sleep, yet how many strive in this way in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him? How many give up their precious time in order to learn and act on Islamic knowledge?

It is strange that muslims desire lawful worldly and religious blessings yet, overlook a simple fact. That they will only gain these things when they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as this is showing gratitude to Him. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

How can they dedicate minimal things to Him and still expect to achieve all their dreams? This attitude is truly strange.

The Material World - 35

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the many difficulties people across the world are facing. 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 according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is good, even if it seems 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 Musa, 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 seems 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."

The Material World - 36

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on sponsoring animals. Firstly, it is important to note Islam teaches muslims the importance of treating all creatures kindly. For example, a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 378, mentions a man who was forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, because he fed a thirsty dog. This Hadith concludes by advising that being kind to all creatures leads to reward. None the less, one of the reasons why humanity across the globe is suffering is because many people have prioritised things incorrectly. For example, some are more concerned about the welfare of animals than humans. This is quite obvious when one observes the behaviour of some animal lovers. The majority of muslims have given striving for the temporal world priority over the permanent hereafter. This is obvious when one observes their typical daily routine. Even some of the muslims who try to please Allah, the Exalted, prioritise things incorrectly for example, they give preference to voluntary goods deeds over acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

This shift in priorities only occurred when muslims stopped acting on the teachings of Islam and instead acted according to their own desires. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, prioritised everything correctly thereby fulfilling the rights of everyone, as they did not act according to their own desires. They instead acted according to the teachings and the list of priorities set by Islam. This is evident to anyone who has studied their lives.

Just like a student who prioritizes having fun over studying for their exams is unlikely to succeed, so will the people who incorrectly prioritise the different aspects of their lives. Incorrectly prioritising causes one to misplace the things and the people within their lives and it encourages them to devote their efforts and resources incorrectly. All of this leads to a huge mess in one's life, which removes any real peace of mind and body one can obtain.

Humanity as a whole and especially muslims will only find real success and progression in both worlds when they prioritise things correctly, this applies to both worldly and religious matters. This is only possible when one acts according to the teachings of Islam. Reordering this list of priorities will only lead to problems for humanity, which is quite obvious when one turns the pages of history.

The Material World - 37

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the achievements of a celebrity. It described their achievements as their legacy which they will leave behind for people to benefit from years after they have departed from this world.

First of all, it is important to understand worldly legacies come and go. How many rich and powerful people have built massive empires only for them to be torn apart and forgotten shortly after their death? The few signs left behind from some of these legacies only endure in order to warn people not to follow in their footsteps. An example is the great empire of Pharaoh. Islam not only teaches muslims to send blessings ahead of them to the hereafter in the form of righteous deeds but it also teaches them to leave a lovely legacy behind from which people can benefit from. In fact, when a muslim passes away and leaves behind anything which is useful, such as an ongoing charity, they will be rewarded for it. This is confirmed in Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4223. So a muslim should strive to perform righteous deeds and send forward as much good as possible but they should also try leaving a good legacy behind which will benefit them after they pass away.

Unfortunately, many muslims are so concerned about their wealth and properties that they only end up leaving them behind which does not benefit them in the least. Each muslim should not be fooled into believing they have plenty of time for creating a legacy for themselves, as the

moment of death is unknown and often pounces on people unexpectedly. Today is the day a muslim should truly reflect on the legacy they will leave behind. If this legacy is good and beneficial, they should praise Allah, the Exalted, for granting them the strength to do so. But if it is something which will not benefit them, then they should prepare something which will, so that they not only send forward good to the hereafter but also leave good behind. It is hoped that the one who is surrounded by good in this way will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. So each muslim should ask themselves what is their legacy?

The Material World - 38

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the death of a celebrity and their worldly achievements. This is connected to a verse of the Holy Quran found in chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 96:

“Whatever you have will end, but what Allah has is lasting...”

The death of this celebrity was a reminder of the many famous people who have passed away and how they were so quickly forgotten by the world, especially the media. Some celebrities were always mentioned during their lifetime in the news but after their passing they were perhaps mentioned once in the year that followed. In addition, the very things they obtained in the material world, such as fame, fortune, authority and a high social status all passed away while they journeyed to the hereafter empty handed.

This news article was also a reminder of the many celebrities who after reaching the top of their industry became depressed and even suicidal. One of the reasons this occurs is that when they reach the top of the mountain after sacrificing so much, such as their modesty, dignity and morals, they do not find what they were looking for namely, contentment and lasting happiness. When they assess their life, they realise that

returning to their previous and more pleasant lifestyle is not possible, as the things they sacrificed have now moved on or faded away. For example, they might have severed a friendship with a good person as they advised them not to sacrifice their self-respect for the sake of fame. They now find themselves surrounded by people who only desire their company for the sake of the material world, such as wealth. This often leads to loneliness, even though they are surrounded by a large entourage. Then they spiral out of control which leads to a huge mental breakdown. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

The key thing to understand is that there is nothing wrong with pursuing worldly success, as long as it is lawful. But one should not sacrifice the limits set by Islam by misusing the blessings they have been granted, such as their modesty, to achieve it. One should also prioritize the hereafter over the material world knowing that whatever worldly thing they obtain will eventually leave them during their life or at the time of their death. If they behave in the opposite manner they too, like the celebrities of this world, will be left empty handed in their grave and they will be forgotten by those who they left behind. So a muslim must fulfil their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and to people, while enjoying the material world within the limits of Islam. This involves using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This leads to peace of mind and body in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

The Material World - 39

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on a famous athlete whose undefeated streak had been broken. This incident is connected to Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3618. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that every worldly thing which is raised high is eventually lowered by Allah, the Exalted.

This does not mean muslims should avoid the material world and trying to achieve success in it. Muslims should strive to obtain a worldly education and a lawful occupation, as it helps one to avoid unlawful wealth and is required to fulfil one's responsibilities. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

“But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world...”

This Hadith actually means that one should not make worldly success their number one priority and instead dedicate most of their efforts in achieving peace of mind and body in both worlds. This involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

No matter how much worldly success one gains, eventually it will fade away. This fading will occur either when one is alive or their success will part from them when they pass away. Countless people have constructed great empires and achieved much worldly success, yet all of this achievement eventually faded away. How many people have had their name plastered across sky scrapers only for their name to be removed and forgotten after a short while?

This Hadith does not mean that a person will not be given success after facing trouble. Muslims should strive to achieve success in the world and not quit when they face setbacks. The key is to prioritize the success of the hereafter over the material world by using the blessings and success of the material world to achieve success in the hereafter. One can achieve this by striving for lawful worldly success in order to fulfil their responsibilities and duties without waste and extravagance. They should also utilise their worldly success to aid them further in obtaining peace of mind and body in both worlds, by spending their extra wealth in charitable projects. If their worldly success can influence society, then they should use this in a way which benefits others. A muslim should behave in this manner before their worldly success fades away and they lose out on using it to achieve peace of mind and body in both worlds.

Simply put, success in the material world will pass away but the success of the hereafter will endure, therefore muslims should dedicate their efforts accordingly.

The Material World - 40

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the positive and negative influence of society and culture. 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. Chapter 15 Al Hijr, verses 39-40:

"[Iblees] said, 'My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them [mankind] on earth, and I will mislead them all. Except, among them, Your sincere servants.'"

The Material World - 41

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.

The Material World - 42

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4297, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a day would soon come when other nations would attack the muslim nation and even though they would be great in number they would be deemed insignificant by the world. Allah, the Exalted, would remove the fear of muslims from the hearts' of the other nations. This would occur because of the muslim nation's love for the material world and their hatred for death.

The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were small in number yet, they overcame entire nations whereas the muslims today are greater in number yet, have no social or political influence in the world. This is because the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, lived their lives according to the teachings of Islam thereby, favoring and preparing for the hereafter over enjoying the lawful pleasures of this world. They used the blessings they were granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

Whereas, most of the muslims today have adopted the opposite mind-set. It is important to understand that the root of all sins is the love of the material world. This is because any sin which is committed is done out of love and desire for it. The material world can be split into four aspects: fame, fortune, authority and one's social life, such as their relatives and friends. It is in the excess pursuit of these things which lead to sins, such as earning unlawful wealth out of love for fortune. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2376, warns that love for wealth and authority

is more destructive to one's faith than the destruction two hungry wolves would cause if they were let loose on a herd of sheep. Whenever people seek the excess of these aspects of the material world it always leads to disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. When this occurs the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, is removed which leads to nothing but trouble.

Even though, some muslims believe pursuing the excess things of the material world is harmless, it is something the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against in many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3158. He warned that he did not fear poverty for muslims. What he feared was that muslims would pursue the excess of this material world, such as excess wealth, and this would cause them to compete with each other over it and this would lead to their destruction. As warned in this Hadith, this was the behaviour of the past nations.

As the material world is limited it is obvious that people would have to compete over it if they desired more than their necessities. This competition would cause them to adopt the characteristics which contradict the character of a true muslim, such as envy and enmity for others. They would stop caring for each other as they are too busy competing in gathering and hoarding the material world. And they would contradict the advice given in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6011, which advises that muslims should act like one body, when any part of the body suffers from an illness, the rest of the body shares in the pain. This competition would drive a muslim to stop loving for others what they love for themselves, which is a characteristic of a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, as they desire to outdo their fellow muslims in worldly things. Persisting on this competition will cause a muslim to love,

hate, give and withhold all for the sake of the material world instead of for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, which is an aspect of perfecting one's faith according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. This competition is the difference between the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and many of the muslims today. This attitude would prevent the Muslims from using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This would cause them to lose the support of Allah, the Exalted, which opens the door for their enemies to overpower them.

If muslims desire to regain the strength and influence Islam once had, they must strive and prioritize preparing for the hereafter over striving for obtaining, enjoying and hoarding the excess of this material world. This must occur from an individual level until it affects the whole nation.

The Material World - 43

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. Worldly success can be broken up into fame, fortune, authority, family, friends and a career.

It is important to understand that even though it is not unlawful to strive for and obtain worldly success, one must understand that worldly success is granted to people as a test. Generally speaking, there are four paths one can choose from after they are granted worldly success which determines whether they pass the test or not. The first path is that after obtaining worldly success, such as a good career, a Muslim loses themselves in their career and prioritizes progressing in their career above all else. They are less bothered about making money and concentrate more on advancing in their career. This type of person is common, whereby they happily give up a higher salary for a lower one just because the latter has more opportunities to progress in their career. Their intention and striving distracts them from finding peace in this world and practically preparing for the Day of Judgement, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

The second path one can choose after being granted worldly success is to lose themselves in gaining more and more wealth, such as expanding their business and investing in financial opportunities. This person is less bothered with advancing in their career and spending their wealth but only

cares about making more wealth. Their intention and striving distracts them from obtaining peace of mind and practically preparing for the Day of Judgement, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

The third path one can choose after being granted worldly success, is when one becomes engrossed in enjoying the worldly success they have obtained, such as wealth or fame. They worked hard to obtain worldly success and therefore feel entitled to enjoy it. These people are less bothered with making more wealth or advancing in their careers and instead only care about enjoying themselves and therefore lose themselves in entertainment, fun and games, such as going on holidays and attending parties. Their intention and striving distracts them from obtaining peace of mind and practically preparing for the Day of Judgement, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

These three paths causes a person to fail the test of being granted worldly success, even if they adhere to the lawful, as these things were not the reason why the worldly success was granted to them.

The final and correct path one can choose when they are granted worldly success is when they use the success, such as wealth, in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Through this, they pass the test of their worldly success and obtain peace of mind and body. They obtain a good balance between making use of their worldly

success in order to lead a comfortable life yet avoid excessiveness, waste and extravagance. This does not mean one cannot enjoy worldly success, but it means success lies in enjoying it in moderation so that one is not distracted from obtaining peace of mind and practically preparing for the Day of Judgement, which involves using the worldly blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This is only possible to do when one learns and acts on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is not possible to do for the one who chooses one of the first three paths discussed after they are granted worldly success.

The Material World - 44

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. Many Muslims use classic excuses in order to avoid learning and acting on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, a parent will use their preoccupation with raising their child as an excuse to avoid learning and acting on Islamic knowledge. Anything which prevents one from fulfilling their purpose of creation, which is to use their blessings in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is nothing but a punishment and a curse for them.

Firstly, a Muslim must be honest with themselves, as lying to oneself only hinders them from peace of mind and body in both worlds. If a Muslim has time to watch films and television shows, then they have time to learn and act on Islamic knowledge.

Secondly, a Muslim must understand that every worldly thing they have been granted only becomes a blessing when they use it in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This involves learning and acting on Islamic knowledge and fulfilling their duties and responsibilities towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation. If these worldly things, such as a spouse, children or a career, prevents one from learning and acting on Islamic knowledge, then they should know that these worldly

things have only become a curse and punishment for them, as a direct consequence of their laziness and bad attitude.

One should dedicate whatever time they have to learning and acting on Islamic knowledge. Allah, the Exalted, does not expect Muslims to become scholars, but they must dedicate some time, whatever time they can find to learning and acting on Islamic knowledge, so that they can gradually improve their behaviour towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation, which involves using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

The Material World - 45

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. In order to correctly evaluate the worth of things, one must never accept the views of social media, fashion and culture, as they often get this wrong. For example, social media and culture teaches that having lots of wealth is valuable. Whereas, the truth is that having excess wealth only leads to stress, especially when it is misused.

An excellent way of judging the value of things, which, in most cases, correlates with the teachings of Islam, is by observing whether something endures or not. All things which have real value, such as peace of mind and good deeds, endure. For example, a person who performed a righteous deed, such as the Holy Pilgrimage years earlier will still feel the peace of mind it brings whenever they think about it. Peace of mind granted through the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is something which also endures, irrespective of the situation one faces. Whereas, the things which have little real value never endure, such as fun and entertainment. For example, when one finishes watching a movie, they begin looking for the next thing to watch, as the fun they experienced with the movie vanished when it finished. Going on leisurely holidays is the same. When one returns from holiday, they often begin planning the next one, as the fun they experienced on holiday vanished the moment they returned home. Having friends is another classic example. Many people sacrifice much for the sake of friendship even though those friendships which are rooted in the world often fade away with the passing of time. Best friends become strangers.

Observing things according to whether they endure or not is therefore an excellent way to judge what has real value and what does not. From this one can learn where they should dedicate their efforts and resources. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 96:

"Whatever you have will end, but what Allāh has is lasting..."

The Material World - 46

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. If one observes people, they will clearly see that peace of mind and success do not lie with fame, fortune, authority, family, friends or one's career. This is obvious, as the people who possess the most of these things face more emotional and mental issues than anyone else, such as anxiety, depression, stress and suicidal tendencies and are the most addicted to drugs and alcohol. As Allah, the Exalted, alone, controls the hearts of people, which is the station of peace of mind, He alone decides who obtains peace of mind. The only condition for obtaining it is sincerely obeying Him, by using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 28:

"...Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah do hearts find peace."

And chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life..."

Whereas, the person who turns away from this obedience will be prevented from obtaining peace of mind and success in both worlds, even if they have the world at their feet. Chapter 20 Taha, verses 124-126:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind." He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?" [Allāh] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot [i.e., disregarded] them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.""

But the point of this discussion is to understand something further. As peace of mind and success are not at all connected to worldly things, such as wealth, it does not mean one should abandon this material world and the opportunities they have been granted by Allah, the Exalted, such as the opportunity to educate oneself. Islam is a religion of balance and balance is best even in this case. A Muslim should use the lawful opportunities granted to them without them being prevented from using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. For example, one should not abandon education and pursuing a good and lawful job just because peace and success does not lie with them. One must understand that worldly success in itself is not bad, it becomes bad or good depending on how it is used. Therefore, one should use the good and lawful worldly opportunities they have been granted in order to obtain worldly success so that they can increase the amount of good deeds they perform and in order to spread goodness within society. For example, the one who obtains a good job, such as becoming a doctor, should use their salary and social influence in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. They can reduce the amount they work, as their high salary covers their expenses

and financial responsibilities easily, so that they can dedicate more time to learning and acting on Islamic knowledge and dedicate more time to taking part in beneficial projects. All of these things will increase one's sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of doing good deeds and spreading goodness in society. All of these things are difficult or impossible to do when one does not obtain the worldly success someone with a good job obtains. This is the reason why many of the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not refuse the good worldly opportunities that were offered to them, such as being a governor of a city. They completely utilised this worldly success in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, and therefore increased their peace of mind and success in both worlds.

To conclude, a Muslim must understand that peace of mind and success in both worlds only lie in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Him. They should use the good worldly opportunities granted to them while maintaining this obedience in order to increase their peace and success in both worlds and they should not turn away from worldly success, unless they truly believe they will not be able to maintain their sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted.

The Hereafter - 1

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2417, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a person's feet will not move on Judgment Day until they answer five questions.

The first is about their life and what they did with it. This refers to the time given to a person. A muslim should understand that death often comes at an unexpected time. A muslim should not assume they will reach elderly age, as many die before this occurs. In reality, no matter what age one reaches, everyone admits that their life went by in a flash. A muslim should not believe they will obey Allah, the Exalted, such as attending the Mosques for the congregational prayers, when they reach elderly age, as this is wishful thinking. Even if one reaches this age, as they were too engrossed in the material world during their life, the change in their environment will have little positive effect on their character and obedience to Allah, the Exalted. A muslim should instead utilize the time they have been granted instead of delaying by obeying Allah, the Exalted, which involves 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. The one who behaves in this manner will use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they obtain peace and success in both worlds, irrespective of how long they live. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

But the one who fails to utilize their time in the correct way will find that they waste it on vain things, which prevents them from obtaining peace and success in both worlds, as they did not use their resources in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

Failing to use one's time correctly will also be a great regret on Judgement Day, especially when they observe the reward of those who utilized their time correctly.

The next question advised in the main Hadith under discussion will be about their knowledge and what they did with it. It is important for muslims to strive to acquire useful worldly and religious knowledge and more importantly act on it in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents, according to the teachings of Islam and in order to obey Allah, the Exalted, and fulfill the rights of people, correctly. The one who remains

ignorant or fails to act on their knowledge is unlikely to achieve success in either worlds. A person will only reach their desired location when they first find the correct path and then journey down it. But if a person fails to locate the correct path meaning, obtain knowledge, or fails to journey down it, meaning, act on their knowledge, they will not reach their desired destination meaning, success in both worldly and religious matters. Useful knowledge which is acted upon leads to all good, whereas, misusing knowledge leads to trouble in both worlds.

The third and fourth questions people will be asked on Judgment Day are about their wealth specifically, how they earned it and how they spent it. Firstly, muslims must ensure that they only obtain lawful wealth and avoid doubtful or unlawful wealth. Unlawful wealth only leads to the rejection of all of one's righteous deeds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2342. If one's foundation is based on the unlawful then everything coming from it will be considered unlawful and therefore rejected by Allah, the Exalted. The same way the internal foundation of Islam is one's intention, the external foundation of Islam is obtaining and utilising the lawful. A muslim is free to obtain lawful wealth and spend it on lawful things, such as fulfilling one's necessities and the necessities of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. Wealth can become a great blessing for a person in both worlds when it is obtained and spent correctly. But if it is not, it will become a great regret for them in both worlds. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6444, that the wealthy will have little good on the Day of Judgment, except for those who spent in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Before spending on vain things, one should reflect on losing out on the great reward which will be granted to those who spent their wealth correctly on Judgement Day. This will ensure they only spend in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, and avoid sinful and vain expenditure.

The final question will be about one's body and how they used it. A muslim must therefore use every organ of their body, such as their sight and hearing, in the correct way, as prescribed by Islam. This is true gratitude and therefore leads to further blessings. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

One must ensure they avoid evil and vain speech, as the latter will be a great regret on Judgement Day and as it often leads to evil speech. One should speak what is good or remain silent.

In addition, they must use their physical strength in ways which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, before they reach a day when they lose it and are no longer able to perform righteous deeds. It is hoped that the one who uses their strength in the correct way will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, during their time of weakness. In fact, the one who uses their good health correctly will be granted the same reward when they fall sick, even if they do not perform the same good deeds anymore. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 500.

Finally, a muslim must keep their physical and verbal harm away from the self and possessions of others, as this is a sign of a true muslim and believer. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

The Hereafter - 2

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some righteous deeds which continue benefiting a muslim after their death namely, ongoing charity, useful knowledge and a righteous child who supplicates for their deceased parent.

It is important to understand worldly legacies come and go. How many rich and powerful people have built massive empires only for them to be torn apart and forgotten shortly after their death? The few signs left behind from some of these legacies only endure in order to warn people not to follow in their footsteps. An example of this is the great empire of Pharaoh. Islam not only teaches muslims to send blessings ahead of them to the hereafter in the form of righteous deeds but it also teaches muslims to leave a lovely legacy behind, from which they and other people can gain benefit from. Unfortunately, many muslims are so concerned about their wealth and properties that they only end up leaving them behind which does not benefit them in the least. Each muslim should not be fooled into believing they have plenty of time for creating a legacy for themselves, as the moment of death is unknown and often pounces on people unexpectedly. Today is the day a muslim should truly reflect on the legacy they will leave behind and if it is righteous they should praise Allah, the Exalted, for granting them the strength to do so. But if it is something which will not benefit them, then they should prepare something which will benefit them after their death, so that they not only send forward good to the hereafter but also leave good behind. It is hoped that the one who is surrounded by good in this way will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted.

The ongoing charity mentioned in the main Hadith includes anything from which the creation continues to benefit from, such as a water well. As long as the creation benefits from it the donor will continue to receive reward, even after their death.

Useful knowledge includes both worldly and religious knowledge which benefit people. According to the Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3641, leaving useful knowledge behind is the tradition of all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon him. Therefore, Muslims must strive to concentrate on fulfilling this tradition instead of concentrating on leaving wealth and properties behind. This part of the main Hadith also encourages one to gain and act on beneficial knowledge, as one first needs to learn before they can teach others. If one struggles to learn and teach, then they should organize for someone else to learn and teach, such as sponsoring a student of knowledge. This will ensure they gain a full share of reward of any useful knowledge spread by this student of knowledge.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith can only be fulfilled when one raises their child according to Islamic teachings. Otherwise, they will not bother with supplicating on behalf of their deceased parents with sincerity. The best way one can achieve this is to lead by example. Meaning, a parent must learn and act on Islamic teachings and be a practical role model for their child to follow. The one who behaves in such a manner will find that their child becomes a blessing for them during their life and after their death, as their child will sincerely supplicate on their behalf regularly.

The Hereafter - 3

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6442, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person's true wealth is what they send ahead to the hereafter whereas, what they leave behind is in reality, the wealth of their inheritors.

It is important for muslims to send as many blessings, such as their wealth, as they can to the hereafter by using them in ways which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This includes spending on one's needs and the needs of their dependents without being wasteful, excessive or extravagant. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006.

But if a muslim does not use their blessings correctly, they will become a source of stress and punishment for them in both worlds, as they have forgotten Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

And if they hoard them and leave them behind for their inheritors, then they will be held accountable for obtaining them even though others will enjoy them after they depart. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379.

In addition, if their inheritors use the blessings correctly, then they will obtain reward from Allah, the Exalted, while the one who collected it will be left empty handed on Judgment Day. Or if their inheritor misuses the blessings then it will become a great regret for both the one who earned the blessing and their inheritor especially, if they did not teach their inheritor, such as their child, how to correctly use the blessings, as this was a duty on them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928.

A Muslim must remember that one's family and all the worldly blessings they hoarded will abandon them at their grave and only their deeds will remain with them. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6514. Therefore, they must convert their worldly blessings into good deeds, by using them in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, so that they take them with them to their lonely grave.

Muslims should therefore fulfill their responsibilities towards Allah, the Exalted, and people and ensure they take the rest of their blessings with them to the hereafter by using them correctly as prescribed by Islam. Otherwise, they will lead a stressful life in this world, even if they possess the entire world, as Allah, the Exalted, the Controller of hearts, only grants peace of mind to those who use their worldly blessings in ways pleasing to

Him, and they will be left empty handed and full of regrets on Judgment Day. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verses 103-104:

"Say, "Shall we [believers] inform you of the greatest losers as to [their] deeds? [They are] those whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work.""

The Hereafter - 4

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2559, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Paradise is surrounded by hardships and Hell is surrounded by desires.

This means the path which leads to Paradise contains difficulties and hardships. In most cases, a person cannot obtain good in this world without going through some sort of difficulty, such as exerting one's energy, then how can one believe they can obtain Paradise without facing difficulties? If one turns the pages of history they will observe the righteous always faced difficulties but as they knew the path of Paradise contained difficulties they maintained their focus on the destination instead of the difficulties. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once declared that no one had been tested more than him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2472. Therefore, muslims must realize the fact that facing some difficulties in this world is an extremely small price to pay to obtain the permanent bliss of Paradise. Therefore, they should constantly focus on the destination, in every time of ease, so that they adopt gratitude, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, and focus on the destination, in every time of difficulty, by adopting patience, which involves avoiding complaining and maintaining sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, through speech and actions.

The path to Hell is full of desires. This indicates the importance of maintaining one's obedience to Allah, the Exalted, at all times 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. Even though it is not unlawful to enjoy lawful pleasures in this world, a muslim should minimize these as much as possible as these lawful desires often lead to unlawful desires. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205, advises that the one who behaves in such a manner will safe guard their faith and honor. A muslim should never obey their desires or the desires of others if it means they will disobey Allah, the Exalted, as the pleasure of fulfilling desires vanishes quickly whereas the regret and the potential punishment will last long.

To conclude, a desire fulfilled will not make one feel better if they end up in Hell. And a difficulty one faces will not make them feel bad if they end up in Paradise.

The Hereafter - 5

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7232, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that people will be resurrected on Judgment Day in the same state they died on Earth.

This means that if a person dies on good they will be resurrected on good. But if they die on evil they will be raised in an evil way.

A muslim should not live in heedlessness by believing that as they have faith in Islam it guarantees they will die and therefore be raised in a good state on Judgment Day. If they persist on the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, and then die in this state without sincerely repenting, then they will be raised in an evil way. It does not take a scholar to determine what will happen to this person on Judgment Day.

From this Hadith one can understand that the way they will die will be in the same state they have lived. Meaning, if they lived in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by sincerely 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, then they will die in a good state and therefore be raised in a good state, which includes being raised with the righteous, as they practically followed in their

footsteps. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688.

A muslim should therefore not walk the path to Hell by disobeying Allah, the Exalted, which involves misusing the blessings they were granted by Him, and believe that they will somehow be resurrected in a good state thereby joining the pious in Paradise. Chapter 20 Taha, verses 124-126:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind." He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?" [Allāh] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot [i.e., disregarded] them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.""

The Hereafter - 6

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7420, the Holy prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the only wealth one truly possesses is connected to three things.

The first is what a person spends of their wealth on obtaining and consuming food. A muslim should spend reasonably on food without excessiveness, waste or extravagance as this can be considered a sin. Chapter 7 Al A'raf, verse 31:

“...and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.”

It is vital for muslims to only consume the lawful as one's supplication is rejected if they consume the unlawful according to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2346. If one's supplication is rejected how can the rest of their actions possibly be accepted by Allah, the Exalted? In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2342, indicates that any good deed rooted in the unlawful is rejected. Just like the inward foundation of Islam is one's intention, similarly the outward foundation of Islam is obtaining and utilising the lawful.

Finally, a Muslim should adopt the mindset whereby they eat simple food so that they eat in order to live and not live in order to eat, whereby they are constantly distracted by their stomach from more important responsibilities and duties.

The next thing one spends their true wealth on is on their clothes. Again, a muslim should avoid extravagance and waste, as these people have been labeled the siblings of the Devil. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 27:

“Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils...”

A muslim should be pleased with nice, clean and simple clothing, as this is an aspect of faith according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118. Islam is not against appearing nice but one must understand that this is easily obtainable without spending much wealth or time. Dedication to appearing nice must never hinder one from their duties and responsibilities. The truth is that the more one indulges in their appearance the more they will adopt extravagance in other aspects of their life, such as their car, home and food. This will prevent them from using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This leads to difficulties in both worlds. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 124:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

The final wealth a person truly owns is what they send ahead to the hereafter by spending it in ways which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This includes spending on one's necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. This includes all the blessings one has been granted, not just wealth. The more one uses these blessings in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, the more peace and success in both worlds they will obtain. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

To conclude, a muslim should remember that the first two things have already been guaranteed by Allah, the Exalted, as they are a part of their provision which cannot change and was allocated to them 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. Therefore, they should be moderate in seeking them and instead focus more on the last aspect. All other forms of obtaining and using wealth in reality, does not belong to a person and will be left behind for others to enjoy even though they will be held accountable for it on Judgment Day.

The Hereafter - 7

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2864, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that on Judgment Day the Sun will be brought within two miles of the creation. This will cause people to sweat according to the deeds they performed during their lives on Earth. Some people's sweat will reach up to their ankles, some their knees and for others it will reach their mouths.

One only needs to ponder over the times they were subjected to intense summer weather and how the heat affected their attitude and behaviour in order to appreciate how difficult the situation on Judgment Day will be when the Sun is brought so close to them. This shows that those who strive hard and exert sincere efforts in the obedience of 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, will find relaxation on Judgment Day. But those who were lazy, relaxed and misused the blessings they were granted during their lives on Earth, will be subjected to great stress on Judgment Day. Simply put, the one who strives here will relax there but the one who relaxes here will strive there in difficulty.

The same way people strive hard in this material world so that they obtain a comfortable life and even a comfortable retirement, even though reaching retirement age is not guaranteed, muslims should strive even harder in this world by obeying Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they have been

granted in ways pleasing to Him, so that they can obtain peace and comfort in this world and on the Day that is guaranteed to occur. It is a sign of great ignorance to strive for a day one may never reach namely, the day of retirement, and not strive for a day they are guaranteed to reach and experience namely, Judgment Day.

The Hereafter - 8

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 484, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the person who will be closest to him on Judgment Day will be the one who sent the most blessings and salutations on him.

Sending blessings and salutations on the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, verbally has been commanded in the Holy Quran and advised in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3370. Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 56:

“Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.”

But it is important to note, if one desires to correctly send blessings and salutations on him they must support their words through actions by learning and acting on his traditions. They should not reorder the priority of his traditions according to their desires. This is in fact the first step which allows one to fulfil another verse of the Holy Quran, chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

“Say, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], “If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins...””

When one persists on this attitude it will allow them to prioritise preparing for the hereafter over this material world without neglecting their worldly duties. Meaning, it will show them how to use the blessings they have been granted correctly so that they fulfil their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and towards people. This includes fulfilling their needs and the needs of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. This will allow one to navigate through each situation correctly, whether there are times of ease or difficulties, without going overboard in devoting themselves to the material world, their own desires or other people. This attitude will allow them to put everything and everyone in their rightful place within their life without neglecting or excessively devoting themselves to anything or any person.

Allah, the Exalted, would not have set an example in the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which was not possible to follow and adopt. Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 21:

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”

Each person can achieve this according to their own potential but this requires a sincere effort which is supported by actions. This is the true

meaning of sending blessings and salutations on the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The one who behaves in this manner practically proves their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and as a result they will join him in the hereafter. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688.

The Hereafter - 9

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2460, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a grave is either a garden of Paradise or a pit of Hell. This Hadith further explains that when a successful believer is placed in their grave it widens and becomes comfortable for them whereas, the grave of a sinful person becomes extremely constricted and harmful for them.

It is important to note, that in reality, each person takes the garden of Paradise or pit of Hell with them when they depart this world in the form of their deeds. If a muslim obeys Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then it will ensure they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they prepare the deeds required to make their grave a garden of Paradise. But if they disobey Allah, the Exalted, by misusing the blessings they have been granted, then their sins will create the pit of Hell they will rest in until the Day of Judgment.

Therefore, muslims must act today and not delay in this preparation as the time of death is unknown and often comes suddenly. Delaying to a tomorrow one may not see is foolish and it only leads to regrets. The same way a person spends much energy and time beautifying their home in this world, the home they will only remain in for a short time, they must strive harder in beautifying their grave, as the journey to it is inevitable and the stay there very long. And if one suffers in their grave then what follows will only be worse. This has been warned in a Hadith

found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4267. One must never forget that the people and worldly things, such as their business, they dedicate most of their energy to, will abandon them when they reach their grave. Only their deeds will accompany them, the same deeds which will determine whether they are placed in a garden of Paradise or a pit of Hell.

Finally, a person must not be fooled into assuming that one's faith is good enough to ensure their garden of Paradise. Faith is an inward state which must be reflected outwardly through one's deeds. This is what the Knower of what is in the hearts has commanded. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer...We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

And the truth is that as faith is like a tree, it must be watered and nourished by righteous deeds. If one fails to nourish their plant of faith then they may well find that it withers away before they reach their grave.

The Hereafter - 10

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 103, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that whoever has their deeds scrutinized by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day will be punished.

It is important for muslims to understand that even though enjoying the lawful pleasures of this material world are not prohibited, they often lead to the unlawful. For example, vain speech is usually the first step before sinful speech. In addition, the more one indulges in unnecessary lawful things the longer their accountability will be on Judgment Day. One should bear in mind that Judgment Day will be a difficult day. For example, the Sun will be brought within two miles of the creation. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2421. While one waits for their accounting and during their final judgement, Hell will be face to face with them. Therefore, the longer one's accounting, the more stress they will endure. Even though, a muslim may be forgiven and saved by Allah, the Exalted, but none the less, the longer their accountability the greater stress they will endure. Seeing as Judgment Day will be fifty thousand years long, according to the Holy Quran, it does not make sense to enjoy a few decades of lawful pleasures if it means one will face a difficult accountability on a day which will last so long. Chapter 70 Al Ma'arij, verse 4:

“...during a Day the extent of which is fifty thousand years.”

It is therefore best to lead a simple life in order to minimize one's accountability on the Day of Judgment. It is one of the reasons why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4118, that simplicity is a part of faith. It is a simple life which will cause the poorer Muslims to enter Paradise five hundred years before the rich muslims, as their accounting will be less. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4122. Seeing as people do not generally live for more than 80 years, does it make sense to live an indulgent life if it leads to a delay in entering Paradise by five hundred years? This assuming of course, one enters Paradise directly without being punished in Hell first.

A Muslim must always remember that the more they indulge in lawful worldly things, the more they will face stress in this world, the more it will distract them from preparing for the hereafter, which involves using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, and the harder their accountability will be on Judgement Day. Whereas, the one who leads a simple life, whereby they obtain and utilise worldly things according to their necessities and responsibilities without waste, excessiveness and extravagance, will obtain peace of mind and body and they will be encouraged to prepare practically for the Day of Judgement, which leads to an easier final accounting. It does not take a scholar to determine which path is best.

The Hereafter - 11

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1372, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, confirmed that there is punishment in the grave.

Many verses and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discuss this stage which all people will face in some form or fashion. As it is inevitable, muslims must prepare for it as the light or darkness of the grave does not come from the grave itself. It is one's deeds which either darkens or illuminates their grave. Similarly, it is one's deeds which will determine if they face punishment or mercy in their grave. The only way to prepare for it is through piety which consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will ensure one uses the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. These righteous deeds will protect one from the punishment of the grave, by the permission and mercy of Allah, the Exalted.

It is strange how a Muslim will dedicate much time, energy and wealth to making their worldly home comfortable, even though their stay in this world is short, whereas, they pay little attention to making their grave comfortable, even though one's stay in the grave will be long and more serious.

Muslims often journey to cemeteries in order to bury their relatives and friends. But very few truly realize that one day, sooner or later, their turn will come. Even though, the majority of muslims dedicate the majority of their efforts to pleasing their family and earning wealth over pleasing Allah, the Exalted, through righteous deeds, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, warns that these two things, which muslims give priority to, will abandon them at their grave and only their deeds will remain with them. Therefore, it makes sense for a muslim to give priority to obtaining righteous deeds over pleasing their family and obtaining excess wealth. This does not mean one should abandon their family and wealth. But it means they should fulfil their duty to their family according to the teachings of Islam without going overboard by neglecting their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and only obtain the wealth they require to achieve this. When this is done correctly it becomes a righteous deed as well. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006. One should never abandon their duties to Allah, the Exalted, for the sake of their family or wealth as this will only lead to an isolated, lonely and dark grave. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 55:

“From it [i.e., the earth] We created you, and into it We will return you, and from it We will extract you another time.”

The Hereafter - 12

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3120, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that each person will be asked three questions in the grave.

The first question will be who is your Lord? In order to answer this question correctly a muslim must not only believe in Allah, the Exalted, but prove this belief through actions. This is only achieved by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing His decrees with patience. This will ensure they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. It is this very proof which will support a muslim in their grave when they encounter this question. It is important to note, that even some non-muslims believe in Allah, the Exalted, yet they will fail to answer this question correctly as they did not use the blessings they were granted in ways pleasing to Him, during their lives on Earth. If only believing in Him was enough, then these non-muslims would succeed in this question. But it is quite evident they will not succeed.

The next question will be what is your religion? If a muslim desires to answer this correctly they must not only believe in Islam but practically implement its teachings in their everyday life. This involves sincerely striving to obtain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. It is the reason gaining useful knowledge has been made a duty on all muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224. Following Islam goes beyond the few obligatory duties and involves

acting on its teachings in every aspect of one's life, such as one's social, financial, work and personal life.

The final question according to this Hadith will be who is your Prophet? It is important to note, that even some of the past nations believed in their Prophets, peace be upon them, but as they did not follow in their footsteps correctly, they will fail in answering this question correctly. If a muslim desires to answer this question correctly they must not only verbally declare their belief in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but actively learn and act on his traditions and teachings. This is the very purpose of sending Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, meaning, to practically follow them. Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 21:

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”

The mercy, love and forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, which will help a muslim answer this question correctly is only possible to obtain through this method. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

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

To conclude, just like the questions in a written or oral exam cannot be answered successfully without practically learning knowledge, through studying and revision, neither can a person answer the questions of the grave successfully without practically learning and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in every aspect of one's life.

The Hereafter - 13

I had a thought which I wanted to share. I was pondering over the different difficulties and times of ease people face throughout their lives. There are things which a Muslim can remember in order to maintain their focus on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. One of those things is to remember a fact which is supported by a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7088. It indicates that the person who ends up in Paradise will not be bothered by the difficulties they faced during their life on Earth. And the person who ends up in Hell will not feel better when they are reminded of the luxuries they enjoyed during their life on Earth.

A person should not be fooled into thinking the hereafter is like this world. In this world difficulties bother people even after the difficulties pass. And the moments when a person enjoyed luxuries can make them feel better even if they are in prison. But this is not the case in respect to the hereafter. So a Muslim should remember this fact when they are facing difficulties knowing it will not bother them at all if they end up in Paradise. And sins, vain things and the luxuries of this world will not make them feel better if they end up in Hell.

This attitude is a strong mechanism which encourages a Muslim towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, if they ponder on it often.

The Hereafter - 14

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on a person whose company went bankrupt after they faced some difficulties and the regrets they had over this issue. It is important for muslims to understand that whenever they face any type of worldly failure or regrets they should remind themselves of the regrets in the hereafter people will have, such as the one mentioned in chapter 89 Al Fajr, verse 24:

"He will say, "Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life.""

In this world, one's regret will always be followed by another chance or other options which they can pursue in order to gain success once again. But the regret and failure of the hereafter is something which cannot be rectified meaning, there are no second chances in the next world. No one will have the opportunity to return to Earth in order to act differently.

Therefore, every muslim should be more concerned with the failures they may encounter in the hereafter over the failures and regrets of this world. This does not mean one should not strive to achieve lawful success in this world. It means they should always prioritise gaining success in the hereafter over gaining success in this world. This is an important mentality

muslims should adopt before they reach a day where reflecting on their failures and regrets will not help them in the slightest. Chapter 89 Al Fajr, verse 23:

“And brought [within view], that Day, is Hell - that Day, man will remember, but how [what good] to him will be the remembrance?”

The Hereafter - 15

I read a news article a while ago, which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on the biography of a famous person. The things they achieved and the regrets they have.

Muslims should understand that regrets can be classified into two categories. The first are the regrets over worldly things, such as not getting married or having children. The second category are the regrets one will have in their grave and on Judgment Day, such as not making better use of their resources and blessings in order to please Allah, the Exalted. The worldly regrets, irrespective of what they are, will never be permanent, as they will either end when one fulfils their desire, changes their mind or dies. They are temporary in nature, as the maximum time one can have this type of regret is until their death. And they are not so significant, as these regrets may lead to sadness but not severe punishment or torment. In addition, these regrets will end if a person reaches Paradise through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted.

On the other hand, the regrets of the hereafter are long lasting, as the time in the grave and on Judgment Day will be much longer than one's life on this Earth. They will not end until one enters Paradise, which may not happen or it may occur after an extremely long time, as a single day in the hereafter is equivalent to a thousand years on Earth. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 47:

“...And indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of those which you count.”

Finally, these regrets are very significant, as they may well lead to a severe punishment and torment in the hereafter.

Therefore, a muslim should ponder over this and be kind to themselves by striving to remove the potential regrets they will have in the grave and on Judgment Day, before they try to remove the regrets of this world. Chapter 89 Al Fajr, verses 23-24:

“And brought [within view], that Day, is Hell - that Day, man will remember, but how [i.e., what good] to him will be the remembrance? He will say, "Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life."”

The Hereafter - 16

Many verses and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discuss this stage which all people will face in some form or fashion. As it is inevitable, muslims must prepare for it, as the light or darkness of the grave does not come from the grave itself. It is one's deeds which either darkens or illuminates their grave. Similarly, it is one's deeds which will determine if they face punishment or mercy in their grave. The only way to prepare for it is through obeying Allah, the Exalted, which consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will ensure one uses the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

Muslims often journey to cemeteries in order to bury their relatives and friends. But very few truly realize that one day, sooner or later, their turn will come. Even though, the majority of muslims dedicate the majority of their efforts to pleasing their family and earning wealth over pleasing Allah, the Exalted, through righteous deeds, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, warns that these two things which muslims give priority to will abandon them at their grave and only their deeds will remain with them. Therefore, it makes sense for a muslim to give priority to obtaining righteous deeds to pleasing their family and obtaining excess wealth. This does not mean one should abandon their family and wealth. But it means they should fulfil their duty to their family according to the teachings of Islam without going overboard by neglecting their duties to Allah, the

Exalted, and only obtain the worldly things, such as wealth, they require to achieve this. When this is done correctly, it becomes a righteous deed as well. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006. One should never abandon their duties to Allah, the Exalted, for the sake of worldly things, such as their family or wealth, as this will only cause them to misuse the blessings they have been granted. This in turn will lead to an isolated, lonely and dark grave.

The Hereafter - 17

The trumpet blast will lead to the death of the creation. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7381. The important thing to learn is that this is a call which no one can or will reject responding to. It will lead to the resurrection and final judgment. Therefore, muslims should respond to the call of Allah, the Exalted, through the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through sincere obedience by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, 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 will ensure they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 8 An Anfal, verse 24:

“O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life...”

Whoever responds to this call in this world, will find the final call easy to endure and respond to. Whereas, the one who lives heedless to the call of Allah, the Exalted, in this world, by misusing the blessings they have been granted, will not find peace in it and they will be forced to answer the call of the trumpet which will be a great burden for them to endure and respond to. A person can only ignore the call of Allah, the Exalted, for so long, as the final call will occur, sooner or later, and no one will be able to avoid or ignore it. If this is inevitable, it makes sense that one responds to it now, today, instead of living in heedlessness. If one hears the trumpet blast while heedless, no action or regret will benefit them and what comes after for this person will be even more terrifying.

The Hereafter - 18

This point is connected to chapter 80 Abasa, verses 34-37:

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

This is when each person will flee from their relatives on Judgment Day out of concern for their own wellbeing. It is important for muslims to understand that Islam does not advise them to abandon their relatives, as upholding the ties of kinship is an extremely important aspect of Islam. But it encourages them to put everyone in their rightful place within their life. This means that they should fulfil the rights of others without going overboard meaning, without compromising on the duties set by Allah, the Exalted, and following the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Unfortunately, some go too far and abandon these more important duties out of misplaced love and loyalty to their relatives. This causes them to misuse the blessings they have been granted. Some even strive to obtain unlawful provision and commit sins for the sake of pleasing their relatives. This great event clearly shows the downside of doing this. A muslim should always support others, especially their relatives, in what is good but never support them in bad things, irrespective of how close their bond with them maybe, as there is no obedience to the creation if it leads to the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

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

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

The only way people can truly benefit each other in this world or in the next is when they prioritise the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, over all else and aid each other in this ultimate goal. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

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

The Hereafter - 19

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4308, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that he is the first person to intercede and the first person whose intercession will be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.

A muslim should therefore strive to make themselves worthy of the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by performing the actions which result in this, such as supplicating for it after hearing the call to prayer. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 679. But this would require one to regularly attend the obligatory prayers at a Mosque, instead of offering them at home. The greatest action which will result in the intercession is learning and acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A muslim should not live in heedlessness by rejecting this duty and then expect intercession on Judgment Day, as this is closer to wishful thinking, which is blame worthy and of no real value, compared to true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted.

Unfortunately, some muslims who have adopted this wishful thinking expect to obtain Paradise through this intercession even though they do not 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. These muslims must realise that even though the intercession is a fact, some muslims who will have their punishment reduced through intercession, will still enter Hell. Even a single moment in Hell is truly

unbearable. So one should abandon wishful thinking and instead adopt true hope by practically striving in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Him.

In addition, the muslim who persists on the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, and assumes they will be saved by this intercession must accept the reality that, due to their disobedience and mocking attitude, they may not even leave this world with their faith. Therefore, this Muslim must be more concerned with dying as a Muslim than receiving this intercession on Judgement Day, which is only reserved for Muslims.

The Hereafter - 20

This point is connected to chapter 101 Al Qari'ah, verses 6-9:

“Then as for one whose scales are heavy [with good deeds]. He will be in a pleasant life. But as for one whose scales are light. His refuge will be an abyss.”

It is important for muslims to regularly assess their own deeds, as no one except Allah, the Exalted, is better aware of them than themselves. When one honestly judges their own deeds it will inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins and encourage them towards performing righteous deeds, which involves using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. But the one who fails to regularly assess their deeds, will lead a life of heedlessness whereby they misuse the blessings they have been granted. This person will find the weighing of their deeds on the Day of Judgment extremely difficult. In fact, it may well cause them to be hurled into Hell.

A clever business owner will always regularly assess their accounts. This will ensure their business heads in the right direction and ensures they complete all the necessary paperwork correctly, such as a tax return. But the foolish business owner will not regularly take accounts of their business. This will lead to a loss in profits and a failure in correctly

preparing for their accounts. Those who fail to file their accounts correctly with the government face penalties which only makes their lives more difficult. But the key thing to note is that the penalty of failing to correctly assess and prepare one's deeds for the Scales of Judgment Day does not involve a monetary fine. Its penalty is more severe and truly unbearable. Chapter 99 Az Zalzalah, verses 7-8:

“So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.”

Finally, a Muslim must not only avoid committing sins but they should also strive to avoid using the blessings they have been granted in vain ways. Vain things may not be sinful but as they are not righteous deeds, they will lead to regrets on Judgement Day, especially when one realises that the vain things they did could have been placed on the good side of the Scales of Judgement Day if they used the blessings correctly. In some cases, a slight difference between the two sides of the Scales may well be the difference between salvation and damnation.

The Hereafter - 21

This point is connected to chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 22:

“And Satan will say when the matter has been concluded, "Indeed, Allah had promised you the promise of truth. And I promised you, but I betrayed you. But I had no authority over you except that I invited you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me; but blame yourselves...””

This is when people on Judgment Day will try to blame the Devil for their sins in order to shift their burden of punishment to him. But this verse makes it clear that this is a futile and foolish excuse, as the Devil only inspires people to commit sins, he cannot physically force someone to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Each person makes a choice to obey or disobey Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they have been granted correctly or incorrectly, and will therefore face the consequences of their choice. Unfortunately, some do not understand this important point. They often commit sins and either blame others by declaring they were convinced to act in this way or they declare that as others are committing sins openly it somehow gives them a license to act in the same way. The same way a judge in a worldly court would never accept these excuses neither will Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. It is important for muslims not to make culture or fashion the standards for their behaviour, as this will misguide them and they will be left with no valid excuses on Judgment Day. Instead, they should adhere to the teachings of Islam which simply outlines how a person must behave in all situations. It is time muslims abandon childish excuses and sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they have been granted

in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, before they reach a day when their excuses will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. If Allah, the Exalted, will reject the excuses of those who blame the Devil when he is their open enemy and promised to misguide them, how will Allah, the Exalted, accept any other excuse for disobeying Him?

The Hereafter - 22

There are many Hadiths which discuss the celestial pool, such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6579. It advises that it takes a month to cross its entire length, its smell is nicer than perfume, its water is whiter than milk and the one who drinks from it once, will never feel thirsty again. The last point is extremely important, as on Judgment Day people will experience an extreme and unimaginable thirst. For example, the Sun will be brought within two miles of the creation which will cause people to sweat excessively. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2421.

There is no doubt that every muslim desires to drink from this pool, irrespective of the strength of their faith. But it is important to note, that a muslim should strive to make themselves worthy of drinking from it, instead of simply hoping to achieve this. This is achieved by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, 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, muslims must avoid the disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, especially those actions which prevent one from reaching the celestial pool. For example, a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 5996, warns that some muslims who innovated evil things in Islam will be detained and prevented from reaching the celestial pool. Another Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4212, warns that those who support and believe the lies and wrong actions of the unjust rulers will not reach the celestial pool. So it is important for muslims who desire to reach and

drink from the celestial pool to avoid disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, and strive in His sincere obedience.

The Hereafter - 23

People will be commanded to cross the Bridge which will be placed over Hell on the Day of Judgment. This has been discussed extensively in Islamic teachings, such as the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6573. It warns that extremely large hooks will be on the Bridge which will affect people according to their deeds. Some will be flung into Hell by them, some will be subjected to great torture before they cross the Bridge, others will only face minimal injury from them and finally the righteous will not be harmed by them. Another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 455, warns that the Bridge is narrower than a strand of hair and sharper than a sword.

The important thing to learn from this is that each person will cross the Bridge according to their deeds. So it is important for muslims not to neglect any duties if they desire to cross the Bridge safely. They must sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One should not neglect this and simply hope they will magically cross the Bridge unaffected.

In addition, the ease at which a person will cross this Bridge will be a mirror of how much they remained steadfast on the straight path of Islam in this world. This straight path is the path of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

“Say, “If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins...””

Anyone who abandons this path will not successfully cross this Bridge. Simply put, the more one remains steadfast on the straight path in this world, by learning and acting on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the easier they will cross the Bridge over Hell on Judgment Day. The straight path has been made clear in this world, so people are left with no excuses.

The Hereafter - 24

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

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

The same way one would not enter a battle without armor and a shield, a muslim should not enter Judgment Day without the armor and shield of

obeying Allah, the Exalted. Otherwise, the same way the soldier who has no protection will most likely be harmed, so will a muslim who reaches Judgment Day without the protection provided by the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. A muslim should remember that the luxuries and pleasures of the material world they enjoyed will not make them feel better if they end up in Hell. In fact, it will only make them feel worse.

The Hereafter - 25

It is important to note, that one will only enter Paradise through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673. This is because every righteous deed is only possible through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of knowledge, inspiration, strength and opportunity to do the deed. This understanding prevents one from adopting pride which is vital to avoid, as only an atom's worth of pride is needed to take a person to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 267.

In addition, a muslim must understand that this mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of righteous deeds, is in reality a light which one must gather in this world if they desire to obtain a guiding light in the hereafter. If a muslim lives in heedlessness and refrains from gathering this light in the world by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then how can they expect to receive this guiding light in the hereafter?

All muslims desire to inhabit Paradise with the greatest servants of Allah, the Exalted, such as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But it is important to understand that simply wishing for this without action will not make it come true, otherwise the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would have done this. Simply put, the more one strives in learning and acting on the traditions of the Holy Prophet

Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the closer they will be to him in the hereafter. If one chooses a path other than his in this world, then how can they possibly end up with him in the next world?

In addition, Islamic teachings make it clear that Paradise will be granted to those who supported their verbal declaration of belief with actions. So one must never be fooled into believing otherwise. The one who fails to practically support their verbal declaration of faith should be more concerned with leaving this world without their faith, as faith is like a plant which must be nourished with actions, otherwise it may well die. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 32:

"The ones whom the angels take in death, [being] good and pure; [the angels] will say, "Peace be upon you. Enter Paradise for what you used to do."

The greatest blessing of Paradise is physically observing Allah, the Exalted, which is discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7436. If a muslim desires to obtain this unimaginable blessing they must practically strive to achieve the level of excellence mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This is when one performs actions, such as the prayer, as if they can observe Allah, the Exalted, overlooking them. This attitude ensures one's persistent and sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted. It is hoped that the one who strives for this level of faith will receive the blessing of physically observing Allah, the Exalted, in the hereafter.

The Hereafter - 26

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. One of the main reasons the worship of false deities is common in society is due to the underlying intention of absolving oneself of being held accountable for their actions. The non-Muslims of Mecca, during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, claimed that they worshipped idols in order to draw closer to Allah, the Exalted, as their idols represented different sacred beings, such as Angels, which were close and beloved to Allah, the Exalted. By worshipping them, they incorrectly believed the idols would intercede on their behalf on Judgement Day in the court of Allah, the Exalted, thereby rescuing them from being held accountable for their actions. In their eyes, this was a free ticket to do whatever they pleased as they would not be held accountable for their actions because of this intercession. Chapter 10 Yunus, verse 18:

"And they worship other than Allāh that which neither harms them nor benefits them, and they say, "These are our intercessors with Allāh."..."

And chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 3:

"...And those who take protectors besides Him [say], "We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allāh in position." Indeed, Allāh will

judge between them concerning that over which they differ. Indeed, Allāh does not guide he who is a liar...”

Unfortunately, a similar attitude has crept into the minds of some Muslims who adopt a similar belief whereby they attempt to find someone who is considered holy and close to Allah, the Exalted, and strive to please Him through pleasing them, through gifts, presents and in some cases, showing them an unhealthy level of respect and reverence. Their aim is to get these holy people to intercede for them in the court of Allah, the Exalted, in this world and in the hereafter. Even though supplicating for others is lawful and intercession on Judgement Day on behalf of the believers is an established fact, yet this does not mean one is absolved from being held accountable for their actions. Thinking otherwise is only making a mockery out of these realities.

This incorrect belief has driven many Muslims to adopt wishful thinking whereby they believe they can openly and persistently disobey Allah, the Exalted, yet will escape any type of accountability, through the intercession of these holy people. If this was true, the Companions, may Allah be pleased them, had the supplications and aid of the holiest man of all, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they constantly feared their accountability and therefore persisted in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Instead of attempting to find a way out of one's inevitable accountability, they should instead strive to prepare for it by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, 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. Otherwise they may well encounter a strict and difficult accountability on a Great Day.

The Hereafter - 27

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. One of the objections given by those who deny the Day of Judgement is that they find it hard to believe Allah, the Exalted, will gather the dust and bones of people, which in most cases have been scattered and mingled with the Earth and other things, such as water, such as those who have their bodies cremated and the remains scattered in an ocean. The fact that Allah, the Exalted, is All Knowing indicates that He is fully aware of the location of every particle which makes a human being and He also has the power and control to bring these particles together once again. In order to understand this one should reflect on the different foods they eat and items they buy. These foods and items are made from different parts that are grown and cultivated from different parts of the world. They are brought together to a single location in order to manufacture the item or make the food, which is then delivered to a shop or directly to a customer. If humans have the ability to gather different ingredients and parts from all over the world in order to manufacture an item or make a food dish then why is it surprising that Allah, the Exalted, the All Knowing, All Able, will gather together the particles of a person in order to give them life again, just like He gave them life the first time. No mistakes will occur with this process as Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of everyone's unique features, such as their DNA and fingerprints. Chapter 75 Al Qiyamah, verses 3-4:

"Does man think that We will not assemble his bones? Yes. [We are] Able [even] to proportion his fingertips."

The Hereafter - 28

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. A common attitude which is often found amongst non-Muslims has become apparent in Muslims also. Those who do not believe in the Day of Judgement often claim that even if it was real, they would make peace with Allah, the Exalted, on that Day. Unfortunately, this attitude has also affected many Muslims who turn away from practically preparing for the Day of Judgement, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and simply claim that they will make peace with Allah, the Exalted, on Judgement Day. The issue with believing that this attitude will lead to success on Judgement Day is that one adopts an incredibly disrespectful and rude belief about Allah, the Exalted. They begin to believe that Allah, the Exalted, will treat the one who ignored Him and followed their desires equally to the doer of good, the one who used the blessings they were granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. If a worldly judge behaved in this manner they would be highly criticised and even dismissed from their post, as it completely contradicts justice. As Allah, the Exalted, is the All Just, how can a Muslim believe and attribute such a negative attitude to Him? Allah, the Exalted, extending His infinite mercy to the creation is one thing but allowing those who persisted in disobedience and harming others to escape the consequences of their actions is simply unjust, something Allah, the Exalted, would not do.

In addition, if Allah, the Exalted, was going to forgive everyone, irrespective of the deeds they committed, then it makes life in this world pointless, as the purpose of this world is to differentiate between those who did good and those who did not. Creating pointless things directly challenges the

infinite Dignity, Majesty and Wisdom of Allah, the Exalted. How can someone who believes in Him then attribute such a silly thing to Him?

To conclude, a Muslim must never be fooled by the false belief that they will make peace with Allah, the Exalted, on Judgement Day. The place of actions is this world, whereas Judgement Day is only the place of consequences. Therefore, one must prepare for these consequences by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 30 Ar Rum, verse 57:

"So that Day, their excuse will not benefit those who wronged, nor will they be asked to appease [Allāh]."

And chapter 45 Al Jathiyah, verse 21:

"Or do those who commit evils think We will make them like those who have believed and done righteous deeds - [make them] equal in their life and their death? Evil is that which they judge [i.e., assume]."

The Hereafter - 29

I had a thought, which I wanted to share. There are many factors which prevent a Muslim from practically preparing for the Day of Judgement, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but only one of the more subtle factors will be discussed.

In the vast majority of cases in this world a person who fails a particular task or activity is given a second chance. In some cases, the second chance is direct, such as retaking a failed driving test, and in other cases the second chance is indirect, such as a divorcee getting married to someone else. The concept of second chances also applies in religious matters. For example, everyone experiences the sister of death: sleep, and most of these people are given another chance to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, when life is restored to them when they wake up. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 42:

"Allāh takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die [He takes] during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death and releases the others for a specified term. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought."

This concept of second chances often becomes so engraved in the mind of a Muslim that subconsciously they begin to behave as if they will be given a second chance on Judgment Day, if they fail to adequately prepare for it. This is a subtle delusion and trick of the Devil which a Muslim must be careful to avoid. It is so subtle that one can behave practically in this manner without realising it, simply because they are under the assumption that just like they always had second chances in this world, they will somehow be given it on the Day of Judgement also.

The best way to combat this subtle delusion is to strengthen one's faith. This is only achieved 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, so that one remains steadfast on practically preparing for the Day of Judgement at all times, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 31 Luqman, verse 33:

"...Indeed, the promise of Allāh is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allāh by the Deceiver [i.e., Satan]."

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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