Life of Abu Bakkar Siddique (RA)

PodBio – Vol I

Achieve Noble Character

Life of Abu Bakkar Siddique (RA)

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Life of Abu Bakkar Siddique (RA)

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

Compiler's Notes

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

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

Introduction

The following short book discusses some lessons from the Life of the Great Companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the First Rightly Guided Caliph of Islam, Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him.

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.

Life of Abu Bakkar Siddique (RA)

Life in Mecca Before Accepting Islam

An Honest Businessman

During the pre-Islamic days, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was a successful merchant who would undertake regular business trips abroad. He had a reputation for fairness and generosity in his business dealings. Other merchants would be eager to trade with him as he never cheated anyone. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 43.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2146, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that merchants will be raised as immoral people on Judgment Day except those who fear Allah, the Exalted, act righteously and speak the truth.

This Hadith applies to all those who take part in business transactions. It is extremely important to fear Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes treating others kindly according to the teachings

of Islam. In respect to business dealings a muslim should be honest in their speech by disclosing all the details of the transaction to all who are involved. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2079, warns that when muslims hide things in financial transactions, such as defects in their goods, it will lead to a loss in blessings.

Acting righteously includes not striving to con others by making them pay excessively for goods. A muslim should simply treat others how they desire to be treated meaning, with honesty and full disclosure. The same way, a muslim would not like to be mistreated in financial matters they should not mistreat others.

Those conducting business should always avoid lying as it leads to immorality and immortality leads to Hell. In fact, a person will keep telling and acting on lies until they are recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971.

Fine Character

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was universally loved by the people of Mecca. The noblemen loved him as he possessed the characteristics which increased their honour among the Arabs. The learned loved him as he was a very well-educated person. The traders loved him as he was a fair and just merchant. The poor loved him as he was always generous to them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 44.

The root of this aspect of his character was sincerity to others.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards to the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themself.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing

the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

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

"…Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them…"

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

“…And do good as Allah has done good to you…”

Intelligence

During the pre-Islamic days, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, never drank alcohol. When questioned about that he replied that he always desired to protect his honour and guard his manliness and drinking alcohol removed both of these things. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Pages 7-8.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah number 3371, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a muslim must never consume alcohol as it is the key to all evil.

Unfortunately, this major sin has increased amongst the muslims over time. This is the key to all evil as it gives rise to other sins. This is quite obvious as a drunk loses control over their tongue and physical actions. One only needs to look at the news to observe how much crime is committed due to drinking alcohol. Even those who drink moderately only cause damage to their bodies, which science has proven. The physical and mental diseases associated with alcohol are numerous and cause a heavy burden on the National Health Service and the tax payers. It is the key to all evil as it negatively affects all three aspects of a person namely, their body, mind and soul. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 90:

“O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful.”

The fact that drinking alcohol has been placed next to things which are associated with polytheism in this verse highlights how important it is to avoid.

It is such a serious sin that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3376, that the one who drinks alcohol regularly will not enter Paradise.

Spreading the Islamic greeting of peace is a key to obtaining Paradise according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 68. Yet, a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 1017, advises muslims not to greet someone who regularly drinks alcohol.

Alcohol is a unique major sin as it has been cursed from ten different ways in a single Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3380. These include the alcohol itself, the one who produces it, the one it is produced for, the one who sells it, the one who buys it, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried to, the one who uses the wealth obtained through selling it, the one who drinks it and the one who pours it. The one who deals with something that has been cursed like this will not obtain true success unless they sincerely repent.

Avoiding Vain Things

During the pre-Islamic days, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, never composed poetry, something which was widely done by the Arabs of that time. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 7.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, disliked vain speech and therefore abstained from composing poetry.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2501, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that whoever is silent is saved.

This means the one who is silent from vain or evil speech and only speaks good words will be saved by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This is important to understand as the main reason people will enter Hell is because of their speech. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616. In fact, it only takes a single evil word to cause a person to plunge into Hell on Judgement Day which has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

Speech can be of three types. The first is evil speech which should be avoided at all costs. The second is vain speech which only causes one

to waste time which will lead to a great regret on Judgment Day. In addition, the first step of sinful speech is often vain speech. So it is safer to avoid this type of speech. The final type is good speech which should always be adopted. Based on these aspects two thirds of speech should be removed from one's life.

In addition, the one who speaks too much will only reflect on their actions and the hereafter a little as this requires silence. This will prevent one from assessing their deeds which inspires one to perform more righteous deeds and sincerely repent from their sins. This person will then be prevented from changing for the better.

Finally, those who speak too much often discuss worldly things and things which are entertaining and fun. This will cause them to adopt a mentality whereby they dislike discussing or listening to serious issues like death and the hereafter. This will prevent them from preparing adequately for the hereafter which will lead to a great regret and a potential punishment.

All of this can be avoided if one simply remains silent from sinful and vain speech and instead only speaks good words. Therefore, the one who is silent in this way will be saved from trouble in this world and from punishment in the next world.

Avoiding Blind Imitation

Even prior to the advent of Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, never prostrated to or worshipped an idol. Even as a child he applied his common sense when told that the idols in Mecca were his Gods. He once requested the lifeless idols to provide him with food and clothing. When they did not reply it became obvious they could not obtain anything for themselves let alone grant someone else something. He even once threw a stone at an idol and observed how it could not protect itself, let alone protect someone else. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 45-46.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, used his common sense and did not blindly follow the people around him in worshipping lifeless idols.

Blind imitation of one's forefathers is a major reason why people reject the truth, such as Judgement Day. A person should utilize their common sense and choose a way of life based on evidence and clear signs and not blindly imitate others like cattle. Behaving in this manner leads to deviation.

Muslims should not follow and adopt the customary practices of non-Muslims. The more Muslims do this the less they will follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet

Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is quite evident in this day and age as many Muslims have adopted the cultural practices of other nations which has caused them to become distant from the teachings of Islam. For example, one only needs to observe the modern Muslim wedding to observe how many non-Muslim cultural practices have been adopted by Muslims. What makes this worse is that many Muslims cannot differentiate between Islamic practices based on the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Because of this non-Muslims cannot differentiate between them either which has caused great problems for Islam. For example, honour killings is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam yet because of the ignorance of Muslims and their habit of adopting non-Muslim cultural practices Islam is blamed every time an honour killing occurs in society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, removed the social barriers in the form of casts and brotherhoods in order to unite people yet ignorant Muslims have resurrected them by adopting the cultural practices of non-Muslims. Simply put, the more cultural practices Muslims adopt the less they will act on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Blind imitation is even disliked within Islam.

A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4049, indicates the importance of not blindly imitating others in accepting Islam, such as one's family, without gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge so that one surpasses blind imitation and obeys Allah, the Exalted, while truly recognising his Lordship and their own servanthood. This is in fact the purpose of mankind. Chapter 51 Adh Dhariyat, verse 56:

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

How can one truly worship someone they do not even recognize? Blind imitation is acceptable for children but adults must follow in the footsteps of the righteous predecessors by truly understanding the purpose of their creation through knowledge. Ignorance is the very reason why the Muslims who fulfil their obligatory duties still feel disconnected from Allah, the Exalted. This recognition aids a Muslim to behave as a true servant of Allah, the Exalted, throughout the day not just during the five daily obligatory prayers. Only through this will Muslims fulfil true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. And this is the weapon which overcomes all difficulties a Muslim faces during their life. If they do not possess this they will face difficulties without gaining reward. In fact, it will only lead to more difficulties in both worlds. Performing the obligatory duties through blind imitation may fulfil the obligation but it will not safely guide one through every difficulty in order to reach the proximity of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. In fact, in most cases blind imitation will lead to one eventually abandoning their obligatory duties. This Muslim will only fulfil their duties in times of difficulty and turn away from them in times of ease or vice versa.

Worshipping Desires

Even prior to the advent of Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, never prostrated to or worshipped an idol. Even as a child he applied his common sense when told that the idols in Mecca were his Gods. He once requested the lifeless idols to provide him with food and clothing. When they did not reply it became obvious they could not obtain anything for themselves let alone grant someone else something. He even once threw a stone at an idol and observed how it could not protect itself, let alone protect someone else. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 45-46.

The truth is that each worshipper of false gods only worships their own desires. Their deities are just a physical manifestation of their desires which they worship. This is obvious as a person who worships a deity in the form of an idol knows that the lifeless idol cannot command them to live their life a certain way so the worshiper themself decides how they imagine their lifeless idol would like them to live. And this code of conduct is based on nothing but their own desires. Therefore, their worship of their desires is the root of their worship. The influential and rich are more drowned in this mentality as they are aware that accepting the truth meaning, Islam, will force them to live according to a specific code of conduct which will prevent them from acting on their misguided desires. They advise others to follow them as they do not wish to lose their influence and authority. This is why history as shown they were the first to reject and oppose the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, rejected worshipping his desires meaning, worshipping idols, and instead held himself to a higher moral standard.

First of all, it is important to understand, that the major thing which separates a human from an animal is the fact that people live by a higher moral code. If people abandoned this and simply acted on their desires then they would be no difference between them and animals. In fact, people would be worse as they possess the higher level of thinking yet, still choose to live like animals.

Secondly, whether people want to admit it or not in reality, every person is a servant of something or someone. Some are servants of others, such as Hollywood executives and do whatever they command them to do even if it challenges modesty and shame. Others are servants of their relatives and friends and do whatever it takes to please them. Others are the worse by being servants of their own desires as this is the attitude of animals who generally act to please themself. The best and highest form of servanthood is being a servant of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite evident if one turns the pages of history which clearly shows that those who were the servants of Allah, the Exalted, such as the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were granted the highest honour and respect in this world and will be granted this in the next. Centuries and millennia have passed yet their names are remembered as the pillars and beacons of history. Whereas those who became servants of others especially, their own desires were eventually disgraced in this world even if they achieved some worldly status and they became mere footnotes in history. The media barely remembers those who pass away for more than a few days before moving onto the next person to report on. During their lives these people eventually become sad, lonely, depressed and even suicidal as selling their souls and decency to their worldly masters did not grant them the contentment they were looking

for. One does not need to be a scholar to understand this obvious truth. So if people must be servants they should be the servants of Allah, the Exalted, as lasting honour, greatness and true success lies only in this.

Avoiding Oppression

Prior to the advent of Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had a keen interest in religious teachings and often had discussions with religious scholars from different religions. His interest showed a genuine desire to seek the truth and the purpose of his creation. For example, he once discussed with Waraqah Ibn Naufal, an expert in the Torah and Bible, about the concept of Prophethood. Waraqah told him that a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, speaks what is revealed to him. He does not commit oppression, he does not help others in committing oppression and he does not tolerate oppression. This research was one of the reasons why he readily accepted the call of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 49-50.

Generally speaking, just like Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, adopted the characteristics of a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, described above, so should a muslim, as oppression leads to darkness in both worlds.

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

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

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

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

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

The final type of oppression is when one mistreats others. Allah, the Exalted, will not forgive these sins until the oppressor’s victim forgives them first. As people are not so merciful this is unlikely to happen. Then

justice will be established on Judgment Day where the oppressor's righteous deeds will be given to their victim and if necessary the victim's sins will be given to the oppressor. This may lead to the oppressor being hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. One should therefore treat others how they wish to be treated by people. A muslim should avoid all forms of oppression if they desire a guiding light in this world and in the next.

Searching for the Truth

Prior to the advent of Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had a keen interest in religious teachings and often had discussions with religious scholars from different religions. His interest showed a genuine desire to seek the truth and the purpose of his creation. For example, he once discussed with Waraqah Ibn Naufal, an expert in the Torah and Bible, about the concept of Prophethood. Waraqah told him that a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, speaks what is revealed to him. He does not commit oppression, he does not help others in committing oppression and he does not tolerate oppression. This research was one of the reasons why he readily accepted the call of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 49-50.

A muslim must follow in the footsteps of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by actively seeking and acting on knowledge as it leads to certainty of faith, just like the certainty Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, possessed when he readily accepted Islam at the call of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

All muslims have faith in Islam but the strength of their faith varies from person to person. For example, the one who follows the teachings of Islam because their family told them to is not the same as the one who believes in it through evidence. A person who has heard about something will not believe in it in the same way as the one who has witnessed the thing with their own eyes.

As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all muslims. One of the reasons for this is that it is the best way a muslim can strengthen their faith in Islam. This is important to pursue as the stronger one's certainty of faith the greater the chance they will remain steadfast on the correct path, especially when facing difficulties. In addition, having certainty of faith has been described as one of the best things one can possess in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3849. This knowledge should be obtained by studying the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through a reliable source.

Allah, the Exalted, did not only declare a truth in the Holy Quran but He also provided evidence for it through examples. Not only examples which are to be found in the past nations but examples which have been placed in one's very own life. For example, in the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that sometimes a person loves a thing even though it will cause them trouble if they obtained it. Similarly, they might hate a thing while there is much hidden good in it for them. 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."

There are many examples of this truth in history such as the Pact of Hudaiba. Some muslims believed this pact, which was made with the non-muslims of Mecca, would completely favour the latter group. Yet, history clearly shows that it favoured Islam and the muslims. This event

is discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731 and 2732.

If one reflects on their own life they will find many examples when they believed something was good when it was actually bad for them and vice versa. These examples prove the authenticity of this verse and help one's faith strengthen.

Another example is found in chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 46:

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

If one turns the pages of history they will clearly observe how great empires came and went. But when they left they passed away in such a way as if they were only on Earth for a moment. All but a few of their signs have faded away as if they were never present on Earth in the first place. Similarly, when one reflects on their own life they will realise that no matter how old they are and no matter how slow certain days might have felt overall their life so far has passed in a flash. Understanding the truthfulness of this verse strengthens one's certainty of faith and this inspires them to prepare for the hereafter before their time runs out.

The Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, are full of such examples. Therefore, one should strive to learn and act on these divine teachings so that they adopt certainty of faith. The one who achieves this will not be shaken by any difficulty they face and will remain steadfast on the path which leads to the gates of Paradise. 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…”

Accepting the Truth

It is widely known that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, accepted the call of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Islam without hesitation, whereas all other men showed different degrees of hesitation. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 51, and indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3661.

One of the reasons he readily accepted the truth is that he was a man of truth. Meaning, prior to Islam he searched for, accepted and adopted the characteristics of truthfulness. Therefore, when the truth of Islam was presented to him, he accepted it without hesitation.

Muslims must strive to emulate him by adopting truthfulness in all aspects of their lives.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness as three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

Good Companionship

It is widely known that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, accepted the call of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to Islam without hesitation, whereas all other men showed different degrees of hesitation. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 51, and indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3661.

One of the reasons Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, readily accepted the truth of Islam is because he already had a deep bond of friendship with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Therefore, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, witnessed the truth of Islam through knowing the flawless character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, prior to his call to Islam. Even though, the non-muslims of Mecca observed the same thing yet they stubbornly rejected Islam.

The fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, spent his entire life amongst the non-Muslims of Mecca was enough of a proof of his declaration of Prophethood. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, invited the non-Muslims of Mecca to embrace Islam he used his 40 years amongst them as proof that he was speaking the truth. This evidence was undeniable even by the non-Muslims. This incident is recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4553. Only the arrogance of some prevented them from submitting to the truth. Chapter 10 Yunus, verse 16:

“…for I had remained among you a lifetime before it. Then will you not reason?"

The deep friendship between the two indicates the importance of good companionship.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5534, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the difference between a good and bad companion. The good companion is like a person who sells perfume. Their companion will either obtain some perfume or at least be affected by the pleasant smell. Whereas, a bad companion is like a blacksmith, if their companion does not burn their clothes they will certainly be affected by the smoke.

Muslims must understand that the people they accompany will have an effect on them whether this affect is positive or negative, obvious or subtle. It is not possible to accompany someone and not be affected by it. A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4833, confirms that a person is on their companion’s religion. Meaning, a person adopts the characteristics of their companion. It is therefore important for muslims to always accompany the righteous as they will undoubtedly affect them in a positive way meaning, they will inspire them to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Whereas, bad companions will either inspire one to disobey Allah, the Exalted, or they will encourage a muslim to concentrate on the material world over preparing for the hereafter. This attitude will become a great regret for them on Judgment Day even if the things they strive for are lawful but beyond their needs.

Finally, as a person will end up with those they love in the hereafter according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, a muslim must practically show they love for the righteous by accompanying them in this world. But if they accompany bad or heedless people then it proves and indicates they love for them and their ultimate destination in the hereafter. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

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

Life in Mecca After Accepting Islam

Guiding Others to Faith

After accepting Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, busied himself in inviting others towards the truth. Due to his efforts many people accepted Islam. These people went on to become the prominent and senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people included: Az Zubair Ibn Al Awwaam, Uthman Ibn Affan, Talhah Ibn Ubaidullah, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqass, Abu Ubaidah Ibn Jarrah, Abdur Rahman ibn Auf, and many more, may Allah be pleased with all of them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 55.

One of the ways Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, achieved this great deed is through leading by example. When the others observed the signs of Islam in his character and actions, instead of only on his tongue, it encouraged them to accept the truth.

It is important for all Muslims, especially parents, to act on what they advise to others. It is obvious if one turns the pages of history that those who acted on what they preached had a much more positive effect on others compared to those who did not lead by example. The best example being the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who not only practiced what he preached but adhered to

those teachings more strictly than anyone else. Only with this attitude will Muslims especially, parents have a positive impact on others. For example, if a mother warns her children not to lie as it is a sin but often lies in front of them her children are unlikely to act on her advice. A person's actions will always have more of an impact on others than their speech. It is important to note that this does not mean one needs to be perfect before advising others. It means they should sincerely strive to act on their own advice before advising others. The Holy Quran has made it clear in the following verse that Allah, the exalted, hates this behaviour. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3267, that the a person who commanded good but refrained from it themself and prohibited evil yet acted on it themself will be punished in severely Hell. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”

So it is vital for all Muslims to strive to act on their advice themself then advise others to do the same. Leading by example is the tradition of all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and is the best way to affect others in a positive way.

A Public Call to Islam

When the Companions of the Holy Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, became around 38 in number Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, urged the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to proclaim and invite others openly. When this was agreed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the sacred area around the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, and Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, rose and addressed all who were present in and around the Mosque while the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, remained seated next to him. He was the first man who openly called people towards accepting Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When the non-Muslims of Mecca heard his call they became extremely angry and violent fights broke out in the Mosque between them and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was badly wounded. He was taken to his home where he regained consciousness and enquired about the state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This incident has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 319-320.

In life a muslim will always face either times of ease or times of difficulty. No one only experiences times of ease without experiencing some difficulties. But the thing to note is that even though difficulties by definition are hard to deal with they are in fact a means to obtain and demonstrate one's true greatness and servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. In addition, in the majority of cases people learn more important life lessons when they face difficulties then when they face times of ease. And people often change for the better after experiencing times of difficulty than times of ease. One only needs to reflect on this in order to

understand this truth. In fact, if one studies the Holy Quran they will realise the majority of the events discussed involve difficulties. This indicates that true greatness does not lie in always experiencing times of ease. It in fact, lies in experiencing difficulties while remaining obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is proven by the fact that each of the great difficulties discussed in Islamic teachings end with ultimate success for those who obeyed Allah, the Exalted. So a muslim should not be bothered about facing difficulties as these are just moments for them to shine while acknowledging their true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience. This is the key to ultimate success in both worlds.

Sincerity to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

When the Companions of the Holy Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, became around 38 in number Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, urged the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to proclaim and invite others openly. When this was agreed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the sacred area around the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, and Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, rose and addressed all who were present in and around the Mosque while the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, remained seated next to him. He was the first man who openly called people towards accepting Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When the non-Muslims of Mecca heard his call they became extremely angry and violent fights broke out in the Mosque between them and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was badly wounded. He was taken to his home where he regained consciousness and enquired about the state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, did not eat, drink or rest until he saw that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was safe and sound. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 56-59.

Even though he was on the verge of death, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, maintained his sincerity to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes striving to acquire knowledge in order to act on his traditions. These traditions include the ones related to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship, and his blessed noble character towards the creation. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verse 4:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bravery

Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, once commented that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was the bravest of men. During the Battle of Badr he remained with and defended the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, from every attack. On another occasion, prior to the migration to Medina, the non-muslims of Mecca physically assaulted the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and it was Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, who defended him by striking one of them, restraining another one and throwing down another. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 13.

He was the bravest of men as he remained steadfast on the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, without weakness.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 159, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a short but far reaching piece of advice. He advised people to sincerely declare their belief in Allah, the Exalted, and then remain steadfast on it.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith means that they must strive in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. It consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, which relate to Him, such as the obligatory fasts and those which relate to people, such as treating others kindly. It includes refraining from all the prohibitions of

Islam which are between a person and Allah, the Exalted, and those involving others. A muslim must also face destiny with patience truly believing Allah, the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

Steadfastness can include refraining from both types of polytheism. The major type is when one worships something other than Allah, the Exalted. The minor type is when one shows off their good deeds to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. Therefore, an aspect of steadfastness is to always act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

It includes obeying Allah, the Exalted, at all times instead of obeying and pleasing oneself or others. If a Muslim disobeys Allah, the Exalted, by pleasing themself or others they should know neither their desires nor people will protect them from Allah, the Exalted. On the other hand, the one who is sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from all things by Him even if this protection is not apparent to them.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith includes following the path set out by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and not adopting a path which deviates from this. The one who strives to adopt this path will not need anything else as this is enough to keep them steadfast on their faith.

As people are not perfect they will undoubtedly make mistakes and commit sins. So being steadfast in matters of faith does not mean one has to be perfect but it means they must strive to adhere strictly to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as outlined earlier, and to sincerely repent if they commit a sin. This has been indicated in chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 6:

"…so take a straight course to Him and seek His forgiveness…"

This is further supported by a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1987, which advises to fear Allah, the Exalted, and to erase a (minor) sin which has occurred by performing a righteous deed. In another Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book 2, Hadith number 37, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims to try their best to remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even though they will not be able to do it perfectly. Therefore, a muslim's duty is to fulfil the potential they have been given through their intention and physical actions in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They have not been commanded to achieve perfection as this is not possible.

It is important to note, that one cannot remain steadfast in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, through their physical actions without purifying their heart first. As indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984, the limbs of the body will only act in a pure way if the spiritual heart is pure. Purity of heart is only achieved by gaining and acting on

the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Steadfast obedience requires one to control their tongue as it expresses the heart. Without controlling the tongue steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, is not possible. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2407.

Finally, if any deficiency in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted, occurs one must make sincere repentance to Allah, the Exalted, and seek the forgiveness of people if it involves their rights. Chapter 46 Al Ahqaf, verse 13:

“Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

Helping the Weak

When the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were being violently persecuted by the non-Muslims of Mecca, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, aided them by purchasing and freeing the male and female slaves who had accepted Islam, such as Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been specifically mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3754. In addition, the following verses of the Holy Quran were revealed because of his pious actions. Chapter 92 Al Layl, verses 5-7:

“As for he who gives and fears Allah. And believes in the best [reward]. We will ease him toward ease.”

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 1, Pages 357-358.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever relieves the distress of a Muslim Allah, the Exalted, will relieve a hardship from them on the Day of Judgment.

This shows that a Muslim is treated by Allah, the Exalted, in the same way they act. There are many examples of this within the teachings of Islam. For example, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

“So remember Me; I will remember you…”

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who shows mercy to others will receive mercy from Allah, the Exalted.

A distress is anything which causes someone to fall into anxiety and difficulty. Therefore, the one who eases such a distress for another whether worldly or religious for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from a hardship on Judgment Day by Allah, the Exalted. This has been indicated in different ways in many Hadiths. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449, that the one who feeds a hungry Muslim will be fed the fruits of Paradise on the Day of Judgment. And the one who gives a drink to a thirsty Muslim will be given a drink from Paradise by Allah, the Exalted, on the Day of Judgment.

As the difficulties of the hereafter are much greater than those found in the world this reward is held back for a Muslim until they reach the hereafter.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that Allah, the Exalted, will continue helping a Muslim as long as they are helping others. A Muslim must understand that when they strive for something or are aided by another person to complete a particular task the outcome may be successful or end in failure. But when Allah, the Exalted, helps someone with anything a successful outcome is guaranteed. Therefore, Muslims should, for their own sake, strive to help others in all good things so that they receive the help of Allah, the Exalted, in both worldly and religious matters.

In addition, it is important to understand that there are other forms of slavery people fall into which Muslims should aid them in, such as financial slavery through debts. This includes helping others pay off their debts to other people or making things easy when a Muslim is owed a debt from another. In fact, the one who waves a debt they are owed for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be relieved by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 225.

Sincerity to Allah (SWT)

When the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were being violently persecuted by the non-Muslims of Mecca, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, aided them by purchasing and freeing the male and female slaves who had accepted Islam, such as Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him. When he was advised by his father to purchase and free strong slaves who could support him in his cause, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he was only buying and freeing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, and not for an ulterior motive. The following verses of the Holy Quran were revealed because of his pious actions. Chapter 92 Al Layl, verses 5-7:

"As for he who gives and fears Allah. And believes in the best [reward]. We will ease him toward ease."

This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 69-70.

A muslim must emulate Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by remaining sincere to Allah, the Exalted, when doing good deeds.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who

perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. A muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

Supporting the Poor

As the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, increased the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some of them to migrate to Ethiopia. He advised them that their king was a just man and they would not face persecution there. Several Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, departed leaving behind their families, businesses and homes all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also decided to migrate so that he could worship Allah, the Exalted, in peace. When he reached a certain distance from Mecca he met a non-muslim nobleman from Mecca, Ibn Ad Daghina. When the two spoke Ibn Ad Daghina commented that a fine person like him should not be forced to leave his homeland. Ibn Ad Daghina went on to narrate some of the noble traits of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, which included: his eagerness to help the needy and poor. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3905.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that Allah, the Exalted, will not show mercy to the one who does not show mercy to others.

Islam is a very simple religion. One of its fundamental teachings is so simple that even uneducated people can understand and act on them namely, how people treat others is how they will be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, those who learn to overlook and forgive the

mistakes of others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

“…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”

Those who support others in beneficial worldly and religious matters such as emotional or financial aid will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. This same Hadith advises that the one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, if one treats others with kindness and respect according to the teachings of Islam they will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted. And those who mistreat others will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted, even if they fulfill the obligatory duties which are connected to Him such as the obligatory prayers. This is because a muslim must fulfill both duties in order to achieve success namely, the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Finally, it is important to note a muslim will only be treated kindly by Allah, the Exalted, if they treat others kindly for His sake. If they do it for any other reason than they will undoubtedly forfeit the reward mentioned in these teachings. The foundation of all acts and Islam itself is one's intention. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

Ties that Bind

As the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, increased the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some of them to migrate to Ethiopia. He advised them that their king was a just man and they would not face persecution there. Several Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, departed leaving behind their families, businesses and homes all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also decided to migrate so that he could worship Allah, the Exalted, in peace. When he reached a certain distance from Mecca he met a non-muslim nobleman from Mecca, Ibn Ad Daghina. When the two spoke Ibn Ad Daghina commented that a fine person like him should not be forced to leave his homeland. Ibn Ad Daghina went on to narrate some of the noble traits of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, which included: maintaining the ties of kinship. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3905.

Upholding the ties of kinship is a vital aspect of Islam which cannot be abandoned if one desires success in both worlds. A true sign of one's faith is not spending all day worshipping Allah, the Exalted, in a Mosque but it is to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and to fulfill the rights of the creation. One of the most important rights of the creation is to uphold the ties of kinship. One can feign piety by dressing Islamically but they cannot deceive Allah, the Exalted. When one turns the pages of history they will always observe that the pious servants of Allah, the Exalted, maintained their ties of kinship. Even when their relative's mistreated them they still responded with kindness. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6525, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, will always aid the one who strives to maintain their ties of kinship even if their relatives make things difficult for them.

Replying good with good is not special whereas, replying good to evil is the sign of a sincere believer. The former behavior is even seen in animals. In most cases, when one treats an animal kindly it will in turn show affection back. It is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5991, that the one who truly upholds the bonds of kinship is the one who maintains ties even when their relatives sever them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was constantly terrorized by most of his relatives but he always showed kindness towards them.

It is commonly known that one cannot achieve success without the closeness of Allah, the Exalted. But in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5987, Allah, the Exalted, has clearly declared that He will sever bonds with the one who cuts their ties of kinship over worldly reasons. Bear in mind, this is true irrespective of how much one struggles to fulfill the rights of Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship such as, the obligatory prayers. If Allah, the Exalted, cuts ties with a muslim how can they achieve His closeness and eternal success?

In addition, in most cases Allah, the Exalted, delays the punishment of sins in order to give people the opportunity to repent. But breaking the ties of kinship over worldly reasons is punished swiftly. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4212.

Unfortunately, severing ties is commonly seen in the world today. People easily sever ties of kinship over petty worldly reasons. They fail to recognize that any loss which occurs in the material world is temporary but if they are disconnected from Allah, the Exalted, they will face prolonged suffering in both worlds.

A reason for breaking the ties of kinship which is commonly seen within the Islamic community is when one reaches a higher social status through their occupation. This inspires them to discard their relatives as they believe they are not worthy of interacting with them anymore. Their love for their wealth and social status pushes them to the doors of paranoia which convinces them that their relatives only wish to take their wealth from them.

The Holy Quran indicates that these bonds will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 1:

“…And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever over you, an Observer.”

This verse also clearly indicates that one cannot obtain piety without upholding the ties of kinship. So those who believe they can achieve it through excess worship and fasting are proven wrong and must therefore change their behaviour.

Islam teaches muslims to uphold all ties of kinship by aiding their relatives in matters which are good whenever and wherever possible. They have been ordered to adopt a constructive mindset which unites relatives for the benefit of society rather than a destructive mentality which only causes divisions within families. According to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4919, creating divisions amongst people leads to one's destruction.

Those who sever their ties of kinship have been cursed in the Holy Quran. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verses 22-23:

“So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your [ties of] relationship? Those [who do so] are the ones that Allah has cursed…”

How can one achieve their lawful desires in this world or in the next when they are encompassed with the curse of Allah, the Exalted, and deprived of His mercy?

Islam does not order one to go beyond their means in supporting their relatives nor does it ask them to sacrifice the limits of Allah, the Exalted, for their relatives as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2625. Therefore, one should never join their relatives in acts of evil. In this case, a muslim should command their relatives to do good and gently forbid them from evil while maintaining respect for them. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Countless benefits are obtained by the one who maintains the ties of kinship for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who maintains ties will be blessed with extra grace in their provision and in their life. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1693. This means that their provision irrespective of how little it is will be enough for them and it will provide them with peace of mind and body. Grace in life means they will find time to fulfill all their religious and worldly duties. These are two blessings muslims spend their whole life and wealth trying to obtain but many fail to recognize that Allah, the Exalted, has placed both of them in maintaining ties of kinship.

Maintaining ties of kinship is so important that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered muslims to fulfill this vital duty even with their non-muslim relatives. A Hadith advising this is found in Sahih Muslim, number 2324.

One of the traps of the Devil is that he aims to create dissension between relatives and within society which leads to broken families and social divisions. His ultimate goal is to weaken Islam as a nation. Unfortunately, some have become infamous for harboring grudges which go on for decades and pass on from generation to generation. A person will treat a relative well for decades but over one mistake and argument the latter will vow never to speak to them again. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6526, that it is unlawful for a muslim to cut off ties from another muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. If this is the command regarding severing ties with a non-relative can one imagine the seriousness of severing ties with relatives? This question has been answered in Sahih Bukhari, number 5984. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared that the one who severs ties with a relative over worldly reasons will not enter Paradise.

One must reflect on the verses and Hadiths which discuss this important topic and realize that if after decades of sins Allah, the Exalted, does not close His doors or servers links with people why do people so easily turn their backs on their relatives over small worldly issues? This must change if one desires for their connection to Allah, the Exalted, to remain intact.

Consoling Others

As the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, increased the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some of them to migrate to Ethiopia. He advised them that their king was a just man and they would not face persecution there. Several Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, departed leaving behind their families, businesses and homes all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also decided to migrate so that he could worship Allah, the Exalted, in peace. When he reached a certain distance from Mecca he met a non-muslim nobleman from Mecca, Ibn Ad Daghina. When the two spoke Ibn Ad Daghina commented that a fine person like him should not be forced to leave his homeland. Ibn Ad Daghina went on to narrate some of the noble traits of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, which included: helping the grief-stricken person. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3905.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1601, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who consoles a grief stricken person will be clothed with a garment of honor on Judgment Day.

As facing difficulties is guaranteed for all this is an extremely simple way of obtaining a great reward which does not require much time, energy or money. This includes striving to aid the family facing a difficulty according to one's means, such as emotional, financial and physical support. A muslim must gently encourage those facing difficulties to

remain patient throughout the ordeal and remind them of the verses of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which discuss the importance and great reward of being patient. They should speak positively by reminding them that things only occur for a good reason even if people fail to understand the wisdom behind them. In reality, a person does not to be a scholar to perform this righteous deed as in most cases a few kind words of support are enough to make someone facing difficulties feel better. And in some cases just physically being there is enough to provide them with the feeling of support even if no words are spoken.

Finally, it is important muslims correct their intention when performing this righteous deed meaning, do it for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not do it in order to show off to others, such as their relatives, nor do it out of fear of being criticized by others if they fail to do it. Those who act for the sake of others will be told on Judgment Day to gain their reward from those they acted for which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

The First Migration

As the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, increased the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some of them to migrate to Ethiopia. He advised them that their king was a just man and they would not face persecution there. Several Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, departed leaving behind their families, businesses and homes all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also decided to migrate so that he could worship Allah, the Exalted, in peace. When he reached a certain distance from Mecca he met a non-muslim nobleman from Mecca, Ibn Ad Daghina. When the two spoke Ibn Ad Daghina commented that a fine person like him should not be forced to leave his homeland. Ibn Ad Daghina went on to narrate some of the noble traits of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. Ibn Ad Daghina then encouraged Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to return to Mecca where he would offer him his protection from the non-muslims of Mecca. When they both returned the leaders of the non-muslims of Mecca agreed to the demands of Ibn Ad Daghina but insisted that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, pray and worship Allah, the Exalted, in the privacy of his own home and not in public. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3905.

Even though Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, returned to Mecca yet he was fully committed to migrate and leave everything behind for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This he did do eventually, in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is important for Muslims to understand that Allah, the Exalted, does not demand Muslims to overcome the difficulties which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, endured. For example, this event which discusses the migration of some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to Ethiopia.

In comparison, the difficulties Muslims face now are not as difficult as those the righteous predecessors faced. Muslims should therefore be grateful that they are only required to make a few small sacrifices, such as sacrificing some sleep to offer the obligatory dawn prayer and some wealth to donate the obligatory charity. Allah, the Exalted, is not commanding them to leave their homes and families for His sake. This gratitude must be shown practically by using the blessings one possesses in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, when a Muslim faces difficulties they should remember the difficulties the righteous predecessors faced and how they overcame them through steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This knowledge can provide a Muslim the strength to overcome their difficulties as they know the righteous predecessors were more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they endured more severe difficulties with patience. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, advises that the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, endured the most difficult of tests and they are undoubtedly the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted.

If a Muslim follows the steadfast attitude of the righteous predecessors it is hoped they will end up with them in the hereafter.

Divine Protection

As the violence of the non-Muslims of Mecca against the socially weak Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, increased the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised some of them to migrate to Ethiopia. He advised them that their king was a just man and they would not face persecution there. Several Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, departed leaving behind their families, businesses and homes all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also decided to migrate so that he could worship Allah, the Exalted, in peace. When he reached a certain distance from Mecca he met a non-muslim nobleman from Mecca, Ibn Ad Daghina. When the two spoke Ibn Ad Daghina commented that a fine person like him should not be forced to leave his homeland. Ibn Ad Daghina went on to narrate some of the noble traits of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. Ibn Ad Daghina then encouraged Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to return to Mecca where he would offer him his protection from the non-muslims of Mecca. When they both returned the leaders of the non-muslims of Mecca agreed to the demands of Ibn Ad Daghina but insisted that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, pray and worship Allah, the Exalted, in the privacy of his own home and not in public. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, agreed but built a Mosque in the front of his home where he prayed and recited the Holy Quran which could be heard by passersby. When the leaders of the non-muslims of Mecca challenged Ibn Ad Daghina over this, he requested Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to either worship Allah, the Exalted, privately or release him from his promise of protection. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, released him and instead sought protection from Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3905.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1081, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims how to gain blessings in their provision, divine support and an improvement in their condition and state.

The first thing is to sincerely repent to Allah, the Exalted, before one dies. As the time of death is unknown this Hadith actually indicates sincerely repenting whenever one commits a sin meaning, repenting without delay. This consists of seeking forgiveness from Allah, the Exalted, and whoever else has been wronged, feeling regret, making a firm promise not to commit the same or a similar sin again. And finally, if possible, to make up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

The next thing advised in the main Hadith is that a muslim must make use of their time before they become preoccupied with responsibilities, an illness or a difficulty. A muslim can achieve this by obeying Allah, the Exalted, through fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must hasten to perform righteous deeds within their means as much as possible without delay as the tomorrow they hope for may never come. It is hoped that the one who behaves in this manner will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, when they are no longer in a position to perform extra righteous deeds due to a change in circumstances.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a muslim must strengthen their bond with Allah, the Exalted, by remembering Him much. True remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, consists of three levels. The first is internal remembrance meaning, sincerity to Him. The second

level consists of remembering Allah, the Exalted, by speaking good words and avoiding vain and sinful speech. And the highest level is to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, through one's actions as outlined earlier.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith is giving much charity both hidden and open. This includes both the obligatory and voluntary charity. It is important to note, this means giving charity according to one's means whether it is much or little. Allah, the Exalted, does not observe quantity He observes and judges actions based on quality meaning, one's sincerity. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. This leaves muslims with no excuses but to give charity according to their means. In addition, it is important to give charity regularly instead of once in a while as regular deeds are more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, even if they are little. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6465. Finally, those who desire to encourage others to give charity can give it publically. This will lead to them gaining the same reward as those who donate because of their inspiration. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2351. But those who are fearful of showing off, which cancels their reward, should do so privately. Islam has provided many options and opportunities for muslims to gain much reward which lead to the removal of their burdens in both worlds.

The Champion of the Truth

During his final years in Mecca before migrating to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was taken on the miraculous Heavenly Journey. He was taken first to Masjid Aqsa in Palestine and then up to the seven Heavens during a small part of the night. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 1:

"Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs…"

On his return he informed the people of Mecca of his Heavenly Journey. The non-Muslims of Mecca refuted his claim and tried to convince the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to renounce Islam as they believed this journey was impossible. But Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, simply replied that believing in this journey was a small issue as he believed in greater things which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, informed him about such as divine revelation. After this the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave him the title of Siddique, meaning, the truthful one. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 63.

One must follow the footsteps of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by adopting truthfulness in all aspects of their life.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness as three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

Migration to Medina with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Trusting in Allah (SWT)

After years of persecution in Mecca Allah, the Exalted, granted permission to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to migrate to Medina in the company of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. They took precautions in order to avoid being detected by the non-muslims of Mecca, such as leaving Mecca secretly. They had the son of Abu Bakkar, Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with them, spy on the non-muslims of Mecca in order to relay their evil plans to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They hired a guide to aid them in their journey to Medina. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3905.

These precautions and steps indicate an aspect of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, namely, using the means Allah, the Exalted, has provided in lawful ways in order to achieve some sort of benefit. The other aspect is trusting that the outcome, which Allah, the Exalted, chooses, will be best for everyone involved. Both elements of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, can be clearly observed in both the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. For example, while in the Cave of Mount Thawr, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, not to worry about his safety as Allah, the Exalted, was with them. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3922.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2344, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that if people truly trusted Allah, the Exalted, He would provide for them just like He provides for birds. They leave their nests hungry in the morning and return in the evening satisfied.

Truly trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is something which is felt in the heart but is proven through the limbs meaning, when one sincerely obeys Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 3:

"…And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him…"

The aspect of trust which is internal involves firmly believing that only Allah, the Exalted, can provide one with beneficial things and protect them from harmful things both in worldly and religious matters. A muslim understands that no one except Allah, the Exalted, can give, withhold, harm or benefit someone.

It is important to note, that truly trusting in Allah, the Exalted, does not mean one should abandon using the means which Allah, the Exalted, has provided, such as medicine. As the main Hadith under discussion clearly mentions that the birds leave their nests actively searching for provision. When one uses the strength and means provided by Allah, the

Exalted, according to the teachings of Islam they are undoubtedly obeying Him. This is in fact, the outward element of trusting in Allah, the Exalted. This has been made clear in many verses and Hadiths. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 71:

“O you who have believed, take your precaution…”

In reality, the outward activity is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and trusting Allah, the Exalted, inwardly is the inward state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One should not abandon the outward tradition even if they possess the inward state of trust.

Actions and using the means provided by Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of trusting Him. In this respect, actions can be split into three categories. The first are those actions of obedience which Allah, the Exalted, commands muslims to do so that they can avoid Hell and obtain Paradise. Abandoning these while claiming trust that Allah, the Exalted, will forgive them is simply wishful thinking and is therefore blameworthy.

The second type of actions are those means which Allah, the Exalted, has created in this world in order for people to live in it safely, such as eating when hungry, drinking when thirsty and wearing warm clothes in cold weather. A person who abandons these and causes harm to themself is blameworthy. However, there are some people who have been provided special strength by Allah, the Exalted, so that they can avoid these means without harming themselves. For example, the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used to fast for days on end uninterrupted but forbade others from doing the same as Allah, the Exalted, provided for him directly without the need for food. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1922. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, prayed for the fourth rightly guided Caliph Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, so that he would not feel excess cold or heat. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 117. Therefore, if a person turns away from these means but is provided with the strength to endure without failing in their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and people then it is acceptable otherwise it is blameworthy.

The third type of actions in respect to trusting in Allah, the Exalted, are those things which have been set as a customary practice which Allah, the Exalted, sometimes breaks for certain people. An example of this are the people who become cured of illnesses without the need of medicine. This is quite common especially in poorer countries where medicine is difficult to obtain. This is linked to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2144, which advises that no person will die until they utilize every ounce of their provision which was allocated to them, which according to another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748, was over fifty thousand years before Allah, the Exalted, created the Heavens and the Earth. So the one who truly realises this Hadith might not seek provision actively knowing that what was allocated to them so long ago cannot miss them. So for this person the customary means of obtaining provision such as obtaining it through a job is broken by Allah, the Exalted. This is a high and rare rank. Only the one who can behave in such a manner without complaining or panicking nor expecting things from people is free of blame if they choose this path. It is important to note, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1692, that it is a sin for a person to fail in providing for their dependents even though they may be on this high rank.

Having real trust in Allah, the Exalted, leads to being content with destiny. Meaning, whatever Allah, the Exalted, chooses for them they accept without complaint and without desiring things to change as they firmly trust that Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

To conclude, it is best to follow the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by using the lawful means one has been granted firmly believing they are from Allah, the Exalted, and trust internally that only what Allah, the Exalted, decides will occur, which is undoubtedly the best choice for each person whether they observe this or not.

True Love

After years of persecution in Mecca Allah, the Exalted, granted permission to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to migrate to Medina in the company of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. During their journey Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would first position himself in front of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when walking and then sometimes position himself behind him. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, questioned him about his behaviour he responded that every time he feared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be attacked from behind he would position himself behind the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but then he would fear a frontal attack and this would cause him to switch positions. They eventually took shelter in the Cave of Mount Thawr for a few days. Before entering the cave Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, insisted on entering it first in order to clean and remove any harmful things from inside it. He even placed his foot on a crevice inside the cave out of fear a creature might emerge from it and harm the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 157.

Every Muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

The Best Companion

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, sought refuge in the cave of Mount Thawr during the migration to Medina they were pursued by the non-Muslims of Mecca determined to martyr the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. On this occasion the non-Muslims of Mecca reached the cave where they were hiding. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, observed that if the non-Muslims were too look down at their feet they would see both him and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, hiding in the cave. At this the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that he should not grieve as Allah, the Exalted, was their third Companion. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3922. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 40:

“…when they were in the cave and he [i.e., the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us."…”

In a divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, Allah, the Exalted, advises that He is with anyone who remembers Him.

With the rise of mental problems and disorders, such as depression, it is vital for Muslims to understand the importance of this declaration. There is a small chance of a person experiencing a mental issue when they are

constantly surrounded and aided by someone that truly loves them. If this is true for a person it is undoubtedly more befitting for Allah, the Exalted, who has promised to be with the one who remembers Him. Acting on this declaration alone would eliminate all mental issues, such as depression. It is the reason why being secluded from others or being amongst others did not affect the mental state of the righteous predecessors as they were always in the company of Allah, the Exalted. It is obvious that when one obtains the company of Allah, the Exalted, they will overcome all obstacles and difficulties successfully until they reach His proximity in the hereafter.

In addition, out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, has not restricted this declaration in anyway. For example, He did not declare He was only with the righteous or with those who perform specific good deeds. He in fact encompassed every Muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith or how many sins they have committed. So a Muslim should never lose hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. But it is important to note the condition mentioned in this Hadith namely, to remember Allah, the Exalted. This is not only remembering Him with one's tongue but more importantly it is to remember Him through one's actions. This is only achieved by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is the true remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The one who behaves in such a manner will be blessed with the company and support of Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, the more one obeys Allah, the Exalted, the more they will receive His company. What one gives is what they shall receive.

Adhering to the Truth

During their migration to Medina, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was asked by a passerby who the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was, as he did not recognize him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, did not want to tell him the truth as this information might have reached the non-muslims of Mecca, who were in pursuit of them, but at the same time he did not desire to lie, as he was the pinnacle of honesty and truthfulness. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, told the man that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was simply his guide. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, meant his guide in this world whereas, the man assumed he meant that he was his guide during his journey. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 104-105.

It is a great shame that muslims nowadays lie for no real reason, even though Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, remained honest, even when facing a deadly situation.

Lying is unacceptable whether it is a small lie which is often called a white lie or when one lies as a joke. All of these types of lies are forbidden. In fact, the one who lies to make people laugh, so their aim is not to deceive someone, has been cursed three times in one Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2315.

Another popular lie people often speak believing it is not a sin is when they lie to children. This is undoubtedly a sin according to Hadiths such as the one found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4991. It is plain foolishness to lie to children as they will only adopt this sinful habit from the elder who lies to them. Behaving in this manner shows children lying is acceptable when it is not acceptable according to the teachings of Islam. Only in very rare and extreme cases is lying acceptable for example, lying in order to protect the life of an innocent person.

It is vital to avoid lying as according to one Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, it leads to other sins such as backbiting and mocking people. This behaviour leads one to the gates of Hell. When a person continues to lie they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a great liar. It does not take a scholar to predict what will happen to a person on Judgment day who has been recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a great liar.

All muslims desire the company of the Angels yet when a person lies they are deprived of their company. In fact, the stench that is omitted from the mouth of a liar causes the Angels to move a mile away from them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1972.

Telling lies which spread to others in society is a such a serious sin that according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7047, if a person does this and fails to repent they will be punished after their death to such an extent that an iron hook will be placed in their mouth and their facial skin will be torn off. Their face will regenerate instantly and the

process will then be repeated. This will continuously occur until the Day of Judgment.

To conclude, all muslims should avoid all forms of lying irrespective of who they are conversing with.

Life in Medina During the Lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The 1st Year After Migration

A Beautiful Legacy

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, arrived in Medina, one of the first things he did was build a house of Allah, the Exalted, the Masjid An Nabawi. The land belonged to two orphaned boys, Suhayl and Sahl, may Allah be pleased with them, who offered the land for free but the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, refused to take it for free and purchased it from them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 165-166.

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 in the form of a

water well 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 themself 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 themself what is their legacy?

Best Places in the World

The Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in Medina was initially built with bricks above which was a light roof made of palm leaves. Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, made no improvements to it during his Caliphate. But during his Caliphate Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, enlarged it, rebuilding it in the same manner as in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that is with bricks and palm leaves and he also restored its wooden pillars. During his Caliphate Uthman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, made changes and major additions. He had its walls built with cut stone and plaster, its pillars of stone and its roof of teak. He was putting into effect the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 738. It advises that whoever builds a Mosque for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even as small as a sparrow's nest or smaller, Allah, the Exalted, will build for them a house in Paradise. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 201-202.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1528, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the most beloved places to Allah, the Exalted, are the Mosques and the most hated places to Him are the market places.

Islam does not prohibit Muslims from going to places other than the Mosques. Nor does it command them to always inhabit the Mosques. But it is important that they prioritize attending Mosques for the

congregational prayers and attending religious gatherings over visiting the market places unnecessarily.

When a need arises there is no harm to attend other places, such as shopping centers, but a Muslim should avoid going to them unnecessarily as they are places where sins more often occur. Whereas, the Mosques are meant to be a sanctuary from sins and a comfortable place to obey Allah, the Exalted, in. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. Just like a student benefits from a library as it is an environment created for studying similarly, Muslims can benefit from Mosques as their very purpose is to encourage Muslims to obtain and act on useful knowledge so that they can obey Allah, the Exalted.

Not only should a Muslim prioritize the Mosques over other places but they should encourage others such as their children to do the same. In fact, it is an excellent place for the youth to avoid sins, crimes and bad company, which lead to nothing but trouble and regret in both worlds.

Brotherhood Between Helpers & Migrants (RA)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, established brotherhood between his fellow Emigrants, the Muhajireen and the Helpers, the Ansars, may Allah be pleased with them all. He advised them to become brothers in the cause of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 215.

With the passing of time people become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, most Muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to strength. Whereas, many Muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

The 2nd Year After Migration

The Battle of Badr

Standing Firm

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. On the way to raiding a caravan of the non-Muslims of Mecca the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca had organized an army to confront the Muslims. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, for their opinion on what to do. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Pages 259-260.

At this time, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, rose up and comforted the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by pledging his support to him under all circumstances and encouraged the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to do the same.

This incident reminds Muslims the importance of remaining steadfast whenever they are attacked by their enemies namely, the Devil, their inner Devil and those who invite them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should not turn their back on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whenever they are tempted by these enemies. They should instead remain steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is achieved by avoiding the places, things and people who invite and tempt them towards sins and the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Avoiding the traps of the Devil is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. The same way traps on a path are only avoided by possessing knowledge of them similarly; Islamic knowledge is required to avoid the traps of the Devil. For example, a Muslim might spend much time reciting the Holy Quran but because of their ignorance they might destroy their righteous deeds without realising it through sins such as, backbiting. A Muslim is bound to face these attacks so they should therefore prepare for them through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return gain an uncountable reward. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed right guidance for those who struggle in this way for His sake. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways…”

Whereas facing these attacks with ignorance and disobedience will only lead one to difficulties and disgrace in both worlds. The same way a solider that possesses no weapons to defend themself would be defeated; an ignorant Muslim will have no weapon to defend themself when facing these attacks which will result in their defeat. Whereas, the knowledgeable Muslim is provided with the most powerful weapon which cannot be overcome or beaten namely, sincere obedience of Allah, the

Exalted. This is only achieved through sincerely gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

In addition, an aspect of hypocrisy is when one verbally shows support for others and their good projects such as, building a mosque but when the time comes to take part in the project such as, donating wealth they seem to disappear. Similarly, when people are facing good times they verbally support them reminding others of their loyalty to them. But the moment the people face difficulties these hypocrites offer no emotional or physical support. Instead they criticize them. This was the attitude of the hypocrites in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 62:

“So how [will it be] when disaster strikes them because of what their hands have put forth and then they come to you swearing by Allah, "We intended nothing but good conduct and accommodation.""

Courage

Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, once advised that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was the bravest of men. During the Battle of Badr he remained with and defended the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, from every attack. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 13.

As the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was the primary target of the non-muslims of Mecca, being with him was the most dangerous place during the Battle of Badr.

A muslim must adopt courage in all aspects of life, which involves remaining sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2511, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against behaving cowardly. This attitude prevents trust in Allah, the Exalted, and in what He has promised, such as one's guaranteed provision. It can cause one to seek their provision in doubtful and unlawful means which will destroy a person in both worlds. Allah, the Exalted, does not accept any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2342.

In addition, being a coward prevents one from striving against the Devil and one's inner Devil which requires genuine struggle. This will lead one to fail in obeying 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. And it will therefore prevent them from fulfilling the rights of people. Both worldly and religious success requires effort and time. A coward will be too afraid to undertake this struggle and will instead be lazy which leads to failure in both worldly and religious matters.

True Hope

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. Before the battle commenced the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, persistently and ardently supplicated to Allah, the Exalted, to grant victory to them. His pleas to Allah, the Exalted, were so intense that his cloak would slip down off his shoulders when he raised his hands in supplications. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and would reposition his cloak for him and out of sympathy he requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to lessen his intensity as Allah, the Exalted, would fulfill His promise and grant him victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 273.

As the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is the perfect servant of Allah, the Exalted, he did not stop turning and supplicating to his Lord and Master. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, during this incident was at the station of true hope in Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the difference between true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, and wishful thinking. True hope is when one controls their soul by avoiding the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, and actively struggles for preparing for the hereafter. Whereas, the foolish wishful thinker follows their

desires and then expects Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and fulfill their wishes.

It is important for Muslims not to confuse these two attitudes so that they avoid living and dying as a wishful thinker as this person is highly unlikely to succeed in this world or the next. Wishful thinking is like a farmer who fails to prepare the land for planting, fails to plant seeds, fails to water the land and then expects to harvest a huge crop. This is plain foolishness and this farmer is highly unlikely to succeed. Whereas, true hope is like a farmer who prepares the land, plants seeds, waters the land and then hopes Allah, the Exalted, will bless them with a huge harvest. The key difference is that the one who possesses true hope will actively strive 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. And whenever they slip up they sincerely repent. Whereas, the wishful thinker will not actively strive in obeying Allah, the Exalted, and instead follow their desires and still expect Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and fulfill their wishes.

Muslims must therefore learn the key difference so that they can abandon wishful thinking and instead adopt true hope in Allah, the Exalted, which always leads to nothing except good and success in both worlds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405.

A specific type of wishful thinking which affected the past nations and even the muslim nation is when a person believes that they can ignore the commands and prohibitions of Allah, the Exalted, and somehow

someone on the Day of Judgement will intercede for them and save them from Hell. Even though the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is a fact and has been discussed in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4308, none the less even with his intercession some muslims whose punishment will be reduced by it 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.

The Devil convinces those who do not believe in Judgement Day that even if it occurs they will make peace with Allah, the Exalted, on that day by claiming that they were not so bad as they avoided major crimes such as murder. They have convinced themselves that their pleas will be accepted and they will be sent to Paradise even though they disbelieved in Allah, the Exalted, during their lives on Earth. This is incredibly foolish as Allah, the Exalted, will not treat the person who believed in Him and tried to obey him like the one who disbelieved in Him. A single verse has erased this type of wishful thinking. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 85:

“And whoever desires other than Islām as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers.”

Real Love

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. During this battle the son of Abu Bakkar, Abdur Rahman, may Allah be pleased with them, was fighting on the side of the non-muslims. Years later, after accepting Islam, he told his father that during the Battle of Badr, he had an opportunity to attack him but withheld his hand out of respect for him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be please with him, replied that if he had an opportunity on that day to fight him, he would have. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 12.

Even though he was his son, yet Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, placed love and loyalty to Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, above all things.

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

"Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are

more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people."”

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

A Merciful Act

In the second year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the first battle of Islam, the Battle of Badr, took place. After victory was given to the Muslims the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, consulted his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, on what to do with their prisoners of war. Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, advised to execute them for their many crimes and acts of war. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, disliked this suggestion. Then Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, suggested to pardon them from execution and instead allow them to purchase their own freedom. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was pleased with this advice and acted on it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 2, Page 305.

Throughout the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Muslims have been advised to be merciful to others. For example, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1924, advises that those who show mercy to the creation will be shown mercy by Allah, the Exalted.

It is important to note, that showing mercy is not only through one's actions, such as donating wealth to the poor. It in fact encompasses every aspect of one's life and interaction with others, such as one's words. This is why Allah, the Exalted, warns those who show mercy to others by donating charity that failing to show mercy through their

speech, such as counting their favours done to others, only cancels their reward. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

“O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury…”

True mercy is shown in everything: one's facial expression, one's glance and the tone of their speech. This was the full mercy shown by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is therefore how Muslims must act.

In addition, showing mercy is so important that Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear in the Holy Quran that even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possessed countless beautiful and noble characteristics yet, the one which attracted the hearts of people towards him and Islam was mercy. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you…”

It clearly warns that without mercy people would have fled from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If this was the

case in respect to him even though he possessed countless other beautiful characteristics how can Muslims, who do not possess such noble characteristics, expect to have a positive impact on others, such as their children, without showing true mercy?

Simply put, Muslims should treat others how they wish to be treated by Allah, the Exalted, and others, which is undoubtedly with true and full mercy.

The 3rd Year After Migration

The Battle of Uhud

Obedience in Difficulties

In the third year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca decided to take revenge for the loss at the Battle of Badr which occurred in the previous year. This led to the Battle of Uhud. When the battle commenced the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly overcame the non-Muslim army which caused them to retreat. But some of the archers the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded to stay on a small mountain, Jabal Al Rumah, which is in front of Mount Uhud, irrespective of the outcome of the battle, believed that the battle was over and the command no longer applied. When they descended Jabal Al Rumah, it exposed the rear of the Muslim army. The non-Muslim army then rallied together and attacked the Muslims from both sides. This led to the martyrdom of many Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and their bodies were mutilated by the non-Muslims. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to Medina, they became aware that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca were considering marching back towards Medina in order to wipe out Islam for good. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave orders for the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, despite their grievous wounds and tired bodies, to move out in pursuit of the non-Muslims.

When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, responded positively Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 172:

“Those [believers] who responded to Allah and the Messenger after injury had struck them. For those who did good among them and feared Allah is a great reward.”

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 67-68.

Seventy Companions, including Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, volunteered to give chase to the non-muslims of Mecca. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6249.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why their worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. 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."

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

To conclude, it is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.

Respecting Conversations

When the daughter of Umar Ibn Khattab, Hafsah, may Allah be pleased with them, became a widow, he discussed a possible marriage proposal with Uthman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him. The latter respectively declined the offer as he was not in the right position to get married. Umar then discussed a marriage proposal with Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, who did not give an immediate response. Later on, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, proposed and married Hafsah, may Allah be pleased with her. Abu Bakkar then explained to Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, that he did not initially reply as he was aware that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated a desire to marry her. Instead of divulging this information he decided not to reply. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3261.

Unlike many people who have a habit of speaking about everything they hear, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, respected the private conversation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4992, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that speaking about everything one hears to others is enough to make them sinful.

It is important to note, one should firstly ensure they only listen to lawful speech as actively participating in a conversation which involves sinful speech will negatively affect them in both worlds. A muslim should try to avoid conversations involving vain and useless speech as this often leads to sinful speech and is a waste of one's precious time which will be a great regret for them on Judgment Day.

Secondly, they should ensure that they do not relate everything they hear to others as this can easily lead to backbiting and slandering which are major sins. It also often leads to fractured and broken relationships especially, amongst relatives. A muslim should only relate things they hear if they can avoid sins and if the information is beneficial to others. In addition, the information they pass on must be verified and authentic as conveying things which are not verified contradicts the command of the Holy Quran. A muslim who intends to benefit people may well harm them by acting in this manner. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 6:

“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.”

Just like a muslim would not like most of the things they discuss to be spread to others they should not treat what others say in this manner either.

The 4th Year After Migration

Forgoing Revenge

In the fourth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, visited a non-Muslim tribe, Banu Nadir, who he had previously made a pledge of support and peace with, in order to ask for financial assistance. They replied that they would help him while secretly planning to assassinate him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, received divine revelation informing them of their treachery and he left and returned to Medina before they had a chance to enact their evil plan. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then dispatched a message to the Banu Nadir warning them to leave his territory and protection. The hypocrites urged the Banu Nadir to stay and offered their support to them. They claimed that if the Banu Nadir resisted against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they would support them, if the Banu Nadir fought, they would fight with them and if they were expelled from the territory, they would leave with them. This encouraged the Banu Nadir to stand against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ultimately the hypocrites did nothing when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, decided to fight against the Banu Nadir. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, besieged the Banu Nadir, the latter requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to spare their blood and instead grant them safe passage so they could evacuate the area with their belongings. Instead of taking revenge against the Banu Nadir for their evil plan, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, allowed them to take whatever they could carry except weapons. This has been

discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 100-101.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

"Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors."

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a Muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

"…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?..."

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on Muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted, does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A Muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

The Second Badr

Before leaving the Battle of Uhud, the non-Muslim leader, Abu Sufyan, announced an appointment for the two armies to meet again at Badr the following year. When the time came the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, marched with around 1500 soldiers and camped at Badr, waiting for the non-Muslims. The non-Muslim army consisted of around 2000 soldiers but set up camp away from Badr. Allah, the Exalted, cast terror into their hearts and even though he set the appointment himself, Abu Sufyan, encouraged the soldiers to head back to Mecca. As they were frightened to engage the Muslims, they did not show any opposition to him and returned to Mecca. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, remained in Badr and engaged in some profitable trade. After eight days, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, left Badr with awe and superiority which had spread into the hearts of the Arab people. This has been discussed in Imam Safi Ur Rahman's, The Sealed Nectar, Pages 306-307.

Because of their firmness, Allah, the Exalted, granted the Muslims a psychological victory which echoed across Arabia more than a military victory would have.

This reminds Muslims the importance of remaining steadfast whenever they are attacked by their enemies namely, the Devil, their inner Devil and those who invite them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. A Muslim should not turn their back on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whenever they are tempted by these enemies. They should instead remain steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which

involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is achieved by avoiding the places, things and people who invite and tempt them towards sins and the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Avoiding the traps of the Devil is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. The same way traps on a path are only avoided by possessing knowledge of them similarly; Islamic knowledge is required to avoid the traps of the Devil. For example, a Muslim might spend much time reciting the Holy Quran but because of their ignorance they might destroy their righteous deeds without realising it through sins such as, backbiting. A Muslim is bound to face these attacks so they should therefore prepare for them through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return gain an uncountable reward. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed right guidance for those who struggle in this way for His sake. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways…”

Whereas facing these attacks with ignorance and disobedience will only lead one to difficulties and disgrace in both worlds. The same way a solider that possesses no weapons to defend themself would be defeated; an ignorant Muslim will have no weapon to defend themself when facing these attacks which will result in their defeat. Whereas, the knowledgeable Muslim is provided with the most powerful weapon which cannot be overcome or beaten namely, sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved through sincerely gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

The 5th Year After Migration

Battle of Ahzab

An Exit

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq/Ahzab. When word of their attack reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, at the advice of Salman Al Farsi, may Allah be pleased with him, he commanded for a huge trench to be dug in the only side of Medina the enemy army could attack from. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, actively participated in digging this trench. He encouraged the Companions, may Allah be pleased with him, to actively take part and seek the reward of the hereafter. They all worked alongside him. When the enemy forces reached near Medina and the trench they setup camp. A non-Muslim tribe within Medina, the Banu Qurayza, who had a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, locked their fortresses up. A non-Muslim travelled from the non-Muslim army and urged one of the leaders of Banu Qurayza, Ka'b Bin Asad, to break his peace treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead join the non-Muslim army and attack the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, from within Medina once the fighting began. Ka'b Bin Asad, then dissolved his peace

treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and tore up the document on which it was written. The anxiety and fear increased as the enemies were outside and inside Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, remained firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, throughout this battle and eventually Allah, the Exalted, dispatched a fierce wind towards the non-Muslim army which completely uprooted their camp and caused them to sink into confusion and distress. The non-Muslims decided to return home as the weather was against them and they failed to successfully penetrate the trench and enter Medina. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 154-155.

Before the non-Muslim army left, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Hudaifa Bin Yamman, may Allah be pleased with him, to gather intel from the enemy camp but warned him not to do anything which could attract attention to himself. When he reached the enemy camp he observed the non-Muslim leader, Abu Sufyan. Hudaifa, may Allah be pleased with him, loaded his bow and was about to fire at Abu Sufyan but withheld his hand when he remembered the orders he was given. He secretly attended one of the meetings of the non-Muslims and ascertained that they had decided to leave and head back to their homes as they were running out of supplies, the wind sent by Allah, the Exalted, was wreaking havoc on them and they could not penetrate the trench dug by the Muslims. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Noble Life of the Prophet (PBUH), Volume 1, Pages 1383-1384.

An important lesson to learn from this event is trusting in Allah, the Exalted. Even in situations which appear inescapable and disastrous, like this great event, a Muslim should always trust in the choice of Allah, the Exalted. Muslims must understand that their knowledge is very limited and that they are extremely short sighted. Meaning, they cannot fully perceive the wisdoms behind the choices of Allah the Exalted. On the other hand, the knowledge and the divine perception of Allah, the Exalted, is unlimited. Therefore, a Muslim should trust in the choices of Allah, the Exalted, just like a blind person trusts the guidance of their physical guide. No matter what the attitude of a Muslim the choice of Allah, the Exalted, will occur so it is best to trust in His wisdom rather than showing impatience which only leads to further trouble.

In addition, it is important to remember the countless examples within one's life when a person desired something only to regret it after obtaining it. And when they disliked something from occurring only to change their mind later on. 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.”

As destiny is out of people's hands it is important for Muslims to concentrate on the thing which is in their control if they desire to be rescued from difficulties namely, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Allah, the Exalted, has already guaranteed that He will save a

Muslim from all difficulties in both worlds. All they have to do is remain obedient to Him. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

“…And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”

It is foolish to stress about the thing which is not in one's control meaning, destiny, and remain heedless to the thing which is in one’s control namely, obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Treason

In the fifth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the enemies of Islam from Medina encouraged the non-Muslims of Mecca and various other non-Muslim tribes to attack Medina. This led to the Battle of Khandaq. After Allah, the Exalted, defeated the non-Muslim army, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to fight against the Banu Qurayza for their act of treason, when they broke their pact of peace and support with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and instead aligned with the non-Muslim army during the Battle of Khandaq. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, besieged the Banu Qurayza and Allah, the Exalted, cast terror in their hearts. The Banu Qurayza agreed to submit to the decision of a Companion, Sa'd Bin Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him, who they knew well, even before he became a Muslim. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then summoned Sa'd, may Allah be pleased with him, for their judgement and he decided that the soldiers of Banu Qurayza would be executed and their assets seized. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then declared that he had given judgement according to the ruling of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 166.

It is important to bear in mind the capital punishment for treason is a very standard judgement, even in this day and age. In addition, their crime was not against a single person but an entire city full of people. If they were exiled instead they would have only waged war with Medina again.

Allah, the Exalted, takes revenge on those who oppress His weak servants as they do not possess the power to defend nor avenge themselves.

A Muslim who understands this divine name will not oppress the servants of Allah, the Exalted, especially those who appear defenceless as in reality their Protector and Avenger is Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, will take revenge for His servants during their lives on Earth and especially on Judgement Day. He will establish justice by forcing the oppressor to hand over their righteous deeds to their victim and if necessary, the victim's sins will be shifted to their oppressor. This may well cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

A Muslim must act on this divine name by taking revenge against their own inner Devil which inspires them towards evil by subjecting it to the strict obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. And a Muslim must seek revenge on all things which prevent them from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by turning away from them.

The 6th Year After Migration

Two Tongues of Fire

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, he dispatched an expedition. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were returning from this expedition, a group of them surrounded a well aiming to quench their thirst. As the area around the well was overcrowded, two of the Companions, one from Medina and the other from Mecca, may Allah be pleased with them, got into a small quarrel. The leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah Bin Ubayy, took this opportunity to cause further disruption by claiming that the migrants of Mecca were only causing them problems. He began to criticize the other hypocrites for allowing the migrants of Mecca to move into Medina. A child, Zayd Bin Arqam, may Allah be pleased with him, overheard his evil words and reported them to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Abdullah Bin Ubayy was summoned but took huge oaths that he never spoke those words. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took no further action. In this connection Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 63 Al Munafiqun, verses 7-8:

“They are the ones who say, "Do not spend on those who are with the Messenger of Allāh until they disband." And to Allāh belong the depositories of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites do not understand. They say, "If we return to al-Madīnah, the more honored [for

power] will surely expel therefrom the more humble." And to Allāh belongs [all] honor, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, but the hypocrites do not know."

After these verses were revealed, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, comforted Zayd Bin Arqam, may Allah be pleased with him, by taking his ear and commenting that this was the one who devoted his ear to Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 213-215.

A sign of hypocrisy is being two-faced. This is the one who changes their behaviour in order to please different groups of people intending thereby to gain some worldly things. They speak with many different tongues showing their support to different people while harbouring dislike for them. They fail to be sincere towards people which has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. If they fail to repent they will find themself in the hereafter with two tongues of fire. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4873. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 14:

"When they meet the believers, they say: "We believe," but when they meet their evil companions (in privacy), they say: "Surely we are with you; we were merely jesting.""

Slander of Aisha (RA) Bint Abu Bakkar (RA)

Letting Things Go

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, went on an expedition against the Banu Al Mustaliq. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, accompanied him as well. During journeys women would sit inside a small compartment which would be placed and tied on a camel. When the army set up camp Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, left to relief herself and returned to the camp. On her return she noticed her necklace had gone missing. She then retracted her steps until she found it. When she once again returned to the camp she found they had departed without her. This occurred as the men in charge of placing and tying her compartment on a camel assumed she was already inside. She remained at the abandoned campsite until a Companion, Safwan Bin Al Mu'attal, may Allah be pleased him, passed by and saw her. He was tasked to lag behind the army and pick up any luggage which had unknowingly fallen from the travelling army. He recognized Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, as he had seen her before the veiling of women became a duty in Islam. He respectfully offered her his camel to ride on as he walked ahead swiftly. When they reached the army people witnessed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, entering the campsite. The hypocrites took this opportunity to spread an evil slander about her and the people became greatly perturbed. After Allah, the Exalted, exonerated Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, of this slander her father, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased him, declared that he would no longer financially aid his relative who took part in spreading this slander. Allah, the Exalted, then revealed chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22,

encouraging him and all Muslims to forgive and overlook the mistakes of others:

“And let not those of virtue among you and wealth swear not to give [aid] to their relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah, and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”

After this Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, retracted his declaration and continued helping his relative. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3180.

All Muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same Muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many Muslims often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a Muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find

that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement.

Prioritising Correctly

Once, during a Friday sermon, some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, left the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, while he was preaching in order to tend to a trade caravan which arrived in Medina. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was amongst those who remained with him. Then chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 11, was revealed:

"But [on one occasion] when they saw a transaction or a diversion they rushed to it and left you standing. Say, "What is with Allāh is better than diversion and than a transaction, and Allāh is the best of providers.""

This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2000.

Even though this was not a sin none the less, it contradicted the correct manners one must show the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 62:

"The believers are only those who believe in Allāh and His Messenger and, when they are [meeting] with him for a matter of common interest, do not depart until they have asked his permission. Indeed, those who ask your [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him]

permission, - those are the ones who believe in Allāh and His Messenger. So when they ask your permission due to something of their affairs, then give permission to whom you will among them…"

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, understood that remaining with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would lead to an increase in useful knowledge. This is better than trade and diversion. This does not mean one should abandon their lawful livelihood rather, they should strike a balance between the two while leaning towards gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. Behaving in this manner leads to peace and success in both worlds.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2465, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever prioritises the hereafter over 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.

But as mentioned in the other half of this Hadith the one who prioritises the material world over 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 which 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 loss in both worlds.

Free From Pride

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned that on the Day of Judgement, Allah, the Exalted, will not look (out of mercy) at the person who drags their robe/lower garment behind them out of pride. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, commented that his robe sometimes slipped down unintentionally (as it was loose) but the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, exonerated him from pride and declared that he did not behave in this manner out of pride. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3665.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a person who possesses even an atom's worth of pride in their heart will not enter Paradise. He clarified that pride is when a person rejects the truth and looks down on others.

No amount of good deeds will benefit someone who possesses pride. This is quite obvious when one observes the Devil and how his countless years of worship did not benefit him when he became proud. In fact, the following verse clearly connects pride with disbelief so a muslim must avoid this evil characteristic at all costs. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 34:

“And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.”

The proud is the one who rejects the truth when it is presented to them simply because it did not come from them and as it challenges their desires and mentality. The proud person also believes they are superior to others even though they are unaware of their own ultimate end and the ultimate end of others. This is plain ignorance. In reality, it is foolish to be proud of anything seeing as Allah, the Exalted, created and granted everything a person owns. Even the righteous deeds one performs are only due to the inspiration, knowledge and strength granted by Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, being proud of something which does not innately belong to them is plain foolishness. This is just like a person who becomes proud over a mansion they do not even own or live in.

This is the reason why pride belongs to Allah, the Exalted, as He alone is the Creator and innate Owner of all things. The one who challenges Allah, the Exalted, in pride will be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4090.

A muslim should instead follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and adopt humility. The humble truly recognise that all the good they possess and all the evil they are protected from comes from no one except Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, humility is more fitting for a person than pride. A person should not be fooled into believing humility leads to disgrace as no one has been more honoured than the humble servants of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him,

has guaranteed an increase in status for the one who adopts humility for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029.

Correcting Relationships

Once, after a dispute with Umar Ibn Khattab, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, requested his forgiveness. When Umar, initially, refused Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, headed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to mention the matter to him. After a short while, Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, regretted his action and went searching for Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. He eventually found him with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who was upset on behalf of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, urged the people of Medina to avoid harming Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as he readily accepted his message of Islam whereas, everyone else showed different degrees of hesitation and he supported him with himself and his wealth. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was not harmed in any way again. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3661.

One of the things to note is that after having a dispute both Abu Bakkar and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, quickly attempted to correct their relationship instead of turning it into a reason to sever ties with one another. Unfortunately, severing ties over petty issues has become very widespread amongst the muslims nowadays, even though it clearly contradicts the teachings of Islam and the way of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6534, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that it is not lawful for a muslim to abandon another muslim for more than three days.

This applies to those who abandon other muslims for worldly reasons. Even though it is lawful to abandon someone over a religious reason it is far superior to maintain ties with them and continue the duty of kindly commanding good and forbidding evil according to the teachings of Islam. This behavior will be far more effective in encouraging the sinful to sincerely repent to Allah, the Exalted, than abandoning them. A muslim should continue to help others in matters of good and forbid them from matters which are bad. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Muslims have been commanded to unite and not separate from each other as unity leads to strength. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were few in number but as they remained united they overcame entire nations. Unfortunately, not fulfilling this important duty is one of the reasons why the general strength of the muslims has weakened over time even though their number has increased.

Consequences of Actions

Abu Bakkar once had a dispute with another Companion, Rabee'ah Al Aslamee, may Allah be pleased with them. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, spoke some harsh words and immediately regretted what he had done. When he urged Rabee'ah, may Allah be pleased with him, to speak similar words back to him in order to balance out what occurred, he refused. When the matter was brought to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he advised Rabee'ah, may Allah be pleased with him, to instead supplicate for the forgiveness of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, at which point the latter left their meeting crying. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Musnad Ahmed, 4/58-59.

Even though it was obvious that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, did not speak sinful and vile words, as this was against his nature, none the less, he regretted his harshness as he was fully aware of the consequences of wronging others, consequences, which muslims often forget.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the bankrupt muslim is the one who accumulates many righteous deeds, such as fasting and prayer, but as they mistreated people their good deeds will be given to their victims and if necessary their victim's sins will be given to them on Judgement Day. This will lead to them being hurled into Hell.

It is important to understand that a muslim must fulfil two aspects of faith in order to achieve success. The first are the duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayer. The second aspect is in respect to people which includes treating them kindly. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true believer until they keep they physical and verbal harm away from the life and possessions of others.

It is important to understand that Allah, the Exalted, is infinitely forgiving meaning, He will forgive those who sincerely repent to Him. But He will not forgive the sins which involve other people until the victim forgives first. As people are not so forgiving a muslim should be fearful that those who they have wronged will exact revenge on them by taking away their precious good deeds on Judgment Day. Even if a muslim fulfils the rights of Allah, the Exalted, they may still end up in Hell simply because they have wronged others. It is therefore important for muslims to strive to fulfil both aspects of their duties in order to obtain success in both worlds.

Blessed Deeds

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once asked his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who out of them was fasting, who took part in a funeral that day, who fed a poor person that day and who visited a sick person that day. Only Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he had done all the blessed deeds mentioned on that day. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, concluded that whoever has these deeds combined within their character will certainly enter Paradise. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2374.

Muslims must strive to follow in the footsteps of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by eagerly searching and performing righteous deeds all the time and not become lazy in this regard.

In a Divine Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2219, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that all righteous deeds people perform are for themselves except for fasting as this is for Allah, the Exalted, and He shall reward it directly.

This Hadith indicates the uniqueness of fasting. One of the reasons it is described in this manner is because all other righteous deeds are visible to people, such as the prayer, or they are between people, such as secret charity. Whereas, fasting is a unique righteous deed as others cannot know someone is fasting by only observing them.

In addition, fasting is a righteous deed which puts a lock on every aspect of oneself. Meaning, a person who fasts correctly will be prevented from committing verbal and physical sins, such as looking at and hearing unlawful things. This is also achieved through the prayer but the prayer is only performed for a short time and is visible to others whereas, fasting occurs throughout the day and is invisible to others. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 45:

"…Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing…"

It is clear from the following verse a person who does not complete the obligatory fasts without a valid reason will not be a true believer as the two have been directly connected. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 183:

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous"

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 723, that if a muslim does not complete a single obligatory fast without a valid reason they cannot make up for the reward and blessings lost even if they fasted every day for their entire life.

In addition, as indicated by the verse quoted earlier fasting correctly leads to piety. Meaning, simply starving during the day does not lead to piety but paying extra attention to abstaining from sins and performing righteous deeds during the fast will lead to piety. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 707, warns that a fast will not be significant if one does not abstain from speaking and acting on falsehood. A similar Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1690, warns that some fasting people obtain nothing except hunger. When one becomes more aware and careful in obeying Allah, the Exalted, while they are fasting this habit will eventually affect them so they behave in a similar way even when they are not fasting. This is in fact true piety.

The righteousness mentioned in the verse quoted earlier is connected to fasting as fasting reduces one's evil desires and passions. It prevents pride and the encouragement of sins. This is because fasting hinders the appetite of the stomach and one's carnal desires. These two things lead to many sins. In addition, the desire for these two things is greater than the desire for other unlawful things. So whoever controls them through fasting will find it easier to control the weaker evil desires. This leads to true righteousness.

As briefly indicated earlier there are different levels of fasting. The first and lowest level of fasting is when one abstains from the things which will break their fast, such as food. The next level is abstaining from sins which damages one’s fast thereby reducing the reward of their fast, such as lying. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2235. Fasting which involves each member of the body is the next level. This is when each body part fasts from sins for example, the eyes from looking at the unlawful, the ears from listening to the unlawful and so on. The next level is when one behaves in this manner even

when they are not fasting. Finally, the highest level of fasting is abstaining from all things which are not connected to Allah, the Exalted.

A muslim should also fast inwardly as their body fasts outwardly by abstaining from sinful or vain thoughts. They should fast from persisting on their own plans in respect to their desires and try to concentrate on fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. In addition, they should fast from inwardly challenging the decree of Allah, the Exalted, and instead except destiny and whatever it brings knowing Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants even if they do not understand the wisdom behind these choices. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

Finally, a muslim should aim for the highest reward by keeping their fast a secret and not informing others if it is avoidable as informing others unnecessarily leads to a loss of reward as it is an aspect of showing off.

The next righteous deed mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is attending a funeral.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, listed five rights a muslim owes another muslim.

One of these rights is that a muslim, when possible, should attend the funeral of other muslims as each attendee supplicates for the deceased to be forgiven. Therefore, the more muslims in attendance the better. Just like one desires others to attend their funeral and supplicate for them they too should do this for others. In this particular deed is a good reminder for a muslim that they too will eventually die. Hopefully, this will alter their behaviour for the better so that they better prepare for their own death by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

The next righteous deed mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is to feed a poor person.

Allah, the Exalted, gives people according to what they do. For example, the Holy Quran mentions that if one remembers Allah, the Exalted, He in turn will remember them. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

“So remember Me; I will remember you…”

Feeding others for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, is just the same. The one who performs this righteous deed will be fed food from Paradise and whoever gives drink to others will be given drink from Paradise on Judgement Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449.

When asked about the best type of Islam the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6236, that feeding others and greeting others with kind speech are the best traits in Islam.

Muslims should make it a top priority to act on this righteous deed and strive to feed others especially, the poor on a regular basis. This is an amazing deed which does not require much wealth. Each person should feed others according to their capacity even if it is only half a date fruit as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1417, that this will protect them from the fire of Hell on Judgement Day. This leaves people with no excuse from abstaining from this righteous deed.

The final righteous deed mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is to visit a sick person.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6551, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the muslim who visits a sick person is in an orchard of Paradise until they return.

The first thing to note is that this Hadith includes visiting any sick person irrespective of their faith. Even though, this is undoubtedly a great deed it is important for a muslim to firstly perform this righteous deed solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. If they do it for any other reason such as to show off to people they will not gain reward from Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, they should fulfil the etiquettes and conditions of visiting the sick according to the teachings of Islam in order to obtain their reward. They should not stay long thereby, causing trouble to the sick person and their relatives. In this day and age it is easy to contact the sick and their family beforehand in order to ensure they visit them at the appropriate time as a sick person will be resting throughout the day. They should control their actions and speech so that they avoid all types of sins such as gossiping, backbiting and slandering others. They should encourage the sick to be patient and discuss the rewards associated with it and generally discuss beneficial matters in respect to the world and the hereafter. Only when one behaves in this manner will they obtain the reward outlined in the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If they fail in this they will either gain no reward or they may well be left with sins depending on how they behaved. Unfortunately, many muslims enjoy performing this righteous deed but fail to fulfill its conditions correctly. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 114:

“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.”

The Celestial Pool

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once said to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, that he was his Companion at the celestial pool (on Judgement Day) and his Companion in the cave. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3670.

The celestial pool was granted to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by Allah, the Exalted, and will be seen on Judgment Day. 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 disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, especially those things 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.

Loving for Allah (SWT)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was once asked who the most beloved person to him was, to which he named his wife, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her. Then he was asked which of the men was the most beloved to him and he named her father, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3662.

Unlike most people nowadays, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing be upon him, loved Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, because of his sincerity and obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Meaning, his love was for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not for the sake of worldly reasons.

In a Divine Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6548, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that Allah, the Exalted, will shade the two people who loved each other for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.

Allah, the Exalted, will grant shade to these two people on a day when the Sun will be brought within two miles of the creation. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2421. If people struggle to cope with the heat of the Sun during summer can one imagine the intensity of the heat on Judgment Day?

Loving for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, leads to such a reward as this emotion is extremely difficult to control. And whoever is blessed with controlling it will find fulfilling the duties of Islam straight forward. These duties involve fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. It is because of this reason loving for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, has been declared an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

Loving others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, includes desiring what is best for others in both worldly and religious matters. This must be practically shown through one's actions meaning, supporting others financially, emotionally and physically according to one's means. Counting the favors one does for others not only cancels the reward but also proves their insincerity as they only love gaining praise and other forms of compensation from people. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

“O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury…”

Any type of negative feeling towards others over worldly reasons, such as envy, contradicts loving others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and must be avoided.

To conclude, this noble quality includes loving for others what one loves for themself through actions not just words. This is in fact an aspect of being a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

Importance of Earning Wealth

Even though Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, mostly remained in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, this still did not prevent him from undertaking journeys for the sake of trading. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 173.

This indicates the importance of striving for one's lawful provision.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2072, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that no one has eaten anything better than from the earnings of their own hands.

It is important for muslims not to confuse laziness for trusting in Allah, the Exalted. Unfortunately, many muslims turn away from working a lawful occupation, go on social benefits and inhabit the Mosques claiming to trust in Allah, the Exalted, to provide for them. This is not trusting in Allah, the Exalted, at all. It is only laziness which contradicts the teachings of Islam. True trust in Allah, the Exalted, in respect to gaining wealth is to use the means Allah, the Exalted, provided a person, such as their physical strength, in order to obtain lawful wealth according to the teachings of Islam and then trust that Allah, the Exalted, will provide lawful wealth to them through these means. The aim of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is not to cause one to give up using the

means He has created as this would make them useless and Allah, the Exalted, does not create useless things. The purpose of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is to prevent one from earning wealth through doubtful or unlawful means. As a muslim should firmly believe their provision which includes wealth 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. This allocation cannot change under any circumstances. A muslim's duty is to strive in obtaining this through lawful means which is the tradition of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon him. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2072. Using the means provided by Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of trusting in Allah, the Exalted, as He created them for this very purpose. A muslim should therefore not be lazy while claiming trust in Allah, the Exalted, by going on social benefits when they have the means to earn lawful wealth through their own efforts and the means created and provided to them by Allah, the Exalted.

The Pact of Hudaibiya

Pressing Forward

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, consulted the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, on what to do. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised that as they were not intending to fight with the non-muslims of Mecca they should proceed towards Mecca and if they were prevented from entering it then they would fight in self-defense. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then gave the order to proceed forward. This has been discussed in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732, and in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 125-126.

This event teaches muslims that whenever they encounter a difficult situation they should remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, trusting that He will provide them a way out of it even if this seems impossible at the time. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

“…And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”

A muslim should understand that Allah, the Exalted, chooses the best for His servants even if the wisdoms behind the difficulty are not obvious. It is a person's reaction which either leads to blessings or the anger of Allah, the Exalted. One only needs to reflect on the countless examples in their own life where they believed something was bad only to change their mind later on and vice versa. This is just like when a person takes a bitter medicine prescribed to them by a doctor. Even though the medicine is bitter they still take it believing it will benefit them. It is strange how a muslim can trust a doctor whose knowledge is limited and who is not absolutely certain the bitter medicine will benefit them and fail to trust Allah, the Exalted, whose knowledge is infinite and when He only decrees the best for His servants.

A muslim should understand the difference between wishful thinking and trust in Allah, the Exalted. The person who does not obey Allah, the Exalted, and then expects Him to help them in difficulties is a wishful thinker. The one who will gain the help of Allah, the Exalted, which is indicated in this great event, is the one who sincerely strives in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience and then trusts His judgment without complaining or questioning His choice.

United in Faith

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the group to take an alternate road into Mecca which was rough and extremely dangerous. Eventually, when they reached close to Hudaibiya the camel of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sat down and refused to go any further. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, understood that staying within this area was best for them instead of marching forward towards Mecca. He commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to setup camp in Hudaibiya and declared that he would accept anything the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca requested from him that day as long as it did not contradict the commands of Allah, the Exalted. The non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. One of these men from the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca was Urwa Bin Masood. After witnessing the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and how much they varied in respect to tribe, ethnicity and social class he declared that if the non-Muslims of Mecca decided to attack them the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would flee. Urwa believed that the only people who would stay and fight with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be the people from his own tribe. He and many others

believed this as tribal affiliation meant everything to them. After hearing Urwa's thoughts, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, rebuked him and made it crystal clear that none of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would ever abandon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 226 and has been recorded in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731-2732.

With the passing of time people become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, most Muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to strength. Whereas, many Muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people

only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

The Pledge of Ridwan

Pledge of Servanthood

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya, the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Uthman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, as his ambassador to the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in order to inform them of his peaceful intention. After Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, delivered this message, he was detained by the non-Muslims of Mecca. News spread to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, had been martyred. He took a pledge from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, that they would not leave Mecca until they took revenge for Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, as he not only entered Mecca unarmed but as an ambassador of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ambassadors have always been treated with respect and harming them is a declaration of war. This is true even in this day and age. During the pledge the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed one of his hands into the other and commented that his hand represented the hand of Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, and his pledge of obedience to Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In this regard, Allah, the Exalted, revealed numerous verses, such as chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 10:

“Indeed, those who pledge allegiance to you,- they are actually pledging allegiance to Allāh. The hand of Allāh is over their hands. So he who breaks his word only breaks it to the detriment of himself. And he who fulfills that which he has promised Allāh - He will give him a great reward.”

And chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 18:

“Certainly was Allāh pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you, under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility upon them and rewarded them with an imminent conquest.”

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 227-228 and in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4066.

It is important for humanity to fulfill the pledge they made with Allah, the Exalted, which has been mentioned in chapter 7 Al A'raf, verse 172 of the Holy Quran:

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

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

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

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

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

Finally, the fact that this covenant is deeply embedded in a person’s heart indicates that it is a duty on Muslims to uncover it. This will lead one to certainty of faith which is much stronger than faith based on hearsay meaning, being told by one's family that they are a Muslim. Certainty of faith allows a Muslim to overcome all difficulties successfully in this world while fulfilling their religious and worldly duties. One only fails in tests and their duties because of weakness in their faith. Certainty of faith is only obtained by gaining and acting on the

knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 53:

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

Remaining Firm when in Doubt

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions. One of which was that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would not perform the Visitation (Umra) that year and instead he would return the following year. Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, like many of the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not pleased with these conditions as they seemed outwardly to favor the non-Muslims of Mecca. So he spoke to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, about this and he reminded him to remain firm on the obedience of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, then discussed this matter with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the latter declared that he would not oppose the command of Allah, the Exalted, and He would never let his mission fail. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave the same exact reply to Umar as Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them,

did. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 228-229.

The reply and attitude of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, indicated his strong faith. Muslims must follow in his footsteps by striving to gain and act on Islamic knowledge in order to gain certainty of faith, as it encourages one to remain firm on the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all situations.

A great obstacle to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is weakness of faith. It is a blameworthy characteristic which gives rise to other negative characteristics, such as failing to act on one's knowledge, fearing others, placing the obedience of people above the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, having hope in forgiveness without striving for it and other undesired characteristics. The greatest affliction of weakness of faith is that it allows one to commit sins, such as neglecting the obligatory duties. The root cause of weakness of faith is ignorance of Islam.

One should strive to gain knowledge in order to strengthen their faith. With time they will eventually reach certainty of faith which is so strong that it safeguards a person through all tests and trials and ensures they fulfil their duties both religious and worldly. This knowledge is obtained when one studies the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Specifically, those teachings which discuss the promises of reward for those who are obedient and the punishment for those who are disobedient to Allah, the Exalted. This creates fear of punishment and hope of reward in a muslim’s heart which acts like a pull and push mechanism towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

One can strengthen their faith by reflecting on the creations within the Heavens and the Earth. When done correctly this clearly indicates the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, and His infinite power. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 53:

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

For example, if a muslim ponders over the night and day and how perfectly in sync they are and the other things linked to them they will truly believe that this is not a random thing meaning, there is a force which ensures everything runs like clockwork. This is the infinite power of Allah, the Exalted. In addition, if one ponders over the perfect timing of the night and day they will realise it clearly indicates that there is only one God namely, Allah, the Exalted. If there were more than one God each god would desire the night and day to occur according to their own desires. This would lead to utter chaos as one God might desire the Sun to rise whereas the other God might desire the night to continue. The perfect uninterrupted system found within the universe proves there is only one God namely, Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 22:

“Had there been within them [i.e., the heavens and earth] gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined…”

Another thing which can strengthen one's faith is to persist in righteous deeds and abstain from all sins. As faith is belief supported by actions it weakens when sins are committed and strengthens when good deeds are performed. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 5662, that a muslim is not a believer when they drink alcohol.

A Clear Victory

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions all of which seemed to outwardly favor the non-Muslims of Mecca. After the pact was signed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to Medina without performing the Visitation (Umra), which was part of the pact. This pact of peace for ten years in reality favored the Muslims. Prior to this pact whenever Muslims and non-Muslims met it often led to some sort of fighting but when warfare came to an end because of the pact whenever these people met they only conversed. When Islam was explained to the non-Muslims they began to accept it. Islam entered the hearts of more people in the next two years than it did in all the previous years since its coming. This clear victory was acknowledged by Allah, the Exalted, who revealed chapter 48 Al Fath after the agreement had been signed. Chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 1:

“Indeed, We have given you, a clear conquest”

This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir’s, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 231.

Years later, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, commented that there was no greater victory in Islam than the Pact of Hudaibiya. Even though the people did not realize its benefits at the time, due to their short-sightedness, Allah, the Exalted, had planned a gradual victory for Islam. He added, that during the farewell Holy Pilgrimage he observed the devotion and obedience of Suhayl Bin Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, who eventually accepted Islam, even though during the Pact of Hudaibiya he stubbornly opposed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then praised Allah, the Exalted, for his conversion to Islam and the great victory Allah, the Exalted, granted Islam.

This superiority and success was granted to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as they remained sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, at all times. Even though the number of Muslims have increased over time it is obvious that the strength of Muslims has only decreased. Each Muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith believes in the authenticity of the Holy Quran as doubting it would cause them to lose their faith. In the following verse Allah, the Exalted, has given the key to obtaining superiority and success which would remove the weakness and grief Muslims are experiencing all around the world. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 139:

“So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.”

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Muslims only need to become true believers in order to achieve this superiority and success in both worlds. True belief 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 includes the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and those towards people, such as loving for others what one loves for themself which has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. This requires one to learn and act on Islamic teachings. Through this attitude was success and superiority granted to the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. And if Muslims desire to achieve it then they must return to this rightly guided attitude. As Muslims believe in the Holy Quran they should understand this simple teaching and act on it.

Evil Plots Fail

In the sixth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, set out towards Mecca intending to perform the Visitation (Umra) and not to engage in warfare with the non-Muslims of Mecca. During the journey, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched a force to prevent them from entering Mecca. After setting up camp in Hudaibiya, the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca sent different people to talk to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to ascertain his motives for coming to Mecca. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told each of them he only desired to perform the Visitation (Umra) in peace. After a few incidences, eventually the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched Suhayl Bin Amr to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to make peace with him but set some conditions, all of which seemed to outwardly favor the non-Muslims of Mecca. One of which was that if any person who accepted Islam from Mecca fled to Medina, he or she would be returned to Mecca. But if someone fled from Medina to Mecca, they would not be sent back to Medina. It was obvious the non-Muslims of Mecca only demanded this as they believed it would weaken the Muslim nation by breaking their unity. After the pact was signed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, returned to Medina. A Companion, Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, escaped his imprisonment in Mecca and fled to Medina. The non-Muslim leaders of Mecca dispatched two men to retrieve Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, from Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, honored the agreement and handed him over to be returned to Mecca. On his way back to Mecca, Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, escaped and eventually fled to another secluded area away

from Medina and Mecca. After this occurred, whenever a Companion, may Allah be pleased with them, fled their imprisonment in Mecca, they joined up with Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him. They numbers grew till eventually they began raiding and looting the merchant caravans of the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca, as the pact of peace did not include them, only the citizens of Medina were included. This caused severe financial problems for the people of Mecca. They eventually send a message to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, pleading for him to call Abu Basir, may Allah be pleased with him, and his force to Medina so that the raids and looting would end. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed and these men migrated to Medina peacefully. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 240.

One should never plot to do an evil thing as it will always, one way or another, backfire on them. Even if these consequences are delayed to the next world they will face them eventually. For example, the brothers of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, desired to harm him as they desired the love, respect and affection of their father the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him. But it is clear that their scheming only put them further away from their desire. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 18:

"And they brought upon his shirt false blood. [Jacob] said, "Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting…"

The more one plots evil the more Allah, the Exalted, will put them further from their goal. Even if they outwardly achieve their desire Allah, the

Exalted, will cause the very thing they desired to become a curse for them in both worlds unless they sincerely repent. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

“…but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples?...”

The 7th Year After Migration

The Battle of Khaybar

Accepting Counsel

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he was commanded to strive against a non-Muslim tribe who lived in Khaybar close to Medina. The command was given as they persistently broke the peace treaty they had with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by constantly plotting against him with the leaders of the non-muslims of Mecca. During the siege of Khaybar some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, requested permission to cut down some of the fruit-bearing trees that belonged to the people of Khaybar, in order to break their spirit. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, agreed as sacrificing some trees was acceptable. Breaking the spirit of the enemy would reduce the number of casualties on both sides. Meaning, preserving human life was more important than preserving some trees. After witnessing what was occurring Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to reverse his decision in order to preserve the remaining fruit-bearing trees for the future. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted his advice and gave the appropriate command, as their initial aim of breaking the spirit of the enemy was achieved. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 132-133.

Generally speaking, muslims should only consult a few people in respect to their affairs. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

"…So ask the people of the message if you do not know."

This verse reminds muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a person would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical health a muslim should only consult those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a muslim should only consult those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

Seeking Repute

During the military expedition of Dhaat As Salaasil, which occurred after the seventh year the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was asked for some general advice by another Companion, Raafai Ibn Amr, may Allah be pleased with him. He advised him not to become a leader, even over two people. He added, that a time will come when the reins of leadership will spread to underserving people. When these people do not establish justice, Allah, the Exalted, will exact vengeance against them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 134-135.

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.

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 prestige.

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 themself 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 worse 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.

Sincerity to Leaders

After the seventh year the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Amr Ibn Al Aas, may Allah be pleased with him, was appointed the leader of a military expedition to Dhaat As Salaasil. Many of the other senior Companions, including Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, were ordered to join the expedition as ordinary soldiers. During a cold night Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, commanded his men not to light any fires as he did not want the enemy to spot them. This could have resulted in an unexpected enemy attack. Some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did not understand the wisdom behind his command and became furious with him, such as Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. But Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, calmed them down and reminded them that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, as their leader as he was knowledgeable about warfare. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 136-137.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, demonstrated sincerity to his leader.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the leaders of society. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number

20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

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

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

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

The Visitation (Umra)

Humility Without Weakness

In the seventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, he headed to Mecca to perform the Visitation (Umra), as agreed with the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca in the previous year. Word reached him that the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca were spreading news that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were under great difficulty and distress. The non-Muslims lined up close to the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, to witness the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then supplicated for the blessings of Allah, the Exalted, on those who demonstrated strength on that day. In order to show their strength, they partially jogged around the House of Allah, the Exalted, the Kaaba, while circumambulating it. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 308.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 2556, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings to the one who adopts humility without a shortcoming meaning, weakness. The humble one submits, accepts and acts on the commands and prohibitions of Allah, the Exalted, thereby proving their servanthood to Him. They readily accept the truth when it is presented to them even if it contradicts their desires and irrespective of who delivers it to them. Meaning, they do not reject the truth believing

they know best. They do not look down at others believing they are superior to them because of any worldly thing they possess or because of their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, as they understand that their final outcome or the final outcome of others is unknown to them. Meaning, they may die while Allah, the Exalted, is not pleased with them. This reality should prevent a person from the deadly sin of pride. An atom's worth of which is enough to take one to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265. Humility without weakness means that a Muslim always demonstrates kindness to others but is not afraid to defend themself if necessary nor does their humility cause them to appear disgraced and dishonored.

The 8th Year After Migration

The Conquest of Mecca

Perfecting Faith

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting another tribe who attacked a tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. After the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca became aware that this news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they dispatched one of their leaders to Medina, Abu Sufyan, in order to reaffirm and extend the pact as they became extremely worried about the consequences of their treachery. Abu Sufyan spoke to many of the senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, urging them to intercede on his behalf with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He listed the different affiliations he had with them in order to win them over such as tribal and kinship affiliations but they all replied in the same way. They refused to compromise on their faith in order to please him and did not desire to convince the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to renew the pact or not to renew it. They instead left the decision to their leader trusting in his divinely guided choice. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 381-382.

Specifically, when Abu Sufyan approached Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, he told him that whoever the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, defends, he too will defend. He added, that even if an ant was fighting against the non-muslims of Mecca, he would aid it against them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 139.

The response from Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, indicated his perfect faith, as he loved and hated for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the characteristics which perfect a muslim's faith.

The first is to love for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This includes desiring what is best for others in both worldly and religious matters. This must be practically shown through one's actions meaning, supporting others financially, emotionally and physically within one's means. Counting one's favors to others not only cancels the reward but also proves their lack of love for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, as this person only loves gaining praise and other forms of compensation from people. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

“O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury…”

Any type of negative feelings towards others over worldly reasons, such as envy, contradicts loving others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and must be avoided.

To sum up, this noble quality includes loving for others what one loves for themself through actions not just words. This is an aspect of being a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

The next characteristic mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is to hate for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This means one should dislike the things Allah, the Exalted, dislikes such as His disobedience. It is important to note, this does not mean one should hate others as people can sincerely repent to Allah, the Exalted. Instead a muslim should dislike the sin itself which is proven by them avoiding it and warning others against it also. Muslims should continue to advise others instead of breaking ties with them as this act of kindness may well cause them to sincerely repent. This includes not disliking things based on one’s own feelings, such as an action, which is lawful. Finally the proof of one disliking for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is that when they show their dislike through their words and actions it will never be in a way which contradicts the teachings of Islam. Meaning, their dislike for something will never cause them to commit a sin as this would prove that their dislike for something is for their own sake.

Private Conversations

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. He often withheld military tactical information from the general public in order to protect the city of Medina so he informed his wife, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, to prepare food for his expedition but told her to keep it a secret. When her father, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, visited his daughter while the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had left the house, he observed Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, preparing food. He questioned her over her actions but she remained silent. He kept asking if the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to leave for an expedition and listed many locations. But Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, remained silent. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 382.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1959, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated that private conversations are a trust which must be protected.

Unfortunately, many have the bad habit of divulging the private conversations of people to others. This is an incredibly bad characteristic

to possess as it contradicts the attitude of a true Muslim. Many do this with their close relatives believing it is acceptable when it is clearly not. A Muslim should always keep the words spoken in a conversation secret unless they are fully sure the person they conversed with would not mind the information being mentioned to a third party. If they would then doing this betrays them which contradicts being sincere to them. Being sincere to others has been commanded in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4204. It is important to act on the main Hadith as it prevents sins such as backbiting and gossiping and prevents negative feelings being developed for each other. These all only lead to fractured and broken relationships. If one honestly reflects on their life they will realize that the majority of the people they have felt negative feelings towards occurred because of what they were told about them not what they directly witnessed about them. Divulging private conversations prevents unity amongst people especially relatives. And unity has been commanded in many teachings of Islam such as the one declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6065. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 58:

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due…”

Make Things Easy

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the non-Muslim leaders of Mecca broke their agreement of peace made in Hudaibiya by supporting a tribe who attacked another tribe who were allied with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The truce only lasted for approximately 18 months. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded by Allah, the Exalted, to head for Mecca. When the huge Muslim army entered Mecca in the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it was obvious to all they would conquer Mecca that day. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, led his elderly father to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that he could accept Islam. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, saw them coming he asked Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, why did he not leave his elderly father at home and he himself would have gone to visit him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that it was more fitting for his father to come to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then the other way round. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Pages 398-399.

Even though Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, spoke the truth the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated the importance of making things easy for others. Unfortunately, some Muslims always strive to extract their full rights and more from others. In this day and age due to ignorance it has become more difficult to fulfil the rights of people, such as one's parents. Even though a Muslim has no excuse but to strive to fulfil them it is important for Muslims to be merciful with each other. As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in

Sahih Bukhari, number 6655, Allah, the Exalted, shows mercy to those who are merciful to others.

One aspect of this mercy is for a Muslim not to demand their full rights from others. Instead, they should use the means such as their physical or financial strength to help themself and make things easy for others. In some cases, when a Muslim demands their full rights from others and they fail to fulfil them it may lead to their punishment. In order to be merciful to others they should therefore only demand their rights in some cases. This does not mean a Muslim should not strive to fulfil the rights of others but it means they should try to overlook and excuse the people they have rights over. For example, a parent can excuse their adult child from a particular house chore and do it themself if they possess the means to do so without troubling themself, especially if they child returns home from work exhausted. This leniency and mercy will not only cause Allah, to Exalted, to be more merciful to them but it will also increase the love and respect people have for them. The one who always demands their full rights is not a sinner but they will lose out on this reward and outcome if they behave in this manner.

Muslims should make things easy for others and hope Allah, the Exalted, will make things easy for them in this world and in the next.

The Battle of Hunayn

Steadfast in Difficulty

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. During the battle the Muslim army was overwhelmed and some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, temporarily retreated from the battlefield. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was one of those who stood his ground and remained with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Eventually, after they were summoned at the command of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, all of them pushed forward until Allah, the Exalted, granted them victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 451 and in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 141.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 159, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a short but far reaching piece of advice. He advised people to sincerely declare their belief in Allah, the Exalted, and then remain steadfast on it.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith means that they must strive in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. It consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, which relate to Him, such as the obligatory fasts and those which relate to people, such as treating others kindly. It includes refraining from all the prohibitions of Islam which are between a person and Allah, the Exalted, and those involving others. A Muslim must also face destiny with patience truly believing Allah, the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

Steadfastness can include refraining from both types of polytheism. The major type is when one worships something other than Allah, the Exalted. The minor type is when one shows off their good deeds to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. Therefore, an aspect of steadfastness is to always act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

It includes obeying Allah, the Exalted, at all times instead of obeying and pleasing oneself or others. If a Muslim disobeys Allah, the Exalted, by pleasing themself or others they should know neither their desires nor people will protect them from Allah, the Exalted. On the other hand, the one who is sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from all things by Him even if this protection is not apparent to them.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith includes following the path set out by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and not adopting a path which deviates from this. The one who strives to adopt this path will not need anything else as this is enough to keep them steadfast on their faith.

As people are not perfect they will undoubtedly make mistakes and commit sins. So being steadfast in matters of faith does not mean one has to be perfect but it means they must strive to adhere strictly to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as outlined earlier, and to sincerely repent if they commit a sin. This has been indicated in chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 6:

"…so take a straight course to Him and seek His forgiveness…"

This is further supported by a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1987, which advises to fear Allah, the Exalted, and to erase a (minor) sin which has occurred by performing a righteous deed. In another Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book 2, Hadith number 37, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to try their best to remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even though they will not be able to do it perfectly. Therefore, a Muslim's duty is to fulfil the potential they have been given through their intention and physical actions in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They have not been commanded to achieve perfection as this is not possible.

It is important to note, that one cannot remain steadfast in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, through their physical actions without purifying their heart first. As indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984, the limbs of the body will only act in a pure way if the spiritual heart is pure. Purity of heart is only achieved by gaining and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Steadfast obedience requires one to control their tongue as it expresses the heart. Without controlling the tongue steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, is not possible. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2407.

Finally, if any deficiency in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted, occurs one must make sincere repentance to Allah, the Exalted, and seek the forgiveness of people if it involves their rights. Chapter 46 Al Ahqaf, verse 13:

“Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

Being Just

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. During the battle the Muslim army was overwhelmed and some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, temporarily retreated from the battlefield. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was one of those who stood his ground and remained with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Eventually, after they were summoned at the command of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, all of them pushed forward until Allah, the Exalted, granted them victory. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 451 and in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 141.

During the battle Abu Qataadah, may Allah be pleased with him, killed an enemy solider. After the victory they were told that whoever could prove he killed an enemy solider would be allowed to take their possessions, such as their weapons. Initially, no one verified the story of Abu Qataadah, may Allah be pleased with him, until another confirmed that the possessions of the enemy solider he had killed was with him. This man requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to allow him to keep the possessions instead of handing them over to Abu Qataadah, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, interjected and commented that he should not be allowed to keep the possessions when they rightfully belonged to one of the lions of Allah, the Exalted, meaning, Abu Qataadah, may Allah be pleased with him. The Holy Prophet

Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then had the possessions handed over to Abu Qataadah, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 142-143.

This interjection of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, clearly indicated his just and fair nature.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themself harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings

of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.[1] So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just…”

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

The Siege of Taif

Leniency and Second Chances

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn, some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. The non-Muslims of Taif were besieged for approximately 30 days but they were not conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the Muslim army to withdraw from Taif and supplicated for their guidance. Perhaps Allah, the Exalted, prevented the Muslims from conquering Taif due to the choice made years earlier, before the migration to Medina, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was given the option of destroying the people of Taif because of their maltreatment of him. But he turned down this option and instead commented that he hoped they would eventually accept Islam. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3231. This choice of protection continued and prevented the Muslims from conquering Taif.

In addition, the people of Taif did eventually take this second chance given to them by Allah, the Exalted, to accept the truth and sent a delegation to Medina to visit the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and

blessings be upon him, and to accept Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 476.

Allah, the Exalted, does not hasten the punishment for the one who deserves it out of leniency. Instead He gives them an opportunity to sincerely repent and rectify their behaviour. The Muslim who understands this will never give up hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, but will not also cross the limits and adopt wishful thinking by believing Allah, the Exalted, will never punish them. They understand that punishment is only delayed not abandoned unless they sincerely repent. So this divine name creates hope and fear in a Muslim. A Muslim should use this delay in order to repent and hasten towards good deeds.

A Muslim should act on this divine attribute by being lenient with people especially, when they demonstrate bad character. They should show leniency towards others just as they desire Allah, the Exalted, to be lenient with them in their moments of heedlessness. But at the same time they should not be lenient with their own bad characteristics knowing that punishment for sins is delayed not permanently abandoned until they sincerely repent. They should also remain steadfast in leniency by replying evil with good according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

"And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend."

The 9th Year After Migration

The Battle of Tabuk

True Devotion

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to fight against the great Byzantine empire, as news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that they were preparing to wage war against the Muslims, as they became aware of the growing power of Islam. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. Allah, the Exalted, revealed many verses of the Holy Quran criticizing them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 1.

Before departing for this great expedition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, encouraged the people of Medina to contribute financially towards it. Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, offered half his wealth in charity. Whereas, Abu Bakkar, may

Allah be pleased with him, donated all his wealth. When he was asked about what he left for his family he replied that he left Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for them. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, Number 3675.

This incident is connected to 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? How many give up their precious sleep in order to offer voluntary prayers?

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 dedicate the blessings they possess in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. How can they dedicate minimal things to Him and still expect to achieve all their dreams? This attitude is truly strange.

Be the Best

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to fight against the great Byzantine empire, as news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that they were preparing to wage war against the Muslims, as they became aware of the growing power of Islam. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. Allah, the Exalted, revealed many verses of the Holy Quran criticizing them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 1.

When the army reached Thaniyyatul Wadaa, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, chose his commanders for this great expedition. He handed each of them a banner and the greatest banner was given to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, thereby indicating that he was the leader of the commanders. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 147.

This incident, like many others, indicated the superior status of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him.

Generally speaking, the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, are the best group ever created after the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. The fact they physically observed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his lifetime is definitely one factor. But anyone who knows about their life and their righteous deeds understands that their superiority is due to more than just this unique and great deed.

One of the main reasons for their superiority is shown in a Hadith involving the Companion Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, which is found in Sahih Muslim, number 6515. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was once riding on his conveyance in the desert when he came across a Bedouin. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted the Bedouin, placed his turban on the Bedouin's head and insisted that the Bedouin ride on his conveyance. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was told that the greeting he gave the Bedouin was more than enough as the Bedouin would have been greatly pleased at the fact that the great Companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted him. Yet, Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, went much further than this and showed the Bedouin great respect. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he only did this because the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that one of the best ways a person can honour their parent is by showing love and respect to their parent's relatives and friends. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, added that the Bedouin's father was a friend of his father the Commander of the Faithful, Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him.

This incident indicates the superiority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They completely submitted to the teachings of Islam. They not only fulfilled the obligatory duties and avoided all sins but

completely fulfilled all acts which were recommended to them to the highest possible degree. Their submission caused them to put aside their own desires and only act to please Allah, the Exalted. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily ignored the Bedouin as none of the actions he done were obligatory yet, unlike many muslims who would use this excuse, he completely submitted to the teachings of Islam and acted the way he did.

It is the lack of submission to the teachings of Islam which has weakened the faith of muslims. Some only fulfil the obligatory duties and turn away from other righteous deeds, such as voluntary charity, which contradict their desires by claiming the actions are not obligatory. All muslims desire to end up with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. But how is this possible if they do not follow their path or way? If a muslim follows a path other than theirs then how can they end up with them? To end up with them one must follow their path. But this is only possible if one completely submits to the teachings of Islam like they did instead of cherry picking the deeds which suit their desires.

A Blessed Grave

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to fight against the great Byzantine empire, as news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that they were preparing to wage war against the Muslims, as they became aware of the growing power of Islam. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. During the expedition a Companion, Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that he once got up in the middle of the night and noticed a light. When he went over to it to investigate he found the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Bakkar and Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, digging a grave for a Companion, Dhu Al Bijadayn, may Allah be pleased with him, who had passed away. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was in the grave while Abu Bakkar and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, lowered the body of Dhu Al Bijadayn, may Allah be pleased with him, into the grave. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, positioned his body correctly in the grave he asked Allah, the Exalted, to be pleased with him just like he was pleased with him. After witnessing this event Abdullah Bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, would often say that he wished that was his grave. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 22-23.

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 namely, 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 prepare the deeds required to make their grave a garden of Paradise. But if they disobey Allah, the Exalted, 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 they must strive harder in beautifying their grave as the journey there is inevitable and the stay there 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.

Blind to the Truth

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to fight against the great Byzantine empire, as news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that they were preparing to wage war against the Muslims, as they became aware of the growing power of Islam. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to make preparations for the Battle of Tabuk during a period of extreme heat and discomfort. In addition, the journey would be long and extremely difficult. A total of 30,000 soldiers joined him for this expedition but some held back out of negligence or hypocrisy. During the journey the army suffered great hunger and thirst. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was requested by Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, for aid. Before he lowered his hands from his supplication it began to rain and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, noted that it only rained on their camp and not beyond it. When a hypocrite was asked if he still desired more proof of Islam after this he replied that it was only a passing cloud. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 10-11, and in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 148-149.

The Holy Quran teaches mankind that certain people are so drowned in the material world no advice will penetrate their veiled hearts. The Holy Quran describes how this group of people possesses hearts harder than rocks. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 74:

“Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder…”

At this point those who desire to spread the word of Islam should separate from this type of person and instead concentrate on others. But it is important to note, even in this case a Muslim should always demonstrate good character towards the sinful as they can repent at anytime. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

“…and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.”

Similarly, in another verse of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that when a limit is reached it is best to separate and leave the stubborn and misguided people to their false beliefs. A day will undoubtedly come when Allah, the Exalted, will inform mankind who was rightly guided and who was lost in darkness. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 55:

“And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, "For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.""

Muslims should never get depressed and confused when their good advice does not affect others. In some cases, these people are drowned in sins to such an extent their heart becomes veiled. This veil prevents the good advice affecting them in a positive way. A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, explains how a sin causes a black spot to be etched onto the spiritual heart. The more one sins the more their spiritual heart becomes engrossed by this darkness. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

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

This is similar to another verse where Allah, the Exalted, declares that their ears, eyes and hearts have been veiled from the truth and they therefore cannot be guided to the truth. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 7:

“Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil…”

The fault does not lie with the message of Islam but in the hearts of the misguided. Just like the fault lies in the eyes of a blind person and not the bright Sun. Unfortunately, this stubborn attitude has become a widespread problem within society. Some of these people believe in Islam yet have closed their hearts and minds to the teachings of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They refuse to accept any good advice which would benefit them in both worlds.

Those who choose to spread the word of Islam should understand that there are two types of mind-sets people can adopt. The first is when someone makes their mind up beforehand about an issue and then searches and accepts only those things which support their predetermined belief. Whereas, the correct attitude is to live with an open mind by searching and accepting strong evidence regarding different issues. The first mentality will only cause problems from a personal level right up to a national level. Unfortunately, this is how some aspects of the media work. They predetermine the information they would like to publish, find bits of weak supporting evidence and then blow it out of proportion for the world to see. Those spreading the word of Islam should avoid the first type of people and instead concentrate on inviting the second group towards the truth.

Prophetic Sermon at Tabuk

A Comprehensive Advice

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to fight against the great Byzantine empire, as news reached the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that they were preparing to wage war against the Muslims, as they became aware of the growing power of Islam. This led to the Battle of Tabuk. When the expedition reached Tabuk, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave the following speech: “People, the most truthful speech is that of the Book of Allah, the Exalted. The firmest of bonds is the word (testification of faith). The best of religions is that of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him. The best of ways of life is the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The most noble of speech is the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The finest of narratives is the Holy Quran. The best of practices are those sanctioned by Allah, the Exalted. The worse of practices are those innovated. The best guidance is that of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. The most noble of deaths is being killed as a martyr. The most blind thing of all is going astray after guidance. The best of deeds are those that are beneficial. The best guidance is that which is followed (not innovated). The worse blindness is that of the (spiritual) heart. The upper hand (giving charity) is better than the lower hand (the one who receives charity). That which is little yet suffices is better than that which is much but wasteful. The worse apology is when death is at hand. The worse repentance is on Judgement Day. There are those people who only attend the Friday prayers at its end. There are those people who only mention Allah, the Exalted, in vain. The worse of

sins is a lying tongue. The best riches are those of the soul (contentment). The best of qualities is piety. The pinnacle of wisdom is the fear of Allah, the Exalted. The best quality within the heart is that of certainty (of faith). Doubting is from disbelief. Wailing in mourning is an act from the age of ignorance (pre-Islamic era). Fraud is of the soil spread in Hell. (Most) Poetry comes from Satan. Wine is the aggregate of sin. Women (for men and men for women) are the snares of Satan. Youth is an offshoot of madness (due to lack of control). The worse income is from interest. The worse food is consuming the wealth of orphans. The happy man is he who is warned by (the actions of) others. One of you has only to move four arm lengths away for the matter (death) to lead on to the hereafter. The fundamental of an action is determined by its results. The worse of narratives are those of untruth. All that is to come is near at hand. To swear at a believer is an outrage. To fight a believer is disbelief. To eat his flesh (backbiting) is disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. The sanctity of his property is as the sanctity of his blood. Whoever takes an (false) oath by Allah, the Exalted, gives the lie to Him. Whoever seeks His forgiveness shall be forgiven. Whoever gives pardon, Allah, the Exalted, will pardon. Whoever suppresses anger, Allah, the Exalted, will reward. Whoever remains firm against calamity, Allah, the Exalted, will compensate. He who desires fame, Allah, the Exalted, will discredit. He who remains firm, Allah, the Exalted, will doubly reward. He who disobeys Allah, the Exalted, Allah, the Exalted, will punish. O Allah, the Exalted, forgive me and my people. O Allah, the Exalted, forgive me and my people. O Allah, the Exalted, forgive me and my people. I seek forgiveness for myself and for you." This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 16-17.

Supporting Good

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation representing the non-Muslim tribe of Thaqif visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to accept Islam. After they accepted Islam, and at the request of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed one of their tribesmen as their commander, Uthman Bin Abu Al As, may Allah be pleased with him. He did this even though he was one of the youngest men, as he showed a great eagerness to understand the Holy Quran. He eventually became an expert in the Holy Quran and was much liked by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 40 in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 145-146.

By nominating Uthman, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, fulfilled his duty of supporting society in what is good. He did not nominate him for worldly reasons, such as a family lineage, or the hope of obtaining something back in return.

Since the passing of the righteous predecessors the strength of the muslim nation has weakened dramatically. It is logical that the greater the number of people in a group the stronger the group will become yet muslims have somehow defied this logic. The strength of the muslim nation has only decreased as the number of muslims have increased. One of the main reasons this has occurred is connected to chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2 of the Holy Quran:

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

Allah, the Exalted, clearly commands muslims to aid each other in any matter which is good and not support each other in any matter which is bad. This is what the righteous predecessors acted on but many muslims have failed to follow in their footsteps. Many muslims now observe who is doing an action instead of observing what they are doing. If the person is linked to them for example, a relative, they support them even if the thing is not good. Similarly, if the person has no relationship with them they turn away from supporting them even if the thing is good. This attitude completely contradicts the traditions of the righteous predecessors. They would support others in good irrespective of who was doing it. In fact, they went so far on acting on this verse of the Holy Quran that they would even support those they did not get on with as long as it was a good thing.

The other thing connected to this is that many muslims fail to support each other in good as they believe the person they are supporting will gain more prominence than them. This condition has even affected scholars and Islamic educational institutes. They make lame excuses not to aid others in good as they do not have a relationship with them and they fear their own institution will be forgotten and those they help will gain further respect in society. But this is completely wrong as one only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the truth. As long as one's intention is to please Allah, the Exalted, supporting others in good will increase their respect within society. Allah, the Exalted, will cause the hearts of the people to turn to them even if their support is for another organisation, institution or person. For example, when the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed this world Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily challenged for the Caliphate and would have found plenty of support in his favour. But he knew the right thing to do was to nominate Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, did not worry about being forgotten by society if he supported another person. He instead obeyed the command in the verse mentioned earlier and supported what was right. This is confirmed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari numbers 3667 and 3668. The honour and respect of Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, within society only increased by this action. This is obvious to those who are aware of Islamic history.

Muslims must reflect on this deeply, change their mentality and strive to aid others in good irrespective of who is doing it and not hold back fearing their support will cause them to be forgotten within society. Those who obey Allah, the Exalted, will never be forgotten in both this world and the next. In fact, their respect and honour will only grow in both worlds.

Purifying the Holy Pilgrimage

Importance of Knowledge

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to announce that only a Muslim could take part in the Holy Pilgrimage after that year. Previous to this non-Muslims would perform the Holy Pilgrimage but according to their own misguided customs. Prior to this announcement and in that year the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, in charge of the Holy Pilgrimage. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 48-49 and in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 150-151.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was appointed in charge of the Holy Pilgrimage because of his deep knowledge of Islam, as the person in charge would deal with many legal issues and regularly address the pilgrims. This indicates the importance of gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever

follows a path seeking knowledge Allah, the Exalted, will make the path to Paradise easy for them.

This indicates both a physical path someone takes seeking knowledge, such as attending lectures and classes, and a path whereby someone seeks knowledge without a physical journey. It encompasses all forms of knowledge, such as listening, reading, studying and writing about knowledge. The path to Paradise has many obstacles preventing a muslim from reaching it. Only the one who possesses knowledge of them and how to overcome them will reach Paradise safely. In addition, it easily understood that a person cannot reach a city in this world without knowledge of its location and the route which leads to it. Similarly, Paradise cannot be obtained without knowing these things about it, such as the path leading to it.

But the important thing to note is that a muslim's intention to seek and act on knowledge must be to please Allah, the Exalted. Whoever seeks religious knowledge for a worldly reason, such as showing off, will end up in Hell if they fail to sincerely repent. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 253.

In addition, a muslim must strive to act on their knowledge as knowledge without action is of no value or benefit. This is like the one who possesses knowledge of a path to safety but does not take it and instead remains in an area full of dangers. This is why knowledge can be split into two categories. The first is when one acts on their knowledge, which leads to piety and an increase in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. The second is when one fails to act on their knowledge. This type will not increase one's obedience to Allah, the Exalted, in fact, it will only

increase them in arrogance believing they are superior to others even though they are like donkeys which carry books that do not benefit it. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

"…and then did not take it on (did not act on their knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]…"

Sincerity

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to announce that only a Muslim could take part in the Holy Pilgrimage after that year. Previous to this non-Muslims would perform the Holy Pilgrimage but according to their own misguided customs. Prior to this announcement and in that year the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, in charge of the Holy Pilgrimage. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 48-49 and in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 150-151.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, to join the pilgrims in order to make this announcement public. When Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, met him he immediately enquired whether he was sent to take over the leadership from him or to deliver a message. Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he was only sent as a messenger. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2996.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had no issues with being replaced as he was sincere to Allah, the Exalted. Meaning, he was not interested in leadership rather, he only desired to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This sincerity is the essence of faith.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerity towards the Holy Quran includes having deep respect and love for the words of Allah, the Exalted. This sincerity is proven when one fulfils the three aspects of the Holy Quran. The first is to recite it correctly and regularly. The second is to understand its teachings through a reliable source and teacher. The final aspect is to act on the teachings of the Holy Quran with the aim of pleasing Allah, the Exalted. The sincere muslim gives priority to acting on its teachings over acting on their desires which contradict the Holy Quran. Modelling one's character on the Holy Quran is the sign of true sincerity towards the book of Allah, the Exalted. This is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1342.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is sincerity towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes striving to acquire knowledge in order to act on his traditions. These traditions include the ones related to Allah, the

Exalted, in the form of worship, and his blessed noble character towards the creation. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verse 4:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Aiming for Worldly Gain

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Amongst them was Musaylima, the liar, who after arriving in Medina said he would only follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, if he was appointed leader of the Islamic nation after him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned in a dream that Musaylima, the liar, would eventually falsely claim Prophethood. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave him a stern warning instead of punishing him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 66.

When Musaylima, the liar, returned to Yamama, he eventually announced Prophethood and out of greed for worldly things, many of his people accepted him. He then wrote a letter to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, informing him of his announcement and attempted to compromise with him. He stated that they would share in the matter of rulership. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, sent a letter back to him while quoting chapter 7 Al A'raf, verse 128:

"...Indeed, the earth belongs to Allāh. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous."

This has been discussed in Imam Safi Ur Rahman's, The Sealed Nectar, Pages 452-454.

Musaylima, the liar, attempted to compose verses which matched the Holy Quran thereby trying to fool others into believing he too was receiving divine revelation. In this regard, Allah, the Exalted, revealed chapter 6 Al An'am, verse 93:

"And who is more unjust than one who invents a lie about Allāh or says, "It has been inspired to me," while nothing has been inspired to him, and one who says, "I will reveal [something] like what Allāh revealed." And if you could but see when the wrongdoers are in the overwhelming pangs of death while the angels extend their hands, [saying], "Discharge your souls! Today you will be awarded the punishment of [extreme] humiliation for what you used to say against Allāh other than the truth and [that] you were, toward His verses, being arrogant.""

His foolishness became more apparent to those who possessed common sense when he attempted this, as his composed poetry was based on pointless things that did not benefit anyone. He gained followers through blind loyalty and by promising them worldly things, such as wealth and authority. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 480 and in Imam Wahidi's, Asbab Al Nuzul, 6:93, Pages 77-78.

During his Caliphate, Abu Bakr dispatched Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, to confront Musaylima, the liar. Washee was the

freed slave of Jubair Ibn Mut'am. During the Battle of Uhud, which occurred in the third year the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Washee assassinated the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Hamza Ibn Abdul Muttalib, may Allah be pleased with him. Years later, Washee accepted Islam and decided to join the expedition against Musaylima, the liar. He desired to kill the worse person on Earth to make up for killing the best person. During the battle, Washee launched a spear at Musaylima, the liar, and fatally wounded him. Another Companion, Abu Dujaanah, may Allah be pleased with him, then finished Musaylima, the liar, off. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4072.

Like Musaylima, the liar, a person can be encouraged to cross all lawful limits when they have extreme love for wealth and social status.

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 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 as they are too preoccupied with obtaining wealth. A body which is too busy acquiring wealth will never prepare adequately for the hereafter. In fact, this person will dedicate so much effort to acquiring 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.

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 that 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 prestige.

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 themself 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 worse 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.

Avoiding the Unlawful

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was once presented food by one of his servants. Before enquiring about its source, which was his normal habit, he ate a bite, as he was hungry. When the servant finally told him the food was given by some idol worshippers who were celebrating a wedding, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, became upset and induced vomiting out of fear the food was unlawful for him. He then advised that he heard the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, say that a body which was nourished on unlawful things will go to Hell. This has been discussed in Imam Al Asfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, Number 48.

It is a major sin to utilise the unlawful. This includes using unlawful wealth, using items which are unlawful and eating unlawful foods. It is important to note, that the specific things which have been labelled unlawful by Islam such as alcohol are not the only things which are unlawful. In fact, even lawful things can become unlawful if they have been gained through unlawful things. For example, a lawful food can become unlawful if it is bought with unlawful wealth. Therefore, it is important for muslims to ensure they only deal with lawful things as it only takes one element of the unlawful to ruin someone.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2346, that the one who utilises the unlawful will have all their supplications rejected. If their supplications are rejected by Allah, the Exalted, can one expect any of their good deeds to be accepted? This in fact has been answered in another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1410. The Holy Prophet

Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that Allah, the Exalted, only accepts the lawful. Therefore, any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful such as performing the Holy Pilgrimage with unlawful wealth will be rejected.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3118, that this type of person will be sent to Hell on Judgement Day. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 188:

“And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful].”

The 10th Year After Migration

The Farewell Holy Pilgrimage

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, he departed Medina with the intention to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 152.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1773, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the reward for an accepted Holy Pilgrimage is nothing except Paradise.

The real purpose of the Holy Pilgrimage is to prepare Muslims for their final journey to the hereafter. The same way a Muslim leaves behind their home, business, wealth, family, friends and social status in order to perform the Holy Pilgrimage this will occur at the time of their death when they take their final journey to the hereafter. In fact, a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2379, advises that a person's family and wealth abandons them at their grave and only their deeds, good and bad, accompany them.

When a Muslim bears this in mind during their Holy Pilgrimage they will fulfil all the aspects of this duty correctly. This Muslim will return back home a changed person as they will prioritise preparing for their final journey to the hereafter over amassing the excess aspects of this material world. They will strive in 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, which includes taking from this world in order to fulfill their needs and the needs of their dependents without waste, excessiveness or extravagance.

Muslims should not treat the Holy Pilgrimage as a holiday and a place to shop as this attitude defeats the purpose of it. It must remind Muslims of their final journey to the hereafter a journey which has no return and no second chances. Only this will inspire one to fulfil the Holy Pilgrimage correctly and prepare adequately for the hereafter.

The 11th Year After Migration

The Final Illness of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

A Fine Choice

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon in which he declared that a servant of Allah, the Exalted, was given a choice between what is on Earth and what is with Allah, the Exalted, and the servant had chosen what is with Allah, the Exalted. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then wept as he knew the servant the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was referring to was himself. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 328-329 and in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3654.

It is important for Muslims to understand a key concept in Islam. Namely, there is nothing wrong with desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, but it is best to avoid worshipping and obeying Allah, the Exalted, in order to obtain them. This is because these types of Muslims often only worship Allah, the Exalted, and inhabit the Mosques when they desire worldly things. But if they do not receive them they become impatient and fed up which causes them to stop obeying Allah, the

Exalted. Or if they obtain them then the joy of them often makes them turn away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as they believe they achieved what they desired therefore there is no need to obey Allah, the Exalted, anymore. These Muslims worship Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they obey Allah, the Exalted, only when it suits their desires. And because of this attitude they are in danger of becoming misguided. 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.”

These Muslims may claim that they are worshipping Allah, the Exalted, but in reality, they are only worshipping their own desires and the gifts and blessings they receive.

It is praiseworthy to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to obtain religious blessings, such as Paradise, as this has been recommended by Islamic teachings. But it is far superior to worship Allah, the Exalted, as He is the only One worthy of it and because the creation are His servants.

If a Muslim must desire gifts and blessings then it is best to aim for religious blessings as aiming for worldly blessings can shift a person's intention so that they end up worshipping the gift instead of the Giver.

Using Means Correctly

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon in which he declared that no one favored him more with their self and wealth than Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3654.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, understood that the only way one can benefit from the blessings they have been granted is by using them in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In reality, in most cases nothing in this material world in itself is good or bad, such as wealth. What makes a thing good or bad is the way it is used. It is important to understand that the very purpose of everything which was created by Allah, the Exalted, was for it to be used correctly according to the teachings of Islam. When something is not used correctly it in reality becomes useless. For example, wealth is useful in both worlds when it is used correctly such as being spent on the necessities of a person and their dependents. But it can become useless and even a curse for its bearer if it is not used correctly, such as being hoarded or spent on sinful things. Simply hoarding wealth causes wealth to lose value. How can paper and metal coins one tucks away be useful? In this respect, there is no difference between a blank piece of paper and a note of money. It is only useful when it is used correctly.

So if a Muslim desires all their worldly possessions to become a blessing for them in both worlds all they have to do is use them correctly according to the teachings found in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But if they use them incorrectly then the same blessing will become a burden and curse for them in both worlds. It is as simple as that.

One can adopt the correct attitude when they understand the purpose of these blessings.

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

This not only aids a Muslim in maintaining their focus on the hereafter but it also aids them whenever they lose worldly blessings. When a Muslim treats each worldly blessing, such as a child, as a means to please Allah, the Exalted, and reach the hereafter safely then losing it will not have such a detrimental impact on them. They may become sad, which is an acceptable emotion, but they will not become grieved which leads to impatience and other mental problems, such as depression. This is because they firmly believe the worldly blessing they possessed was only a means so losing it does not cause a loss in the ultimate goal namely, Paradise, the loss of which is disastrous. Therefore, still

possessing and concentrating on the ultimate goal will prevent them from becoming grieved.

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

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

A Successor

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. During this period the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a public sermon in which he declared that all the gates to the Mosque, which people had built for themselves, should be sealed except the gate of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3654.

This public announcement was a clear indication of who the successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be. Direct access to the Mosque is reserved for the leader of the prayers, which was the same person who would govern and lead the people, just like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was best suited for the role as he represented Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in the highest possible way. Muslims must follow in his footsteps by fulfilling their role as the ambassadors of Islam. It is extremely important for muslims to fulfil this duty according to their potential. The best way to achieve this is by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with His choices. Islam spread across the entire globe because the righteous predecessors took this duty very seriously. When they gained and acted on beneficial knowledge the outside world recognised the truthfulness of Islam through their behaviour. This caused countless

people to enter the fold of Islam. Unfortunately, many muslims today believe that showing others about Islam is merely in one's appearance, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf. This is only an aspect of representing Islam. The greatest part is by adopting the characteristics of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed in the Holy Quran and his traditions. Only with this attitude will the outside world observe the true nature of Islam. A muslim should always remember that adopting an Islamic appearance while possessing characteristics which oppose the teachings of Islam only causes the outside world to disrespect Islam. They will be held accountable for this disrespect as they are the cause of it. A muslim should therefore behave as a true ambassador of Islam by adopting the inward teachings of Islam as well as the outer appearance of Islam.

In addition, this important position should remind muslims that they will be held accountable and questioned whether they fulfilled this role or not on Judgment Day. The same way a king would become angry at their diplomat and representative if they failed to fulfil their duty so will Allah, the Exalted, become angry with the muslim who fails to fulfill their duty as an ambassador of Islam.

A Practical Role Model

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. When his illness grew intense he ordered a Companion, Abdullah Bin Zam'a, may Allah be pleased with him, to tell Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead the congregational prayer. When Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the Mosque who could not find Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and as he did not desire for the prayer to be delayed he told Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead the prayer instead. When Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, began the prayer the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, overheard his voice and declared that Allah, the Exalted, and the Muslims refuse anyone except Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then arrived and prayed with the people. Later on Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, criticized Abdullah Bin Zam'a, may Allah be pleased with him, as he believed the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered him to lead the prayer otherwise he would never have done so. Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, apologized but added that as Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was absent from the Mosque at that time, he believed that no one was more worthy of leading the prayer after Abu Bakkar than Umar, may Allah be pleased with them. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 332-333.

First of all this incident, like many others, clearly indicates that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was the desired choice of being the first Caliph of Islam. In addition, this particular incident played out in such a way that it even indicated that the second Caliph of Islam should be Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him.

The important thing to note is that these pious souls were chosen for leadership as they possessed the qualities of a good leader. The greatest of which is leading by example. This quality all Muslims should strive to adopt as every Muslim is a representative of Islam for other Muslims and non-Muslims.

In the early days of Islam to attend a gathering of Islamic knowledge one had to journey for days but now countless lectures can be found online. Yet, ignorance of the correct path has only increased since the passing of the righteous predecessors. This is because some have acquired knowledge by memorizing verses of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but have not used them to purify their character. Meaning, they did not act on their knowledge. Those who act like this will lose the power to affect the hearts of others through their advice. Some lecturers are like news bulletins that only provide information without stimulating others to act thereby failing in their duty to guide others through their God given knowledge. Non-Muslims are mainly accepting Islam through their own research of Islam instead of observing a practical example of a successful Muslim. One who desires to spread Islam must make it their priority to purify their character through knowledge. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”

When one acts in this way then a little correct knowledge will have a massive impact on themself and others. Whereas, those who reject this correct attitude may possess more knowledge but it will have no positive affect on anybody. This type of person has been described in the Holy Quran. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

"…and then did not take it on (did not act on their knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]…"

Most Knowledgeable

Abu Bakkar, like all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, was devoted to learning and acting on Islamic knowledge. But it is obvious he surpassed them all in this and many other blessed things. For example, Abdullah Bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, once commented that no one except Abu Bakkar and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, would issue legal rulings during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 18.

In addition, the fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead the congregational prayers during his final illness also proves that he was the most knowledgeable. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, leading the congregational prayers has been discussed in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 682. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1532, that the one who is most well versed (knowledgeable) in the Holy Quran should lead the prayer. And if people are equal in this manner, then the one who is most knowledgeable regarding the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, should lead the prayer. This indicates that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was the most knowledgeable in respect to the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2645, that when Allah, the Exalted, desires to give someone good He provides them with Islamic knowledge.

There is no doubt that every muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith desires good in both worlds. Even though many muslims incorrectly believe that this good which they desire lies in fame, wealth, authority, companionship and their career this Hadith makes it crystal clear that true lasting good lies in gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. It is important to note a branch of religious knowledge is useful worldly knowledge whereby one earns lawful provision in order to fulfil their necessities and the necessities of their dependents. Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has pointed out where good lies yet it is a shame how many muslims do not place much value in this. They in most cases only strive to obtain the bare minimum of Islamic knowledge in order to fulfil their obligatory duties and fail to acquire and act on more such as the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Instead they dedicate their efforts on worldly things believing true good is found there. Many muslims fail to appreciate that the righteous predecessors had to journey for weeks on end just to learn a single verse or Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, whereas today one can study Islamic teachings without leaving their home. Yet, many fail to make use of this blessing given to the modern day muslims. Out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, through his Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has not only pointed out where true good lies but He has also placed this good at one's finger tips. Allah, the Exalted, has informed mankind of where an eternal buried treasure is located which can solve all the problems they may encounter in both worlds. But muslims will only obtain this good once they struggle to acquire and act on it.

Confirming the Truth

Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, confirmed that the following verse refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and specifically to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and generally to others. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 33:

"And the one who has brought the truth [the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and [who] believed in it [Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him] - those are the righteous."

This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 28.

As Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had always been a person who adopted truthfulness in all his affairs, he readily accepted the truth of Islam.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness as three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

Mutual Consultation

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, once advised that the following verse specifically refers to Abu Bakkar and Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, and generally to others. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

"So by mercy from Allāh, [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him], you were lenient with them…and consult them in the matter…"

This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 28.

Muslims should only consult a few people in respect to their affairs. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

"…So ask the people of the message if you do not know."

This verse reminds muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a

person would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical health a muslim should only consult those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a muslim should only consult those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

Fearing Accountability

It has been said that the following verse was revealed specifically about Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and generally for others. Chapter 55 Ar Rahman, verse 46:

“But for he who has feared the position of his Lord are two gardens.”

This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti’s, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Pages 28-29.

The position of Allah, the Exalted, can be referring to when one will stand in front of Him for their final reckoning on Judgement Day.

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 righteous deeds. But the one who fails to regularly assess their deeds will lead a life of heedlessness whereby they commit sins without sincerely repenting. 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 accounts such as a tax return correctly. 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.”

Guarding Prophethood

Abdullah Bin Umar and Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, have both said that the following verse was specifically revealed about Abu Bakkar and Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, and generally for others. Chapter 66 At Tahrim, verse 4:

"…But if you cooperate against him [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] - then indeed Allāh is his protector, and Gabriel and the righteous of the believers…"

This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Pages 28-29.

The essence of defending the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is sincerity.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This includes striving to acquire knowledge in order to act on his traditions. These traditions include the ones related to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of worship, and his blessed noble character towards the creation. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verse 4:

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

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

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

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

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

One must love all those who supported him during his life and after his passing, whether they are from his Family or his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all. Supporting those who walk on his path and

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

Honouring Parents

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, has advised that the following verses were specifically revealed about Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and generally for others. Chapter 46 Al Ahqaf, verses 15-16:

“And We have enjoined upon man, to his parents, good treatment. His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him with hardship, and his gestation and weaning [period] is thirty months. [He grows] until, when he reaches maturity and reaches [the age of] forty years, he says, "My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and to work righteousness of which You will approve and make righteous for me my offspring. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed, I am of the Muslims." Those are the ones from whom We will accept the best of what they did and overlook their misdeeds, [their being] among the companions of Paradise. [That is] the promise of truth which they had been promised.”

This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti’s, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 29.

Even though many lessons can be discussed, one of the main things which one can learn from the conduct of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, is honouring one’s parents.

Being kind to parents is widely known characteristic amongst muslims yet unfortunately many fail to fulfil this important duty. Allah, the Exalted, has placed being kind to parents next to solely worshipping Him in many places of the Holy Quran such as, chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 23:

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship not except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff,"[1] and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word.”

In fact this same verse prohibits muslims to even utter a single word out of annoyance towards their parents. In another place of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, has combined being grateful to Him with being grateful to parents. Chapter 31 Luqman, verse 14:

“…Be grateful to Me and to your parents…”

Even though, there are countless Hadiths commanding treating parents kindly a single Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3662, is enough to understand its importance. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, answered someone who questioned what the rights of one's parents are by declaring that they are a child's Paradise or Hell. Meaning, if one treats their parents kindly for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, they may well be admitted into Paradise because

of it. But those who mistreat their parents may well be hurled into Hell because of it.

Even though, being obedient to parents, as long as it does not involve the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, is very difficult, especially, in this day and age muslims should try to remain patient and not argue with their parents. If a muslim disagrees with them they can and should still maintain respect for them at all times.

A Noble Return

On one occasion, the following verses of the Holy Quran were recited in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and some of his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them: chapter 89 Al Fajr, verses 27-30:

“[To the righteous it will be said], "O reassured soul. Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him]. And enter among My [righteous] servants. And enter My Paradise.""

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, commented that this return journey to Allah, the Exalted, was truly beautiful. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then replied that an Angel would say these words to him at the time of his death. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti’s, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 39.

One of the most important characteristics of the reassured soul, as indicated by these verses as well as the character of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, is being completely satisfied with the decrees and choices of Allah, the Exalted, thereby maintaining one’s sincere obedience to Him during all situations. In order to obtain this blessed level one must learn and act on Islamic knowledge in order to understand that Allah, the Exalted, always decrees what is best for people, even if the wisdoms behind His choices are not obvious.

For example, parents often take away things or prevent their children from obtaining certain things such as unhealthy food in order to protect them. This behaviour often causes the child to become sad or angry as they are completely unaware of the wisdom behind the actions of their parent. This parental behaviour is something which is widely accepted in society and is rightfully believed to be a characteristic of a good and responsible parent. Similarly, in life people often lose or are prevented from obtaining certain worldly things by Allah, the Exalted. A muslim must understand that the same way parents keep harmful things away from their children even though their children do not understand the reason behind their choice similarly Allah, the Exalted, acts in this manner according to His infinite wisdom and knowledge in order to protect His servants even if people do not understand the wisdom behind His choices. Therefore, every time a muslim finds themself in this situation they should reflect on this simple example, which no one would reject irrespective of their faith, so that they are inspired to remain patient and show gratitude for the divine protection Allah, the Exalted, has granted them. They should not act like an immature child by becoming angry and impatient as adults are meant to behave better than children. In fact, children are excused from behaving in such a manner as they lack knowledge and experience whereas adults should not lack this and will therefore be held accountable for their behaviour in both worlds.

Complete Devotion

After the following verse was revealed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, told the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that if he had commanded him to kill himself, he would have done it. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, confirmed that his declaration was truthful. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 66:

“And if We had decreed upon them, "Kill yourselves" or "Leave your homes," they would not have done it, except for a few of them. But if they had done what they were instructed, it would have been better for them and a firmer position [for them in faith].”

This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti’s, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 39.

His complete devotion to the commands of Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was due to his strong faith. The stronger one’s faith, the more they will sincerely submit to the commands of Islam.

All muslims have faith in Islam but the strength of their faith varies from person to person. For example, the one who follows the teachings of Islam because their family told them to is not the same as the one who

believes in it through evidence. A person who has heard about something will not believe in it in the same way as the one who has witnessed the thing with their own eyes.

As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all muslims. One of the reasons for this is that it is the best way a muslim can strengthen their faith in Islam. This is important to pursue as the stronger one's certainty of faith the greater the chance they will remain steadfast on the correct path, especially when facing difficulties. In addition, having certainty of faith has been described as one of the best things one can possess in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3849. This knowledge should be obtained by studying the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through a reliable source.

Allah, the Exalted, did not only declare a truth in the Holy Quran but He also provided evidence for it through examples. Not only examples which are to be found in the past nations but examples which have been placed in one's very own life. For example, in the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that sometimes a person loves a thing even though it will cause them trouble if they obtained it. Similarly, they might hate a thing while there is much hidden good in it for them. 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."

There are many examples of this truth in history such as the Pact of Hudaiba. Some muslims believed this pact, which was made with the non-muslims of Mecca, would completely favour the latter group. Yet, history clearly shows that it favoured Islam and the muslims. This event is discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731 and 2732.

If one reflects on their own life they will find many examples when they believed something was good when it was actually bad for them and vice versa. These examples prove the authenticity of this verse and help one's faith strengthen.

Another example is found in chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 46:

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

If one turns the pages of history they will clearly observe how great empires came and went. But when they left they passed away in such a way as if they were only on Earth for a moment. All but a few of their signs have faded away as if they were never present on Earth in the first place. Similarly, when one reflects on their own life they will realise that no matter how old they are and no matter how slow certain days might have felt overall their life so far has passed in a flash. Understanding the

truthfulness of this verse strengthens one's certainty of faith and this inspires them to prepare for the hereafter before their time runs out.

The Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, are full of such examples. Therefore, one should strive to learn and act on these divine teachings so that they adopt certainty of faith. The one who achieves this will not be shaken by any difficulty they face and will remain steadfast on the path which leads to the gates of Paradise. 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…”

Sublime Character

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once said that there was 360 qualities of good. And whenever Allah, the Exalted, wills good for a slave He instills them with one of these qualities and through it they enter Paradise. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, questioned whether he possessed any of these good qualities to which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, replied that he possessed all of them. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Pages 39-40.

One must emulate the behaviour of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge so that they remove their bad characteristics and replace them with good qualities.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the heaviest thing in the scales of Judgment Day will be good character. This includes showing good character towards Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. It also includes showing good character towards people. Unfortunately, many muslims strive to fulfil the obligatory duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, but neglect the second aspect by mistreating others. They fail to understand its importance. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515, clearly advises that a person will not be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themself. Meaning, the same way a person desires to be treated kindly they must also treat others with good character otherwise they will not succeed as the only truly successful people are the believers.

In addition, a person cannot be a true believer until they keep their verbal and physical harm away from others and their possessions irrespective of their faith. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3318, that a woman will enter Hell because she mistreated a cat which led to its death. And another Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2550, advises that a man was forgiven because he fed a thirsty dog. If this is the outcome of showing good character and the consequences of showing evil character to animals can one imagine the importance of showing good character towards Allah, the Exalted, and people? In fact, the main Hadith under discussion concludes by advising that the one who possesses good character will be rewarded like the muslim who persistently worships Allah, the Exalted, and regularly fasts.

No Envy

The gatherings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would be tight until they became like walls. But the seat of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, which was next to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would always be left empty for him and no one would aspire to it. When Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would join these gatherings he would sit in his spot and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would face him and direct his discourse to him, while the others listened carefully. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 40.

This narration indicates the importance of avoiding envy, as it was clear that none of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were jealous of each other. Rather, they were satisfied with the status Allah, the Exalted, had granted each of them.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4210, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

Envy is a serious and major sin because the envier's problem is not with another person in reality it is with Allah, the Exalted, as He is the One who granted the blessing which is envied. So a person's envy only demonstrates their displeasure with the allocation and choice of Allah,

the Exalted. They believe Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake when He allocated a particular blessing to another person instead of them.

Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when the envier strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing. Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feelings and strives to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing. Even though this type is not a sin it is considered disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and praiseworthy if it is over a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first person who can be lawfully envied is the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second person who can be lawfully envied is the one who uses their knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

An envious muslim should strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person envied such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

Love and Gratitude

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once declared that showing love and gratitude to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was a duty on every muslim. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 40.

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

household, may Allah be pleased with them, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 143.

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

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

Finally, showing gratitude to Abu Bakkar and the rest of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, involves honouring their sacrifices to ensure the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, reached the following generations of muslims. One can achieve this by learning and acting on these two sources of guidance instead of ignoring them.

Death of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Devotion to Allah (SWT)

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. Before his illness the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised that no Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, would be taken by death until he saw his resting place in Paradise and had been asked to make a choice between life and death. During his final moments he raised his sight to the sky and declared to the highest Companion meaning, to Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 343.

It is important for Muslims to recognize why their worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. 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."

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This Muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

It is important for Muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was transported by Allah, the Exalted, from this transient abode away into eternal ease in an elevated place on high, the most exalted and most splendid level of Paradise. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 79:

"…it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station."

And chapter 93 Ad Duhaa, verses 4-5:

"And the Hereafter is better for you than the first [life]. And your Lord is going to give you, and you will be satisfied."

That was after he had completed his mission that Allah, the Exalted, entrusted him with. He had given advice to his nation and had directed them to the very best in both worlds. He had warned them and restrained them from what would have harmed them here on Earth and in the Hereafter. Peace and blessings be upon him, the final Messenger of Allah, the Exalted, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Life After the Death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Remaining Obedient

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away the people of Medina fell into great anxiety and confusion. Then Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, addressed the people in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He recited chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 144:

"Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all…"

And then said the following: "Allah, the Exalted, gave life to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and kept him alive until he had established the religion of Allah, the Exalted, made the orders of Allah, the Exalted, plain, delivered His message and fought in His cause. Thereafter Allah, the Exalted, took him to Himself and left you upon the path. And none shall perish except after clear signs and pain. Those whose Lord is Allah, the Exalted, should know that Allah, the Exalted, is alive and will never die. And those who worshipped the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, should know that he has died. Fear Allah, the Exalted, people! Hold fast to your religion and put your trust in your Lord. The religion of Allah, the Exalted, is established. The word of Allah, the Exalted, is complete. Allah, the Exalted, will help those who support Him and who revere His religion. The Book of Allah, the Exalted, is amongst us. It is both the light and the cure. By it Allah, the Exalted, guided the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In it states what Allah, the Exalted, considers lawful and what is unlawful. We will not care who out of the creation descends upon us (to attack us). We will fight vigorously against those who oppose us just as we fought alongside the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 348-349.

Abu Bakr (RA) - The First Caliph

Supporting the Truth

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away the people of Medina fell into great anxiety and confusion. At this time the Companions from Mecca and Medina, may Allah be pleased with them, agreed to elect Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. This has been discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 3667 and 3668.

An important lesson to learn from this event is the importance of supporting others in matters of good. It is clear from this and other Hadiths that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised the people to choose someone else as their Caliph. In fact, he even named Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him. This was the perfect opportunity for Umar Bin Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him, to take the important role as the first representative of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without any arguments or problems. But Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, chose to do the right thing and help the Muslim nation by appointing the best person for the role. He did not worry that if he supported someone else his rank and social status would be reduced or he would be forgotten. In fact, his honour and social status only grew after this right choice.

Unfortunately, many Muslims and even Islamic institutions do not behave in this manner. They often only support those they have a relationship with instead of helping anyone who does something good. They behave as if their social status will be reduced if they support others in good things. Some have fallen even lower and support their friends and relatives in bad things and fail to support strangers who are doing good. This is a major reason why the Islamic community has weakened over time. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were small in number but always fulfilled their duty by supporting each other in matters of good without worrying about anything else. Muslims must change their attitude and follow in their footsteps if they desire strength and respect in both worlds. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

In addition, even though it was clear Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was the preferred choice by even the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet he did not nominate him explicitly. One of the reasons for this is that the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and nominating a new leader was a test from Allah, the Exalted. A test to see whether the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, would argue and fight for leadership or submit sincerely to Allah, the Exalted, and nominate the best person for the role. As history clearly shows, they passed this test with flying colours. Therefore, it was a test for them, and a lesson for the future muslims to always strive to aid others in what is good. In addition, if he was appointed explicitly by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then some people in the future would have stated the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were never unanimously pleased with his appointment and they only accepted it

because they were commanded to do so. Therefore, avoiding an explicit command allowed prevented this false belief as the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were left to choose their leader under the implicit indications that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, should be the first Caliph of Islam. This further enhanced the right of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as Caliph, as he was implicitly indicated by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and independently appointed by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them.

Burial of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The Noblest Garden of Paradise

After the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were unsure where to bury him. Some suggested his Mosque in Medina and others suggested the main cemetery in Medina. It was Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, who united them by declaring that he heard the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, say that the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, are buried in the same location they died. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, accepted this and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was buried in the location he died: the house of his wife, the mother of the believers, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1628.

No doubt the grave of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is within the greatest gardens of Paradise. One should therefore reflect whether they will be placed in a garden of Paradise or a pit of Hell when they descend into their grave, and therefore work accordingly to what they desire.

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 namely, 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 prepare the deeds required to make their grave a garden of Paradise. But if they disobey Allah, the Exalted, 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 they must strive harder in beautifying their grave as the journey there is inevitable and the stay there 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.

Unity

After being unanimously appointed as the first Caliph of Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, tried to resign as he had no desire for leadership. He publicly made this plea and it was Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, who stepped forward and made it clear that no one desired his resignation nor would they accept his resignation. He reiterated how the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed him ahead of everyone else in all situations, such as leading the congregational prayers during the final illness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been confirmed in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 682. All the Companions agreed with Ali and insisted Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, lead them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 212.

Years later, during his Caliphate, Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, would say that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was content with choosing Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to lead everyone in their religion (by leading them in the congregational prayers during the final illness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him) and so all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were pleased with him to lead them in their worldly affairs also. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 5.

The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, behaved in this manner as they had been trained to become unified in matters of good

by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Muslims must strive to adopt these teachings so that they too become unified in the things pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6541, discusses some aspects of creating unity within society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, firstly advised muslims not to envy each other.

This is when a person desires to obtain the very blessing someone else possesses meaning, they desire for the owner to lose the blessing. And it involves disliking the fact that the owner was given the blessing by Allah, the Exalted, instead of them. Some only desire this to occur in their hearts without showing it through their actions or speech. If they dislike their thought and feeling it is hoped that they will not be held accountable for their envy. Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when a person strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing.

Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feeling and if they strive to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing they possess. Even though this type is not sinful yet it is disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and only praiseworthy if it involves a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first is when a person envies the one who acquires

and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second is when a person envies the one who uses their wisdom and knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

The evil type of envy, as mentioned earlier, directly challenges the choice of Allah, the Exalted. The envious person behaves as if Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake giving a particular blessing to someone else instead of them. This is why it is a major sin. In fact, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903, envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

An envious muslim must strive to act on the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. It advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themself. An envious muslim should therefore, strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person they envy, such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

Another thing advised in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is that muslims should not hate each other. This means one should only dislike something if Allah, the Exalted, dislikes it. This has been described as an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. A muslim should therefore, not dislike things or people according to their own desires. If one dislikes another according to their own desires they should never allow it to affect their speech or actions as it is sinful. A muslim should strive to remove the feeling by treating the other according to the teachings of Islam meaning, with

respect and kindness. A muslim should remember that other people are not perfect just like they are not perfect. And if others possess a bad characteristic they will undoubtedly possess good qualities also. Therefore, a muslim should advise others to abandon their bad characteristics but continue to love the good qualities they possess.

Another point must be made on this topic. A muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their scholar's opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that muslims should not turn away from each other. This means they should not sever ties with other muslims over worldly issues thereby refusing to support them according to the teachings of Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6077, it is unlawful for a muslim to sever ties with another muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. In fact, the one who severs ties for more than a year over a worldly issue is considered like the one who has killed another muslim. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4915. Severing ties with others is only lawful in matters of faith. But even then a muslim should continue to advise the other muslim to sincerely repent and only avoid their company if they refuse to change for the better. They should still support them on lawful things when they are requested to do so as this act of kindness may inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that muslims are commanded to be like brothers to one another. This is only achievable if they obey the previous advice given in this Hadith and strive to fulfil their duty towards other muslims according to the teachings of Islam, such as helping others in matters of good and warning them from evil matters. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, advises that a muslim should fulfil the following rights of other muslims: they are to return the Islamic greeting of peace, to visit the sick, to take part in their funeral prayers and to reply to the sneezer who praises Allah, the Exalted. A muslim must learn and fulfil all the rights other people, especially other muslims, have over them.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a muslim should not wrong, forsake or hate another muslim. The sins a person commits should be hated but the sinner should not be as they may sincerely repent at any time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4884, that whoever humiliates another muslim Allah, the Exalted, will humiliate them. And whoever protects a muslim from humiliation will be protected by Allah, the Exalted.

The negative characteristics mentioned in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning can develop when one adopts pride. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, pride is when one looks down on others in contempt. The proud person sees themself as perfect while seeing others as imperfect. This prevents them from fulfilling the rights of others and encourages them to dislike others.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that true piety is not in one's physical appearance, such as wearing beautiful clothes, but it is an internal characteristic. This internal characteristic manifests outwardly in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is purified the whole body becomes purified but when the spiritual heart is corrupt the whole body becomes corrupt. It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge based on outward appearances, such as wealth, but He considers the intentions and actions of people. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6542. Therefore, a muslim must strive to adopt internal piety through learning and acting on the teachings of Islam so that it manifests outwardly in the way they interact with Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that it is a sin for a muslim to hate another muslim. This hatred applies to worldly things and not disliking others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, loving and hating for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of perfecting one's faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. But even then a muslim must show respect to

others in all cases and dislike only their sins without actually hating the person. In addition, their dislike must never cause them to act against the teachings of Islam as this would prove their hatred is based on their own desires and not for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The root cause of despising others for worldly reasons is pride. It is vital to understand that an atom's worth of pride is enough to take one to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a muslim's life, property and honour are all sacred. A muslim must not violate any of these rights without a just reason. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true muslim until they protect other people, including non-muslims, from their harmful speech and actions. And a true believer is the one who keeps their evil away from the lives and property of others. Whoever violates these rights will not be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then justice will be established on Judgment Day whereby the good deeds of the oppressor will be given to the victim and if necessary the sins of the victim will be given to the oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a muslim should treat others exactly how they want people to treat them. This will lead to much blessings for an individual and create unity within their society.

Concentrating on More Relevant Issues

The nomination of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam has always been a topic of much debate. Rightly guided scholars have often abundantly discussed the overwhelming evidence of his right to be the first Caliph of Islam in order to unite the two groups on the truth: the Sunnis and the Shi'a. Even though this is a worthy aim, none the less the average muslim should not delve into these discussions or other similar discussions, such as the disagreements amongst the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as these are issues Allah, the Exalted, will not ask them about on the Day of Judgement. These issues are between Allah, the Exalted, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 141:

"That is a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do."

A muslim must firmly believe that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were rightly guided and that Allah, the Exalted, was pleased with all of them. This has been proven by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 100:

“And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhājireen (migrants from Mecca) and the Anṣār (residents of Medina) and those who followed them with good conduct - Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.”

As these issues will not be asked about on Judgement Day, a muslim must instead concentrate on the things which will be asked about on Judgement Day. Only after a muslim has fully understood and acted upon the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, do they have a right to address other issues. As virtually no one has reached this level, one must ensure they concentrate on the issues that are relevant, meaning, the issues which will determine whether they will go to Paradise or Hell.

The Caliphate of Abu Bakkar (RA)

Abu Bakkar's (RA) First Sermon

Justice in Authority

In the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the symptoms of his final illness began to appear. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away the people of Medina fell into great anxiety and confusion. At this time the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, agreed to elect Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. In his first sermon he said the following: "O people, I have assumed authority even though I am not the best of you (this showing his modesty as the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were united in the belief of him being the best of them). If I do well, then help me. If I err, then set me straight. Honesty is loyalty; dishonesty is deceit. It is the weak among you who are powerful in my view until I can do away with their weakness. It is the strong among you who are weak until I can draw forth from them the right they owe people, if Allah, the Exalted, so wills it. No people abandons the fight for the cause of Allah, the Exalted, without Allah, the Exalted, afflicting them with degradation. Depravity never spreads over a people without Allah, the Exalted, making them experience calamity. Obey me for as long as I obey Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. If I disobey Allah, the Exalted, and His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then I should expect no obedience from you. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 355-356.

One of the major reasons why society seems to be digressing is because people have abandoned acting justly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6787, that previous nations were destroyed as the authorities would punish the weak when they broke the law but would pardon the rich and influential. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, being the head of state even declared in this Hadith that if his own daughter committed a crime he would enforce the full legal punishment on her. Even though members of the general public might not be in a position to advise their leaders to remain just in their actions but they can influence them indirectly by acting justly in all their dealings and actions. For example, a muslim must act justly in respect to their dependents, such as their children, by treating them equally. This has been specifically advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3544. They should act justly in all their business dealings irrespective of who they deal with. If people act with justice on an individual level then communities can change for the better and in turn those who are in influential positions, such as politicians, will act justly whether they desire to or not.

The final part of his speech indicates the importance of sincerely obeying and following the two sources of guidance namely, the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as a person nor a society can prosper without this.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

A Simple Life

After Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was appointed Caliph, he was seen heading to the marketplace to earn provision for himself and his family. As his attention and energy was required to the affairs of the nation, the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, decided to set a paltry wage for him. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 270.

Similar to the politicians of today, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, could have demanded a luxurious wage but he refrained from this and instead adopted a simple lifestyle, in emulation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

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.

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.

A Fair Leader

On one occasion, when the time came for distributing charity to the people of Medina, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, ordered the people not to enter the building which housed the charity until they were given permission. A man entered without permission and as a result Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, reprimanded him by taking the bridle the man was carrying and hitting him with it. Later on, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, summoned the man and asked him to take retribution from him, even though the man disobeyed his explicit orders. Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, interceded and suggested the man should be given something from the public treasury as compensation. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 257-258.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was fully aware of the consequences of harming others. A fact, muslims must acquaint themselves with also.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the bankrupt muslim is the one who accumulates many righteous deeds, such as fasting and prayer, but as they mistreated people their good deeds will be given to their victims and if necessary their victim's sins will be given to them on Judgement Day. This will lead to them being hurled into Hell.

It is important to understand that a muslim must fulfil two aspects of faith in order to achieve success. The first are the duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayer. The second aspect is in respect to people which includes treating them kindly. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true believer until they keep they physical and verbal harm away from the life and possessions of others.

It is important to understand that Allah, the Exalted, is infinitely forgiving meaning, He will forgive those who sincerely repent to Him. But He will not forgive the sins which involve other people until the victim forgives first. As people are not so forgiving a muslim should be fearful that those who they have wronged will exact revenge on them by taking away their precious good deeds on Judgment Day. Even if a muslim fulfils the rights of Allah, the Exalted, they may still end up in Hell simply because they have wronged others. It is therefore important for muslims to strive to fulfil both aspects of their duties in order to obtain success in both worlds.

A Humble Leader

Prior to becoming the Caliph, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would milk the goats of his neighbors. They were afraid he would stop doing this for them after his appointment yet he did not and continued with the righteous deeds he did prior to becoming the Caliph. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 273.

He did not allow his position to make him arrogant rather, he maintained his humility throughout his life. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

"And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily…"

The servants of Allah, the Exalted, have understood that anything good they possess is solely because Allah, the Exalted, granted it to them. And any evil they are saved from is because Allah, the Exalted, protected them. Is it not foolish to be proud of something that does not belong to someone? Just like a person does not boast about a sports car which does not belong to them muslims must realize nothing in reality belongs to them. This attitude ensures one remains humble at all times. The humble servants of Allah, the Exalted, fully believe in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673, which declares that the righteous deeds of a person will not take them to Paradise. Only the

mercy of Allah, the Exalted, can cause this to occur. This is because every righteous deed is only possible when Allah, the Exalted, provides one with the knowledge, strength, opportunity and inspiration to perform it. Even the acceptance of the deed is dependent on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. When one bares this in mind it saves them from pride and inspires them to adopt humility. One should always remember that being humble is not a sign of weakness as Islam has encouraged one to defend themself if necessary. In other words, Islam teaches muslims to be humble without weakness. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, that whoever humbles themself before Allah, the Exalted, will be raised by Him. So in reality, humility leads to honor in both worlds. One only needs to reflect on the most humble of the creation to understand this fact namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Allah, the Exalted, has clearly ordered people by ordering the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to adopt this important quality. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verse 215:

"And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led a humble life. For example, he happily carried out the domestic duties at home thereby proving these chores are gender-neutral. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 538.

Humility is an inner characteristic that manifests outwards such as the way one walks. This is discussed in another verse chapter 31 Luqman, verse 18:

“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly…”

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Paradise is for the humble servants who possess no trace of pride. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 83:

“That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1998, that whoever possesses an atom’s worth of pride will not enter Paradise. Only Allah, the Exalted, has the right to be proud as He is the Creator, Sustainer and Owner of the entire universe.

It is important to note, pride is when one believes they are superior to others and rejects the truth when it is presented to them as they dislike accepting the truth when it comes from other than them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4092.

Helping the Needy

Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, used to secretly take care of an elderly blind woman in Medina at night by completing her daily chores for her. Sometimes he would come to her and find that all the work had already been done by someone else. On one occasion, he came early and waited to see who the stranger who helped her was. He was left amazed as it was none other than the Caliph of the time, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 68.

Generally speaking, this indicates the importance of aiding the needy.

This includes all types of aiding others not just financial aid. Any type of lawful need of others should be fulfilled according to one's strength and if a Muslim finds they cannot provide this aid then they should direct the needy person to someone who can help them. This will ensure they gain the same reward as the one who aids the needy person. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2671. Muslims must sincerely aid others in ways which benefit them solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, without desiring any payback from people as this only leads to their reward being cancelled. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

"O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury…"

Simply put, if a Muslim desires the aid of Allah, the Exalted, in their moment of need then they must strive to aid others when they are in need. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. But those who turn away from helping others may well be left stranded in their time of need.

If Muslims desire to demonstrate true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, so that they receive an increase in blessings then they must use the blessings they already possess correctly as prescribed by Islam. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

An aspect of this is helping the needy with whatever one possesses such as good advice.

One should understand a vital point which will prevent them from becoming proud. Namely, the help they offer the needy is not innately theirs. It was created and therefore belongs to Allah, the Exalted, and they must therefore use it according to the wishes of the true owner by helping the needy. In reality, the needy are doing their helper a favor as they will receive reward from Allah, the Exalted. If there was no one in need people would lose out on this method of gaining much reward.

Equality

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, treated all the members of society equally and according to the teachings of Islam. For example, during his Caliphate he distributed the same amount of wealth to every man and woman, whether they were free or enslaved. When questioned why he did not give more to those who served and sacrificed more for the sake of Islam, he replied that their reward was with Allah, the Exalted, but in matters of livelihood and distribution of wealth, the people were equal in his eyes. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 259-260.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6543, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge people based on their outward appearance or their wealth instead He observes and judges people's inward intention and their physical actions.

The first thing to note is that a muslim should always correct their intention when performing any deed as Allah, the Exalted, will only reward them when they perform righteous deeds for His sake. Those who perform deeds for the sake of other people and things will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for on Judgment Day, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this Hadith indicates the importance of equality in Islam. A person is not superior to others by worldly things such as their ethnicity or wealth. Even though, many muslims have erected these barriers such as social castes and sects thereby believing some are better than others Islam has clearly rejected this concept and declared that in this respect all people are equal in the sight of Islam. The only thing which makes one muslim superior to another is their piety meaning, how much they fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

"…Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you…"

A muslim should therefore busy themself in obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His rights and the rights of people and not believe that something they possess or belong to will somehow save them from punishment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, that the muslim who lacks in righteous deeds meaning, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, will not be increased in rank because of their lineage. In reality, this applies to all worldly things such as wealth, ethnicity, gender or social brotherhoods and castes.

One Body

During his Caliphate, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would keep a close eye on the poor and needy. For example, during the winter season he would spend from the public fund to purchase large quantities of winter clothing and distributed them to the widows of Medina. Over his two-year reign the public treasury collected around two hundred thousand coins, all of which he distributed to the needy. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 261.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, truly acted on the teachings of Islam which encourages one to feel for the difficulties of others and therefore aid them according to their means.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6586, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that the muslim nation is like one body. If any part of the body suffers pain the rest of the body shares in its pain.

This Hadith, like many others, indicates the importance of not becoming so self-absorbed into one's own life thereby behaving as if the universe revolves around them and their problems. The Devil inspires a muslim to focus so much on their own life and their problems that they lose focus on the bigger picture which leads to impatience and causes them to become heedless of others thereby failing their duty in supporting others

according to their means. A muslim should always bear this in mind and strive to aid others as much as they can. This extends to beyond financial help and includes all verbal and physical help such as good and sincere advice.

Muslims should regularly observe the news and those who are in difficult situations all over the world. This will inspire them to avoid becoming self-centered and instead aid others. In reality, the one who only cares about themself is lower in rank than an animal as even they care about their offspring. In fact, a muslim should be better than animals by practically caring for others beyond their own family.

Even though a muslim cannot remove all the problems of the world but they can play their part and help others according to their means as this is what Allah, the Exalted, commands and expects.

Commanding Good & Forbidding Evil

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, always encouraged the people to adhere to the teachings of Islam and aided them in worldly matters. For example, he once indicated the importance of commanding good and forbidding evil by explaining chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 105:

"O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided…"

He explained that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that if people did not stop a wrong doer when they were able to, Allah, the Exalted, would punish everyone. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4338.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2686, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that failing to fulfill the important duty of commanding good and forbidding evil can be understood with the example of a boat with two levels full of people. The people on the lower level keep disturbing the people on the upper level whenever they desire to access water. So they decide to drill a hole in the lower level so that they can access water directly. If the people on the upper level fail to stop them they will all surely drown.

It is important for muslims to never give up commanding good and forbidding evil according to their knowledge in a gentle way. A muslim should never believe that as long as they obey Allah, the Exalted, other misguided people will not be able to affect them in a negative way. A good apple will eventually get affected when placed with rotten apples. Similarly, the muslim who fails to command others to do good will eventually be effected by their negative behavior whether it is subtle or apparent. Even if the wider society has become heedless one should never give up advising their dependents such as their family as not only will their negative behavior affect them more but this is a duty on all muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. Even if a muslim is ignored by others they should discharge their duty by persistently advising them in a gentle way which is supported by strong evidence and knowledge. Only in this way will they be protected from their negative effects and pardoned on the Day of Judgment. But if they only care about themself and ignore the actions of others it is feared that the negative effects of others may well lead to their eventual misguidance.

Spreading Peace

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, never allowed his position of authority to cause him to be treated differently from everyone else. For example, once a man approached a gathering of muslims and only singled out Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by offering him the Islamic greeting of peace. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, reminded the man to extend the greeting of peace to everyone in the gathering. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 280.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 12, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised a good quality found within Islam. Namely, to spread the Islamic greeting of peace to people one knows and to those they do not know.

It is important to act on this good characteristic as nowadays muslims often only spread the Islamic greeting of peace to those they know. It is important to spread it to all as this leads to love between people and strengthens Islam. In fact, this characteristic leads to Paradise according to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 194.

A muslim should never forget that they will receive a minimum of ten rewards for every greeting of peace they extend to others even if others fail to reply to them. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5195.

Finally, a muslim should fulfill the Islamic greeting of peace correctly by demonstrating this peace in their other speech and actions towards others by keeping their verbal and physical harm away from the self and possessions of others. This is in fact, the definition of a true muslim and believer according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

Making Problems Small

As busy as he was, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, always felt the pain of others and worked hard to console them in their times of grief and difficulties according to his means. For example, he once consoled a grief-stricken person by reminding them that there was no harm in patience and no benefit in impatience. That death was less serious than what comes before it and more severe than what comes after it (for a rightly guided person). He added, that they should remember the loss of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and as a result, their affliction would seem little to them and in return Allah, the Exalted, would magnify their reward. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 89.

One of the ways of achieving patience through difficulties is by always comparing them to harder and more severe difficulties. When one does this it will make their problem seem small and less significant. This change in focus can aid a muslim to be patient and remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted. This can be explained through a worldly example. A person suffering from a severe migraine can be effected in such a way that it seems to them that the world is collapsing around them. But if this same person was on a ship which is about to hit an iceberg and sink in the middle of a freezing ocean then their severe migraine will not seem like a big deal. In fact, they would probably not even be effected by it at all as their whole focus would become shifted to the imminent life threatening danger namely, the sinking ship. This is how a muslim should behave during difficulties. When they encounter a difficulty they should realise it could have been much worse and try to shift they focus on greater difficulties they could have encountered. This can be achieved by observing others who are in more difficult situations than them. For example, a person who suffers from back pain can ponder over the person who is physically disabled. Or they could ponder over

much greater difficulties such as death and Judgment Day. This comparison will reduce the significance of their difficulty and its effects, which in turn will aid them in remaining patient and steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience.

Encouraging Good

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would address the public on issues which were relevant and beneficial. He always encouraged others to maintain a good relationship with Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience and with people through kindness and respect. For example, he once gave a sermon and advised that there were five dark matters and five lamps. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 282.

He described love of this world as darkness and piety as a lamp.

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 themself 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 treasuries 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 second dark matter Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned was sin and its lamp was sincere repentance.

Sins have been classified as minor and major. Over time many definitions have been given regarding what exactly a major sin is. One simple classification is that any sin which Islam has commanded the Islamic government to punish is classed as a major sin. Another classification is that if any sin is mentioned with Hellfire, the anger of Allah, the Exalted, or the curse of Allah, the Exalted, then it is a major sin. For example, backbiting is a major sin as it is cursed in the Holy Quran. Chapter 104 Al Humazah, verse 1:

“Woe to every backbiter, slanderer.”

Some muslims believe there are only seven major sins which have been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2766. But they fail to realize that even though these seven are major sins it does not mean that they are only seven. In fact, there are other Hadiths which mention other major sins such as, disobeying parents. This Hadith is found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6273. The seven major sins declared in the Hadith quoted earlier are: polytheism, magic, killing an innocent, dealing with financial interest, usurping the wealth of orphans, fleeing a battlefield and accusing an innocent woman of fornication.

It is important to note, that when one persists on minor sins they become major in the sight of Islam.

Major sins are only forgiven with sincere repentance whereas minor sins can be erased by avoiding the major sins and performing righteous deeds. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 31:

“If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins…”

Sincere repentance includes regret, seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, making a firm promise not to commit the same or similar sin again and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Muslims should ensure they avoid all types of sins irrespective of size as one of the traps of the Devil is that he inspires muslims to disregard small sins. One should always remember that mountains are made up of small stones.

The third dark matter Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned was the grave and its lamp was actualising the testification of faith.

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. 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 obey Him correctly during their lives. 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 its teachings. 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.

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. 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, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.""

The fourth dark matter Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned was the hereafter and its lamp was good deeds.

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 righteous deeds. But the one who fails to regularly assess their deeds will lead a life of heedlessness whereby they commit sins without sincerely repenting. 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 accounts such as a tax return correctly. 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.”

The fifth dark matter Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned was the bridge of the hereafter and its lamp was certainty of faith.

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 fulfil the commands of Allah, the Exalted, and refrain from His prohibitions. These include duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and

people. 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 Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

“Say, [O Muhammad], "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 the easier they will cross the Bridge over Hell on Judgment Day. The straight path has been made clear in this world so muslims are left with no excuses from following it thereby ensuring they safely cross the Bridge on Judgment Day.

A Beautiful Sermon – 1

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would give elegant, precise and useful sermons to the public, urging them towards success and peace in both worlds. The following sermon has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 282-283.

He urged the people to seek well-being from Allah, the Exalted, as that was the best thing, after certainty of faith, they could obtain.

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. 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 the self and possessions of others. 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. But those who fail to make use of this blessing 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.

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 themself with their other duties and plan for tomorrow without stressing as their provision is guaranteed.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also urged the people to adopt truthfulness in all matters as it is a companion of piety, both of which lead to Paradise. Whereas, lying is a companion of immorality and both lead to Hell.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness as three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also urged the people to maintain their ties of kinship.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2612, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who possesses complete faith is the one who is best in conduct and most kind to their family.

Unfortunately, some have adopted the bad habit of treating non-relatives in a kind manner while mistreating their own family. They behave in this manner as they do not understand the importance of treating one's own family kindly and as they fail to appreciate their family. A muslim will never achieve success until they fulfill both aspects of faith. The first is fulfilling their duties towards 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. The second is to fulfill the rights of people which includes treating them kindly. None have more right to this kind treatment than one’s own family. A muslim must aid their family in all matters which are good and warn them against bad things and practices in a gentle way according to the teachings of Islam. They should not blindly support them in bad things simply because they are their relatives neither should they fail to help them in good matters

because of some ill feelings towards them as this contradicts Islamic teachings. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

The best way to guide others is through a practical example as this is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is much more effective than just verbal guidance.

Finally, one should generally choose gentleness in all matters especially, when dealing with their family. Even if their commit sins they should be warned in a gentle manner and still be aided in matters which are good as this kindness is more effective in bringing them back to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, than treating them harshly.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also urged the people not to plot against each other, not to hate each other, not to be jealous of others and instead be the unified slaves of Allah, the Exalted.

One of the best ways to achieve this relationship with others is to treat them how one desires to be treated by people.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Muslim should not only love for others to obtain lawful worldly blessings but also for them to gain religious blessings in both worlds. In fact, when one wishes this for others it encourages them to strive harder

in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This type of healthy competition is welcomed in Islam. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 26:

"…So for this let the competitors compete."

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

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

Excellence of Faith

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, once advised that whenever he would relieve himself he would cover himself up with his robe out of shyness before Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 283.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was constantly aware of the divine presence of Allah, the Exalted, which prompted him to behave in such a manner.

In a long Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, explained the meaning of Ihsan, which can be translated to mean excellence. This excellence refers to one's conduct and behavior towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation. Acting with excellence has been mentioned throughout the Holy Quran, such as chapter 10 Yunus, verse 26:

"For them who have done excellent is the best [reward] - and extra…"

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has explained this verse in Hadiths found in Sahih Muslim, numbers 449 and 450. The word extra in this verse refers to when the inhabitants of

Paradise will be blessed with the divine vision of Allah, the Exalted. This reward befits the muslim who acts with excellence. As excellence means to lead one's life as if they can witness Allah, the Exalted, observing their outer and inner being at all times. A person who can observe a powerful authority watching them will never misbehave out of awe of them. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised someone to always behave as if they were constantly being observed by a righteous man they respected. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Imam Tabarani's, Al Mu'jam Al Kabir, number 5539.

Whoever acts in this manner will very rarely commit sins and always hasten towards good deeds. This attitude creates the fear of Allah, the Exalted, and acts as a shield from the fire of trials in this world and the fire of Hell in the hereafter. This vigilance will ensure one not only fulfills all their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, but it also encourages them to fulfill their responsibilities towards the creation. The peak of which is to sincerely treat others with kindness. This person will fulfill the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 251, which advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themself.

This level of excellence ensures one acts with the right intention, which is the foundation of faith according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. Success is guaranteed for the one who performs good deeds and demonstrates good behavior with the right intention namely, to please Allah, the Exalted. The more excellent a person acts the stronger their faith becomes until they become a muslim who is far from heedlessness and is always struggling to beautify their hereafter and worldly life according to the teachings of Islam.

It is feared that the opposite of this reward will be given to those who turned away from Allah, the Exalted. As they lived without fearing the all-encompassing gaze of Allah, the Exalted, they will be veiled from seeing Him in the hereafter. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 15:

“No! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be partitioned.”

Those who fail to reach the level of acting as if they witness Allah, the Exalted, must act on the second part of the advice given in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning. This person should sincerely believe that Allah, the Exalted, is constantly observing them. Even though this state is lower in rank than the one who acts as if they observe Allah, the Exalted, none the less, it is a great way of adopting true fear of Allah, the Exalted. As mentioned earlier this attitude will prevent one from committing sins and encourage them towards good deeds. As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in Imam Tabarani’s, Al Mu’jam Al Kabir, number 7935, the one who strives to adopt this mentality will be granted shade on the Day of Judgment by Allah, the Exalted.

The divine presence of Allah, the Exalted, is mentioned throughout the Holy Quran, such as Chapter 57 Al Hadid, verse 4:

“…He is with you wherever you are. And Allah, of what you do, is Seeing.”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised to adopt the true awareness of the divine presence of Allah, the Exalted, in many Hadiths. For example, in one divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He is with whoever remembers Him. This is the reason why it has been reported in Hilyat Al Awliya, volume 1, pages 84 and 85, about the Commander of the Faithful, Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, that he shied away from the glitter and pomp of the material world and only found solace in the lonely night. Meaning, he sought the companionship of Allah, the Exalted, rather than the companionship of people.

Adopting the awareness of the divine presence of Allah, the Exalted, not only prevents sins and encourages good deeds but it also prevents loneliness and depression. A person is very rarely affected by mental health issues when they are constantly surrounded by a person who loves them and aids them. No one loves the creation more than Allah, the Exalted, and there is no doubt that He is the source of all aid. Therefore, acting with excellence benefits one’s faith, actions, emotional state and the wider society.

A muslim must avoid becoming like those who treat Allah, the Exalted, as the most insignificant of those who observe them. This is a serious spiritual illness which leads to all types of sins and evil behavior towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

Fear and Hope

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would instill the fear of Allah, the Exalted, into the people through his sermons but also perfectly balanced it with encouraging them towards hoping in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. This balanced approach is often overlooked by most public speakers today who adopt extreme attitudes. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 283.

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

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

keeping the crop healthy and then hopes for a large harvest. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has summarised this explanation in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459.

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

A Beautiful Sermon – 2

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would give elegant, precise and useful sermons to the public, urging them towards success and peace in both worlds. The following sermon has been discussed in Imam Al Asfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, Number 56.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, reminded the people that Allah, the Exalted, had purchased from them what was little and temporal in exchange for what was plentiful and everlasting.

One must adopt the correct perception and understanding in respect to this material world and the hereafter to truly comprehend this advice.

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

In reality, this parable was given in order for people to understand how small the material world is compared to the hereafter. But in reality they cannot be compared as the material world is temporal whereas the hereafter is eternal. Meaning, the limited cannot be compared to the unlimited. The material world can be split into four categories: fame,

fortune, authority and one's social life, such as their family and friends. No matter what worldly blessing one obtains which falls within these groups it will always be imperfect, transient and death will cut a person off from the blessing. On the other hand, the blessings in the hereafter are lasting and perfect. So in this respect the material world is no more than a drop compared to an endless ocean.

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

This does not mean one should abandon the world as it is a bridge which must be crossed in order to reach the hereafter safely. Instead, a muslim should take from this material world enough to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. And then dedicate the rest of their efforts in preparing for the eternal hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the teachings of Islam.

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also urged the people to adhere to the Holy Quran with sincerity by reminding them that its wonders never cease and its light will never extinguish. He urged them to seek light from the Holy Quran in preparation for the darkness of Judgement Day.

The Holy Quran possesses an uncountable amount of qualities which separates it from any other worldly book. This aspect of the Holy Quran is so intense that it cannot even be explained or discussed over countless lifetimes. But a few of these qualities will be mentioned here. First of all, in the Holy Quran, Allah, the Exalted, has given an open challenge to the entire universe (not just people) and not only a challenge to those who were present when this divine revelation was revealed but to all of creation till the end of time. The challenge being if the people believed the Holy Quran was not a divine revelation from Allah, the Exalted, then they should produce a chapter that can rival a chapter of the Holy Quran. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 23:

“And if you are in some doubt, concerning what We sent down upon Our special devotee, then bring one chapter like it, and call upon all your helpers beside Allah, if you are truthful.”

There is no book on the entire planet that can and has given this type of open challenge. But over 1400 years ago the Holy Quran gave this challenge to the entire universe and to this day this challenge has not been won by the non-Muslims nor will it ever be God willing.

Another quality of the Holy Quran is that it stated the outcome of future events. But the more amazing thing about these statements is that the outcomes seemed impossible at the time. For example chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 28:

“It is He Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that he may make it prevail over all other religions And Sufficient is Allah as witness.”

When this verse was revealed the entire city of Mecca was Islam so when the people of Mecca heard this verse, unfortunately for them, they believed that Islam was too feeble and would therefore not survive long and certainly would not spread beyond the borders of Mecca let alone the entire world. But within a some years Allah, the Exalted, fulfilled this promise.

Another example of how the Holy Quran prophesied a future event which was unimaginable at the time is found in chapter 30 Ar Rum, verses 2-5:

“The Romans have been subdued. In the nearby land and after their subjugation they will soon overcome. In a few years. The command is of Allah only before and after. And on that day the believers shall rejoice. With the help of Allah, He helps whom He pleases. And He is the Might, and Merciful.”

These verses of the Holy Quran were revealed during a time where the Romans (Christians) were at war with the Persians (Fire worshippers). This war has been confirmed by many authentic historic books. At this particular time the Persians were on the verge of winning the war. At one point Rome itself was surrounded by the Persians. But Allah, the Exalted, stated that the Romans would eventually reign victorious. The non-Muslims of Mecca who themselves were idol worshippers favoured the Persians and agreed with the majority that it was impossible for the Romans to win. But Allah, the Exalted, as always proved these verses true and allowed the Romans victory.

A final example which appeals to the scientists of the world is seen in chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 33:

"And it is He Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Each one is floating in a circumference."

For centuries scientists have fought over theories on how exactly the solar system is arranged e.g. whether the sun remains still and the Earth rotates around or vice versa. Only relatively recently it has been proven by scientists from all different faiths and backgrounds that each object; sun, moon and the Earth all rotate on their own axes and rotate around each other in a set orbit. But Allah, the Exalted, declared this over 1400 years ago. All the science related verses of the Holy Quran are slowly being proven by scientists today. This is a huge piece of evidence that proves that the Holy Quran are the words of the One and only true God, Allah, the Exalted, who has created this universe and everything in it, because only a Creator can truly explain his creations.

Even though many commands of the Holy Quran may not be understood by people does not mean they are incorrect. Certain verses of the Holy Quran whose wisdom was hidden to man became apparent when society reached a certain level of development. As the whole Holy Quran is a book of wisdom and guidance it must be accepted irrespective if one understands its commands or not. This situation is just like a child who is suffering from a cold and desires ice cream but is not given it by their parent. The child will continue to cry without understanding the wisdom behind but those that possess knowledge will agree with the parent even though outwardly it appears as if the decision of the parent is wronging the child.

When studying the Holy Quran one will realize that it contains different levels of superiority through both obvious and subtle meanings that it discusses. Chapter 11 Hud, verse 1:

"…[This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail from [one who is] Wise and Aware."

The expressions in it are unparalleled and its meanings are explained in a simple straight forward way. Its verses are extremely eloquent and no other text can surpass it. The Holy Quran also mentioned the stories of the previous nations in detail even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not educated in history. It commanded every type of good and forbade every type of evil, those that affect an individual and those that affect an entire society so that

peace and security can spread throughout homes and society. The Holy Quran is free from exaggerations, lies or falsehood unlike poems and stories. All the verses, whether short or long, in the Holy Quran are beneficial. Even when the same story is repeated in the Holy Quran different important lessons can be learned from it. Unlike all other books the Holy Quran does not become boring when it is repeatedly recited and a seeker of truth never gets fed up of studying it. The Holy Quran not only provides warnings and promises but supports them with unshakeable and clear proofs. When the Holy Quran discusses anything which can seem abstract, such as adopting patience, it always provides an easy and practical way of implementing it. It encourages one to fulfil the purpose of their creation and prepare for the eternal hereafter in a simple yet profound way. It makes the straight path clear and appealing to the one who desires true success in both worlds. The knowledge within it is timeless and can be applied to every society and age. It is a healing for every emotional, economical and physical difficulty when it is understood and applied correctly. It is the cure for every problem an individual or an entire society can ever encounter. One only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the societies which implemented the teachings of the Holy Quran correctly in order to understand its all encompassing benefits. Centuries have passed yet not even a single letter has been edited in the Holy Quran as Allah, the Exalted, promised to safeguard it. No other book in history possesses this quality. Chapter 15 Al Hijr, verse 9:

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the message [i.e., the Quran], and indeed, We will be its guardian.”

This is undoubtedly the greatest and timeless miracle of Allah, the Exalted, granted to His final Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But the only one who will benefit from it is the

one who seeks the truth whereas the seekers of their desires will only find it difficult to hear and follow. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also reminded the people that the Angels were observing and recording their deeds.

This reminds people to constantly assess their actions and speech in order to correct themselves before they reach the Day of Resurrection and their Final Reckoning.

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

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

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

This self-assessment is vital for triggering one to take the steps needed to purify their character and soul of evil characteristics which is the path of success in both worlds. Some are so lost in the material world they never perform this important deed and therefore decades pass by without them changing one single bit. Muslims must use the time of strength they have been given in order to self-assess and change for the better before they reach the final stage of weakness. At this point they will desire to change but they will not possess the intelligence or strength to do so. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6412.

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

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

As the majority of muslims do not understand the Arabic language an abundant amount of worship will not trigger this inner purification. One can only reach it by reflecting on this material world, death, the grave

and Hell. Because of this a single moment of reflection can become better than sixty years of voluntary worship.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also reminded the people of death and its unexpected nature. He urged the people to practically prepare for it by performing righteous deeds.

Death is something which is certain to occur but the time is unknown so it therefore makes sense that a muslim who believes in the hereafter prioritises preparing for it over preparing for things which might not occur, such as marriage, children or their retirement. It is strange how many muslims have adopted the opposite mentality even though they testify that the world is temporary and uncertain whereas the hereafter is permanent and they are certain to reach it. No matter how one behaves they will be judged regarding their deeds. A muslim should not be fooled into believing that they can and will prepare for the hereafter in the future as this attitude only causes them to delay further until their death occurs and they leave this world with regrets that will not aid them.

So the important thing is not that people will die as this is unavoidable but the key is acting in such a way that one is fully prepared for it. The only way to prepare for it correctly is by acting on the teachings of Islam namely, fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is only possible when one prioritises preparing for the hereafter over preparing for things which might not occur.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also warned the people not to follow in the footsteps of those who dedicated their lives to others while forgetting their duties towards Allah, the Exalted.

People often complain that no matter how hard they try they cannot seem to please everyone. No matter what situation they are in someone always seems to be displeased with them. This is a reality which all experience whether it is in their family life, work life or with friends. A muslim should always remember a few simple things which would prevent them from stressing over this issue.

Firstly, the majority of people are not pleased with Allah, the Exalted, even though He granted them countless blessings without being asked to. How then can these people be truly happy with another person who in reality gave them nothing? Their lack of pleasure with Allah, the Exalted, is quite evident from their complaining and the lack of gratitude they show Him.

Secondly, no matter how much a person improves their character they will never reach the sublime character possessed by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, yet they were still disliked by some people. If this is the case with them how can a normal person achieve the pleasure of everybody during their life?

A muslim should also remember that as people were created with different mind-sets they will always find people who disagree with their

attitude and behaviour. Because of this there will always be some people who are not pleased with a person at any given point in time. The only one who can come close to pleasing everyone is the two-faced person who changes their attitude and beliefs depending on who they are dealing with. But eventually even this person will be publicly disgraced by Allah, the Exalted.

Therefore, obtaining the pleasure of all people is unattainable and only a foolish person will strive to achieve something which cannot be obtained. A muslim should therefore strive to prioritise the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, above all else 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. This does not mean a muslim should not be respectful to others as this contradicts the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. It means a muslim should understand that if they obey Allah, the Exalted, He will protect them from the negative attitude and effects of people even if this protection is not obvious to them. But if they prioritise pleasing people they will not achieve it and Allah, the Exalted, will not protect them from the displeasure and negative effects of people.

A Beautiful Sermon – 3

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would give elegant, precise and useful sermons to the public, urging them towards success and peace in both worlds. The following sermon has been discussed in Imam Al Asfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, Number 55.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, reminded the people of those who took pride in what they had obtained from this world, such as the worldly kings and victorious soldiers. Even though they obtained worldly success and built massive castles and empires yet they ended up in dark and isolated graves. He warned the people to learn a lesson from them and avoid their behaviour.

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 in the form of a water well 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 themself 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 themself what is their legacy?

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then reminded the people that no speech was beneficial unless it was spoken for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2501, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that whoever is silent is saved.

This means the one who is silent from vain or evil speech and only speaks good words will be saved by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This is important to understand as the main reason people will enter Hell is because of their speech. This has been warned in a Hadith found in

Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616. In fact, it only takes a single evil word to cause a person to plunge into Hell on Judgement Day which has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

Speech can be of three types. The first is evil speech which should be avoided at all costs. The second is vain speech which only causes one to waste time which will lead to a great regret on Judgment Day. In addition, the first step of sinful speech is often vain speech. So it is safer to avoid this type of speech. The final type is good speech which should always be adopted. Based on these aspects two thirds of speech should be removed from one's life.

In addition, the one who speaks too much will only reflect on their actions and the hereafter a little as this requires silence. This will prevent one from assessing their deeds which inspires one to perform more righteous deeds and sincerely repent from their sins. This person will then be prevented from changing for the better.

Finally, those who speak too much often discuss worldly things and things which are entertaining and fun. This will cause them to adopt a mentality whereby they dislike discussing or listening to serious issues like death and the hereafter. This will prevent them from preparing adequately for the hereafter which will lead to a great regret and a potential punishment.

All of this can be avoided if one simply remains silent from sinful and vain speech and instead only speaks good words. Therefore, the one

who is silent in this way will be saved from trouble in this world and from punishment in the next world.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then reminded the people that there was no goodness in wealth which was not spent in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

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

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

“So he came out before his people in his adornment. Those who desired the worldly life said, "Oh, would that we had like what was given to Qārūn. Indeed, he is one of great fortune. But those who had been given knowledge said, "Woe to you! The reward of Allah is better for he who believes and does righteousness. And none are granted it except the patient." And We caused the earth to swallow him and his home. And there was for him no company to aid him other than Allah, nor was he of those who [could] defend themselves.”

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

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

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then reminded the people that there was no goodness in a person whose ignorance overcomes their forbearance.

A great distraction which prevents one from submitting to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is ignorance. It can be argued that it is the origin of every sin as the one who truly knows the consequences of sins would never commit them. This refers to true beneficial knowledge which is knowledge that is acted upon. In reality, all knowledge which is not acted on is not beneficial knowledge. The example of the one who behaves in this manner is described in the Holy Quran as a donkey which carries books of knowledge which do not benefit it. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

"…and then did not take it on (did not act upon knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]…"

A person who acts on their knowledge rarely slips up and commits sins intentionally. In fact, when this occurs it is only caused by a moment of ignorance where a person forgets to act on their knowledge which results in them sinning.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once highlighted the seriousness of ignorance in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2322. He declared that everything in the material world is cursed except for the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, whatever is connected to this remembrance, the scholar and the student of

knowledge. This means that all the blessings in the material world will become a curse for the one who is ignorant as they will misuse them thereby committing sins.

In fact, ignorance can be considered a person's worse enemy as it prevents them from protecting themself from harm and gaining benefit all of which can only be achieved through acting on knowledge. The ignorant commits sins without being aware of them. How can one avoid a sin if they do not know what is considered a sin? Ignorance causes one to neglect their obligatory duties. How can one fulfil their duties if they are unaware of what their duties are?

It is therefore a duty on all muslims to gain enough knowledge to fulfil all their obligatory duties and avoid sins. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then reminded the people that there was no goodness in a person who feared the criticism of people when doing things for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

A muslim should always remember that there are two types of people. The first are rightly guided as their criticism of others is based on the criticism and advice found in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This type will always be constructive and guide one to blessings and the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. These people will also refrain from over or under praising others. Over praising others can cause them to

become proud and arrogant. Under praising others can lead them to becoming lazy and put them off from doing good. This reaction is often observed in children. Praising according to the teachings of Islam will inspire others to strive harder in both worldly and religious matters and it will prevent them from becoming arrogant. Therefore, the praise and constructive criticism of this person should be accepted and acted upon even if it comes from a stranger.

The second type of person criticises based on their own desires. This criticism is mostly unconstructive and only shows one's bad mood and attitude. These people often over and under praise others as they act based on their own desires. The negative effects of these two were mentioned earlier. Therefore, the criticism and praise of this person should be ignored in the majority of cases even if it comes from a loved one as it will only cause one to become unnecessarily sad in cases of criticism and arrogant in cases of praise.

It is important to remember that a person who over praises others will often over criticise them too. The rule one should always follow is that they should only accept the criticism and praise based on the teachings of Islam. All other things should be ignored and not taken personally.

A Beautiful Sermon – 4

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would give elegant, precise and useful sermons to the public, urging them towards success and peace in both worlds. The following sermon has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Pages 95-97.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, warned the people not to follow the whims of passion, as successful is the one who is protected from the whims of passion, greed, ambition and anger.

If one gives in to these whims then they will become their object of worship. Chapter 45 Al Jathiyah, verse 23:

"Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire…"

First of all, it is important to understand, that the major thing which separates a human from an animal is the fact that people live by a higher moral code. If people abandoned this and simply acted on their desires then they would be no difference between them and animals. In fact, people would be worse as they possess the higher level of thinking yet, still choose to live like animals.

Secondly, whether people want to admit it or not in reality, every person is a servant of something or someone. Some are servants of others, such as Hollywood executives and do whatever they command them to do even if it challenges modesty and shame. Others are servants of their relatives and friends and do whatever it takes to please them. Others are the worse by being servants of their own desires as this is the attitude of animals who generally act to please themself. The best and highest form of servanthood is being a servant of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite evident if one turns the pages of history which clearly shows that those who were the servants of Allah, the Exalted, such as the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were granted the highest honour and respect in this world and will be granted this in the next. Centuries and millennia have passed yet their names are remembered as the pillars and beacons of history. Whereas those who became servants of others especially, their own desires were eventually disgraced in this world even if they achieved some worldly status and they became mere footnotes in history. The media barely remembers those who pass away for more than a few days before moving onto the next person to report on. During their lives these people eventually become sad, lonely, depressed and even suicidal as selling their souls and decency to their worldly masters did not grant them the contentment they were looking for. One does not need to be a scholar to understand this obvious truth. So if people must be servants they should be the servants of Allah, the Exalted, as lasting honour, greatness and true success lies only in this.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also warned the people from boasting and adopting pride. He reminded them that a person had nothing to boast about when they were created from dust and then later return to dust.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a person who possesses even an atom's worth of pride in their heart will not enter Paradise. He clarified that pride is when a person rejects the truth and looks down on others.

No amount of good deeds will benefit someone who possesses pride. This is quite obvious when one observes the Devil and how his countless years of worship did not benefit him when he became proud. In fact, the following verse clearly connects pride with disbelief so a muslim must avoid this evil characteristic at all costs. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 34:

"And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers."

The proud is the one who rejects the truth when it is presented to them simply because it did not come from them and as it challenges their desires and mentality. The proud person also believes they are superior to others even though they are unaware of their own ultimate end and the ultimate end of others. This is plain ignorance. In reality, it is foolish to be proud of anything seeing as Allah, the Exalted, created and granted everything a person owns. Even the righteous deeds one performs are only due to the inspiration, knowledge and strength granted by Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, being proud of something which does not innately belong to them is plain foolishness. This is just like a person who becomes proud over a mansion they do not even own or live in.

This is the reason why pride belongs to Allah, the Exalted, as He alone is the Creator and innate Owner of all things. The one who challenges Allah, the Exalted, in pride will be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4090.

A muslim should instead follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and adopt humility. The humble truly recognise that all the good they possess and all the evil they are protected from comes from no one except Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, humility is more fitting for a person than pride. A person should not be fooled into believing humility leads to disgrace as no one has been more honoured than the humble servants of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has guaranteed an increase in status for the one who adopts humility for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised them to know a day by a day and an hour by an hour.

This could mean that a person should not adopt hopes for a long life and instead try to live and plan for one day at a time.

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 themself. 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.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also warned the people to protect themselves from the supplication of the oppressed one.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the bankrupt muslim is the one who accumulates many righteous deeds, such as fasting and prayer, but as they mistreated people their good deeds will be given to their victims and if necessary their victim's sins will be given to them on Judgement Day. This will lead to them being hurled into Hell.

It is important to understand that a muslim must fulfil two aspects of faith in order to achieve success. The first are the duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayer. The second aspect is in respect to people which includes treating them kindly. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true believer until they keep they physical and verbal harm away from the life and possessions of others.

It is important to understand that Allah, the Exalted, is infinitely forgiving meaning, He will forgive those who sincerely repent to Him. But He will not forgive the sins which involve other people until the victim forgives first. As people are not so forgiving a muslim should be fearful that those who they have wronged will exact revenge on them by taking away their precious good deeds on Judgment Day. Even if a muslim fulfils the

rights of Allah, the Exalted, they may still end up in Hell simply because they have wronged others. It is therefore important for muslims to strive to fulfil both aspects of their duties in order to obtain success in both worlds.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised the people to adopt patience, as the foundation of all good actions is patience.

A Hadith found in Musnad Ahmad, number 2803, advises that being patient over the things one dislikes leads to a great reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

Patience is a key element required in order to fulfil the three aspects of faith: fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny. But a higher and more rewarding level than patience is contentment. This is when a muslim deeply believes that Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants and they therefore prefer His choice over their own. 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."

A patient muslim understands that anything which effected them, such as a difficulty, could not have been avoided even if the entire creation aided them. Similarly, whatever missed them could not have affected them. The one who truly accepts this fact will not exult and grow proud over anything they obtain knowing Allah, the Exalted, allocated that thing to them. Nor will they grieve over anything which they fail to obtain knowing Allah, the Exalted, did not allocate that thing to them and nothing in existence can alter this fact. Chapter 57 Al Hadid, verses 22-23:

"No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register[1] before We bring it into being - indeed that, for Allah, is easy. In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you…"

In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 79, that when something occurs a muslim should firmly believe it was decreed and nothing could have changed the outcome. And a muslim should not have regrets believing they could have prevented the outcome if they somehow behaved differently as this attitude only causes the Devil to encourage them towards impatience and complaining about destiny. A patient muslim truly understands that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has chosen is best for them even if they do not observe the wisdom behind it. The one who is patient does desire a change in their situation and even supplicates for it but they do not complain about what has

occurred. Being persistently patient can lead a muslim to a greater level namely, contentment.

The one who is content does not desire things to change as they know the choice of Allah, the Exalted, is better than their choice. This muslim firmly believes and acts on the Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500. It advises that every situation is best for the believer. If they encounter a problem they should show patience which leads to blessings. And if they experience times of ease they should show gratitude which also leads to blessings.

It is important to know that Allah, the Exalted, tests those He loves. If they show patience they will be rewarded but if they are angered it only proves their lack of love for Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2396.

A muslim should be patient or content with the choice and decree of Allah, the Exalted, in both times of ease and hardship. This will reduce one's distress and provide them with much blessings in both worlds. Whereas, impatience will only destroy the reward they could have received. Either way a muslim will go through the situation decreed by Allah, the Exalted, but it is their choice whether they desire reward or not.

A muslim will never reach full contentment until they behaviour is equal in times of difficulty and ease. How can a true servant go to the Master namely, Allah, the Exalted, for a judgment and then become unhappy if

the choice does not match their desire. There is a real possibility that if a person gets what they desire it will destroy them. 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.”

A muslim should not worship Allah, the Exalted, on the edge. Meaning, when the divine decree matches their wishes they praise Allah, the Exalted. And when it does not they become annoyed acting as if they know better than Allah, the Exalted. 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.”

A muslim should behave with the choice of Allah, the Exalted, as if they would behave with a skilled trustworthy doctor. The same way a muslim would not complain taking bitter medicine prescribed by the doctor knowing it is best for them they should accept the difficulties they face in the world knowing it is best for them. In fact, a sensible person would thank the doctor for the bitter medicine and similarly an intelligent muslim would thank Allah, the Exalted, for any situation they encounter.

In addition, a muslim should review the many verses of the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which discuss the reward given to the patient and content muslim. Deep reflection on this will inspire a muslim to remain steadfast when facing difficulties. For example, Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2402. It advises that when those who patiently faced trials and difficulties in the world receive their reward on Judgment Day those who did not face such trials will wish they patiently faced difficulties such as their skin being cut off with scissors.

In order to gain patience and even contentment with what Allah, the Exalted, chooses for a person they should seek and act on the knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that they reach the high level of excellence of faith. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. Excellence in faith is when a muslim performs deeds, such as the prayer, as if they can witness Allah, the Exalted. The one who reaches this level will not feel the pain of difficulties and trials as they will completely be immersed in the awareness and love of Allah, the Exalted. This is similar to the state of the women who did not feel pain when cutting their own hands when they observed the beauty of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 31:

“…and gave each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph], "Come out before them." And when they saw him, they greatly admired him and cut their hands and said, "Perfect is Allah! This is not a man; this is none but a noble angel."”

If a muslim cannot reach this high level of faith they should at least try to reach the lower level mentioned in the Hadith quoted earlier. This is the level where one is constantly aware they are being observed by Allah, the Exalted. The same way a person would not complain in front of an authoritative figure they feared, such as an employer, a muslim who is constantly aware of the presence of Allah, the Exalted, will not complain about the choices He makes.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised the people to be constantly on guard, for watchfulness is useful.

It is important to understand that no matter how much religious knowledge one obtains or how much worship and righteous deeds they perform they will never be safe from the attacks and traps of the Devil. This is because the Devil attacks each person according to how much knowledge they possess and how much righteous deeds they perform. For example, he will try to convince the muslim who is strict in offering their obligatory prayers not to offer them in congregation at the Mosque or by convincing them to delay their obligatory prayers beyond their starting times as he knows he will not be able to convince them to completely abandon the obligatory prayers. Whereas, in respect to the muslim who is struggling to establish their obligatory prayers he will attempt to convince them that they are too difficult to establish therefore

they should only offer them when they are completely free. He tries to convince those who perform many voluntary righteous deeds not to gain and act on Islamic knowledge in order to improve their character so that they continue to destroy their good deeds through bad characteristics such as, lying and backing.

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised the people to adopt the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return they would be guarded.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2516, that if a muslim safeguards Allah, the Exalted, He in turn will protect them.

This means that if one safeguards the limits and commands of Allah, the Exalted, they will be protected by Him. One can simply achieve this by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 112:

“…and those who observe the limits [set by] Allah. And give good tidings to the believers.”

There are many aspects of safeguarding one’s duty to Allah, the Exalted. One of the greatest duties to safeguard is the pacts and promises made with Allah, the Exalted, and people. The greatest pact the entire mankind took with Allah, the Exalted, was accepting Him as their Lord. Chapter 7 Al A’raf, verse 172:

“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified."…”

This means one must obey Allah, the Exalted, and those which lead to His obedience. But if one obeys someone which results in the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, then they have broken their promise and taken another as their Lord. Chapter 45 Al Jathiyah, verse 23:

“Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire…”

Another example is safeguarding the obligatory prayer. This has been mentioned repeatedly throughout the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This duty is so significant that a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 425, advises that whoever fulfils this duty correctly has been promised forgiveness. But the one who fails to safeguard their obligatory prayers has no guarantee of forgiveness.

Safeguarding the obligatory prayers has been indicated in another Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 277. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that only a true believer safeguards their ablution, which is the key to the prayer.

An aspect of safeguarding the limits of Allah, the Exalted, is discussed in another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2458. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised muslims to safeguard their head and stomachs. This includes using one's eyes, ears, tongue and thoughts in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Protecting the stomach involves refraining from obtaining and utilising unlawful wealth and food. Safeguarding the tongue and one's passionate desire has been commanded in many different places. For example, one Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6474, advises that whoever safeguards these two things is guaranteed paradise.

A fundamental Islamic principle teaches muslims that how they act is how they shall be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Quran advises muslims that whoever supports Islam will be supported by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

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

Another example is found in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152. The Holy Quran declares that whoever remembers Allah, the Exalted, will be remembered by Him.

“So remember Me; I will remember you…”

Allah, the Exalted, will even safeguard the family of the one who safeguards His limits. The Holy Quran explains how Allah, the Exalted, safeguarded the buried treasure of two orphans as their father was righteous. As their father safeguarded the limits of Allah, the Exalted, He in turn safeguarded his orphan children. Chapter 18 Al Kahf, verse 82:

“And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure for them, and their father had been righteous…”

In fact, whoever safeguards the limits of Allah, the Exalted, will find that Allah, the Exalted, gives them a way out of every difficulty in both this world and the next. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

“…whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”

In some cases Allah, the Exalted, averts things from His righteous servant which outwardly seem to be good, such as getting a new job, yet there is a hidden evil or difficulty which Allah, the Exalted, desires to protect His servant from. 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 greatest thing Allah, the Exalted, protects is a muslim's faith. Allah, the Exalted, saves His servant from doubts, evil innovations, sins and anything else which could corrupt their faith. This ensures they leave the world with their faith intact.

The overall teaching of the first advice given in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is to safeguard all the limits of Islam by utilising the blessings one possesses in ways which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Whoever safeguards the limits of Allah, the Exalted, will be safeguarded by Allah, the Exalted. They will find that all difficulties and tests become bearable and they will be guided to travel through them safely while obtaining blessings in both worlds.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised the people that Allah, the Exalted, had made clear why He destroyed the disobedient past nations and why He saved the obedient ones.

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

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

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

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

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised the people that Allah, the Exalted, had made clear the lawful, the unlawful, the actions He loves and the actions He hates.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the lawful and unlawful have been made clear by Islam. In between them are doubtful things which should be avoided in order to protect one's faith and honor.

The vast majority of muslims are aware of the obligatory duties and the majority of unlawful things, such as drinking alcohol. So these create no

doubt within muslims therefore they should act accordingly. Meaning, fulfil the obligatory duties and abstain from the unlawful according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. All other things which are not obligatory and create a doubt in society should therefore be avoided. Allah, the Exalted, will not question why someone did not perform a voluntary deed instead He will ask why they performed a voluntary deed. Therefore, leaving the voluntary action will have no consequences in the hereafter whereas performing a voluntary deed will namely, punishment, reward or forgiveness. It is important for muslims to act on this short but extremely important Hadith as it will solve and prevent many problems and debates. It is important to understand that when one indulges in doubtful or even vain things it will take them one step closer to the unlawful. For example, sinful speech is often preceded by vain and useless speech. Therefore, it is much safer for a muslim's faith and honor to avoid doubtful and vain things.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised the people that they would be regarded as obedient servants who protected their rewards as long as they were sincere to Allah, the Exalted, in their actions.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. A muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

Moving On

In the eighth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina the city of Mecca was conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was informed of a non-Muslim tribe, the Hawazin, which had gathered to attack him. This eventually led to the Battle of Hunayn. After the victory at Hunayn some of the non-Muslim enemies retreated to the city of Taif. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then led an expedition to Taif. The non-Muslims of Taif were besieged for approximately 30 days but they were not conquered. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then commanded the Muslim army to withdraw from Taif and supplicated for their guidance. They did eventually take this second chance given to them by Allah, the Exalted, to accept the truth and sent a delegation to Medina to visit the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and to accept Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 3, Page 476.

During this expedition an arrow struck Abdullah Ibn Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with both of them, and as a result of his wound he died forty days after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, died. During his Caliphate, a muslim delegation visited Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. He showed them the arrow which struck his son and a man from the delegation admitted he fired the arrow. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, praised Allah, the Exalted, for granting his son martyrdom. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 146.

All muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many muslims often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go

perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

“…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.“

Appointing Others

During his Caliphate, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, appointed many people to governmental positions, such as judges and governors. Unlike the leaders of today, these appointments were based on a person's merits and characteristics instead of worldly reasons, such as being relatives or friends. All the people he appointed were trustworthy and fulfilled the duties they were entrusted with. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 286.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst muslims.

Levels of Knowledge

During his Caliphate, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, worked tirelessly in administrating the affairs of the nation according to the correct levels of knowledge. Meaning, according to the Holy Quran, the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mutual consensus of the learned and in rare cases, independent reasoning. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 286.

When Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, became Caliph, he would place the verdicts of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, above the level of mutual consensus and independent reasoning. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 20.

This process has been explained in an event during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In the tenth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina he dispatched Mu'adth Bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, to govern a province of Yemen. When leaving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked what he would do if he was brought a case to judge. Mu'adth, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he would judge according to the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and

blessings be upon him, replied that what if he did not find the case and its judgement in the Holy Quran. He then replied he would judge according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, then replied that what if he did not find the case and its judgement in his traditions. Mu'adth, may Allah be pleased with him, finally replied that he would use independent reasoning meaning, a judgement which runs in line with the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, praised Allah, the Exalted, for giving him a representative that pleased him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Pages 140-141.

Whenever a scholar masters the different sciences of Islam they may reach a level called independent reasoning. This allows them to apply the teachings of the Holy Quran, the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, with their professional unbiased judgement in order to derive a ruling within Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4487, when this scholar makes an incorrect ruling they will be rewarded a single time for their effort. If they make a correct ruling they will be rewarded twice over.

Upholding Justice

Even though he was the Caliph and the most honest and upright person yet Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would not administer legal punishment on anyone based on his own testimony or judgement. He would instead seek another person to corroborate with his view before moving forward with his judgement. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 288.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themself harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.[1] So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just…"

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

Clarifying Not Innovating

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would implement the teachings of Islam during all situations. He would clarify matters to the public according to these teachings and avoided innovating new matters that were not rooted in the two sources of guidance namely, the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, a son once complained to him that his father wanted to take all his wealth. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, told his father that he was entitled to take the minimum amount for his daily expenses and no more. When the father quoted the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who once said that a child and their wealth belongs to the their father, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, explained that the Hadith meant that a father was entitled to his daily expenses. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 289.

Muslims should not follow and adopt the customary practices of non-muslims. The more muslims do this the less they will follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is quite evident in this day and age as many muslims have adopted the cultural practices of other nations which has caused them to become distant from the teachings of Islam. For example, one only needs to observe the modern muslim wedding to observe how many non-muslim cultural practices have been adopted by muslims. What makes this worse is that many muslims cannot differentiate between Islamic practices based on the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the cultural practices of non-muslims. Because of this non-muslims cannot differentiate between them either which has caused great problems for Islam. For example, honour killings

is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam yet because of the ignorance of muslims and their habit of adopting non-muslim cultural practices Islam is blamed every time an honour killing occurs in society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, removed the social barriers in the form of casts and brotherhoods in order to unite people yet ignorant muslims have resurrected them by adopting the cultural practices of non-muslims. Simply put, the more cultural practices muslims adopt the less they will act on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Aiming for the Hereafter

In order to focus his governors on fulfilling their roles correctly, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would often write to them encouraging them to take little from the material world and instead strive hard for preparing for the hereafter. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 298.

When one focuses their attention on the hereafter they will use the blessings Allah, the Exalted, has granted them, such as authority, in ways pleasing to Him. This leads to peace and success in both worlds for the person and others especially, when they are in an authoritative position.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2465, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever prioritises the hereafter over 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.

But as mentioned in the other half of this Hadith the one who prioritises the material world over 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 which 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 loss in both worlds.

Love

Even though many ignorant people have attempted to create wedges between Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and the family of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it is clear from their interactions and conduct towards one another that there was nothing but love and respect between them. Any ill-feelings between them would only indicate selfishness and greed – negative characteristics they were all free from. For example, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, once declared that he preferred doing good towards the family of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, than doing good to his own relatives. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4036.

A sign of truly loving Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is to love all those who love Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, even if this contradicts one's personal opinion about them. This love includes those who proclaim love through their words and more importantly through their actions. For example, it is obvious to all that all the household of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with them, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors possessed this true love. So loving each of them is a duty upon the one who claims love for Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been proven through many Hadiths such as the one found in Sahih Bukhari, number 17. It advises that love for the helpers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, meaning, the residents of the Holy city of Medina is a part of faith and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy. In another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3862, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has

clearly warned muslims not to criticize any of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as loving them is a sign of loving the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and hating them is a sign of hating the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and Allah, the Exalted. This person will not succeed unless they sincerely repent. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned a similar statement regarding his blessed household, may Allah be pleased with them, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 143.

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

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

Internal and External Complications

Initially, the Roman and Persian superpowers were completely uninterested in the Arabian Peninsula, as it was mainly desert land. This is why most of it was not controlled by either of the superpowers. But when Islam began to take a firm footing in the Arabian Peninsula, this alerted the two superpowers who began to plot against Islam in order to prevent the muslim nation becoming a superpower. Therefore, during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in the eighth year after he migrated to Medina, the Battle of Muta took place. This area was controlled by the Romans and therefore the enemy army consisted of Roman and Christian Arabs. This battle ended with a huge victory for the muslims.

Later on, in the ninth year after the migration to Medina, the Battle of Tabuk took place where the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led the muslim army to Roman territory. The Roman army failed to show up to the battle field out of awe of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though no fighting took place, the muslims gained a huge psychological victory over the Romans.

As time went on the Romans began to push towards the Islamic empire in order to show their power. As a result, during his final illness the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched an army under the leadership of Usamah Bin Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him, to Al Balqaa and Palestine, in order to fight the Romans. This army remained camped three miles from Medina until they heard that

the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had passed away and then returned to Medina for further instructions.

At the same, the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, caused many of the Arab tribes, who had initially accepted Islam, to apostatize. Some of them began to follow false prophet and others refused to donate the obligatory charity. These Arab tribes only accepted Islam when it became the dominant force in the region and so therefore, their faith was always weak and based on blind imitation instead of certainty of faith. The false prophet took advantage of this weakness of faith.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, therefore, faced two great issues, the first being the Roman and Persian empires and the second the Arab tribes who had apostatized. The vast majority of muslims took a logical approach and advised him to refrain from fighting with the two superpowers and instead deal with the internal issue of the Arab tribes apostatizing first. But as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched the army of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, he did not desire to cancel his order. Therefore, he commanded this army to continue with their mission.

This was a bold but ingenious move, as it gave Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, a psychological victory over the two superpowers and the apostates even before any fighting took place. Under normal circumstances a leader would first deal with the internal problem before dealing with the external problem but by dealing with both problems at the same time Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, gave the impression that he had the man-power, weapons and resources to deal

with both issues at the same time, even though he barely had the resources to deal with a single problem. This psychological victory was incredibly useful as it struck fear in the hearts of the enemies of Islam. In addition, this strategy was a clear message to all that the resolve of the muslims had not weakened after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This clear message acted as a deterrent against the plots and plans of the enemies of Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 314-317.

Generally speaking, in life a muslim will always face either times of ease or times of difficulty. No one only experiences times of ease without experiencing some difficulties. But the thing to note is that even though difficulties by definition are hard to deal with they are in fact a means to obtain and demonstrate one's true greatness and servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. In addition, in the majority of cases people learn more important life lessons when they face difficulties then when they face times of ease. And people often change for the better after experiencing times of difficulty than times of ease. One only needs to reflect on this in order to understand this truth. In fact, if one studies the Holy Quran they will realise the majority of the events discussed involve difficulties. This indicates that true greatness does not lie in always experiencing times of ease. It in fact, lies in experiencing difficulties while remaining obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is proven by the fact that each of the great difficulties discussed in Islamic teachings end with ultimate success for those who obeyed Allah, the Exalted. So a muslim should not be bothered about facing difficulties as these are just moments for them to shine while acknowledging their true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, through sincere obedience. This is the key to ultimate success in both worlds.

A Worthy Leader

During his final illness, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched an army under the leadership of Usamah Bin Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him, to Al Balqaa and Palestine, in order to fight the Romans. This army remained camped three miles from Medina when they heard that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was sick. When he passed away they returned to Medina for further instructions.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, decided to order the army to continue with their mission. Some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, showed some dislike for Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, leading the army, as he was extremely young and inexperienced, and was even appointed as leader over many senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Before his passing, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, even criticised those who felt this way by declaring that he was worthy of leadership, just like his father, Zaid Bin Haritha, may Allah be pleased with him, was worthy of leadership before him, even though people criticised his appointment to leadership also. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4469.

After the passing of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and after Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, re-dispatched the army headed by Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, some of the Companions encouraged Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, who was part of that army, to request Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to reassign the leadership of the army to

someone who was older and more experienced. After hearing this request Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, out of anger, seized the beard of Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, and commented that how could he dismiss him when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, personally appointed him and made it clear that he was worthy of leadership. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 325-326.

It is important to note, that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who had an issue with the appointment of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, were not displeased with the choice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They only had an issue with his leadership as he was extremely young and inexperienced in warfare. Having an experienced and awe-inspiring leader is an extremely important aspect of leadership during a battle. The leader who lacks these qualities may well cause hesitation within the hearts of the soldiers when he issues his commands. This hesitation is often the difference between life and death on the battlefield. This is why some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, questioned his appointment as leader.

In addition, Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, was worthy of leadership as he led by example.

It is important for all Muslims, especially parents, to act on what they advise to others. It is obvious if one turns the pages of history that those who acted on what they preached had a much more positive effect on others compared to those who did not lead by example. The best

example being the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who not only practiced what he preached but adhered to those teachings more strictly than anyone else. Only with this attitude will Muslims especially, parents have a positive impact on others. For example, if a mother warns her children not to lie as it is a sin but often lies in front of them her children are unlikely to act on her advice. A person's actions will always have more of an impact on others than their speech. It is important to note that this does not mean one needs to be perfect before advising others. It means they should sincerely strive to act on their own advice before advising others. The Holy Quran has made it clear in the following verse that Allah, the exalted, hates this behaviour. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3267, that the a person who commanded good but refrained from it themself and prohibited evil yet acted on it themself will be punished in severely Hell. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”

So it is vital for all Muslims to strive to act on their advice themself then advise others to do the same. Leading by example is the tradition of all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and is the best way to affect others in a positive way.

Finally, even though Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, was very young yet as he was raised in the correct way meaning, according to the teachings of Islam, he became a noble person and leader. Muslims must pay close attention to raising the youth according to the teachings of

Islam so that they ensure the next generation of muslims become noble and praiseworthy.

For example, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1952, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the most virtuous gift a parent can give their child is to teach them good character.

This Hadith reminds muslims to be more concerned about the faith of their relatives, such as their children, over acquiring and imparting wealth and properties to them. 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. Unfortunately, many muslims are so concerned about teaching their children how to build an empire and acquire much wealth and properties that they neglect teaching them the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This includes good manners towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation. A muslim should not be fooled into believing they have plenty of time for teaching their children good manners as their moment of death is unknown and often pounces on people unexpectedly.

In addition, it is extremely difficult to teach good manners to children when they get older and become set in their ways. Today is the day a muslim should truly reflect on the gift they wish to impart to their children and relatives. This is how a muslim sends forward good to the hereafter

but also leaves good behind as a righteous child which supplicates for their deceased parent benefits them. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1376. It is hoped that the one who is surrounded by good in this way will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted.

A Humble Caliph

When Abu Bakkar came out to bid Usamah and his army farewell, may Allah be pleased with them, he chose to walk alongside them while Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, was mounted on his riding animal. Out of respect, Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, insisted that he would either come down and walk with him or Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, should mount and ride alongside him. But Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, refused both suggestions and instead replied that he desired to get his feet dusty in the path of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 326.

Some members of the army were hesitant of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, leading them, as he was so young and inexperienced. By showing a great deal of respect to him, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, further stamped the authority of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him.

It is a shame how things have changed so much since the day of the righteous predecessors. In those days, when they became leaders they in fact became the servants of the people and instead of spending the people's money on their own personal things they would spend their own personal money on the people. Whereas, nowadays the leaders and royal families instead spend the wealth of the people and behave as if they are the masters of the nation.

It is important for muslims to select the righteous predecessors as their role models and adopt their characteristics. For example, muslims must fulfil their duties towards all those under their care which has been advised in a Hadith, found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. This does not mean one should not care about themself. It means they should fulfil their own personal duties and then strive to fulfil their duties in respect to their dependents without going overboard. They must first obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience and then fulfil the rights of people.

Good Companions

When Abu Bakkar came out to bid Usamah and his army farewell, may Allah be pleased with them, he desired to keep Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, who was a member of this army, with himself as he was a sincere and wise advisor. Perhaps, he also desired to keep him back as he wanted to train him so that he could become the next Caliph of Islam. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, sought permission for this from the army's leader, Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, who instantly agreed. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 326-327.

Some members of the army were hesitant of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, leading them, as he was so young and inexperienced. By showing a great deal of respect to him by requesting him to allow Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, to remain with him instead of ordering it, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, further stamped the authority of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him.

In addition, this indicates the importance of good companionship, something which is vital in all spheres of life.

Muslims should note that a major sign of true love is when one directs their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and

facing destiny with patience. This is because obedience leads to success and safety in both this world and in the hereafter. A person who does not desire safety and success for a person can never truly love them irrespective of what they claim or how they treat the other person. The same way a person becomes happy when their beloved obtains worldly success, like a job, they will also desire their beloved to obtain success in the hereafter. If a person does not care about another obtaining safety and success especially, in the next world then they do not love them.

A true lover could not bear knowing and seeing their beloved facing difficulties and punishment in this world or in the next. This is only avoidable through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they would always direct their beloved towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. If a person directs another towards their own selfish interest or the interest of others instead of the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. This applies to all relationships such as friendships and relatives.

Therefore, a muslim should assess whether those in their life direct them towards Allah, the Exalted, or not. If they do then it is a clear sign of their love for them. If they do not then it is a clear sign that they do not truly love them. Chapter 43 Az Zukhruf, verse 67:

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

Rules of Engagement

When Abu Bakkar came out to bid Usamah and his army farewell, may Allah be pleased with them, he commanded them to adhere to certain matters. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 327.

The first was that he warned them not to be treacherous.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst muslims.

The second matter Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised the army was for them not to wrongfully take from the spoils of war before they had been correctly distributed.

Generally speaking, it is a major sin to utilise the unlawful. This includes using unlawful wealth, using items which are unlawful and eating unlawful foods. It is important to note, that the specific things which have been labelled unlawful by Islam such as alcohol are not the only things which are unlawful. In fact, even lawful things can become unlawful if they have been gained through unlawful things. For example, a lawful food can become unlawful if it is bought with unlawful wealth. Therefore, it is important for muslims to ensure they only deal with lawful things as it only takes one element of the unlawful to ruin someone.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2346, that the one who utilises the unlawful will have all their supplications rejected. If their supplications are rejected by Allah, the Exalted, can one expect any of their good deeds to be accepted? This in fact has been answered in another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1410. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that

Allah, the Exalted, only accepts the lawful. Therefore, any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful such as performing the Holy Pilgrimage with unlawful wealth will be rejected.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3118, that this type of person will be sent to Hell on Judgement Day. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 188:

“And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful].”

The third matter Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised the army was for them not to be deceitful.

The root of this evil characteristic is lying.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that lying is an aspect of hypocrisy. Lying is unacceptable whether it is a small lie which is often called a white lie or when one lies as a joke. All of these types of lying are forbidden. In fact, the one who lies to make people laugh, so

their aim is not to deceive someone, has been cursed three times in one Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2315.

Another popular lie people often speak believing it is not a sin is when they lie to children. This is undoubtedly a sin according to Hadiths such as the one found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4991. It is plain foolishness to lie to children as they will only adopt this sinful habit from the elder who lies to them. Behaving in this manner shows children lying is acceptable when it is not acceptable according to the teachings of Islam. Only in very rare and extreme cases is lying acceptable for example, lying in order to protect the life of an innocent person.

It is vital to avoid lying as according to one Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, it leads to other sins such as, backbiting and mocking people. This behaviour leads one to the gates of Hell. When a person continues to lie they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a great liar. It does not take a scholar to predict what will happen to a person on Judgment day who has been recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a great liar.

All muslims desire the company of the Angels. Yet, when a person lies they are deprived of their company. In fact, the stench that is omitted from the mouth of a liar causes the Angels to move a mile away from them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1972.

Etiquettes of War

When Abu Bakkar came out to bid Usamah and his army farewell, may Allah be pleased with them, he commanded them to adhere to certain matters. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 327.

Some of the matters Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised the army included: not to mutilate enemy soldiers; not to cut down a tree that bears fruit; not to kill animals unnecessarily; and not to harm religious personalities from other religions who were not part of the enemy army, such as priests and monks.

It is vital to understand that in order to correctly understand the meanings of the verses of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, one must place them in their correct context. Meaning, no verse or Hadith can be taken in isolation without observing the context in which it was revealed in order to justify someone's actions. In order to correctly understand the context one must assess the verses and Hadiths which are linked to it in the light of the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Only in this way will it become clear what or who a specific verse or Hadith refers to.

In addition, Muslims can only take up arms against external aggressors under the banner of a legitimate ruler and when it is done according to

the injunctions found within the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who fight must constantly fear Allah, the Exalted, in crossing these limits and rules. One such rule is to resort to war only when one is attacked. Therefore, showing physical aggression against an enemy in a state of peace is forbidden. Another rule is that when the enemy desists from aggression then Muslims must desist also. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 193:

"…But if they cease, then there is to be no aggression [i.e., assault] except against the violators."

If the enemy desires peace it must be granted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 90:

"…So if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allāh has not made for you a cause [for fighting] against them."

The third rule is that civilians are not to be harmed. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, repeatedly forbade women, children, elders, and the sick, as well as monks and hermits to be harmed during war. This has been confirmed in many Hadiths such as the one found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2614, and Musnad Ahmad, number 2728.

The first Caliph of Islam Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased him, forbade the killing of children, women and the elderly. He forbade the cutting of fruit bearing trees, damaging property and the killing of cattle. This has been advised in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba, number 33121.

The second Caliph of Islam Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, made it clear to the Muslim armies not to harm non-soldiers such as a farmer. This has been advised in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba, number 33120.

In case of impending conflict the Muslim nation are commanded to prepare as best as they can. This preparation aims to deter the enemy from attacking, in which case if the enemy wish for peace it must be granted to them. Chapter 8 An Anfal, verses 60-61:

“And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allāh and your enemy…And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also]…”

Permission is granted to fight those who do not honor their treaties with the Muslims. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verses 12-13:

“And if they break their oaths after their treaty and defame your religion, then combat the leaders of disbelief, for indeed, there are no oaths [sacred] to them; [fight them that] they might cease. Would you not fight against a people who broke their oaths and determined to expel the Messenger, and they had begun [the attack upon] you the first time?”

Islam has forbade attacking those who respect their treaties. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 7:

“…So as long as they are upright toward you, be upright toward them. Indeed, Allāh loves the righteous [who fear Him].”

There is no question of forcing anyone to accept Islam as it is something which must be accepted by one’s heart not only through one’s tongue and actions. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 256:

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion…”

Those who are at peace with the Muslims are to be treated with justice at all times. Chapter 60 Al Mumtahanah, verses 8-9:

“Allāh does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allāh loves those who act justly. Allāh only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion…”

War is hateful to Allah, the Exalted, and Muslims must be forced into it and not desire it. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“Battle has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you…”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, even warned Muslims not to desire fighting and instead commanded them to desire safety from Allah, the Exalted. But if they were forced to encounter the enemy then they must remain steadfast. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2966.

The real intent of these verses is to stress that force should be used only when its use is unavoidable, only to the extent that is absolutely necessary and under the guidance of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

As mentioned earlier it is vital to assess a verse or a Hadith in its right context in order to understand who, what and where it applies.

Unfortunately, many people, intentionally or unintentionally, fail to interpret the verses and Hadiths on fighting in this way. One very famous example is of a verse which is referred to as the sword verse even though the word “sword” is not mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 5:

“And when the inviolable months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush…”

As explained earlier in detail even this statement of war is restricted to specific conditions and concessions of peace. In addition, studying the historical context of this and other related verses clearly prove that it is not a universal principle for fighting non-Muslims. Meaning, the verse refers to a specific group of people, at a specific time and in a specific place.

The surrounding verses of the Sword verse clearly indicate, multiple times, that the polytheists referred to are only those who repeatedly violated their peace treaties with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and engaged in acts of violent aggression against the Muslim community and its allies. For example, the verse immediately before the Sword verse, meaning, chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 4, states:

“Excepted are those with whom you made a treaty among the polytheists and then they have not been deficient toward you in anything

or supported anyone against you; so complete for them their treaty until their term [has ended]. Indeed, Allāh loves the righteous [who fear Him].”

This is followed by another command in a related verse, chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 7:

“How can there be for the polytheists a treaty in the sight of Allāh and with His Messenger, except for those with whom you made a treaty at al-Masjid al-Ḥarām? So as long as they are upright toward you, be upright toward them. Indeed, Allāh loves the righteous [who fear Him].”

The crimes of these polytheists whom fighting was commanded against are mentioned in other related verses. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verses 8-10:

“How [can there be a treaty] while, if they gain dominance over you, they do not observe concerning you any pact of kinship or covenant of protection? They satisfy you with their mouths, but their hearts refuse [compliance], and most of them are defiantly disobedient. They have exchanged the signs of Allāh for a small price and averted [people] from His way. Indeed, it was evil that they were doing. They do not observe toward a believer any pact of kinship or covenant of protection. And it is they who are the transgressors.”

And chapter 9 At Tawbah, verses 12-13:

“And if they break their oaths after their treaty and defame your religion, then combat the leaders of disbelief, for indeed, there are no oaths [sacred] to them; [fight them that] they might cease. Would you not fight against a people who broke their oaths and determined to expel the Messenger, and they had begun [the attack upon] you the first time?...”

Theses specific polytheists continuously broke their agreements and aided others against Islam. They began hostilities against the Muslims, prevented people from accepting Islam, expelled Muslims from Mecca and Masjid Al Haram. At least eight times in the quoted verses their crimes against the Muslims are mentioned.

In chapter 9 Tawbah, verse 12, which is quoted above, the goal of fighting the “leaders of disbelief” is so they “cease” from their acts of aggression. These verses, like the rest, indicate the importance of adhering to specific conditions during times of war such as fighting only those who fight them first.

In addition, these polytheists were still offered many warnings and concessions. They were given a four-month period of respite and peace. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 2:

“So travel freely, [O disbelievers], throughout the land [during] four months but know that you cannot cause failure to Allah…”

And chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 5:

“And when the inviolable [four] months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush…”

This respite was given so that they either accept Islam or peacefully leave the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was commanded to grant protection to any of these polytheists who request it so that they have the opportunity to listen to the teachings of Islam without any fear or pressure or they could peacefully leave the Arabian Peninsula without the fear of being harmed. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 6:

“And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allāh [i.e., the Qur’ān]. Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know.”

The command in the sword verse of fighting and killing these polytheists would only come into effect if they remained in the Arabian Peninsula

after the four-month respite without accepting Islam. It is important to note that many of the polytheists took advantage of this respite and accepted Islam. Because of this respite fighting came to an end and no blood was actually shed on account of the Sword verse as the aim of this verse was to act as a deterrent from further bloodshed meaning, either these polytheists accept Islam or leave the Arabian Peninsula peacefully.

To conclude, the surrounding verses and the blessed life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, place the Sword verse in its correct context. Meaning, these verses were specifically revealed in order to put an end to attacks from specific hostile polytheists against the Muslim community. Therefore, they cannot be blankly applied to others after them.

The Apostate Wars

Avoid Fanaticism

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, faced two great issues, the first being the two superpowers: the Roman and Persian empires, and the second the Arab tribes who had apostatized. The vast majority of muslims took a logical approach and advised him to refrain from fighting with the super powers and to instead deal with the internal issue of the Arab tribes apostatizing first. But as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, dispatched the army of Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him, he did not desire to cancel his order. In addition, even though the vast majority advised Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, not to fight against the Arab tribes who had refused to pay the obligatory charity, he rejected their advice. He understood that rejecting that pillar of Islam was disbelief and therefore a clear reason to fight. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 314-317 and in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 1399-1400.

This event, as well as many others in Islamic history, indicates an important principle namely, the majority decision or opinion is not always the correct one. In most cases, it is the correct choice and following it is praiseworthy, as long as it is in line with the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, none the less, one must not behave like a fanatic and simply believe the majority opinion is always correct.

By extension, a muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their scholar's opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

Standing up for Islam

Dealing with the threat of the Roman and Persian superpowers was an external threat Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had to deal with. The other great internal threat consisted of many Arab tribes who apostatized after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Some of them began to follow false prophet and others refused to donate the obligatory charity. These Arab tribes only accepted Islam when it became the dominant force in the region and so therefore, their faith was always weak and based on blind imitation instead of certainty of faith. The false prophet took advantage of this weakness of faith and their greed for worldly things overcame their weak faith. In addition, even though the vast majority advised Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, not to fight against the Arab tribes who had refused to pay the obligatory charity, he rejected their advice. He understood that rejecting that pillar of Islam was disbelief and therefore a clear reason to fight. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 314-317 and in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 1399-1400.

In reality, if Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, compromised on the obligatory charity then misguided and ignorant muslims till the end of time would have used him as an excuse to openly compromise on the teachings of Islam. Islam would have then lost its essence and only an empty shell would have remained, where people call themselves muslims yet fail to practice on any of its teachings. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was endowed with far-reaching perception and understood this when others failed to. This protection of the essence of Islam is why he fought those who refused to donate the obligatory charity. This perception is reflected in the short statement he gave to those who urged him not to fight those who refused to give the obligatory charity. He said, "Revelation has ceased to descend and the religion is

complete. Shall I now allow it to decrease (to be changed or modified), while I am alive?" This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 361.

This is connected to chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 85:

"…So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part? Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allāh is not unaware of what you do."

This steadfast attitude is an important aspect of Islam muslims must adopt. Muslims should not compromise on any duty for worldly things as these things will eventually become a burden for them, let alone the punishment which awaits them in the next world if they do not sincerely repent.

A muslim should not be fooled into believing that if they fail to fulfil their obligatory duties they will somehow find a way out of the judgment and punishment of Allah, the Exalted. Simply ignoring one's disobedience and the reality of Judgment Day will not make it go away. When one accepted Islam as their faith and became a muslim this included accepting the responsibility of fulfilling the duties which accompany Islam. A person who accepts a job by definition accepts the duties which come with it. If they simply refuse to fulfil their duties they will undoubtedly be sacked. Similarly, the one who refuses to fulfil their

obligatory duties after accepting Islam as their religion may well find themself surrounded by punishment and difficulties in both worlds.

In reality, the obligatory duties are not many and do not require that much time or effort. In fact, Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear in the Holy Quran that He does not burden someone with more than they can handle. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

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

So any duty which is obligatory on a person can be carried out by them. It is only their extreme laziness and poor judgment which prevents them from doing it. Muslims must therefore change their attitude and fulfil their duties according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, before they encounter a severe torment on a Great Day.

Defending Medina

Dealing with the threat of the Roman and Persian superpowers was an external threat Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had to deal with. The other great internal threat consisted of many Arab tribes who apostatized after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Some of them began to follow false prophet and others refused to donate the obligatory charity. These Arab tribes only accepted Islam when it became the dominant force in the region and so therefore, their faith was always weak and based on blind imitation instead of certainty of faith. The false prophet took advantage of this weakness of faith and their greed for worldly things overcame their weak faith. In addition, even though the vast majority advised Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, not to fight against the Arab tribes who had refused to pay the obligatory charity, he rejected their advice. He understood that rejecting that pillar of Islam was disbelief and therefore a clear reason to fight. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 314-317 and in Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 1399-1400.

When the Arab tribes who apostatized dispatched their representatives to Medina in order to create peace treaties with Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, he blankly refused to agree with anything less than the complete submission to every duty of Islam, as outlined by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These delegates left Medina without agreeing to re-enter the fold of Islam. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, sensed that they may attempt to seize the opportunity of the muslim's situation of dealing with multiple difficulties at the same time, by attacking Medina and putting an end to the true teachings of Islam. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, took many steps in order to protect Medina which included: ordering the inhabitants to spend the

nights in the Mosque so that they remained vigilant of a surprise attack. He placed guards at the entry points of Medina. He requested the aid of neighboring tribes who did not apostatize and instead remained firm on faith. These tribes dispatched their soldiers to defend Medina.

Some of the Arab tribes who apostatized did attack Medina as they did not expect much resistance, as most of the muslim soldiers had left with the army led by Usamah Bin Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him. But as reinforcements had arrived into Medina, the attack was repelled successfully by Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and his men. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 364-369.

The steps Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, took indicates the importance of acting on both aspects of trusting in Allah, the Exalted. The first aspect is using the means Allah, the Exalted, has provided, according to the teachings of Islam. The other aspect is fully believing that the outcome of the situation, which Allah, the Exalted, alone decides, will be best for all involved.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2344, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that if people truly trusted Allah, the Exalted, He would provide for them just like He provides for birds. They leave their nests hungry in the morning and return in the evening satisfied.

Truly trusting in Allah, the Exalted, is something which is felt in the heart but is proven through the limbs meaning, when one sincerely obeys Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 3:

"…And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him…"

The aspect of trust which is internal involves firmly believing that only Allah, the Exalted, can provide one with beneficial things and protect them from harmful things both in worldly and religious matters. A muslim understands that no one except Allah, the Exalted, can give, withhold, harm or benefit someone.

It is important to note, that truly trusting in Allah, the Exalted, does not mean one should abandon using the means which Allah, the Exalted, has provided, such as medicine. As the main Hadith under discussion clearly mentions that the birds leave their nests actively searching for provision. When one uses the strength and means provided by Allah, the Exalted, according to the teachings of Islam they are undoubtedly obeying Him. This is in fact, the outward element of trusting in Allah, the Exalted. This has been made clear in many verses and Hadiths. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 71:

"O you who have believed, take your precaution…"

In reality, the outward activity is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and trusting Allah, the Exalted, inwardly is the inward state of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One should not abandon the outward tradition even if they possess the inward state of trust.

Actions and using the means provided by Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of trusting Him. In this respect, actions can be split into three categories. The first are those actions of obedience which Allah, the Exalted, commands muslims to do so that they can avoid Hell and obtain Paradise. Abandoning these while claiming trust that Allah, the Exalted, will forgive them is simply wishful thinking and is therefore blameworthy.

The second type of actions are those means which Allah, the Exalted, has created in this world in order for people to live in it safely, such as eating when hungry, drinking when thirsty and wearing warm clothes in cold weather. A person who abandons these and causes harm to themself is blameworthy. However, there are some people who have been provided special strength by Allah, the Exalted, so that they can avoid these means without harming themselves. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, used to fast for days on end uninterrupted but forbade others from doing the same as Allah, the Exalted, provided for him directly without the need for food. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1922. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, prayed for the fourth rightly guided Caliph Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, so that he would not feel excess cold or heat. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 117. Therefore, if a person turns away from these means but is provided with the strength to endure without failing in their duties to Allah, the Exalted, and people then it is acceptable otherwise it is blameworthy.

The third type of actions in respect to trusting in Allah, the Exalted, are those things which have been set as a customary practice which Allah, the Exalted, sometimes breaks for certain people. An example of this are the people who become cured of illnesses without the need of medicine. This is quite common especially in poorer countries where medicine is difficult to obtain. This is linked to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2144, which advises that no person will die until they utilize every ounce of their provision which was allocated to them, which according to another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6748, was over fifty thousand years before Allah, the Exalted, created the Heavens and the Earth. So the one who truly realises this Hadith might not seek provision actively knowing that what was allocated to them so long ago cannot miss them. So for this person the customary means of obtaining provision such as obtaining it through a job is broken by Allah, the Exalted. This is a high and rare rank. Only the one who can behave in such a manner without complaining or panicking nor expecting things from people is free of blame if they choose this path. It is important to note, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1692, that it is a sin for a person to fail in providing for their dependents even though they may be on this high rank.

Having real trust in Allah, the Exalted, leads to being content with destiny. Meaning, whatever Allah, the Exalted, chooses for them they accept without complaint and without desiring things to change as they firmly trust that Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

To conclude, it is best to follow the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by using the lawful means one has been granted firmly believing they are from Allah, the Exalted, and trust internally that only what Allah, the Exalted, decides will occur, which is undoubtedly the best choice for each person whether they observe this or not.

Gentleness

Even during the apostate wars, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, urged his generals and the common soldiers to show gentleness to those who repented from apostatizing, thereby re-entering the fold of Islam, and to extend them the full rights every muslim is owed. He also urged his generals to treat their soldiers with gentleness through speech and actions. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 393.

Even during such a dangerous and difficult period Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, encouraged a balance between gentleness and firmness in all matters as it leads to nothing but good.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2701, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves gentleness in all matters.

This is an important characteristic which must be adopted by all muslims. It should be used in all aspects of one's life. It is important to understand that being gentle benefits the muslim themself more than anyone else. Not only will they receive blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, and minimize the amount of sins they commit, as a gentle person is less likely to commits sins through their speech and actions, but it benefits them in worldly affairs also. For example, the person who treats their spouse gently will gain more love and respect in return then if

they treated their spouse in a harsh manner. Children are more likely to obey and treat their parents with respect when they are treated gently. Colleagues at work are more likely to help the one who is gentle with them. The examples are endless. Only in very rare cases is a harsh attitude required. In most cases, gentle behaviour will be much more effective than a harsh attitude.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possesses countless good qualities yet, Allah, the exalted, specifically highlighted his gentleness in the Holy Quran as it is a key ingredient required to affect others in a positive way. Chapter 3 Al Imran, verse 159:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you…”

A muslim must remember that they will never be better than a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, nor will the person they interact with be worse than Pharaoh yet, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them, to deal with Pharaoh in a kind manner. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:

“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah]."

Therefore, a muslim should adopt gentleness in all affairs as it leads to much reward and affects others, such as one's family, in a positive way.

Disobedience Leads to Failure

Some of these Arab tribes who refused to give the obligatory charity did attack Medina as they did not expect much resistance as most of the muslim soldiers had left with the army led by Usamah Bin Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him. But as reinforcements had arrived into Medina, the attack was repelled successfully by Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and his men. In another battle led by Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, they managed to heavily defeat some Arab tribes who had apostatized. As a result these tribes executed many of their own tribesmen who had been firm on Islam and did not apostatize. But this only strengthened the resolve of the muslims, who fought even harder to defeat the apostates. Eventually, many of these tribes submitted to the truth and repented. They sent their delegates to Medina with their obligatory charities. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 366-369.

It is important for muslims to understand a simple yet profound lesson namely, they will never succeed in this world or the next in worldly or religious matters through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Since the dawn of time to this age and till the end of time no person has ever achieved true success nor will they ever through the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious when one turns the pages of history. Therefore, when a muslim is in a situation which they desire to achieve a positive and successful outcome from they should never choose to disobey Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of how tempting or easy it may seem to be. Even if one is advised by their close friends and relatives to do so as there is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the Creator. And in truth they will never be able to protect them from Allah, the Exalted, and His punishment in either this world or the next. The same way Allah, the Exalted, grants success to

those who obey Him He removes a successful outcome from those who disobey Him even if this removal takes time to witness. A muslim should not be fooled as this will occur sooner or later. The Holy Quran has made it extremely clear that an evil plan or action only encompasses the doer even if this punishment is delayed. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

"…but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people…"

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

Blind Loyalty

During the apostate wars, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, faced another great threat namely, the false prophets and their followers. In most cases, even though the followers of these false prophets were aware of their leaders' falsehood yet they still followed them blindly. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 398-399.

This type of blind loyalty occurs when people form bonds based on worldly things, such as lineage and friendship. Muslims must avoid this attitude as it leads to trouble in both worlds.

With the passing of time people often become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, most muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to

strength. Whereas, many muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Dangerous Cravings

During the apostate wars, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, faced another great threat namely, the false prophets and their followers. In most cases, even though the followers of these false prophets were aware of their leaders' falsehood yet they still followed them blindly. Others accepted them out of greed of obtaining wealth and leadership, which they had promised their followers if they supported them. This greed even seized some of the weaker muslims who had recently accepted Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 398-399.

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 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 as they are too preoccupied with obtaining wealth. A body which is too busy acquiring wealth will never prepare adequately for the hereafter. In fact, this person will dedicate so much effort to acquiring 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.

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 that 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 prestige.

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 themself 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 worse 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.

Leniency

During the apostate wars, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, faced another great threat namely, the false prophets and their followers. In most cases, even though the followers of these false prophets were aware of their leaders' falsehood yet they still followed them blindly. Others accepted them out of greed of obtaining wealth and leadership, which they had promised their followers if they supported them. This greed even seized some of the weaker muslims who had recently accepted Islam. Two generals of one of the false prophets, Aswad Al Ansee, who was killed during the last days of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, attempted to mobilize forces against the Islamic nation. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched an army against them and these two were eventually captured and sent to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as prisoners of war. They both repented for their actions and declared their re-entry into Islam. As a result Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, set them free. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 410-411.

Leniency and overlooking the faults of others are important qualities to adopt.

All muslims hope that on Judgment Day Allah, the Exalted, will put aside, overlook and forgive their past mistakes and sins. But the strange thing is that most of these same muslims who hope and pray for this do not treat others in the same way. Meaning, they often latch on to the past mistakes of others and use them as weapons against them. This is not referring to those mistakes which have an effect on the present or

future. For example, a car accident caused by a driver which physically disables another person is a mistake which will affect the victim in the present and future. This type of mistake is understandably difficult to let go and overlook. But many muslims often latch on to the mistakes of others which do not influence the future in anyway, such as a verbal insult. Even though, the mistake has faded away yet these people insist on reviving and using it against others when the opportunity presents itself. It is a very sad mentality to possess as one should understand that people are not Angels. At the very least a muslim who hopes for Allah, the Exalted, to overlook their past mistakes should overlook the past mistakes of others. Those who refuse to behave in this manner will find that the majority of their relationships are fractured as no relationship is perfect. They will always be a disagreement which can lead to a mistake in every relationship. Therefore, the one who behaves in this manner will end up lonely as their bad mentality causes them to destroy their relationships with others. It is strange that these very people hate to be lonely yet adopt an attitude which drives others away from them. This defies logic and common sense. All people want to be loved and respected while they are alive and after they pass away but this attitude causes the very opposite to occur. While they are alive people become fed up with them and when they die people do not remember them with true affection and love. If they do remember them it is merely out of custom.

Letting the past go does not mean one needs to be overly nice to others but the least one can do is be respectful according to the teachings of Islam. This does not cost anything and requires little effort. One should therefore learn to overlook and let the past mistakes of people go perhaps then Allah, the Exalted, will overlook their past mistakes on the Day of Judgement. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

“…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.“

Avoiding Stubbornness

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched an army to deal with the apostates of Hadramoot and Kindah. Their dissension occurred over a simple matter which should have been avoided. The governor of Hadramoot was once distributing charity and mistakenly gave the incorrect camel to a person. This person's objections were not answered and when he sought the aid of a prominent member of his tribe, this resulted in an all-out fight. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 412-413.

This simple matter could have been resolved if stubbornness, from both sides, was avoided.

Some adopt stubbornness in worldly matters and as a result they do not change their character for the better. Instead, they remain steadfast on their attitude believing this is somehow a sign of their great strength and wisdom. Steadfastness in matters of faith is a praiseworthy attitude but in most worldly matters it is only called stubbornness, which is blameworthy.

Unfortunately, some believe if they change their attitude it demonstrates weakness or it shows that they are admitting their fault and because of this they stubbornly fail to change for the better. Adults behave like immature children by believing that if they change their behaviour it

means they have lost while others who remain steadfast on their attitude have won. This is simply childish.

In reality, an intelligent person will remain steadfast on matters of faith but in worldly matters they will change their attitude, as long as it is not sinful, in order to make their life easier. So changing to improve one's life is not a sign of weakness it is in fact a sign of intelligence.

In many cases, a person refuses to change their attitude and expects others in their life to change theirs, such as their relatives. But what often occurs is that due to stubbornness all remain in the same state which only leads to regular disagreements and arguments. A wise person understands that if the people around them do not change for the better than they should. This change will improve the quality of their life and their relationship with others which is much better than going around in circular arguments with people. This positive attitude will eventually cause others to respect them as it takes real strength to change one's character for the better.

Those who remain stubborn will always find something to be annoyed about which will remove peace from their life. This will cause further difficulties in all aspects of their life, such as their mental health. But those who adapt and change for the better will always move from one station of peace to another. If one achieves this peace does it really matter if others believe they only changed because they were wrong?

To conclude, to remain steadfast on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is praiseworthy. But in worldly matters and in cases where no sin is committed a person should learn to adapt and change their attitude so that they find some peace in this world.

Objecting to Evil

During the apostate wars, some Arab tribes who had apostatized were brought back to Islam through the advice and preaching of their fellow tribesmen. These people risked their lives and the lives of their families all for the sake of standing up for the truth out of sincerity to Allah, the Exalted. An example of this was Miraan Ibn Dhee, may Allah be pleased with him, who publicly addressed his people without any fear of the consequences. Through his sincere efforts Allah, the Exalted, guided his tribe back to Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 420-421.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised the importance of objecting to evil things in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4340. This Hadith clearly shows that it is a duty on all muslims to object to all forms of evil according to their strength and means. The lowest level, as mentioned in this Hadith, is rejecting the evil with one's heart.

This shows internally approving evil actions is one of the ugliest of those things which are forbidden. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4345, that the one who is present when an evil is committed and denounces it is like the one who was not present. But the one who was absent and approved the evil deed is like the one who was present when it was committed.

The first two aspects of objecting to evil, mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion, are through one's physical actions and speech. This is only a duty on a muslim who has the strength to do so for example, they will not be harmed by their actions or words.

It is important to note, objecting to evil with one's hand does not refer to fighting. It refers to correcting the evil actions of others, such as returning the rights of someone which have been unlawfully violated. The one who is in a position to do so yet, refrains from doing so has been warned of a punishment in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4338.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised muslims in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2191, that they should not fear the creation in respect to speaking the truth. In fact, the one who allows the fear of the creation to prevent them from objecting to evil things has been described as the one who hates themself and will be criticized by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4008. It is important to note, this does not refer to the one who remains silent out of fear of being harmed as this is an acceptable excuse but it refers to the person who remains silent because of the status people hold in their eyes.

A Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4341, advises that a person can give up objecting to evil things through their actions and speech when others obey their greed, follow their incorrect opinions and desires and when they prefer the material world over the hereafter. It does not take a scholar to conclude this time has arrived. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 105.

“O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided…”

But it is important to note, a muslim should continue with this important duty in respect to their dependents as this is a duty on them according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928, and in respect to those they feel physically and verbally safe from, as this is the superior attitude.

Objecting to evil things which are apparent is what the main Hadith under discussion refers to. Meaning, it does not grant permission to muslims to spy on others in order to find evil things to object to. Spying and anything associated with it in this respect are forbidden. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

“O you who have believed…do not spy…”

It is important to note, that a muslim must object to evil according to the teachings of Islam and not their on desires. A muslim may believe they are acting for sake of Allah, the Exalted, when they are not. This is proven when they object to evil in a way which contradicts the teachings of Islam. In fact, what is considered a good deed may well become a sin because of this negative attitude.

A muslim must object to evil in a gentle and fair way preferably in private in accordance to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The opposite of these characteristics will only push people away from sincerely repenting and may lead to further sins as a result of angering them.

Holding Onto Faith

Prior to the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the false prophet Aswad Al Ansee began to spread his message and forced people to believe in him. Abu Muslim Al Khaulaanee, may Allah have mercy on him, remained firm on Islam which resulted in Aswad ordering for him to be thrown into a large fire. To the amazement of the people the fire did not harm Abu Muslim, may Allah have mercy on him. Aswad was then advised to exile him before this miracle became a means for the people to reject him. Abu Muslim, may Allah have mercy on him, eventually reached Medina during the Caliphate of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. After entering the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, he was questioned about his identity by Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. As the latter was perceptive, he enquired if he was the man who Allah, the Exalted, protected from the fire. Abu Muslim, may Allah have mercy on him, was forced to admit the truth and as a result Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, proudly seated him in between himself and Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, praised Allah, the Exalted, for showing him a person who He protected from fire, just like He protected the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verses 28-29:

“They said, "Burn him [Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him] and support your gods - if you are to act." We [Allāh] said, "O fire, be coolness and safety upon Abraham.""

This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 422-423.

Generally speaking, this incident indicates the importance of holding onto one's faith in times of extreme difficulties.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7400, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who continues worshipping Allah, the Exalted, during widespread turmoil and seditions is like the one who has emigrated to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his lifetime.

The reward of emigrating to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, during his life time was a great deed. In fact, it erased all of one's previous sins according to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 321.

Worshipping Allah, the Exalted, means to continue sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is obvious that the time mentioned in this Hadith has arrived. It has become very easy to become misguided from the teachings of Islam as

worldly desires have opened up for the muslim nation. Therefore, muslims should not get distracted by them and avoid controversial issues and people and instead remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, in every aspect of their life if they desire to obtain the reward mentioned in this Hadith.

Accountability

During his Caliphate, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would constantly hold his governors accountable for their actions and regularly met them in person to undertake this audit. He often reminded them that as leaders they were the servants of the people and, just like him, needed to spend their time working tirelessly for the benefit of the people. They needed to lead a simple and rough life so that their people could lead a comfortable life. They needed to rest little and instead deal with the affairs of the people. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 427-428.

His attitude is a stark contrast from the behavior of the leaders of today, he behave as monarchs over their subjects and are more concerned about their personal comfort then the comfort of their people.

Generally speaking, this type of accountability of one's actions must be undertaken by everyone, as all people, whether leaders or followers, will be held accountable for their actions on the Day of Judgement.

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 righteous deeds. But the one who fails to regularly assess their deeds will lead a

life of heedlessness whereby they commit sins without sincerely repenting. 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 accounts such as a tax return correctly. 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.”

Uniting on Sincerity

One of major causes of the apostate wars was the blind loyalty of people to their tribes and clans. This blind loyalty encouraged many of the muslims to apostatize even though they did not have a problem with being muslim. Therefore, one of the aims of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was to continue the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by removing the concept of blind loyalty to one's tribe, clan and family and instead unite the people under the banner of Islam. This would ensure muslims would fulfill the rights of others and treat them kindly, even if they were no worldly bonds between them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 428-429.

This sincerity to others is in fact a cornerstone of Islam.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards to the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themself.

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

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

"…Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them…"

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they

can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

“…And do good as Allah has done good to you…”

Thinking Things Through

During his Caliphate Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched an army under the leadership of Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, to fight the false prophet Tulaihah Al Asdee and his followers, who had grown into a formidable force. Tulaihah invited the Taiy tribe towards his religion and they initially responded by sending many of their soldiers to join his campaign. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also dispatched Adi Bin Haatim, may Allah be pleased with him, to this tribe, a tribe he belonged to, in order to convince them not to apostatize. They eventually accepted his admonishment and promised him to call back the fighters that had went out to join Tulaihah. When Khalid eventually met Adi, may Allah be pleased with them, the latter managed to convince the former to hold off attacking the Taiy tribe, even though their initial actions resulted in the deaths of some Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, could have acted hastily out of revenge but instead he agreed to wait for three days. Within this time the soldiers of the Taiy tribe, who initially went out to join Tulaihah, returned and all of them, under the supervision of Adi Bin Haatim, may Allah be pleased with him, join Khalid and his army, may Allah be pleased with them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 430-437.

This incident indicates the importance of thinking things through as Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, had the authority to attack the Taiy tribe, yet he patiently waited. Therefore, a dangerous and violent situation became one of reconciliation and peace.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2012, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that thinking things through is from Allah, the Exalted, while being hasty is from the Devil.

This is an extremely important teaching to understand and act on as muslims who perform much righteous deeds often destroy them through hastiness. For example, they may utter some evil words in a fit of rage which may cause them to plunge into Hell on Judgment Day. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

The vast majority of sins and difficulties, such as arguments, occur because people fail to think things through and instead act in a hasty way. The sign of intelligence is when one thinks before speaking or acting and only precedes when they know their speech or action is good and beneficial in worldly or religious matters.

Even though, a muslim should not delay in performing righteous deeds yet, they should still think things through before performing them. This is because a righteous deed may receive no reward simply because its conditions and etiquettes have not been fulfilled because of one's hastiness. In this respect, one should only move forward in any matter after they have thought things through.

The one who behaves in this manner will not only minimize their sins and increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, but they will minimize

the difficulties they encounter, such as arguments and disagreements, in all aspects of their life.

Over Praising

Abu Bakkar dispatched Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, to many different areas in order to engage with many different Arab tribes who had apostatized. Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, moved from one place to the next gaining victory where ever he went. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, wrote a letter to him congratulating him on his victories yet balanced his praise for him by firstly attributing his success to Allah, the Exalted, and by instilling him with the fear of Allah, the Exalted. Vital ingredients needed to avoid arrogance. The letter included, “May Allah increase you in goodness that He has blessed you with. And fear Allah, the Exalted, regarding all your affairs, for indeed, Allah, the Exalted, is with those who fear Him and those who do good deeds…” This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee’s, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 440.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2662, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against over praising others.

This is a disliked deed as it firstly can be sinful if the praise is based on falsehood. Even if it is true over praising people especially, the ignorant can cause them to become proud. This is an evil characteristic as an atom’s worth of it is enough to take one to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265. Over praising can even cause the praised person to believe they have fulfilled their potential in obeying Allah, the Exalted, and therefore do not need to strive harder in His obedience.

A muslim should not be fooled by the praise of others as they know their actions and inner hidden character better than any other person. Reflecting on this and the countless times Allah, the Exalted, has concealed their faults from people should prevent them from becoming proud. In addition, they should remember that the praised quality they possess was granted to them by none other than Allah, the Exalted, therefore all praise belongs to Him. Finally, a muslim should become more grateful to Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they possess in ways pleasing to Him. They should instead advise others about this Hadith and warn them not to over praise others.

Only in certain cases is praising others acceptable and must include not over praising them, sticking with the truth and it should be done in order to encourage them to do more good. This especially applies to children such as, praising them in respect to their school work, good behaviour and fulfilling the duties of Islam.

A Serious Matter

During the apostate wars, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, made it clear that even though he was willing to accept the repentance of any of the apostates, as he commanded every army leader to first invite every apostate army they encountered towards repentance while promising them it will be accepted from them, yet Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, did not create peace deals with them. This is because entering and exiting Islam was a serious matter and if he had made peace treaties with the apostates then it would have sent a clear message to everyone else, that whenever they became bored of Islam they could simply walk away from it. This would have turned Islam into a joke. In addition, apostatizing was a serious crime as it was a clear act of treason against the Islamic state. Treason, even in this day and age, is punishable by death. Therefore, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, made it clear that even though he would accept the repentance of the apostates, he would not accept anything else from them except death. This tactic also acted as a deterrent to the other Arab tribes who were considering apostatizing. This deterrent prevented the deaths of many people, from both sides. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 440-441.

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

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

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

Many people especially women, will encounter moments in their lives where they will have to choose whether to compromise on their faith. For example, in some cases a muslim woman may believe that if she removed her scarf and dressed a certain way she would be more respected at work and may even climb the corporate ladder more quickly. Similarly, in the corporate world it is considered important to mingle with colleagues after work hours. So a muslim might find themself being invited to a pub or club after work.

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

their lives and in return Allah, the Exalted, granted them a worldly and religious empire.

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

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

Flexibility Without Compromise

During his Caliphate Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched an army under the leadership of Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, to fight the false prophet Tulaihah Al Asdee and his followers, who had grown into a formidable force. Tulaihah invited the Taiy tribe towards his religion and they initially responded by sending many of their soldiers to join his campaign. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also dispatched Adi Bin Haatim, may Allah be pleased with him, to this tribe, a tribe he belonged to, in order to convince them not to apostatize. They eventually accepted his admonishment and promised him to call back the fighters that had went out to join Tulaihah. When Khalid eventually met Adi, may Allah be pleased with them, the latter managed to convince the former to hold off attacking the Taiy tribe, even though their initial actions resulted in the deaths of some Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, could have acted hastily out of revenge but instead he agreed to wait for three days. Within this time the soldiers of the Taiy tribe, who initially went out to join Tulaihah, returned and all of them, under the supervision of Adi Bin Haatim, may Allah be pleased with him, join Khalid and his army, may Allah be pleased with them.

Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, was then commanded to fight against the two Arab tribes who had apostatized: the Banu Asad and the Banu Qais. The Taiy tribe had an old agreement of peace with the Banu Asad and therefore did not desire to fight them immediately and therefore requested Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, if they could march and fight against the Banu Qais instead. He accepted their request, even though Adi, may Allah be pleased with him, became enraged at his people as he demanded them to defend Islam from all enemies, irrespective of who they were. This has been discussed in

Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 443-444.

Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, made the right call as he did not desire to put the Taiy tribe into a compromising position whereby they may have apostatized again. They were clearly a fickle people, so the chance of this occurring was real and could have been disastrous for Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, if they betrayed him during battle.

Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, acted in a flexible manner without compromising on the teachings of Islam. This is an important quality to adopt.

Some adopt stubbornness in worldly matters and as a result they do not change their character for the better. Instead, they remain steadfast on their attitude believing this is somehow a sign of their great strength and wisdom. Steadfastness in matters of faith is a praiseworthy attitude but in most worldly matters it is only called stubbornness, which is blameworthy.

Unfortunately, some believe if they change their attitude it demonstrates weakness or it shows that they are admitting their fault and because of this they stubbornly fail to change for the better. Adults behave like immature children by believing that if they change their behaviour it means they have lost while others who remain steadfast on their attitude have won. This is simply childish.

In reality, an intelligent person will remain steadfast on matters of faith but in worldly matters they will change their attitude, as long as it is not sinful, in order to make their life easier. So changing to improve one's life is not a sign of weakness it is in fact a sign of intelligence.

In many cases, a person refuses to change their attitude and expects others in their life to change theirs, such as their relatives. But what often occurs is that due to stubbornness all remain in the same state which only leads to regular disagreements and arguments. A wise person understands that if the people around them do not change for the better than they should. This change will improve the quality of their life and their relationship with others which is much better than going around in circular arguments with people. This positive attitude will eventually cause others to respect them as it takes real strength to change one's character for the better.

Those who remain stubborn will always find something to be annoyed about which will remove peace from their life. This will cause further difficulties in all aspects of their life, such as their mental health. But those who adapt and change for the better will always move from one station of peace to another. If one achieves this peace does it really matter if others believe they only changed because they were wrong?

To conclude, to remain steadfast on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is praiseworthy. But in worldly matters and in cases where no sin is

committed a person should learn to adapt and change their attitude so that they find some peace in this world.

The Nation's Strength

Abu Bakkar dispatched Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, to fight the false prophet Tulaihah and his followers. When reaching the battle field Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, sent a small but awe-inspiring message to Tulaiha. The letter read: "Indeed, I have come to you with a group of people who love death just as much as you love life." When fighting commenced, eventually Tulaiha's army was defeated and he himself fled from the battle field fearing for his life. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 446.

The message of Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, clearly indicates a major reason why the muslims were undefeatable. As they possessed certainty of faith, they knew that either they would win a battle thereby gaining reward and worldly blessings or they would be killed and obtain Paradise, through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. Their strong desire for the hereafter prompted them to remain firm on Islam, even at the cost of their lives. Losing this steadfastness, which is rooted in strong faith, is the reason why the strength of the Islamic nation has declined over the years.

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, favouring and preparing for the hereafter over enjoying the lawful pleasures of this world. 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 themself 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.

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

A Bad Leader

Among the apostates were people who decided to repent and even gathered their obligatory charities with the intention to send it to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, but they prevented from doing so by their leaders. For example, the Banu Yarboo clan and their leader who prevented them from sending their obligatory charity, Maalik Ibn Nuwairah. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 458-459.

Generally speaking, this indicates the importance of choosing and following the correct role model.

If one turns the pages of history they will observe many people who achieved great worldly success and in some cases benefited mankind yet, they will also observe at least one thing which taints their achievements. But if one observes the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they will observe nothing except success and countless things which benefit mankind. Even though, there are people who falsely criticise the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, it is quite evident from his highly accurate and detailed biography which has been verified by reliable muslim and non-muslim historians that this criticism is based on nothing but falsehood. This is why muslims must put aside all role models and instead study and adopt the flawless character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as this is the only way to achieve real untainted success in both one's worldly and religious life. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 31:

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

There is no goal greater than this in this world. In fact, this is what people irrespective of their faith strive to achieve. And Allah, the Exalted, has placed all of it in the footsteps of his Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. 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.”

It is simple, if a person desires worldly and religious success they should follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But if they choose a path other than his whatever tainted success they achieve will eventually become a burden for them and it may lead to a punishment on a Great Day.

Loyalty to Allah (SWT)

One of the apostate groups was situated in Bahrain but not all of its people abandoned Islam. The people of Juwaathah remained loyal to Islam and as a consequence their forts were besieged by the apostates. Eventually, their food supplies ran out and they were faced with either death from the enemy soldiers camped outside or by hunger. Even then they did not waver in their faith and remained firm on Islam. Eventually, Allah, the Exalted, aided them when a muslim army, dispatched by Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, turned up and defeated the apostate army thereby saving the inhabitants of Juwaathah. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 470-471.

The people of Juwaathah could have compromised for the sake of gaining worldly benefit yet their actions made it clear that they did not worship Allah, the Exalted, for this reason. Rather, they worshipped Allah, the Exalted, because it is the truth and as a result they remained firm on Islam whether they faced times of ease or difficulty.

It is important for muslims to recognize why their worship Allah, the Exalted, as this reason can be a cause for an increase in obedience to Allah, the Exalted, or in some cases it can lead to disobedience. When one worships Allah, the Exalted, in order to gain lawful worldly things from Him they run the risk of becoming disobedient to Him. This type of person has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. 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 disobedience]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”

As they obey Allah, the Exalted, in order to receive worldly blessings the moment they fail to receive them or encounter a difficulty they often become angered which turns them away from the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. These people often obey and disobey Allah, the Exalted, according to the situation they are facing which in reality contradicts true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted.

Even though, desiring lawful worldly things from Allah, the Exalted, is acceptable in Islam yet, if one persists with this attitude they may become like those mentioned in this verse. It is far better to worship Allah, the Exalted, in order to be saved in the hereafter and obtain Paradise. This person is unlikely to alter their behaviour when encountering difficulties. But the highest and best reason is to obey Allah, the Exalted, simply because He is their Lord and the Lord of the universe. This muslim, if sincere, will remain steadfast in all situations and through this obedience they will be granted both worldly and religious blessings which outstrip the worldly blessings the first type of person would ever receive.

To conclude, it is important for muslims to reflect on their intention and if necessary correct it so that it encourages them to remain firm on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining

from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, in all situations.

The Battle of Yamaamah

The Unique Revelation

Arguably the most dangerous false prophet was Musaylima, the liar. His evil ways began during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

In the ninth year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina a delegation visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Amongst them was Musaylima the liar who after arriving to Medina said he would only follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, if he was appointed leader of the Islamic nation after him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was warned in a dream that Musaylima the liar would eventually falsely claim Prophethood. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave him a stern warning instead of punishing him. This has been discussed in Imam Ibn Kathir's, the Life of the Prophet, Volume 4, Page 66.

Musaylima, the liar, attempted to compose verses which matched the Holy Quran thereby trying to fool others into believing he too was receiving divine revelation. His foolishness became more apparent to those who possessed common sense when he attempted this, as his composed poetry was based on pointless things that did not benefit

anyone. He gained followers through blind loyalty and by promising them worldly things, such as wealth and authority. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 480.

Generally speaking, muslims must strive to gain appreciation for the Holy Quran in order to strengthen their faith through learning and acting on it. This process will allow them to recognize its divine origins and its universal and timeless beneficial teachings.

The Holy Quran possesses an uncountable amount of qualities which separates it from any other worldly book. This aspect of the Holy Quran is so intense that it cannot even be explained or discussed over countless lifetimes. But a few of these qualities will be mentioned here. First of all, in the Holy Quran, Allah, the Exalted, has given an open challenge to the entire universe (not just people) and not only a challenge to those who were present when this divine revelation was revealed but to all of creation till the end of time. The challenge being if the people believed the Holy Quran was not a divine revelation from Allah, the Exalted, then they should produce a chapter that can rival a chapter of the Holy Quran. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 23:

"And if you are in some doubt, concerning what We sent down upon Our special devotee, then bring one chapter like it, and call upon all your helpers beside Allah, if you are truthful."

There is no book on the entire planet that can and has given this type of open challenge. But over 1400 years ago the Holy Quran gave this challenge to the entire universe and to this day this challenge has not been won by the non-Muslims nor will it ever be God willing.

Another quality of the Holy Quran is that it stated the outcome of future events. But the more amazing thing about these statements is that the outcomes seemed impossible at the time. For example chapter 48 Al Fath, verse 28:

“It is He Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that he may make it prevail over all other religions And Sufficient is Allah as witness.”

When this verse was revealed the entire city of Mecca was Islam so when the people of Mecca heard this verse, unfortunately for them, they believed that Islam was too feeble and would therefore not survive long and certainly would not spread beyond the borders of Mecca let alone the entire world. But within a some years Allah, the Exalted, fulfilled this promise.

Another example of how the Holy Quran prophesied a future event which was unimaginable at the time is found in chapter 30 Ar Rum, verses 2-5:

“The Romans have been subdued. In the nearby land and after their subjugation they will soon overcome. In a few years. The command is of Allah only before and after. And on that day the believers shall rejoice. With the help of Allah, He helps whom He pleases. And He is the Might, and Merciful.”

These verses of the Holy Quran were revealed during a time where the Romans (Christians) were at war with the Persians (Fire worshippers). This war has been confirmed by many authentic historic books. At this particular time the Persians were on the verge of winning the war. At one point Rome itself was surrounded by the Persians. But Allah, the Exalted, stated that the Romans would eventually reign victorious. The non-Muslims of Mecca who themselves were idol worshippers favoured the Persians and agreed with the majority that it was impossible for the Romans to win. But Allah, the Exalted, as always proved these verses true and allowed the Romans victory.

A final example which appeals to the scientists of the world is seen in chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 33:

“And it is He Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Each one is floating in a circumference.”

For centuries scientists have fought over theories on how exactly the solar system is arranged e.g. whether the sun remains still and the Earth rotates around or vice versa. Only relatively recently it has been proven by scientists from all different faiths and backgrounds that each object;

sun, moon and the Earth all rotate on their own axes and rotate around each other in a set orbit. But Allah, the Exalted, declared this over 1400 years ago. All the science related verses of the Holy Quran are slowly being proven by scientists today. This is a huge piece of evidence that proves that the Holy Quran are the words of the One and only true God, Allah, the Exalted, who has created this universe and everything in it, because only a Creator can truly explain his creations.

Even though many commands of the Holy Quran may not be understood by people does not mean they are incorrect. Certain verses of the Holy Quran whose wisdom was hidden to man became apparent when society reached a certain level of development. As the whole Holy Quran is a book of wisdom and guidance it must be accepted irrespective if one understands its commands or not. This situation is just like a child who is suffering from a cold and desires ice cream but is not given it by their parent. The child will continue to cry without understanding the wisdom behind but those that possess knowledge will agree with the parent even though outwardly it appears as if the decision of the parent is wronging the child.

When studying the Holy Quran one will realize that it contains different levels of superiority through both obvious and subtle meanings that it discusses. Chapter 11 Hud, verse 1:

“…[This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail from [one who is] Wise and Aware.”

The expressions in it are unparalleled and its meanings are explained in a simple straight forward way. Its verses are extremely eloquent and no other text can surpass it. The Holy Quran also mentioned the stories of the previous nations in detail even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was not educated in history. It commanded every type of good and forbade every type of evil, those that affect an individual and those that affect an entire society so that peace and security can spread throughout homes and society. The Holy Quran is free from exaggerations, lies or falsehood unlike poems and stories. All the verses, whether short or long, in the Holy Quran are beneficial. Even when the same story is repeated in the Holy Quran different important lessons can be learned from it. Unlike all other books the Holy Quran does not become boring when it is repeatedly recited and a seeker of truth never gets fed up of studying it. The Holy Quran not only provides warnings and promises but supports them with unshakeable and clear proofs. When the Holy Quran discusses anything which can seem abstract, such as adopting patience, it always provides an easy and practical way of implementing it. It encourages one to fulfil the purpose of their creation and prepare for the eternal hereafter in a simple yet profound way. It makes the straight path clear and appealing to the one who desires true success in both worlds. The knowledge within it is timeless and can be applied to every society and age. It is a healing for every emotional, economical and physical difficulty when it is understood and applied correctly. It is the cure for every problem an individual or an entire society can ever encounter. One only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the societies which implemented the teachings of the Holy Quran correctly in order to understand its all encompassing benefits. Centuries have passed yet not even a single letter has been edited in the Holy Quran as Allah, the Exalted, promised to safeguard it. No other book in history possesses this quality. Chapter 15 Al Hijr, verse 9:

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the message [i.e., the Quran], and indeed, We will be its guardian.”

This is undoubtedly the greatest and timeless miracle of Allah, the Exalted, granted to His final Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But the only one who will benefit from it is the one who seeks the truth whereas the seekers of their desires will only find it difficult to hear and follow. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

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

Remaining on the Truth

Arguably the most dangerous false prophet was Musaylima, the liar. Even though many of his tribesmen from Banu Haneefah joined him out of blind loyalty, others did not. For example, Thumammah Ibn Aathaal, may Allah have mercy on him, was one of the senior members of his tribe who remained firm on Islam and publicly urged others to do the same, even though doing this was extremely dangerous for him and his family. Because of his efforts many remained firm on Islam. He eventually left his town and joined the army of Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, when he eventually reached Yamaamah in order to confront Musaylima, the liar. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 485-486.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2686, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that failing to fulfill the important duty of commanding good and forbidding evil can be understood with the example of a boat with two levels full of people. The people on the lower level keep disturbing the people on the upper level whenever they desire to access water. So they decide to drill a hole in the lower level so that they can access water directly. If the people on the upper level fail to stop them they will all surely drown.

It is important for muslims to never give up commanding good and forbidding evil according to their knowledge in a gentle way. A muslim should never believe that as long as they obey Allah, the Exalted, other misguided people will not be able to affect them in a negative way. A good apple will eventually get affected when placed with rotten apples.

Similarly, the muslim who fails to command others to do good will eventually be effected by their negative behavior whether it is subtle or apparent. Even if the wider society has become heedless one should never give up advising their dependents such as their family as not only will their negative behavior affect them more but this is a duty on all muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. Even if a muslim is ignored by others they should discharge their duty by persistently advising them in a gentle way which is supported by strong evidence and knowledge. Only in this way will they be protected from their negative effects and pardoned on the Day of Judgment. But if they only care about themself and ignore the actions of others it is feared that the negative effects of others may well lead to their eventual misguidance.

Strong Faith

Arguably the most dangerous false prophet was Musaylima, the liar. Abu Bakkar dispatched Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, to confront him. Before fighting commenced some of the followers of Musaylima, the liar were captured. Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, spoke to their leader urging him to accept the truth of Islam. He even made it clear that the poetry Musaylima, the liar, composed was nothing but useless rubbish by reciting the Holy Quran to him. When the leader failed to give in Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, finally said, “Then Allah, the Exalted, is sufficient for us against you. And He will honour His religion. Indeed, it is against Him that you are fighting, even though it is His religion that you are seeking out (to destroy).” This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee’s, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 490-492.

This incident highlights the strong faith Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, possessed. He did not lead his army and challenge Musaylima, the liar, while relying on his superior tactics, man-power and weapons rather, he challenged falsehood by relying on Allah, the Exalted. A reliance which was rooted in strong faith. This is a clear lesson for muslims to follow in his footsteps by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge in order to obtain certainty of faith. Through this they will overcome all difficulties successfully, just like Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, did.

All muslims have faith in Islam but the strength of their faith varies from person to person. For example, the one who follows the teachings of Islam because their family told them to is not the same as the one who

believes in it through evidence. A person who has heard about something will not believe in it in the same way as the one who has witnessed the thing with their own eyes.

As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all muslims. One of the reasons for this is that it is the best way a muslim can strengthen their faith in Islam. This is important to pursue as the stronger one's certainty of faith the greater the chance they will remain steadfast on the correct path, especially when facing difficulties. In addition, having certainty of faith has been described as one of the best things one can possess in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3849. This knowledge should be obtained by studying the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, through a reliable source.

Allah, the Exalted, did not only declare a truth in the Holy Quran but He also provided evidence for it through examples. Not only examples which are to be found in the past nations but examples which have been placed in one's very own life. For example, in the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that sometimes a person loves a thing even though it will cause them trouble if they obtained it. Similarly, they might hate a thing while there is much hidden good in it for them. 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."

There are many examples of this truth in history such as the Pact of Hudaiba. Some muslims believed this pact, which was made with the non-muslims of Mecca, would completely favour the latter group. Yet, history clearly shows that it favoured Islam and the muslims. This event is discussed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari, numbers 2731 and 2732.

If one reflects on their own life they will find many examples when they believed something was good when it was actually bad for them and vice versa. These examples prove the authenticity of this verse and help one's faith strengthen.

Another example is found in chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 46:

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

If one turns the pages of history they will clearly observe how great empires came and went. But when they left they passed away in such a way as if they were only on Earth for a moment. All but a few of their signs have faded away as if they were never present on Earth in the first place. Similarly, when one reflects on their own life they will realise that no matter how old they are and no matter how slow certain days might have felt overall their life so far has passed in a flash. Understanding the

truthfulness of this verse strengthens one's certainty of faith and this inspires them to prepare for the hereafter before their time runs out.

The Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, are full of such examples. Therefore, one should strive to learn and act on these divine teachings so that they adopt certainty of faith. The one who achieves this will not be shaken by any difficulty they face and will remain steadfast on the path which leads to the gates of Paradise. 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…”

Opportunities to Change

Arguably the most dangerous false prophet was Musaylima, the liar. Abu Bakkar dispatched Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, to confront him. Washee was the freed slave of Jubair Ibn Mut'am. During the Battle of Uhud, which occurred in the third year the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, migrated to Medina, Washee assassinated the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Hamza Ibn Abu Muttalib, may Allah be pleased with him. Years later, Washee accepted Islam and decided to join the expedition against Musaylima, the liar. He desired to kill the worse person on Earth to make up for killing the best person. During the battle Washee launched a spear at Musaylima, the liar, and fatally wounded him. Another Companion, Abu Dujaanah, may Allah be pleased with him, then finished Musaylima, the liar, off. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4072.

Even though Washee killed Hazma, may Allah be pleased with him, Allah, the Exalted, did not immediately punish him. Instead, out of His great forbearance, He gave him a chance to repent and mend his ways. Washee took this opportunity and muslims must do the same.

Allah, the Exalted, does not hasten the punishment for the one who deserves it out of leniency. Instead He gives them an opportunity to sincerely repent and rectify their behaviour. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 61:

“And if Allāh were to impose blame on the people for their wrongdoing, He would not have left upon it [i.e., the earth] any creature, but He defers them for a specified term. And when their term has come, they will not remain behind an hour, nor will they precede [it].”

The muslim who understands this will never give up hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, but will not also cross the limits and adopt wishful thinking by believing Allah, the Exalted, will never punish them. They understand that punishment is only delayed not abandoned unless they sincerely repent. So this divine name creates hope and fear in a muslim. A muslim should use this delay in order to repent and hasten towards good deeds.

A muslim should act on this divine name by being lenient with people especially, when they demonstrate bad character. They should show leniency towards others just as they desire Allah, the Exalted, to be lenient with them in their moments of heedlessness. But at the same time they should not be lenient with their own bad characteristics knowing that punishment for sins is delayed not permanently abandoned until they sincerely repent. They should also remain steadfast in leniency by replying evil with good according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 34:

“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.”

Softening Hearts

After the Battle of Yamaamah was over and Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, was granted victory, he married the daughter of one of the chiefs of the Banu Haneefah tribe. In addition, Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, was tricked into making a peace treaty with the rest of the Banu Haneefah tribe, a trick which he overlooked as it did lead to most of their tribesman returning to the fold of Islam. Finally, Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, preferred the treaty over fighting at that time, as his men already endured a difficult battle, where 1200 muslims were martyred, including many senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. When Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was informed about what had occurred he was initially angered, as he did not desire to make peace treaties with any apostatizing tribe, but later on, he excused Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, for his actions as they were justified due to the circumstances he was facing. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 510-513.

The actions of Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, did soften the hearts of the Banu Hanfeeah tribe, which encouraged them to repent and return to the fold of Islam. Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, managed to balance strictness with softness to his advantage.

Generally speaking, the beauty of Islam is found in gentleness. This has been advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in many Hadiths such as the one found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3689. The Holy Quran even mentions that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, constantly lovingly accompanied the

Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, because of his gentleness and soft nature. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you…”

The Arabs were infamous for being harsh hearted but due to the Holy Prophet Muhammad’s, peace and blessings be upon him, soft temperament their tough hearts melted and thus they adopted this quality and became beacons to guide the rest of mankind. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4809, that the one who is deprived of gentleness is deprived of good. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 103:

“…And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers…”

This is a clear message to those who desire to spread the word of Islam. They must possess a gentle constructive mind set rather than a harsh destructive one. They should unite people and strive to benefit others rather than spreading controversy within society. A good example of this is seen in one’s attitude towards their children. The parents that showed a gentle nature towards their children had a greater positive impact on them than the parents who adopted a harsh temperament. Often some

push people further away from Islam with their harsh attitude and this completely challenges the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, once an uneducated Bedouin urinated in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. When the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, desired to punish him the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade them and gently explained to the Bedouin the etiquettes of being in a Mosque. This incident is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 529. This soft approach affected the man in a positive way.

This important characteristic is also mentioned in many places of the Holy Quran. For example, even though Pharaoh claimed to be the highest Lord yet Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them both, to invite Pharaoh towards guidance using gentle and kind speech. Chapter 79 An Naziat, verse 24:

“And said, "I am your most exalted lord."”

and Chapter 20 Taha, verses 43-44:

“Go, both of you, to Pharaoh. Indeed, he has transgressed. And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah]."

Children and even animals understand the language of gentleness. So how can an adult not be guided correctly if one adopts this characteristic when inviting them towards Islam and good? This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6601, that Allah, the Exalted, is kind and gentle according to His infinite dignity and likes the creation to act softly with each other. Unfortunately, many who spread the word of Islam have adopted the incorrect belief that being gentle is a sign of weakness. This is nothing but a ploy of the Devil as he desires to lead mankind away from Islam.

Understand the Limits

After the Battle of Yamaamah was over and Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, was granted victory, a peace treaty was struck with the Banu Haneefah tribe, which resulted in all, but a few, of them repenting and returning to the fold of Islam. One such man who failed to repent was Salamah Ibn Umair. He decided to assassinate Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, but was apprehended before he could act on his evil plan. He was then released after feigning repentance and once again attempted to assassinate Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him. During his second attempt he was attacked and chased until he fell into a well and died. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 516.

Generally speaking, even though most people will incline to the truth when it is made clear to them, they are some that will never submit to it as they have adopted evil as their way.

The Holy Quran teaches mankind that certain people are so drowned in the material world no advice will penetrate their veiled hearts. The Holy Quran describes how this group of people possesses hearts harder than rocks. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 74:

"Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder…"

At this point those who desire to spread the word of Islam should separate from this type of person and instead concentrate on others. But it is important to note, even in this case a muslim should always demonstrate good character towards the sinful as they can repent at anytime. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

“…and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.”

Similarly, in another verse of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, advises that when a limit is reached it is best to separate and leave the stubborn and misguided people to their false beliefs. A day will undoubtedly come when Allah, the Exalted, will inform mankind who was rightly guided and who was lost in darkness. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 55:

“And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, "For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.""

Muslims should never get depressed and confused when their good advice does not affect others. In some cases, these people are drowned in sins to such an extent their heart becomes veiled. This veil prevents the good advice affecting them in a positive way. A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4244, explains how a sin causes a black spot to be etched onto the spiritual heart. The more one sins the more their

spiritual heart becomes engrossed by this darkness. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verse 14:

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

This is similar to another verse where Allah, the Exalted, declares that their ears, eyes and hearts have been veiled from the truth and they therefore cannot be guided to the truth. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 7:

“Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil…”

The fault does not lie with the message of Islam but in the hearts of the misguided. Just like the fault lies in the eyes of a blind person and not the bright Sun. Unfortunately, this stubborn attitude has become a widespread problem within society. Some of these people believe in Islam yet have closed their hearts and minds to the teachings of the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They refuse to accept any good advice which would benefit them in both worlds.

Those who choose to spread the word of Islam should understand that there are two types of mind-sets people can adopt. The first is when

someone makes their mind up beforehand about an issue and then searches and accepts only those things which support their predetermined belief. Whereas, the correct attitude is to live with an open mind by searching and accepting strong evidence regarding different issues. The first mentality will only cause problems from a personal level right up to a national level. Unfortunately, this is how some aspects of the media work. They predetermine the information they would like to publish, find bits of weak supporting evidence and then blow it out of proportion for the world to see. Those spreading the word of Islam should avoid the first type of people and instead concentrate on inviting the second group towards the truth.

Sincere Repentance

Even though those who apostatized during the Caliphate of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, caused great distress and trouble for the sincere muslims, none the less, those of them who sincerely repented and returned to the fold of Islam were forgiven and treated with respect and honour, just like they were treated with respect and honour prior to apostatizing. They remained firm on the teachings of Islam thereafter, and strove hard in the path of Allah, the Exalted, with their bodies and wealth. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 429-430.

An example of this was the false prophet Tulahiah who killed many sincere muslims and spread much corruption in the land. After he was defeated and fled for his life, he eventually repented and re-entered the fold of Islam. Sometime after, he passed by Medina with the intention to perform the Visitation (Umra) at Mecca. When Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was alerted to this he simply told people to leave him alone as Allah, the Exalted, guided him to Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 448.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4251, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that people commit sins but the best person who commits sins is the one who sincerely repents.

As people are not Angels they are bound to commit sins. The thing that makes these people special is when they sincerely repent from their sins. Sincere repentance includes feeling remorse, seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, making a firm promise not to commit the sin or a similar sin again and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

It is important to note, minor sins can be erased through righteous deeds which has been advised in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Muslim, number 550. It advises that the five daily obligatory prayers and two consecutive Friday congregational prayers erase the minor sins committed in between them as long as major sins are avoided.

Major sins are only erased through sincere repentance. Therefore, a muslim should strive to avoid all sins, minor and major, and if they happen to occur to immediately sincerely repent as the time of death is unknown. And they should continue obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

Never Fooled Twice

The apostates who repented and returned to the fold of Islam were accepted back into the muslim society and were treated with justice and kindness. But as they had recently returned to Islam, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, did not appoint them as leaders or governors. He even forbade them from participating in battles beyond the apostate wars. Even though he extended them their full rights as muslims, none the less, he behaved in this manner in order to protect the general muslim population and armies he dispatched to fight the superpowers of that time: the Romans and Persians. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 449-450.

If these former apostates abandoned Islam once again while a muslim army was very far from home and engaging with a superpower in the latter's homeland, then it would have been disastrous for that muslim army. His behaviour indicates the importance of fulfilling the rights of people without blindly trusting them.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6133, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a believer does not get stung from the same hole twice.

This means that a believer does not get fooled by something or someone twice. This includes committing sins. A true believer is not

immune to committing sins. But when they happen to commit them they do not repeat their mistake and instead learn and change for the better by sincerely repenting to Allah, the Exalted.

A true believer does not blindly trust people thereby increasing the chances of being wronged by them. But if they are fooled by anyone they should overlook and pardon as this leads to their forgiveness. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

“…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”

But they should also change their behaviour by treading cautiously when dealing with this person thereby ensuring they do not get fooled again. There is a vast difference between forgiving others and blindly trusting them especially, after they have wronged someone.

This Hadith applies to every aspect of one's life as a true believer is the one who constantly learns from their experiences and knowledge in order to change for the better so that they increase their 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.

Superiority and Success

A major lesson to learn from the apostate wars is that success and superiority was granted to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and the muslims as they remained firm on the sincere obedience of 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 is achieved when one sincerely learns and acts on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 24 An Nur, verses 55-56:

“Allāh has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after that - then those are the defiantly disobedient. And establish prayer and give zakāh and obey the Messenger - that you may receive mercy.”

Even though the number of muslims have increased over time it is obvious that the strength of muslims has only decreased. Each muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith believes in the authenticity of the Holy Quran as doubting it would cause them to lose their faith. In the following verse Allah, the Exalted, has given the key to obtaining superiority and success which would remove the weakness and grief

muslims are experiencing all around the world. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 139:

“So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.”

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that muslims only need to become true believers in order to achieve this superiority and success in both worlds. True belief 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 includes the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and those towards people, such as loving for others what one loves for themself which has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. This requires one to learn and act on Islamic teachings. Through this attitude was success and superiority granted to the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. And if muslims desire to achieve it then they must return to this rightly guided attitude. As muslims believe in the Holy Quran they should understand this simple teaching and act on it.

Compiling the Quran

Gathering the Quran

After the Battle of Yamaamah, which led to many muslim casualties, many of which had memorized the Holy Quran, Umar Ibn Khattab encouraged Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, to gather the Holy Quran in book form out of fear that the verses might become lost if the memorizers of the Holy Quran continued to die or be martyred during battles. Prior to this the verses of the Holy Quran were not contained in a single book, instead they were either memorized or written on various different objects, such as rocks, which were in the possession of different people. Initially, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, showed some hesitation as he did not desire to do something the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not do. He was very strict in following the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But when Umar persisted eventually, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, understood that this was the best course of action in order to secure the verses of the Holy Quran for the future generations. Abu Bakkar appointed Zaid Bin Thabit, may Allah be pleased with them, for this momentous and difficult task. He worked tirelessly in order to gather the Holy Quran in book form. The copy remained with Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, until he died, then it was passed onto Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, and eventually to his daughter and the mother of the believers Hafsah Bint Umar, may Allah be pleased with her. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7191.

They worked tirelessly to ensure the Holy Quran reached the future muslims. Therefore, muslims must honour their noble legacy by fulfilling the rights of the Holy Quran, as this was the purpose of their sacrifices.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 30, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the Holy Quran will intercede on Judgment Day. Those who follow it during their lives on Earth will be led to Paradise on Judgment Day. But those who neglect it during their lives on Earth will find that it pushes them into Hell on Judgment Day.

The Holy Quran is a book of guidance. It is not merely a book of recitation. Muslims must therefore strive to fulfill all aspects of the Holy Quran to ensure that it guides them to success in both worlds. The first aspect is reciting it correctly and regularly. The second aspect is to understand it. And the final aspect is to act on its teachings according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who behave in such a manner are the ones who are given glad tidings of right guidance through every difficulty in this world and its intercession on the Day of Judgment. But as warned by this Hadith the Holy Quran is only guidance and a mercy for those who correctly act on its aspects according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But those who misinterpret it and instead act according to their desires in order to gain worldly things, such as fame, will be deprived of this right guidance and its intercession on Judgment Day. In fact, their complete loss in both worlds will only increase until they sincerely repent. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

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

Finally, it is important to understand that even though the Holy Quran is a cure for worldly problems a muslim should not only use it for this purpose. Meaning, they should not only recite it in order to fix their worldly problems thereby, treating the Holy Quran like a tool which is removed during a difficulty and then placed back in a toolbox. The main function of the Holy Quran is to guide one to the hereafter safely. Neglecting this main function and only using it to fix one's worldly problems is not correct as it contradicts the behaviour of a true muslim. It is like the one who purchases a car with many different accessories yet, it possesses no engine. There is no doubt that this person is simply foolish.

Under Your Care

When one observes the leadership of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, it becomes clear that he was a person who fulfilled the rights of those under his care. By extension, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the true muslims at that time did the same. This resulted in a peaceful and stable society.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2409, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that each person is a guardian and responsible for the things under their care.

The greatest thing a muslim is a guardian of is their faith. Therefore, they must strive to fulfill its responsibility 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 guardianship also includes every blessing one has been granted by Allah, the Exalted, which includes external things such as wealth and internal things such as one's body. A muslim must fulfill the responsibility of these things by using them in the way prescribed by Islam. For example, a muslim should only use their eyes to look at lawful things and their tongue to utter only lawful and useful words.

This guardianship also extends to others within one's life such as relatives and friends. A muslim must fulfill this responsibility by fulfilling their rights such as providing for them and gently commanding good and forbidding evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should not cut off from others especially over worldly issues. Instead, they should continue to treat them kindly hoping they will change for the better. This guardianship includes one’s children. A muslim must guide them by leading by example as this by far is the most effective way in guiding children. They must obey Allah, the Exalted, practically as discussed earlier and teach their children to do the same.

To conclude, according to this Hadith everyone has some sort of responsibility they have been entrusted with. So they should gain and act on the relevant knowledge in order to fulfill them as this is a part of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Faith Brings Peace

When one observes the leadership of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, it becomes clear that he was a person who fulfilled the rights of those under his care. He applied the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in every aspect of his personal and political life. By extension, all the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the true muslims at that time did the same. This resulted in a peaceful and stable society.

Unfortunately, they are some who claim that faith is not required in this world and others who are muslims claim it is enough to profess Islam without supporting it with sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted. But the increase in crimes within society proves the importance of faith and strengthening it through knowledge and action. This is because crimes and sins only occur as a person feels they will either face no consequences for their actions, such as prison, or they will somehow escape them for example, by fleeing the country. But the person who believes that no matter what action they perform, whether open or secret, big or small, and no matter what tricks they attempt a day will undoubtedly come where they will be held accountable for all their deeds will always think twice before committing a crime or a sin. If this belief is strengthened through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge it will deter one from committing crimes and sins. If people acted in this way peace and justice would spread across society. The crime rate would decrease and the times would closely match the times of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his rightly guided Caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them. This fact alone indicates the importance of faith and strengthening it through gaining and acting on knowledge within society. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 90:

“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving [help] to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.”

Evil Plots

A major lesson to learn from the apostate wars is that when one enacts evil plots eventually, sooner or later, they will face the consequences of their evil behaviour in this world. And if they fail to repent, what comes after this world will be even more disastrous for them.

Therefore, a muslim should never plot to do an evil thing as it will always, one way or another, backfire on them. Even if these consequences are delayed to the next world they will face them eventually. For example, the brothers of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, desired to harm him as they desired the love, respect and affection of their father the Holy Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him. But it is clear that their scheming only put them further away from their desire. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 18:

“And they brought upon his shirt false blood. [Jacob] said, "Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting…”

The more one plots evil the more Allah, the Exalted, will put them further from their goal. Even if they outwardly achieve their desire Allah, the Exalted, will cause the very thing they desired to become a curse for them in both worlds unless they sincerely repent. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 43:

“…but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples?...”

Spreading the Message

After dealing with the apostates, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then shifted his entire focus to dealing with the danger posed by the two super powers of that time: the Romans and the Persians. Both of these super powers were making moves against the muslims. For example, they supplied the apostates with weapons and began to send soldiers to the territories surrounding the borders of the Islamic empire. In addition, they were preventing the peaceful preaching of Islam in their territories and were threatening their citizens from considering Islam. This was another reason why Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had to fight against them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 551-552.

Generally speaking, whenever one invites others towards Islam, commands good and forbids evil they will be challenging the heedless lifestyle of many others which will inspire them to resist the truth anyway they can. The major reason all the past nations rejected their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, was due to this very reason. They could not abandon their lifestyles and characteristics and in defense of them were prepared to wage war against Allah, the Exalted, and their Holy Prophet, peace be upon him. When one takes up this important duty they must be prepared to face many hardships caused by others including their own relatives. The Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, are the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they encountered countless difficulties from their nations. One only needs to study the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to observe this fact. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once declared in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2472, that no one in

creation had been persecuted in the path of Allah, the Exalted, more than him.

In cases like this one's response to the bad attitude of others should be educated, respectful and gentle. An example of this is found in chapter 19 Maryam, verses 46-47:

"[His father] said, "Have you no desire for my gods, O Abraham? If you do not desist, I will surely stone you, so avoid me a prolonged time." [Abraham] said, "Peace [i.e., safety] will be upon you. I will ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Indeed, He is ever gracious to me."

Here the kind and respectful response of the Holy Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, to the harsh attitude of his elder is discussed.

In most cases, a person must possess a character flaw if they claim to get along with everyone. Due to the differences within the members of society a person will never get along with everyone. They will always be one or more that disagree with their mentality, life style and advice. This diversity will lead to tension and occasionally problems. But if a person is liked by everyone then in most cases it shows they have adopted the mentality of the hypocrites by being two-faced. If the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were not loved by all how can a normal person achieve this status? This is the reason one should not believe in propaganda as the group that were mistreated the most in this way were the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023.

For example, the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, was once falsely accused of illegal relations by a shameless woman. She was enticed into slandering him by the enemy of Allah, the Exalted, Quraoon. When she accused the Holy Prophet Mosa, peace be upon him, publically during a religious gathering he interrogated her. When she observed his reaction she immediately retracted her accusation and admitted the truth. As a result Allah, the Exalted, destroyed Quraoon by commanding the Earth to swallow him and his great treasury. This incident has been recorded in Imam Dhahabi's, The Major Sins, Pages 166-167. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 81:

"And We caused the earth to swallow him and his home…"

The Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, were slandered on many occasions but they remained steadfast on their mission until they were granted victory by Allah, the Exalted. When Allah, the Exalted, decides to complete a task like aiding the one who spreads the true word of faith the entire creation combined cannot stop Him.

Muslims must accept that they too will face hardships when spreading the word of Islam. Therefore, they must follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, by remaining steadfast in the face of difficulties. This was the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. If one desires to join them in the next world they must adopt this attitude also.

Expedition Against the Persians

Making Things Easy

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched armies towards the Persians, in Iraq, but he commanded his generals: Khalid Bin Waleed and Iyaadh Ibn Ghanam, may Allah be pleased with them, not to force the muslim soldiers to join their expeditions. Instead, he commanded them to give an option to each of the soldiers, to either march forward with them or return to their homes. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 555-556.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was someone who always strived to make things easy for others, even if that made his own life harder. The muslims had a duty to support the muslim nation during a dangerous time, yet he did not force people to enlist.

Generally speaking, one must adopt this behaviour of making things easier for others.

In this day and age due to ignorance it has become more difficult to fulfil the rights of people, such as one's parents. Even though a muslim has

no excuse but to strive to fulfil them it is important for muslims to be merciful with each other. As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6655, Allah, the Exalted, shows mercy to those who are merciful to others.

One aspect of this mercy is for a muslim not to demand their full rights from others. Instead, they should use the means such as their physical or financial strength to help themself and make things easy for others. In some cases, when a muslim demands their full rights from others and they fail to fulfil them it may lead to their punishment. In order to be merciful to others they should therefore only demand their rights in some cases. This does not mean a muslim should not strive to fulfil the rights of others but it means they should try to overlook and excuse the people they have rights over. For example, a parent can excuse their adult child from a particular house chore and do it themself if they possess the means to do so without troubling themself, especially if they child returns home from work exhausted. This leniency and mercy will not only cause Allah, to Exalted, to be more merciful to them but it will also increase the love and respect people have for them. The one who always demands their full rights is not a sinner but they will lose out on this reward and outcome if they behave in this manner.

Muslims should make things easy for others and hope Allah, the Exalted, will make things easy for them in this world and in the next.

Hearing and Obeying

When Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased be him, dispatched forces towards Iraq, he ordered some of his leaders to follow the leadership of a single leader, as a battle must be ultimately led by one person in order to avoid confusion. All of his leaders submitted to his orders and sincerely obeyed those who they were commanded to follow. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 556-557.

They behaved in this manner as they were sincere to Allah, the Exalted, and did not desire worldly things, such as leadership. They only desired to please Allah, the Exalted, whether that meant they were leading or following others.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the leaders of society. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

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

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

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

Facing Consequences

During the expedition to Iraq, Khalid Bin Waleed, and his army, may Allah be pleased with them, moved swiftly in order to support another muslim army, an army led by Iyaadh Ibn Ghanam, may Allah be pleased with him. When the former reached Daumatul Jandal, one of the leaders of the enemy army, Ukaidir Ibn Abdul Malik, encouraged the other enemy leaders to retreat and not engage with Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, as they had crossed paths before. During the Battle of Tabuk, which occurred in the ninth year after the migration to Medina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, to capture Ukaidir, who was one of the leaders of the enemy army. After his capture the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mercifully freed Ukaidir after taking a promise from him not to ever fight against muslims again. He broke this promise and as a result always feared for his life. Ukaidir then fled Daumatul Jandal but was once against caught by Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him. For his many acts of treachery he was executed. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 593-594.

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

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

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

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

Choosing Good Companions

During the Iraq expedition, two muslims who were living amongst the non-muslims in Iraq were unintentionally killed during one of the battles. When Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was informed of this he wrote a letter to all the muslims who were living within non-Islamic territories and warned them this occurred because they chose to remain with the non-muslims. Meaning, they should have migrated to Islamic controlled lands, especially during a time of war. Or at the least, they should have fled to the oncoming muslim army in order to manifest their faith to the muslim soldiers. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 598-599.

Even though they may have been extenuating circumstances which forced the two muslims to stay in a non-muslim land, even during times of war, none the less, this incident indicates the importance of good companionship, as their companionship with the non-muslims led to their deaths.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4031, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person who imitates a people is counted as one of them.

All muslims irrespective of the strength of their faith desire to be counted and end up with the righteous in the next world. But this Hadith clearly

warns that a muslim will only be considered a righteous person and end up with them if they imitate the righteous. This imitation is a practical thing not only a declaration through words. This imitation is correctly done 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.

But those who verbally declare their love for the righteous and fail to imitate them and instead imitate the characteristics found in hypocrites and the sinful will be considered and judged as one of them. This does not mean they will lose their faith but it means they will be judged as disobedient muslims. How can a disobedient muslim be counted as an obedient muslim and end up with the righteous? This is only wishful thinking which has no value in Islam. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 20:

“Not equal are the companions of the Fire and the companions of Paradise. The companions of Paradise - they are the attainers [of success].”

A Balanced Attitude

After the success gained in Iraq, Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, ordered his army to remain stationed within it and secretly headed to Mecca to perform the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj). He kept it a secret as he did not want the enemy forces to learn he had left Iraq, as this would have only given them confidence. After he performed the Holy Pilgrimage he raced back to his army in Iraq. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, only learned about what occurred after the Holy Pilgrimage season ended. Initially, Abu Bakkar was annoyed that Khalid, may Allah be pleased with them, did not seek his permission to leave his army during a vulnerable time, none the less, he adopted a balanced approach and limited his constructive criticism to just words. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 601-602.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, could have turned the issue into a long-winded argument but instead wisely chose not to do that as arguing often leads to more trouble.

Generally speaking, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1993, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever avoids arguing even if they are right will be given a house in the middle of Paradise.

It is important to understand that the characteristic of a true muslim is not to argue or debate in order to promote themself and their opinion. They should instead present the information in order to promote the truth. This applies to both worldly and religious matters. The one who aims to promote the truth will not argue. Only the one who is trying to promote themself will. Contrary to what many believe winning arguments does not increase one's rank in anyway. The only time one's rank in both worlds' increases is when they avoid arguing and instead present the truth or accept it when it is presented to them. A muslim should avoid going back and forth with others when discussing things as this is a characteristic of arguing. It is this correct mentality which has been indicated in Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 125:

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best…"

A muslim should understand that their duty is not to force people to accept something. Their duty is to simply present the truth as being forceful is a characteristic of arguing.

A muslim should not waste their time nor stress if others disagree with their opinion. When one holds onto these disagreements over time it can cause enmity to build up between them and others, which can lead to fractured and broken relationships. This can even lead to the sin of severing ties with people. So in cases like this it is important for muslims to let things go and not harbour negative feelings towards someone who disagrees with their opinion and choice. They should instead push themself to agree to disagree and move on from the situation without any ill feelings. The one who fails to do this will find themself always

arguing and possessing enmity for others as they are bound to disagree with others on certain topics and issues due to the difference in their characteristics and mentality. Understanding this principle is a branch of finding peace in this world.

Belief with Actions

A Companion, Shurahbeel Ibn Hasanah, once saw and related a dream to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them. The long dream indicated that Allah, the Exalted, would grant victory to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, in Syria and that his demise was near. When he heard the dream he wept and commented that he would continue to command good, forbid evil and be stern with those who abandon the commands of Allah, the Exalted. He would strive against the enemies of Islam and he would not allow weakness or laziness to overcome him in any matter related to the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 621-623.

This indicates the importance of supporting one's belief with actions. Merely declaring faith with the tongue is not good enough.

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

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

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

Expedition Against the Romans

Seeking Counsel

After the success gained in Iraq, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, desired to combat the Romans in Syria. As the Romans began moving soldiers to the border of the Islamic nation, he understood it was only a matter of time before they attacked them. He consulted the senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, of his thoughts and they all agreed to hear and obey him in this matter. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 624-628.

Muslims must follow in the footsteps of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, by only consulting a few people in respect to their affairs. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

"…So ask the people of the message if you do not know."

This verse reminds muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a person would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical

health a muslim should only consult those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a muslim should only consult those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

Guiding Others

After Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, resolved to fight against the Roman empire, he dispatched letters to the muslims of Yemen encouraging them, not commanding them, to join this expedition. He reminded them of their duty to defend Islam from external threats and the fact that Allah, the Exalted, is only pleased with muslims who support their declaration of faith with actions. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 628-629.

Throughout his life, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, encouraged others towards the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2674, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who guides others to something good will receive the same reward as those who act on their advice. And those who guide others to sins will be held accountable as if they committed the sins.

It is important for muslims to be careful when advising and guiding others. A muslim should only advise others in matters of good so that they gain reward from it and avoid advising others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. A person will not escape punishment on Judgment Day by simply claiming they are only inviting others towards sins even if they did not commit the sins themselves. Allah, the Exalted, will hold both the

guide and the follower accountable for their actions. Muslims should therefore only advise others to do the things they would do themselves. If they dislike an action being recorded in their book of deeds they should not advise others to perform that action.

Because of this Islamic principle muslims should ensure they gain the adequate knowledge before advising others as they can easily multiply their own sins if they incorrectly advise others.

In addition, this principle is an extremely easy way for muslims to gain reward for actions they cannot perform themselves due to a lack of means, such as wealth. For example, a person who is not financially able to donate charity can encourage others to do so and this will result in them gaining the same reward as the one who gave charity.

Firm Hearts

After Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, resolved to fight against the Roman empire, he dispatched letters to the muslims of Yemen encouraging them, not commanding them, to join this expedition. He reminded them of their duty to defend Islam from external threats and the fact that Allah, the Exalted, is only pleased with muslims who support their declaration of faith with actions. In response, many muslims from Yemen volunteered for this expedition. Many of them reached Medina and after entering the Mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and listening to the Holy Quran being recited, they wept because of the deep penetrating truths mentioned with in it. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also wept and commented that this is how they used to behave towards the Holy Quran but with the passing of time their spiritual hearts became hardened. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 628-631.

Even though Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was being modest in his comment, in reality, the hearts of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, became so firm on the teachings of the Holy Quran that it led to them becoming calm and collective, even though their spiritual hearts were completely humbled towards Allah, the Exalted. One must follow in their footsteps by learning and acting on the Holy Quran.

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 30, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the Holy Quran will intercede on Judgment Day. Those

who follow it during their lives on Earth will be led to Paradise on Judgment Day. But those who neglect it during their lives on Earth will find that it pushes them into Hell on Judgment Day.

The Holy Quran is a book of guidance. It is not merely a book of recitation. Muslims must therefore strive to fulfill all aspects of the Holy Quran to ensure that it guides them to success in both worlds. The first aspect is reciting it correctly and regularly. The second aspect is to understand it. And the final aspect is to act on its teachings according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Those who behave in such a manner are the ones who are given glad tidings of right guidance through every difficulty in this world and its intercession on the Day of Judgment. But as warned by this Hadith the Holy Quran is only guidance and a mercy for those who correctly act on its aspects according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But those who misinterpret it and instead act according to their desires in order to gain worldly things, such as fame, will be deprived of this right guidance and its intercession on Judgment Day. In fact, their complete loss in both worlds will only increase until they sincerely repent. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 82:

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

Finally, it is important to understand that even though the Holy Quran is a cure for worldly problems a muslim should not only use it for this purpose. Meaning, they should not only recite it in order to fix their worldly problems thereby, treating the Holy Quran like a tool which is

removed during a difficulty and then placed back in a toolbox. The main function of the Holy Quran is to guide one to the hereafter safely. Neglecting this main function and only using it to fix one's worldly problems is not correct as it contradicts the behaviour of a true muslim. It is like the one who purchases a car with many different accessories yet, it possesses no engine. There is no doubt that this person is simply foolish.

In addition, learning and acting on the Holy Quran, in light of the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, leads to a soft spiritual heart.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 52, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that if one’s spiritual heart is sound the whole body will become sound but if their spiritual heart is corrupt then the whole body will become corrupt.

First of all, this Hadith refutes the foolish belief where one claims to have a purified heart even though their speech and actions are bad. This is because what is inside will eventually manifest outwardly.

The purification of the spiritual heart is only possible when one eliminates evil characteristics from themself and replaces them with good characteristics discussed in Islamic teachings. This is only possible when one learns and acts on Islamic teachings so that they can sincerely fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience according to the traditions of

the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Behaving in this manner will lead to a purified spiritual heart. This purification will then reflect in the outward limbs of the body, such as one's tongue and eyes. Meaning, they will only use their organs in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This is in fact a sign showing the love Allah, the Exalted, has for His righteous servant according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502.

It is important to note, that this purification will guide one through all worldly difficulties successfully so that they achieve both worldly and religious success.

The Superior Ones

After Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, resolved to fight against the Roman empire, he dispatched letters to the muslims of Yemen encouraging them, not commanding them, to join this expedition. He reminded them of their duty to defend Islam from external threats and the fact that Allah, the Exalted, is only pleased with muslims who support their declaration of faith with actions. In response, many muslims from Yemen volunteered for this expedition. Many of these volunteers reached Medina. One of these volunteers was a rich noble leader of the people of Yemen named, Dhil Kilaa. He, like most rich leaders, enjoyed the luxuries of the world, such as fine clothing and food. He observed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and his simple nature. He was not wearing any fine clothing or precious jewels, even though he was the leader of the entire Islamic nation. Being moved by what he observed Dhil Kilaa removed his fine clothing and jewels and exchanged them for simple clothing. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 631-633.

Dhil Kilaa was moved to change his behaviour by simply observing Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. This indicates that he affected others in a positive way through his actions as well as through his speech.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4119, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the best people are those who remind others of Allah, the Exalted, when they are observed.

This does not refer to those who adopt an Islamic outward appearance, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf, as many of these people do not remind others of Allah, the Exalted, at all. This Hadith refers to those who learn and act on Islamic knowledge so that they sincerely obey 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. This leads to the purification of one's heart which leads to the purification of their outward limbs. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984. This will cause others to remember Allah, the Exalted, when they observe these righteous muslims. And this remembrance will only increase when these righteous muslims speak as they only speak in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they avoid evil and vain speech and only speak on beneficial matters in respect to the world and the hereafter. This remembrance further increases when one observes their actions as they practically implement the teachings of Islam thereby, acting only in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. For example, they love, dislike, give and withhold only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This leads to perfecting one’s faith according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

A Simple Leader

After Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, resolved to fight against the Roman empire, he dispatched letters to the muslims of Yemen encouraging them, not commanding them, to join this expedition. He reminded them of their duty to defend Islam from external threats and the fact that Allah, the Exalted, is only pleased with muslims who support their declaration of faith with actions. In response, many muslims from Yemen volunteered for this expedition. Many of these volunteers reached Medina. One of these volunteers was a rich noble leader of the people of Yemen named, Dhil Kilaa. He, like most rich leaders, enjoyed the luxuries of the world, such as fine clothing and food. He observed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and his simple nature. He was not wearing any fine clothing or precious jewels, even though he was the leader of the entire Islamic nation. Being moved by what he observed Dhil Kilaa removed his fine clothing and jewels and exchanged them for simple clothing. When his people criticized him for embarrassing them in front of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, he questioned whether they desired for him to live like a tyrant, just like he did before he accepted Islam. He added that obedience to Allah, the Exalted, is only achieved through humility and detachment from the material world. Many of the other rich leaders from Yemen followed his behaviour and had their expensive clothes admitted into the public treasury of the muslims. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 631-633.

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.

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 accountability on the Day of Judgment.

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 other worldly things in order to satisfy their desires and the desires of others. And it is directed at those who pursue non-essential lawful things in such a way that it causes them to neglect 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 preparing adequately for the hereafter and their final judgment.

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. A muslim should know 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.”

Noble Advice

One of the four armies Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched to Syria was led by Yazeed Ibn Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, walked alongside him while bidding farewell and gave him the following advice, which has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 634-635.

The first thing he advised was that he was appointing him leader in order to test his ability. If he done well, he would maintain his position and be given more duties. But if he done poorly, he would be removed from his post.

Even though Yazeed, may Allah be pleased with him, was a senior member of the Quraish tribe, the same tribe of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, none the less, he was treated based on his merits and not his lineage. This indicates the importance of equality in Islam.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6543, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge people based on their outward appearance or their wealth instead He observes and judges people's inward intention and their physical actions.

The first thing to note is that a muslim should always correct their intention when performing any deed as Allah, the Exalted, will only reward them when they perform righteous deeds for His sake. Those who perform deeds for the sake of other people and things will be told to gain their reward from those who they acted for on Judgment Day, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

In addition, this Hadith indicates the importance of equality in Islam. A person is not superior to others by worldly things such as their ethnicity or wealth. Even though, many muslims have erected these barriers such as social castes and sects thereby believing some are better than others Islam has clearly rejected this concept and declared that in this respect all people are equal in the sight of Islam. The only thing which makes one muslim superior to another is their piety meaning, how much they fulfill the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

"…Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you…"

A muslim should therefore busy themself in obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His rights and the rights of people and not believe that something they possess or belong to will somehow save them from punishment. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, that the muslim who lacks in righteous deeds meaning, the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, will not be increased in rank because of

their lineage. In reality, this applies to all worldly things such as wealth, ethnicity, gender or social brotherhoods and castes.

The next thing Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised was that he should fear Allah, the Exalted, constantly, as He sees the inward state of a person just like He observes their outward state.

Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of all things including the inner intention and feelings of a person as well as their outward actions.

The muslim who understands this will ensure they not only perform righteous deeds but will do so with the correct intention knowing that they might be able to fool people but Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their intention and inward state and will hold them accountable according to it.

A muslim must act on this divine name by striving to gain and act on useful worldly and religious knowledge sincerely for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In addition, they must constantly supervise their inward and outward states. Through this they will become aware of their faults and strive to rectify them. A muslim should not live heedless to the purpose of their creation. They should instead live in full awareness and therefore obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience.

The next thing Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised was that the closest person to Allah, the Exalted, was the one who was most obedient to Him and performed deeds for His sake.

In a divine Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502, Allah, the Exalted, declares that when one strives in fulfilling the obligatory duties and performing voluntary righteous deeds Allah, the Exalted, blesses their five senses so that they use them in obedience to Him. This righteous servant will very rarely commit sins. This increase in guidance has been indicated in Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways…”

This muslim reaches the level of excellence which has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This is when a muslim performs actions, such as the prayer, as if they observe Allah, the Exalted. The one who reaches this level will guard their mind and body from sins. This is the one who when they speak they speak for Allah, the Exalted, when they are silent they are silent for Allah, the Exalted. When they act they act for Him and when they are still they are for His sake. This is an aspect of monotheism and understanding the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that this muslim’s supplication will be fulfilled and they will be granted the refuge and protection of Allah, the Exalted. This is a clear lesson for those who

desire lawful worldly things. They should not seek to obtain them using any means except through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. No spiritual teacher or anyone else will be able to grant things to a person unless the person strives in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted and they are destined to obtain those things.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then warned him not to return to the pre-Islamic ways of ignorance as Allah, the Exalted, hates those ways and the people which followed those ways.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that when he reached his soldiers in Syria, he should be a good companion to them.

This is best achieved when one treats others the way they desire to be treated by people. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 13, that a person cannot become a true believer until they love for others what they love for themself.

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

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

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

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

As mentioned earlier, the main Hadith under discussion indicates the importance of eliminating all bad characteristics which contradict mutual love and care, such as envy. Envy is when a person desires to possess a specific blessing which is only obtainable when it is taken away from

someone else. This attitude is a direct challenge to the distribution of blessings chosen by Allah, the Exalted. This is why it is a major sin and leads to the destruction of the envier's good deeds. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903. If a Muslim must desire the lawful things others possess they should wish and supplicate to Allah, the Exalted, to grant them the same or similar thing without the other person losing the blessing. This type of jealousy is lawful and is praiseworthy in aspects of religion. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that muslims should only be jealous of a wealthy person who uses their wealth correctly. And be jealous of a knowledgeable person who uses their knowledge to benefit themself and others.

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

"…So for this let the competitors compete."

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

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that when he advised his soldiers, he should be brief in speech as the nature of speech is that part of it makes the listener forget other parts of it.

Every Islamic discourse should deliver a concise and useful message. Unfortunately, some only attend gatherings which are composed of storytelling with no real purpose and meaning. These gatherings are only held in order to please the masses with flowery but meaningless speech. Some lecturers incorrectly believe they must provide their listeners with hours' worth of information in order to achieve success. But they fail to realize a few good words which inspire the audience towards improvement is much better. A gathering is only useful when the audience leaves with the sincere intention to reform themselves. But this requires the one who desires to spread the word of faith to turn away from the incorrect attitude of searching for new ideas and concepts before acting on the basics.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that he should improve himself and as a result the people around him will improve also.

It is important for all Muslims, especially parents, to act on what they advise to others. It is obvious if one turns the pages of history that those who acted on what they preached had a much more positive effect on others compared to those who did not lead by example. The best example being the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who not only practiced what he preached but adhered to those teachings more strictly than anyone else. Only with this attitude will Muslims especially, parents have a positive impact on others. For example, if a mother warns her children not to lie as it is a sin but often lies in front of them her children are unlikely to act on her advice. A person's actions will always have more of an impact on others than their speech. It is important to note that this does not mean one needs to be perfect before advising others. It means they should sincerely strive to act on their own advice before advising others. The Holy Quran has made it clear in the following verse that Allah, the exalted, hates this behaviour. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3267, that the a person who commanded good but refrained from it themself and prohibited evil yet acted on it themself will be punished in severely Hell. Chapter 61 As Saf, verse 3:

“Greatly hateful in the sight of Allah is that you say what you do not do.”

So it is vital for all Muslims to strive to act on their advice themself then advise others to do the same. Leading by example is the tradition of all the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, and is the best way to affect others in a positive way.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised that he must perform the obligatory prayers on their times and complete them with perfection and remain heedful during them.

It is important to note, this advice was given during a time of war, when an enemy attack could occur at any moment.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2618, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the difference between belief and disbelief is abandoning the obligatory prayers.

In this day and age this has become far too common. Many give up their obligatory prayers for trivial reasons all of which are undoubtedly rejected. If the obligation of the prayer has not been removed for the one who is engaging in battle how can it be removed from anyone else? Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 102:

“And when you [i.e., the commander of an army] are among them and lead them in prayer, let a group of them stand [in prayer] with you and let them carry their arms. And when they have prostrated, let them be [in position] behind you and have the other group come forward which has not [yet] prayed and let them pray with you, taking precaution and carrying their arms…”

Neither is the traveller or the sick exempt from offering their obligatory prayers. The traveller has been advised to reduce the amount of cycles in some of the obligatory prayers in order to reduce the burden for them but they have not been exempt from offering them. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 101:

“And when you travel throughout the land, there is no blame upon you for shortening the prayer…”

The sick have been advised to perform dry ablution if contact with water will harm them. Chapter 5 Al Ma’idah, verse 6:

“…But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it…”

In addition, the sick can perform the obligatory prayer in a way which is easier for them. Meaning, if they cannot stand they are allowed to sit and if they cannot sit they can lay down and offer the obligatory prayer. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 372. But again, no complete exemption is granted to the sick unless one is mentally ill which prevents them from comprehending the obligation of the prayer.

The other major issue is that some muslims delay their obligatory prayers and offer them beyond their correct times. This clearly contradicts the Holy Quran as the believers have been described as those who offer their obligatory prayers on time. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 103:

"…Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times."

Many believe that the following verse of the Holy Quran refers to those who unnecessarily delay their obligatory prayers. This has been discussed in Tafseer Ibn Kathir, volume 10, pages 603-604. Chapter 107 Al Ma'un, verses 4-5:

"So woe to those who pray. [But] who are heedless of their prayer."

Here Allah, the Exalted, has clearly cursed those who have adopted this evil trait. How can one find success in this world or the next if they have been removed from the mercy of Allah, the Exalted?

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 512, that delaying one's obligatory prayers unnecessarily is a sign of hypocrisy. The Holy Quran has made it clear that one of the main reasons people

will enter Hell is failing to establish the obligatory prayers. Chapter 74 Al Muddaththir, verses 42-43:

“[And asking them], "What put you into Saqar?" They will say, "We were not of those who prayed.”

Abandoning the obligatory prayers is such a serious sin that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2621, that whoever commits this sin has disbelieved in Islam.

In addition, no other good deed will benefit a muslim until their obligatory prayers are not established. A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 553, clearly warns that one's good deeds are destroyed if they miss the afternoon obligatory prayer. If this is the case for abandoning one obligatory prayer can one imagine the penalty of abandoning them all?

Observing the obligatory prayers at their correct times has been advised to be one of the most beloved deeds to Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 252. From this one can determine that delaying the obligatory prayers beyond their time or completely missing them is one of the most hated deeds by Allah, the Exalted.

It is an important duty for all elders to encourage the children under their care to offer the obligatory prayers from a young age so that they establish them before it becomes legally binding on them. Those adults that delay this and wait until children are older have failed in this extremely important duty. The children who were only encouraged to offer the obligatory prayers when it became obligatory on them very rarely established them quickly. In most cases, it takes years for them to fulfil this important duty correctly. And the blame falls on the elders of the family especially, the parents. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 495, that families most encourage their children to offer the obligatory prayers when they turn seven years old.

Another major issue many muslims face is that they may offer the obligatory prayers but fail to do so correctly. For example, many do not complete the stages of the prayer correctly and instead rush through it. In fact, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 757, clearly warns that the one who prays like this has not prayed at all. Meaning, they are not recorded as a person who offered their prayer and therefore their obligation has not been fulfilled. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 265, clearly warns that the prayer of the one who does not settle in each position of the prayer is not accepted.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the one who does not bow or prostrate correctly in the prayer as the worse thief. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Muwatta Malik, Book number 9, Hadith number 75. Unfortunately, many muslims who have spent decades offering their obligatory and many voluntary prayers like this will find that none of them have counted and thus they will be treated as one who did not fulfil their obligation. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1313.

The Holy Quran indicates the importance of offering the obligatory prayers with congregation usually at a Mosque. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 43:

“…and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience].”

In fact, due to this verse and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, some reliable scholars have declared this obligatory on muslim men. For example, one Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 550, clearly warns that the muslims who would not offer their obligatory prayers with congregation at the Mosque were considered hypocrites by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, even threatened to burn the houses of the men who failed to perform their obligatory prayers at the Mosque with congregation without a valid excuse. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1482. Those muslims who are in a position to perform this important deed should do so. They should not fool themselves into claiming they are performing other righteous deeds such as helping their family with house chores. Even though, this is a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 676, but it is important not to rearrange the importance of his traditions according to one's desires. Whoever does this is not following his traditions they are only following their own desires even if they are performing a righteous deed. In fact, this same Hadith concludes by advising that when it was time for the obligatory prayer the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, would leave for the Mosque.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that when he sought the advice of others, he should be truthful in speech and as a result he would be given truthful counsel.

Generally speaking, adopting truthfulness leads to goodness in all aspects of one’s life.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness as three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved

through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that as a leader, he must not be afraid of punishing those who deserved it.

One of the major reasons why society seems to be digressing is because people have abandoned acting justly. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6787, that previous nations were destroyed as the authorities would punish the weak when they broke the law but would pardon the rich and influential. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, being the head of state even declared in this Hadith that if his own daughter committed a crime he would enforce the full legal punishment on her. Even though members of the general public might not be in a position to advise their leaders to remain just in their actions but they can influence them indirectly by acting justly in all their dealings and actions. For example, a

muslim must act justly in respect to their dependents, such as their children, by treating them equally. This has been specifically advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 3544. They should act justly in all their business dealings irrespective of who they deal with. If people act with justice on an individual level then communities can change for the better and in turn those who are in influential positions, such as politicians, will act justly whether they desire to or not.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him he should never spy on his soldiers or expose their secrets. He should rather be content with what his soldiers showed him outwardly.

It is a major sin to spy on others in order to uncover faults which have been concealed by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 12:

"…And do not spy…"

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7042, that whoever spies on others, such as ease dropping on their private conversations, will have molten lead poured into their ears on the Day of Judgment.

Muslims should understand that if Allah, the Exalted, is All Knowing yet still conceals the faults of others then muslims who possess limited God-

given knowledge should not spy on others with the intention to uncover their faults and personal issues. Whoever uncovers the faults of others will have their faults exposed by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 2546. Instead muslims should act on the other part of this Hadith which is to conceal the faults of others so that Allah, the Exalted, conceals their faults.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that he should not accompany foolish people who waste their time. Instead, he should accompany the truthful and faithful ones.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4031, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person who imitates a people is counted as one of them.

All muslims irrespective of the strength of their faith desire to be counted and end up with the righteous in the next world. But this Hadith clearly warns that a muslim will only be considered a righteous person and end up with them if they imitate the righteous. This imitation is a practical thing not only a declaration through words. This imitation is correctly done 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.

But those who verbally declare their love for the righteous and fail to imitate them and instead imitate the characteristics found in hypocrites

and the sinful will be considered and judged as one of them. This does not mean they will lose their faith but it means they will be judged as disobedient muslims. How can a disobedient muslim be counted as an obedient muslim and end up with the righteous? This is only wishful thinking which has no value in Islam. Chapter 59 Al Hashr, verse 20:

“Not equal are the companions of the Fire and the companions of Paradise. The companions of Paradise - they are the attainers [of success].”

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that he should be sincere and true when he confronted the enemy.

This reminds muslims the importance of remaining steadfast whenever they are attacked by their enemies namely, the Devil, their inner Devil and those who invite them towards the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. A muslim should not turn their back on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, whenever they are tempted by these enemies. They should instead remain steadfast on the obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is achieved by avoiding the places, things and people who invite and tempt them towards sins and the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted. Avoiding the traps of the Devil is only achieved through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. The same way traps on a path are only avoided by possessing knowledge of them similarly; Islamic knowledge is required to avoid the traps of the Devil. For example, a muslim might spend much time reciting the Holy Quran but because of their ignorance they might destroy their righteous deeds without realising it through sins such as, backbiting. A muslim is bound

to face these attacks so they should therefore prepare for them through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and in return gain an uncountable reward. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed right guidance for those who struggle in this way for His sake. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways…”

Whereas facing these attacks with ignorance and disobedience will only lead one to difficulties and disgrace in both worlds. The same way a solider that possesses no weapons to defend themself would be defeated; an ignorant muslim will have no weapon to defend themself when facing these attacks which will result in their defeat. Whereas, the knowledgeable muslim is provided with the most powerful weapon which cannot be overcome or beaten namely, sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved through sincerely gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that he should not behave cowardly, otherwise his soldiers would also behave cowardly.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2511, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against behaving cowardly. This attitude prevents trust in Allah, the Exalted, and in what He has promised, such as one's guaranteed provision. It can cause one to seek their provision in doubtful and unlawful means which

will destroy a person in both worlds. Allah, the Exalted, does not accept any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2342.

In addition, being a coward prevents one from striving against the Devil and one's inner Devil which requires genuine struggle. This will lead one to fail in obeying 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. And it will therefore prevent them from fulfilling the rights of people. Both worldly and religious success requires effort and time. A coward will be too afraid to undertake this struggle and will instead be lazy which leads to failure in both worldly and religious matters.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, then advised him that he must not wrongfully take from the spoils of war, as this brings one closer to poverty and repels victory.

Generally speaking, it is a major sin to utilise the unlawful. This includes using unlawful wealth, using items which are unlawful and eating unlawful foods. It is important to note, that the specific things which have been labelled unlawful by Islam such as alcohol are not the only things which are unlawful. In fact, even lawful things can become unlawful if they have been gained through unlawful things. For example, a lawful food can become unlawful if it is bought with unlawful wealth. Therefore, it is important for muslims to ensure they only deal with lawful things as it only takes one element of the unlawful to ruin someone.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 2346, that the one who utilises the unlawful will have all their supplications rejected. If their supplications are rejected by Allah, the Exalted, can one expect any of their good deeds to be accepted? This in fact has been answered in another Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1410. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that Allah, the Exalted, only accepts the lawful. Therefore, any deed which has a foundation in the unlawful such as performing the Holy Pilgrimage with unlawful wealth will be rejected.

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3118, that this type of person will be sent to Hell on Judgement Day. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 188:

“And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful].”

The next thing Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, said was that he must not wrongfully take from the spoils of war, as this brings one closer to poverty and wards off victory.

Success Lies in Remembrance

One of the four armies Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched to Syria was led by Shurahbeel Ibn Hasanah, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, walked alongside him while bidding farewell and gave him the same advice he gave to Yazeed Ibn Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, but added, that even during times of war, he must remember Allah, the Exalted, constantly and in every possible situation. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 640-641.

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

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

This is achieved by practically acting on the three levels of the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The first level is to remember Allah, the Exalted, internally and silently. This includes correcting one's

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

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

These stages are the key to peace and success in both worlds. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 28:

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

Important Advice

One of the four armies Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched to Syria was led by Abu Ubaidah Ibn Jarraah, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, gave him the same advice he gave Yazeed Ibn Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, which has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 641-642.

But he added that he should listen carefully to good advice, intending thereby to execute the commands that are given to him.

Even though, the number of preachers has increased over time and accessing information has become easier yet the strength of muslims has only weakened. One of the reasons is that many muslims have adopted a mentality which has hindered them from learning and acting on Islamic knowledge namely, they believe merely listening to Islamic knowledge is good enough to succeed. This is a trap of the Devil and completely contradicts the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. They not only listened to religious knowledge but they fully intended and fulfilled this intention by acting on the knowledge they heard. Failing to act in this way has caused the faith of muslims to weaken. It is the reason why some muslims have spent decades attending religious gatherings and talks yet have not changed for the better at all. The danger of this attitude is that eventually people will fall lower by believing that they can simply declare Islam with their tongues without the need to listen or act on religious teachings. Muslims will be left with ignorance as their guide which will only lead them to destruction.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also added that when it comes to the truth he should treat everyone equally.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

“…Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you…”

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one’s race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these muslims.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also added that he should always seek help from Allah, the Exalted, as He is sufficient for him as a Helper.

Even though, having hope in people is not a sin but as they are imperfect a muslim always runs the risk of being let down, in fact it is inevitable. They should instead strive to rely on Allah, the Exalted. This is only achieved through his obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience as a muslim who is disobedient will not depend on Allah, the Exalted. They should then fulfil their duties in respect of the creation without expecting or hoping in anything in return from them. This will aid in eliminating their dependency on them. Allah, the Exalted, has made it crystal clear that whoever correctly depends on Him through His sincere obedience will be sufficed from all issues they might face in both worlds. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 3:

"…And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him…"

As Allah, the Exalted, is firm on His promises when one depends on Him they too will become steadfast and firm when facing difficulties. But if they rely on people who are prone to change with the passing of time they will become fickle and fail to remain steadfast.

The stronger one's helper and refuge the stronger they will become. If a muslim seeks refuge with Allah, the Exalted, who has power over all things, through sincere obedience, they will become empowered to overcome all difficulties. But if they seek refuge and depend on people, who by their nature are weak, they too will become weak in the face of difficulties. This is like a person who seeks refuge in a strong fortified castle during a storm and another who seeks refuge in a straw hut. It does not take a genius to determine who is more likely to overcome the difficulty of the storm successfully.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also added that he should always place his trust in Allah, the Exalted, as He is sufficient as a Guardian.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the difference between true hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, and wishful thinking. True hope is when one controls their soul by avoiding the disobedience of Allah, the Exalted, and actively struggles for preparing for the hereafter. Whereas, the foolish wishful thinker follows their desires and then expects Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and fulfill their wishes.

It is important for muslims not to confuse these two attitudes so that they avoid living and dying as a wishful thinker as this person is highly unlikely to succeed in this world or the next. Wishful thinking is like a farmer who fails to prepare the land for planting, fails to plant seeds, fails to water the land and then expects to harvest a huge crop. This is plain foolishness and this farmer is highly unlikely to succeed. Whereas, true hope is like a farmer who prepares the land, plants seeds, waters the land and then hopes Allah, the Exalted, will bless them with a huge harvest. The key difference is that the one who possesses true hope will actively strive 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. And whenever they slip up they sincerely repent. Whereas, the wishful thinker will not actively strive in obeying Allah, the Exalted, and instead follow their desires and still expect Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them and fulfill their wishes.

Muslims must therefore learn the key difference so that they can abandon wishful thinking and instead adopt true hope in Allah, the Exalted, which always leads to nothing except good and success in both worlds. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405.

A specific type of wishful thinking which affected the past nations and even the muslim nation is when a person believes that they can ignore the commands and prohibitions of Allah, the Exalted, and somehow someone on the Day of Judgement will intercede for them and save them from Hell. Even though the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is a fact and has been discussed in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4308, none the less even with his intercession some muslims whose punishment will be reduced by it 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.

The Devil convinces those who do not believe in Judgement Day that even if it occurs they will make peace with Allah, the Exalted, on that day by claiming that they were not so bad as they avoided major crimes such as murder. They have convinced themselves that their pleas will be accepted and they will be sent to Paradise even though they disbelieved in Allah, the Exalted, during their lives on Earth. This is incredibly foolish as Allah, the Exalted, will not treat the person who believed in Him and tried to obey him like the one who disbelieved in Him. A single verse has erased this type of wishful thinking. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 85:

“And whoever desires other than Islām as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers.”

Uniting Muslims

One of the four armies Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, dispatched to Syria was led by Abu Ubaidah Ibn Jarraah, may Allah be pleased with him. After giving him advice, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, summoned and spoke to Qais Ibn Haibarah, may Allah be pleased with him, a renowned warrior who would be joining the army of Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, gave him some important advice thereby aiming to unify the muslims under their appointed leader. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 642-643.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, first mentioned the merits of his leader, Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. He reminded Qais Ibn Haibarah that Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with them, was given the title of the trustworthy one by none other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, Number 6252.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that betraying trusts is an aspect of hypocrisy.

This includes all the trusts one possesses from Allah, the Exalted, and people. Every blessing one possesses has been entrusted to them by Allah, the Exalted. The only way to fulfill these trusts is by using the blessings in the way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they gain further blessings as this is true gratitude. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

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

The trusts between people are important to fulfill also. The one who has been entrusted with someone else's belongings should not misuse them and only use them according to the wishes of the owner. One of the greatest trusts between people is keeping conversations secret unless there is some obvious benefit in informing others. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked amongst muslims.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, first mentioned the merits of his leader, Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. He also reminded him that Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him, was someone who did not transgress on others, even when they transgressed against him. When he was wronged, he would forgive.

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6853, advises that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never took revenge for himself but instead pardoned and overlooked.

Muslims have been given permission to defend themselves in a proportionate and reasonable way when they are left with no other options. But they should never step over the line as this is a sin. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 190:

“Fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”

As stepping over the mark is difficult to avoid a muslim should therefore adhere to patience, overlook and forgive others as it is not only the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, but also leads to Allah, the Exalted, forgiving their sins. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

“…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?...”

Forgiving others is also more effective in changing the character of others in a positive way which is the purpose of Islam and a duty on muslims as taking revenge only leads to further enmity and anger between the people involved.

Finally, those who have the bad habit of not forgiving others and always hold onto grudges, even over minor issues, may well find that Allah, the Exalted, does not overlook their faults and instead scrutinizes each of their small sins. A muslim should learn to let things go as this leads to forgiveness and peace of mind in both worlds.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, first mentioned the merits of his leader, Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. He reminded him that Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him, was someone who mended ties with people, even if others severed them.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6586, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that the muslim nation is like one body. If any part of the body suffers pain the rest of the body shares in its pain.

This Hadith, like many others, indicates the importance of not becoming so self-absorbed into one's own life thereby behaving as if the universe revolves around them and their problems. The Devil inspires a muslim to

focus so much on their own life and their problems that they lose focus on the bigger picture which leads to impatience and causes them to become heedless of others thereby failing their duty in supporting others according to their means. A muslim should always bear this in mind and strive to aid others as much as they can. This extends to beyond financial help and includes all verbal and physical help such as good and sincere advice.

Muslims should regularly observe the news and those who are in difficult situations all over the world. This will inspire them to avoid becoming self-centered and instead aid others. In reality, the one who only cares about themself is lower in rank than an animal as even they care about their offspring. In fact, a muslim should be better than animals by practically caring for others beyond their own family.

Even though a muslim cannot remove all the problems of the world but they can play their part and help others according to their means as this is what Allah, the Exalted, commands and expects.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, first mentioned the merits of his leader, Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. He reminded him that Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him, was merciful towards the believers.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that Allah, the Exalted, will not show mercy to the one who does not show mercy to others.

Islam is a very simple religion. One of its fundamental teachings is so simple that even uneducated people can understand and act on them namely, how people treat others is how they will be treated by Allah, the Exalted. For example, those who learn to overlook and forgive the mistakes of others will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 22:

"…and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?..."

Those who support others in beneficial worldly and religious matters such as emotional or financial aid will be supported by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4893. This same Hadith advises that the one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, if one treats others with kindness and respect according to the teachings of Islam they will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted. And those who mistreat others will be treated similarly by Allah, the Exalted,

even if they fulfill the obligatory duties which are connected to Him such as the obligatory prayers. This is because a muslim must fulfill both duties in order to achieve success namely, the duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Finally, it is important to note a muslim will only be treated kindly by Allah, the Exalted, if they treat others kindly for His sake. If they do it for any other reason than they will undoubtedly forfeit the reward mentioned in these teachings. The foundation of all acts and Islam itself is one's intention. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, first mentioned the merits of his leader, Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. He reminded him that Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him, was harsh against disbelievers.

This harshness refers to remaining firm on the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, when one is invited towards evil. One must be harsh against evil which results from disbelief, not harsh against people. Muslims must not befriend those who direct them away from the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. This involves fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This in reality can apply to both Muslims and non-Muslims. As warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4833, a Muslim is on the religion of their friend. This means a person will adopt the characteristics, good or bad, which their companions possess.

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

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, first mentioned the merits of his leader, Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with him. Then he ordered him not to disobey the commands of Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased

with him, or oppose his views, as he would only command that which was good.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the leaders of society. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

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

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

To be deceitful towards the leaders is a sign of hypocrisy, which one must avoid at all times. Sincerity also includes striving to obey them in matters

which unite society on good and warning against anything which causes disruption in society.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also reminded Qais Ibn Haibarah, may Allah be pleased with him, to remain sincere to Allah, the Exalted, and reminded him that those who use their strength and ability to promote the cause of Islam will obtain a tremendous reward.

This is connected to chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

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

This verse means that if one aids Islam then Allah, the Exalted, will help them in both worlds. It is strange how countless people desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet do not fulfil the first part of this verse through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. The excuse most people give is that they do not have time to perform righteous deeds. They desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet will not make time to do the things which please Him. Does this make sense? Those who do not fulfil the obligatory duties and then expect the aid of Allah, the Exalted, in their moment of need are quite foolish. And those who do fulfil the obligatory duties yet refuse to go beyond them will find that the aid they

receive is limited. How one behaves is how they are treated. The more time and energy dedicated to Allah, the Exalted, the more support they will receive. It really is that simple.

A muslim needs to understand that the majority of the obligatory duties, such as the five daily prayers, only takes a small amount of time in one's day. A muslim cannot expect to barely dedicate an hour a day to offering the obligatory prayers and then neglect Allah, the Exalted, for the rest of the day and still expect His continuous support through all difficulties. A person would dislike a friend who treated them in such a manner. How then can one treat Allah, the Exalted, the Lord of the worlds, like this then?

Some only dedicate extra time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, when they encounter a worldly problem then demand Him to fix it as if they done Allah, the Exalted, a favour by performing voluntary good deeds. This foolish mentality clearly contradicts servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. It is amazing how this type of person finds time to do all their other leisurely activities, such as spending time with family and friends, watching TV and attending social functions yet finds no time to dedicate to pleasing Allah, the Exalted. They cannot seem to find time to recite and adopt the teachings of the Holy Quran. They do not seem to find time to study and act on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people somehow find wealth to spend on their unnecessary luxuries yet seem to find no wealth to donate in voluntary charity.

It is important to understand that a muslim will be treated according to how they behave. Meaning, if a Muslim dedicates extra time to please Allah, the Exalted, then they will find the support they need to journey through all difficulties safely. But if they fail to fulfil the obligatory duties or only fulfil them without dedicating any other time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, then they will find a similar response from Allah, the Exalted. Put simply, the more one gives the more they shall receive. If one does not give much they should not expect much in return.

Focusing on Obedience

During the expedition to Syria, Abu Bakkar dispatched Amr Ibn Al-Aas, may Allah be pleased with them, as the leader of an army to Palestine. Before he departed Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, gave him some advice which has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 717-718.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, reminded him to fear Allah, the Exalted, in public and private.

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 obeys Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in public and in private. Doing so in private indicates a person's sincerity to Allah, the Exalted, meaning, they only perform righteous deeds for His sake. This is the one who firmly remembers that no matter where they are the inner and outer aspects of their being is constantly being observed by Allah, the Exalted. If one persists on this belief they will adopt excellence of faith which is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. It means they act, such as performing the prayer, as if they can observe Allah, the Exalted, watching them. This encourages righteous deeds and prevents sins.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also reminded him to strive for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and work for the hereafter.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that even slightly showing off is polytheism.

This is a minor type of polytheism which does not cause one to lose their faith. Instead it leads to the loss of reward as this muslim acted for the sake of pleasing people when they should have acted to please Allah, the Exalted. In fact, these people will be told on Judgment Day to seek their reward from those they acted for, which will not be possible. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

If the Devil cannot prevent one from performing righteous deeds he will attempt to corrupt their intention thereby destroying their reward. If he cannot corrupt their intention in an obvious way he tries to corrupt it through subtle ways. This includes when people subtly show off their righteous deeds to others. Sometimes it is so subtle that the person themself are not fully aware of what they are doing. As gaining and acting on knowledge is a duty on all, according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224, claiming ignorance will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day.

Subtly showing off often occurs through social media and one's speech. For example, a muslim might inform others they are fasting even though no one directly asked them if they were fasting. Another example is when one publically recites the Holy Quran from memory in front of others thereby showing others they have memorized the Holy Quran. Even criticizing oneself publically can be considered showing off one's humility to others.

To conclude, showing off subtly destroys a muslim’s reward and must be avoided in order to safeguard their righteous deeds. This is only possible by learning and acting on Islamic knowledge, such as how to safeguard one's speech.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him to behave as a loving father to those under his leadership.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2409, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that each person is a guardian and responsible for the things under their care.

The greatest thing a muslim is a guardian of is their faith. Therefore, they must strive to fulfill its responsibility 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 guardianship also includes every blessing one has been granted by Allah, the Exalted, which includes external things such as wealth and internal things such as one's body. A muslim must fulfill the responsibility of these things by using them in the way prescribed by Islam. For example, a muslim should only use their eyes to look at lawful things and their tongue to utter only lawful and useful words.

This guardianship also extends to others within one's life such as relatives and friends. A muslim must fulfill this responsibility by fulfilling their rights such as providing for them and gently commanding good and forbidding evil according to the teachings of Islam. One should not cut off from others especially over worldly issues. Instead, they should continue to treat them kindly hoping they will change for the better. This guardianship includes one’s children. A muslim must guide them by leading by example as this by far is the most effective way in guiding children. They must obey Allah, the Exalted, practically as discussed earlier and teach their children to do the same.

To conclude, according to this Hadith everyone has some sort of responsibility they have been entrusted with. So they should gain and act on the relevant knowledge in order to fulfill them as this is a part of obeying Allah, the Exalted.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him to strictly adhere to the obligatory prayers and ensure his soldiers did the same.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 574, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever establishes the two cool obligatory prayers will enter Paradise.

The two cool obligatory prayers refer to the dawn and late afternoon obligatory prayers as during these two times the weather is cooler than at other times meaning, before sunrise and before sunset.

Establishing the obligatory prayers includes fulfilling all their conditions and etiquettes correctly according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as offering them on time. In fact, offering them as soon as they occur is one of the most beloved deeds to Allah, the Exalted. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 252.

Even though, there are five obligatory prayers which must be established yet, only two have been mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion. This is because these two prayers are arguably the two hardest to

establish. The obligatory dawn prayer occurs at a time when most people are asleep. Therefore, it requires much energy and motivation in order to leave one's comfortable bed in order to offer it correctly. The obligatory late afternoon prayer mostly occurs at a time where most people have completed their working day and have returned home tired. So to leave one’s relaxation after a tiring and even stressful day of work in order to correctly offer their obligatory prayer is difficult. Therefore, if one correctly establishes these two prayers they will through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, find it easier to establish the other obligatory prayers, which usually occur at more convenient times.

Muslims should therefore strive to establish all their obligatory prayers as it is the very essence of Islam and it in fact separates belief from disbelief. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2618.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him to encourage his soldiers to recite and act on the Holy Quran.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the Holy Quran. This includes having deep respect and love for the words of Allah, the Exalted. This sincerity is proven when one fulfils the three aspects of the Holy Quran. The first is to recite it correctly and regularly. The second is to understand its teachings through a reliable source and teacher. The final aspect is to act on the teachings of the Holy Quran with the aim of pleasing Allah, the Exalted. The sincere muslim gives

priority to acting on its teachings over acting on their desires which contradict the Holy Quran. Modelling one's character on the Holy Quran is the sign of true sincerity towards the book of Allah, the Exalted. This is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1342.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him to forbid his soldiers from discussing the days of pre-Islamic ignorance as this only leads to the love of tribalism, which in turn leads to disunity.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5116, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned that nobility does not lie in one's lineage as all people are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, and he was made of dust. Therefore, people should give up boasting about their relatives and lineage.

It is important to understand that even though some ignorant muslims have adopted the attitude of other nations by creating castes and sects thereby believing some people are superior to others based on these groups Islam declared a simple criterion for superiority namely, piety. Meaning, the more a muslim fulfills the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrains from His prohibitions and faces destiny with patience the greater they are in rank in the sight of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

“…Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you…”

This verse destroys all other standards which have been created by ignorant people such as one’s race, ethnicity, wealth, gender or social status.

In addition, if a muslim is proud of a pious person in their lineage they should correctly demonstrate this belief by praising Allah, the Exalted, and following in their footsteps. Boasting about others without following in their footsteps will not help someone in either this world or the next. This has been made clear in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2945.

Finally, the one who is proud of others but fails to follow in their footsteps is indirectly dishonoring them as the outside world will observe their bad character and assume their righteous ancestor behaved in the same manner. These people should therefore strive harder in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, because of this reason. These are like those people who adopt the outward traditions and advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as growing a beard or wearing a scarf yet, fail to adopt his inner character. The outside world will only think negatively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when they observe the bad character of these muslims.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him to turn away from the temptations of the material world and remain steadfast on focusing on the hereafter until he dies.

One must gain the correct perception and understanding in respect to this material world and the hereafter in order to achieve this noble aim.

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

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

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

This does not mean one should abandon the world as it is a bridge which must be crossed in order to reach the hereafter safely. Instead, a muslim should take from this material world enough to fulfill their necessities and the necessities of their dependents according to the teachings of Islam without waste, excessiveness or extravagance. And then dedicate the rest of their efforts in preparing for the eternal hereafter by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the teachings of Islam.

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

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him to adhere to the characteristics in the following verse in order to become a great leader. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 73:

“And We made them leaders guiding by Our command. And We inspired to them the doing of good deeds, establishment of prayer, and giving of zakāh; and they were worshippers of Us.”

Remaining Humble

After the success gained in Iraq, Abu Bakkar ordered Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, to move towards Syria, meaning, towards the Roman empire. He also reminded him, and others, that he should not become proud at the victories he obtained as they were granted by none other than Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 602-603.

This is connected to chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

"And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily…"

The servants of Allah, the Exalted, have understood that anything good they possess is solely because Allah, the Exalted, granted it to them. And any evil they are saved from is because Allah, the Exalted, protected them. Is it not foolish to be proud of something that does not belong to someone? Just like a person does not boast about a sports car which does not belong to them muslims must realize nothing in reality belongs to them. This attitude ensures one remains humble at all times. The humble servants of Allah, the Exalted, fully believe in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673, which declares that the righteous deeds of a person will not take them to Paradise. Only the

mercy of Allah, the Exalted, can cause this to occur. This is because every righteous deed is only possible when Allah, the Exalted, provides one with the knowledge, strength, opportunity and inspiration to perform it. Even the acceptance of the deed is dependent on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. When one bares this in mind it saves them from pride and inspires them to adopt humility. One should always remember that being humble is not a sign of weakness as Islam has encouraged one to defend themself if necessary. In other words, Islam teaches muslims to be humble without weakness. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, that whoever humbles themself before Allah, the Exalted, will be raised by Him. So in reality, humility leads to honor in both worlds. One only needs to reflect on the most humble of the creation to understand this fact namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Allah, the Exalted, has clearly ordered people by ordering the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to adopt this important quality. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verse 215:

"And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led a humble life. For example, he happily carried out the domestic duties at home thereby proving these chores are gender-neutral. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 538.

Humility is an inner characteristic that manifests outwards such as the way one walks. This is discussed in another verse chapter 31 Luqman, verse 18:

“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly…”

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Paradise is for the humble servants who possess no trace of pride. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 83:

“That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1998, that whoever possesses an atom’s worth of pride will not enter Paradise. Only Allah, the Exalted, has the right to be proud as He is the Creator, Sustainer and Owner of the entire universe.

It is important to note, pride is when one believes they are superior to others and rejects the truth when it is presented to them as they dislike accepting the truth when it comes from other than them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4092.

Building Trust in Allah (SWT)

After being commanded to head to Syria to engage with the Roman empire, Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, decided on taking an extremely dangerous path to Syria from Iraq, in order to avoid alerting the Romans, who were guarding their borders. After taking practical steps to prepare for the long and difficult journey he commented that as long as the help of Allah, the Exalted, is with a muslim they should not be bothered by any difficulty they face. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 605-606.

Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, fulfilled both aspects of trusting in Allah, the Exalted. The first is using the means provided by Allah, the Exalted, in ways pleasing to Him. And the second is to confidently believe that the outcome of the situation, which is always decided by Allah, the Exalted, will be best for everyone involved.

Muslims often question how they can build up and strengthen their trust in Allah, the Exalted, especially during difficulties. One of the main ways of doing this is through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is because the one who is disobedient to Allah, the Exalted, will always believe Allah, the Exalted, will not help them which in turn weakens their trust in Him. Whereas, the obedient muslim will firmly believe that as they have fulfilled their duties Allah, the Exalted, will definitely respond to them in their moment of need which in turn strengthens their trust in Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, advises that Allah, the Exalted, responds to a person according to their perception of Him. The disobedient person will always have negative thoughts about Allah, the Exalted, because of their disobedience. Whereas, an obedient muslim will always have positive thoughts about Allah, the Exalted, because of their obedience. This thinking can weaken or strengthen a muslim's trust in Allah, the Exalted. The obedient muslim trusts that if they fulfilled their side of a business contract their business partner would do the same. Similarly, an obedient muslim trusts that as they through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, have fulfilled their duties Allah, the Exalted, will fulfil His promises by aiding them throughout their life especially, through difficulties. Whereas, the one who does not fulfil their side of a business contract would not trust or hope that their business partner will fulfil their side. Similarly, a disobedient person would not trust that Allah, the Exalted, would aid them as they failed to fulfil their duties.

To conclude, having and building trust in Allah, the Exalted, is directly linked to His obedience. The more one is obedient the more they will trust in Him. The less they are obedient they less they will trust in Him.

Unified for Allah (SWT)

While in Syria, Khalid Bin Waleed and his army, may Allah be pleased with them, reached Qanaat Busraa. There, he found many of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who were part of a different army and they too were attacking the city. These Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, willingly accepted the leadership of Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, and worked together to conquer the city. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 609.

It is obvious that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, adopted the important Islamic principle of unity. They always put aside their differences and abandoned all worldly motives and instead unified under the banner of pleasing Allah, the Exalted. They took the practical steps required to create unity, steps all muslims must take.

A Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6541, discusses some aspects of creating unity within society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, firstly advised muslims not to envy each other.

This is when a person desires to obtain the very blessing someone else possesses meaning, they desire for the owner to lose the blessing. And it involves disliking the fact that the owner was given the blessing by Allah, the Exalted, instead of them. Some only desire this to occur in

their hearts without showing it through their actions or speech. If they dislike their thought and feeling it is hoped that they will not be held accountable for their envy. Some exert efforts through their speech and actions in order to confiscate the blessing from the other person which is undoubtedly a sin. The worse kind is when a person strives to remove the blessing from the owner even if the envier does not obtain the blessing.

Envy is only lawful when a person does not act on their feelings, dislikes their feeling and if they strive to obtain a similar blessing without the owner losing the blessing they possess. Even though this type is not sinful yet it is disliked if the envy is over a worldly blessing and only praiseworthy if it involves a religious blessing. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned two examples of the praiseworthy type in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1896. The first is when a person envies the one who acquires and spends lawful wealth in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The second is when a person envies the one who uses their wisdom and knowledge in the correct way and teaches it to others.

The evil type of envy, as mentioned earlier, directly challenges the choice of Allah, the Exalted. The envious person behaves as if Allah, the Exalted, made a mistake giving a particular blessing to someone else instead of them. This is why it is a major sin. In fact, as warned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4903, envy destroys good deeds just like fire consumes wood.

An envious muslim must strive to act on the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. It advises that a person cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they love for themself. An envious muslim should therefore, strive to remove this feeling from their heart by showing good character and kindness towards the person they envy, such as praising their good qualities and supplicating for them until their envy becomes love for them.

Another thing advised in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning is that muslims should not hate each other. This means one should only dislike something if Allah, the Exalted, dislikes it. This has been described as an aspect of perfecting one's faith in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. A muslim should therefore, not dislike things or people according to their own desires. If one dislikes another according to their own desires they should never allow it to affect their speech or actions as it is sinful. A muslim should strive to remove the feeling by treating the other according to the teachings of Islam meaning, with respect and kindness. A muslim should remember that other people are not perfect just like they are not perfect. And if others possess a bad characteristic they will undoubtedly possess good qualities also. Therefore, a muslim should advise others to abandon their bad characteristics but continue to love the good qualities they possess.

Another point must be made on this topic. A muslim who follows a particular scholar who advocates a specific belief should not act like a fanatic and believe their scholar is always right thereby hating those who oppose their scholar’s opinion. This behaviour is not disliking something/someone for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. As long as there is a legitimate difference of opinion amongst the scholars a muslim following a particular scholar should respect this and not dislike others who differ from what the scholar they follow believes.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that muslims should not turn away from each other. This means they should not sever ties with other muslims over worldly issues thereby refusing to support them according to the teachings of Islam. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6077, it is unlawful for a muslim to sever ties with another muslim over a worldly issue for more than three days. In fact, the one who severs ties for more than a year over a worldly issue is considered like the one who has killed another muslim. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4915. Severing ties with others is only lawful in matters of faith. But even then a muslim should continue to advise the other muslim to sincerely repent and only avoid their company if they refuse to change for the better. They should still support them on lawful things when they are requested to do so as this act of kindness may inspire them to sincerely repent from their sins.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that muslims are commanded to be like brothers to one another. This is only achievable if they obey the previous advice given in this Hadith and strive to fulfil their duty towards other muslims according to the teachings of Islam, such as helping others in matters of good and warning them from evil matters. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

A Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1240, advises that a muslim should fulfil the following rights of other muslims: they are to return the Islamic greeting of peace, to visit the sick, to take part in their funeral

prayers and to reply to the sneezer who praises Allah, the Exalted. A muslim must learn and fulfil all the rights other people, especially other muslims, have over them.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a muslim should not wrong, forsake or hate another muslim. The sins a person commits should be hated but the sinner should not be as they may sincerely repent at any time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4884, that whoever humiliates another muslim Allah, the Exalted, will humiliate them. And whoever protects a muslim from humiliation will be protected by Allah, the Exalted.

The negative characteristics mentioned in the main Hadith quoted at the beginning can develop when one adopts pride. According to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, pride is when one looks down on others in contempt. The proud person sees themself as perfect while seeing others as imperfect. This prevents them from fulfilling the rights of others and encourages them to dislike others.

Another thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that true piety is not in one's physical appearance, such as wearing beautiful clothes, but it is an internal characteristic. This internal characteristic manifests outwardly in the form of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is why the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4094, that when the spiritual heart is purified the whole body becomes purified but when the spiritual heart is corrupt the whole body becomes corrupt. It is important to note that Allah, the Exalted, does not judge based on outward appearances, such as wealth, but He considers the intentions and actions of people. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6542. Therefore, a muslim must strive to adopt internal piety through learning and acting on the teachings of Islam so that it manifests outwardly in the way they interact with Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that it is a sin for a muslim to hate another muslim. This hatred applies to worldly things and not disliking others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, loving and hating for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, is an aspect of perfecting one's faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681. But even then a muslim must show respect to others in all cases and dislike only their sins without actually hating the person. In addition, their dislike must never cause them to act against the teachings of Islam as this would prove their hatred is based on their own desires and not for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The root cause of despising others for worldly reasons is pride. It is vital to understand that an atom’s worth of pride is enough to take one to Hell. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith is that a muslim’s life, property and honour are all sacred. A muslim must not violate any of these rights without a just reason. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true muslim until they protect other people, including non-muslims, from their harmful speech and actions. And a true believer is the one who keeps their evil

away from the lives and property of others. Whoever violates these rights will not be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted, until their victim forgives them first. If they do not then justice will be established on Judgment Day whereby the good deeds of the oppressor will be given to the victim and if necessary the sins of the victim will be given to the oppressor. This may cause the oppressor to be hurled into Hell. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

To conclude, a muslim should treat others exactly how they want people to treat them. This will lead to much blessings for an individual and create unity within their society.

Facing Difficulties

During the expedition to Syria, Khalid Bin Waleed and his army, may Allah be pleased with them, suffered a defeat during a battle, as they were greatly outnumbered and virtually surrounded from all sides. They were forced to retreat and headed to the border of Syria. During the battle many muslims were killed, including Khalid's son, may Allah be pleased with them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 619-620.

It is important for muslims to understand that Allah, the Exalted, does not demand muslims to overcome the difficulties which the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, endured. For example, they migrated from Mecca to Medina whereby they left behind their families, homes, businesses and migrated to a strange land all for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

In comparison, the difficulties muslims face now are not as difficult as those the righteous predecessors faced. Muslims should therefore be grateful that they are only required to make a few small sacrifices, such as sacrificing some sleep to offer the obligatory dawn prayer and some wealth to donate the obligatory charity. Allah, the Exalted, is not commanding them to leave their homes and families for His sake. This gratitude must be shown practically by using the blessings one possesses in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In addition, when a muslim faces difficulties they should remember the difficulties the righteous predecessors faced and how they overcame them through steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, which involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This knowledge can provide a muslim the strength to overcome their difficulties as they know the righteous predecessors were more beloved to Allah, the Exalted, yet they endured more severe difficulties with patience. In fact, a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, advises that the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, endured the most difficult of tests and they are undoubtedly the most beloved to Allah, the Exalted.

If a muslim follows the steadfast attitude of the righteous predecessors it is hoped they will end up with them in the hereafter.

The Company of Allah (SWT)

During the expedition to Syria, the leaders of the muslim armies requested reinforcements from Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, as the Roman armies were both vast in number and strong in battle. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, wrote back to them informing them that he would send them reinforcements but reminded them that the muslim soldiers were superior to others as they fought for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and therefore even if they were outnumbered, an unbreakable support was with them namely, Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 649-651.

In a long divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405, Allah, the Exalted, advises that He is with anyone who remembers Him.

With the rise of mental problems and disorders, such as depression, it is vital for muslims to understand the importance of this declaration. There is a small chance of a person experiencing a mental issue when they are constantly surrounded and aided by someone that truly loves them. If this is true for a person it is undoubtedly more befitting for Allah, the Exalted, who has promised to be with the one who remembers Him. Acting on this declaration alone would eliminate all mental issues, such as depression. It is the reason why being secluded from others or being amongst others did not affect the mental state of the righteous predecessors as they were always in the company of Allah, the Exalted. It is obvious that when one obtains the company of Allah, the Exalted, they will overcome all obstacles and difficulties successfully until they reach His proximity in the hereafter.

In addition, out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, has not restricted this declaration in anyway. For example, He did not declare He was only with the righteous or with those who perform specific good deeds. He in fact encompassed every muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith or how many sins they have committed. So a muslim should never lose hope in the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. But it is important to note the condition mentioned in this Hadith namely, to remember Allah, the Exalted. This is not only remembering Him with one's tongue but more importantly it is to remember Him through one's actions. This is only achieved by fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is the true remembrance of Allah, the Exalted. The one who behaves in such a manner will be blessed with the company and support of Allah, the Exalted.

Simply put, the more one obeys Allah, the Exalted, the more they will receive His company. What one gives is what they shall receive.

Gaining Reward

During the expedition to Syria, the muslim armies needed reinforcements as they were heavily outnumbered. As a result Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, asked for volunteers to join them and a large army was formed under the leadership of Haashim Ibn Utbah Ibn Abu Waqqas, may Allah be pleased with him. When departing his uncle, the senior Companion, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, may Allah be pleased with him, reminded him to proceed and fight only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not for any worldly motive. He added, that a person will only take a truthful step and a good deed they performed for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, with them, when they depart from this world. Haashim, may Allah be pleased with him, replied that he would strive to live up to this advice and commented that he would undoubtedly be a loser if he acted for the sake of people instead of for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 653-655.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that those who perform deeds for the sake of people, such as showing off, instead of doing them for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will be told to gain their reward on Judgment Day from the people they acted for which in reality is not possible to do.

It is important to understand that the foundation of all deeds and even Islam itself is one's intention. It is the very thing which Allah, the Exalted, judges people on according to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. A muslim should ensure they perform all religious and useful worldly actions for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward from

Him in both worlds. A sign of this correct mentality is that this person neither expects nor desires people to appreciate or show gratitude to them for the deeds they perform. If one desires this then it indicates their incorrect intention.

In addition, acting with the correct intention prevents sadness and bitterness as the one who acts for the sake of people will eventually encounter ungrateful people who will make them annoyed and bitter as they feel they wasted their effort and time. Unfortunately, this is seen in parents and relatives as they often fulfill their duties towards their children and relatives for their sake instead of for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. But the one who acts for the sake of Allah, the exalted, will fulfill all their duties towards others such as their children and never become bitter or enraged when they fail to show gratitude towards them. This attitude leads to peace of mind and general happiness as they know Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of their righteous deed and will reward them for it. This is the way all muslims must act otherwise they may well be left empty handed on the Day of Judgment.

Keeping Blessings

During the expedition to Syria, the muslim armies needed reinforcements as they were heavily outnumbered. As a result Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, asked for volunteers to join them and a large army was formed under the leadership of Sa'eed Ibn Aaamir Ibn Hudhaim, may Allah be pleased with him. Bilal, the original caller for the prayers, requested Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, for permission to leave with this army. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was reluctant to let him go because of the great love he possessed for him, but none the less, he gave him permission. Before departing Abu Bakkar, advised Bilal, may Allah be pleased with them, to always perform good deeds as they would be his sustenance in this world and lead to a good reward after his death. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 655-656.

Good deeds involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. The one who does them will not only find peace and success in this world but they will also take these worldly blessings with them to the hereafter in the form of everlasting reward. But those who misuse their blessings will not gain peace in this world and these worldly blessings will abandon them when they reach their grave.

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 burden for them in both worlds. 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 their inheritor will misuse the blessings which 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 is a duty on them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928.

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 be left empty handed and full of regrets on Judgment Day.

Being Lenient

Many muslims were entering Medina in order to enlist and join the expedition to Syria. Many of these muslims did not possess much knowledge about Islamic manners and etiquettes and as a result they would often unintentionally offend the residents of Medina. Some of these residents complained to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, who publicly urged them to remain patient and lenient towards the foreign muslims, as their intention was to serve Islam and please Allah, the Exalted. The residents of Medina accepted his plea and showed the best of manners towards their foreign muslim brothers. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 656-657.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2701, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, loves gentleness in all matters.

This is an important characteristic which must be adopted by all muslims. It should be used in all aspects of one's life. It is important to understand that being gentle benefits the muslim themself more than anyone else. Not only will they receive blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, and minimize the amount of sins they commit, as a gentle person is less likely to commits sins through their speech and actions, but it benefits them in worldly affairs also. For example, the person who treats their spouse gently will gain more love and respect in return then if they treated their spouse in a harsh manner. Children are more likely to obey and treat their parents with respect when they are treated gently. Colleagues at work are more likely to help the one who is gentle with

them. The examples are endless. Only in very rare cases is a harsh attitude required. In most cases, gentle behaviour will be much more effective than a harsh attitude.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, possesses countless good qualities yet, Allah, the exalted, specifically highlighted his gentleness in the Holy Quran as it is a key ingredient required to affect others in a positive way. Chapter 3 Al Imran, verse 159:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you…”

A muslim must remember that they will never be better than a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, nor will the person they interact with be worse than Pharaoh yet, Allah, the Exalted, commanded the Holy Prophet Mosa and the Holy Prophet Haroon, peace be upon them, to deal with Pharaoh in a kind manner. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:

“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah]."

Therefore, a muslim should adopt gentleness in all affairs as it leads to much reward and affects others, such as one's family, in a positive way.

The Battle of Yarmouk

United in Islam

During the expedition to Syria, the leaders of the muslim armies decided, with the permission of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, to retreat to the land of Yarmouk, which was close to the border of the Roman empire. Abu Bakkar decided to appoint Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with them, as the leader of all the armies. He wrote a letter to the leaders informing them of his decision but also went out of his way to highlight their noble characteristics, so that they would not feel alienated over the appointment of Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him. Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, did the same as he did not want any negative feelings between him and his muslim brothers. But as these leaders were noble Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, who only sought the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, they welcomed his leadership with open arms. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 661-664.

They behaved in this manner as they were united for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, and not worldly reasons.

With the passing of time people often become divided and lose the strong connection they once had with one another. There are many causes of this but a major cause is the foundation on which their

connection was formed by their parents and relatives. It is commonly known that when the foundation of a building is weak the building will either get damaged over time or even collapse. Similarly, when the foundation of bonds connecting people are not correct the bonds between them will eventually weaken or even break. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, brought the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, together he formed the bonds between them for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, most muslims today bring people together for the sake of tribalism, brotherhood and to show off to other families. Even though, the majority of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were not related but as the foundation of the bonds connecting them was correct namely, for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, their bonds grew from strength to strength. Whereas, many muslims nowadays are related by blood yet, with the passing of time become separated as the foundation of their bonds was based on falsehood namely, tribalism and similar things.

Muslims must understand that if desire for their bonds to endure and to earn reward for fulfilling the important duty of upholding the ties of kinship and the rights of non-relatives then they must only forge bonds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The foundation of this is that people only connect with one another and act together in a way which is pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This has been commanded in the Holy Quran. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

Practicing Faith

After Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, aided one of the muslim armies which was struggling to retreat to the land of Yarmouk, all the muslims eventually reached Yarmouk where they set up camp. The Roman army, which was nearly six times larger than the muslim army, also set up camp at Yarmouk. Each muslim deputy, in charge of a unit of soldiers, gave sermons encouraging the muslims to remain steadfast against the enemy. All of them highlighted the importance of practicing one's faith through actions, in this case fighting in the path of Allah, the Exalted. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 669-671.

This indicates the importance of differentiating between wishful thinking and hope in Allah, the Exalted. Wishful thinking prevents one from practically obeying Allah, the Exalted, whereas, the essence of hoping in Allah, the Exalted, is His sincere obedience.

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

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

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

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

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

Coming with Sincerity

Before the Battle of Yarmouk commenced, one of the Roman commanders, Jarjah, requested to meet Khalid Bin Waleed, may Allah be pleased with him, in the open battle field for a conversation. He questioned Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, about some teachings of Islam that he was unsure about. After hearing some basic things, such as the importance of equality, he decided to return to the muslim camp with Khalid, may Allah be pleased with him, and accepted Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 675-677.

Jarjah did not ask about complicated or deep spiritual issues which amazed him nor was he shown any miracle to convince him of the truthfulness of Islam, yet he submitted to the truth and completely changed his belief, behaviour and way of life. This is because he came seeking the truth with sincerity. When one adopts sincerity by declaring that they will accept the truth and follow it to the best of their ability, even if it contradicts their desires, then even the simplest of truths, the truths overlooked by others, will completely change them. Whereas, the one who comes to Allah, the Exalted, with a cherry-picking attitude and only accepts and follows the things which please them and ignores the things which challenge their desires will never correctly submit to the truth, even if they are muslim. It is because of this sincerity that many people in history accepted Islam after encountering the simplest of things and not through deep spiritual experiences. It is this sincerity muslims must strive to adopt, as following Islam correctly cannot be achieved without it.

Feeling for Others

During the Battle of Yarmouk, one of the leaders of the muslim army, Ikrimah Ibn Abu Jahl, may Allah be pleased with him, and many of his soldiers were fatally wounded. While lying on the battle field they were offered drinking water but instead of drinking themselves they would command the water-carrier to give it to others first. As a result many of them died without tasting any water. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 678-679.

This was the deep level of sincerity they possessed for each other.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the general public. This includes desiring the best for them at all times and showing this through one's words and actions. It includes advising others to do good, forbidding them from evil, to be merciful and kind to others at all times. This can be summed up by a single Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 170. It warns that one cannot be a true believer until they love for others what they desire for themself.

Being sincere to people is so important that according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 57, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, placed this duty next to establishing

the obligatory prayer and donating the obligatory charity. From this Hadith alone one can understand its importance as it has been placed with two vital obligatory duties.

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

"…Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them…"

One way of uniting people is to veil the faults of others and advise them privately against sins. The one who acts in this way will have their sins veiled by Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1426. Whenever possible one should advise and teach the aspects of religion and the important aspects of the world to others so that both their worldly and religious lives improve. A proof of one's sincerity to others is that they support them in their absence for example, from the slander of others. Turning away from others and only worrying about oneself is not the attitude of a muslim. In fact, this is how most animals behave. Even if one cannot change the whole society they can still be sincere in helping those in their life, such as their relatives and friends. Simply put, one must treat others how they desire people to treat them. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 77:

“…And do good as Allah has done good to you…”

An Honest Reply

After some intense fighting the Battle of Yarmouk ended with a clear victory for the Muslims. When Haraql, the Roman king, heard the news he was both angry and sad. He interrogated his leaders on how this defeat was possible when their army was around six times larger than the muslim army. Only one elderly leader had the courage to give an honest reply, which has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 685-686.

The elderly leader replied that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted.

In a Divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1145, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Allah, the Exalted, descends every night to the nearest Heaven according to His infinite majesty and invites people to ask Him to fulfill their needs so that He can fulfill them.

Voluntary night time worship proves one's sincerity towards Allah, the Exalted, as no other eyes are watching them. Offering it is a means to having an intimate conversation with Allah, the Exalted. And it is a sign of one's servanthood to Him. It has countless virtues for example, a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1614, declares that it is the best voluntary prayer.

No one will have a rank higher on Judgment Day or in Paradise than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and this rank has been directly connected to the voluntary night prayer. This shows that those who establish the night voluntary prayer will be blessed with the highest ranks in both worlds. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 79:

“And from [part of] the night, pray with it [i.e., recitation of the Quran] as additional [worship] for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station.”

A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3579, advises that a muslim is closest to Allah, the Exalted, in the last part of the night. Therefore, one can derive countless blessings if they remember Allah, the Exalted, at this time.

All muslims desire their supplications to be answered and their needs to be fulfilled. Therefore, they should strive to offer the voluntary night prayer as a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1770, advises that there is a special hour in every night when good supplications are always answered.

Establishing the voluntary night prayer is an excellent way to prevent one from committing sins, it helps a person to stay away from pointless social gatherings and it protects a person from many physical illnesses.

This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3549.

One should prepare for the voluntary night prayer by not over eating or drinking especially, before bed as it induces laziness. One should not unnecessarily tire themself out during the day. A short nap during the day can help with this. Finally, one should avoid sins and strive to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience as the obedient find it easier to offer the voluntary night prayer.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims fasted during the day.

In a Divine Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2219, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that all righteous deeds people perform are for themselves except for fasting as this is for Allah, the Exalted, and He shall reward it directly.

This Hadith indicates the uniqueness of fasting. One of the reasons it is described in this manner is because all other righteous deeds are visible to people, such as the prayer, or they are between people, such as secret charity. Whereas, fasting is a unique righteous deed as others cannot know someone is fasting by only observing them.

In addition, fasting is a righteous deed which puts a lock on every aspect of oneself. Meaning, a person who fasts correctly will be prevented from committing verbal and physical sins, such as looking at and hearing unlawful things. This is also achieved through the prayer but the prayer is only performed for a short time and is visible to others whereas, fasting occurs throughout the day and is invisible to others. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 45:

"…Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing…"

It is clear from the following verse a person who does not complete the obligatory fasts without a valid reason will not be a true believer as the two have been directly connected. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 183:

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous"

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 723, that if a muslim does not complete a single obligatory fast without a valid reason they cannot make up for the reward and blessings lost even if they fasted every day for their entire life.

In addition, as indicated by the verse quoted earlier fasting correctly leads to piety. Meaning, simply starving during the day does not lead to piety but paying extra attention to abstaining from sins and performing righteous deeds during the fast will lead to piety. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 707, warns that a fast will not be significant if one does not abstain from speaking and acting on falsehood. A similar Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 1690, warns that some fasting people obtain nothing except hunger. When one becomes more aware and careful in obeying Allah, the Exalted, while they are fasting this habit will eventually affect them so they behave in a similar way even when they are not fasting. This is in fact true piety.

The righteousness mentioned in the verse quoted earlier is connected to fasting as fasting reduces one's evil desires and passions. It prevents pride and the encouragement of sins. This is because fasting hinders the appetite of the stomach and one's carnal desires. These two things lead to many sins. In addition, the desire for these two things is greater than the desire for other unlawful things. So whoever controls them through fasting will find it easier to control the weaker evil desires. This leads to true righteousness.

As briefly indicated earlier there are different levels of fasting. The first and lowest level of fasting is when one abstains from the things which will break their fast, such as food. The next level is abstaining from sins which damages one’s fast thereby reducing the reward of their fast, such as lying. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 2235. Fasting which involves each member of the body is the next level. This is when each body part fasts from sins for example, the eyes from looking at the unlawful, the ears from listening to the unlawful and so on. The next level is when one behaves in this manner even when they are not fasting. Finally, the highest level of fasting is abstaining from all things which are not connected to Allah, the Exalted.

A muslim should also fast inwardly as their body fasts outwardly by abstaining from sinful or vain thoughts. They should fast from persisting on their own plans in respect to their desires and try to concentrate on fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. In addition, they should fast from inwardly challenging the decree of Allah, the Exalted, and instead except destiny and whatever it brings knowing Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants even if they do not understand the wisdom behind these choices. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

Finally, a muslim should aim for the highest reward by keeping their fast a secret and not informing others if it is avoidable as informing others unnecessarily leads to a loss of reward as it is an aspect of showing off.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims fulfil their promises.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2749, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that breaking promises is an aspect of hypocrisy.

The greatest of promises a muslim has made is with Allah, the Exalted, which is to obey Him sincerely. This involves fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. All other promises made with people must also be kept unless one has a valid excuse especially, the ones a parent makes with children. Breaking promises only teaches children bad character and encourages them to believe being deceitful is an acceptable characteristic to possess. In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2227, Allah, the Exalted, declares that He will be against the one who makes a promise in His name and then breaks it without a valid excuse. How can the one who has Allah, the Exalted, against them on Judgment Day possibly succeed?

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims command good and forbid evil.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2686, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that failing to fulfill the important duty of commanding good and forbidding evil can be understood with the example of a boat with two levels full of people. The people on the lower level keep disturbing the people on the upper level whenever they desire to access water. So they decide to drill a hole in the lower level so that they can access water directly. If the people on the upper level fail to stop them they will all surely drown.

It is important for muslims to never give up commanding good and forbidding evil according to their knowledge in a gentle way. A muslim should never believe that as long as they obey Allah, the Exalted, other

misguided people will not be able to affect them in a negative way. A good apple will eventually get affected when placed with rotten apples. Similarly, the muslim who fails to command others to do good will eventually be effected by their negative behavior whether it is subtle or apparent. Even if the wider society has become heedless one should never give up advising their dependents such as their family as not only will their negative behavior affect them more but this is a duty on all muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. Even if a muslim is ignored by others they should discharge their duty by persistently advising them in a gentle way which is supported by strong evidence and knowledge. Only in this way will they be protected from their negative effects and pardoned on the Day of Judgment. But if they only care about themself and ignore the actions of others it is feared that the negative effects of others may well lead to their eventual misguidance.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims upheld justice.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They

must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themself harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.[1] So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just…”

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted; they fasted during the day; they fulfilled their promises; they commanded good and forbade evil; and upheld justice. Whereas, the Romans drank alcohol, while knowing it is sinful.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3371, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a muslim must never consume alcohol as it is the key to all evil.

Unfortunately, this major sin has increased amongst the muslims over time. This is the key to all evil as it gives rise to other sins. This is quite obvious as a drunk loses control over their tongue and physical actions. One only needs to look at the news to observe how much crime is committed due to drinking alcohol. Even those who drink moderately only cause damage to their bodies which science has proven. The physical and mental diseases associated with alcohol are numerous and cause a heavy burden on the National Health Service and the tax payers. It is the key to all evil as it negatively affects all three aspects of a person namely, their body, mind and soul. Chapter 5 Al Ma’idah, verse 90:

“O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful.”

The fact that drinking alcohol has been placed next to things which are associated with polytheism in this verse highlights how important it is to avoid.

It is such a serious sin that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3376, that the one who drinks alcohol regularly will not enter Paradise.

Spreading the Islamic greeting of peace is a key to obtaining Paradise according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 68. Yet, a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 1017, advises muslims not to greet someone who regularly drinks alcohol.

Alcohol is a unique major sin as it has been cursed from ten different angles in a single Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3380. This includes the alcohol itself, the one who produces it, the one it is produced for, the one who sells it, the one who buys it, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried to, the one who uses the wealth obtained through selling it, the one who drinks it and the one who pours

it. The one who deals with something that has been cursed like this will not obtain true success unless they sincerely repent.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted; they fasted during the day; they fulfilled their promises; they commanded good and forbade evil; and upheld justice. Whereas, the Romans took part in unlawful relationships.

This is connected to chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 68:

“…and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will meet a penalty.”

The true servants of Allah, the Exalted, avoid all forms of illegal relationships. The fact that adultery has been placed next to polytheism and killing an innocent person in this verse indicates its severity.

Muslims should take precautions in order to avoid being tempted into illegal relationships. Firstly, they should learn to lower their gaze. This does not mean one should always stare at their shoes but it means they should avoid looking around unnecessary especially in public places. They should avoid staring at others and maintain respect for the opposite gender. Just like a muslim would not like someone staring at

their sister or daughter they should not stare at other people's sisters and daughters. Chapter 24 An Nur, verse 30:

“Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision[1] and guard their private parts. That is purer for them…”

Whenever possible a muslim should avoid spending time alone with the opposite gender unless they are related in a way which prohibits marriage. This has been advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1862.

Muslims should dress and behave with modesty. Dressing modestly avoids attracting the glances of strangers and behaving modestly prevents one from taking the initial steps which could lead to an illegal relationship such as talking unnecessarily to the opposite gender.

Understanding the blessings of avoiding illegal relationships is another way to protect oneself from them. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has guaranteed Paradise to the one who safeguards their tongue and chastity. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2408.

Fearing the punishment of being involved in illegal relationships will also aid a muslim to avoid them. For example, faith will depart from the person who is committing fornication. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4690.

In reality, a muslim does not need illegal relationships as Islam prescribes marriage. Those who cannot afford to marry should fast often as this also helps to control one's desires and actions. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 3398.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted; they fasted during the day; they fulfilled their promises; they commanded good and forbade evil; and upheld justice. Whereas, the Romans broke their promises and openly oppressed others.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the bankrupt muslim is the one who accumulates many righteous deeds, such as fasting and prayer, but as they mistreated people their good deeds will be given to their victims and if necessary their victim’s sins will be given to them on Judgement Day. This will lead to them being hurled into Hell.

It is important to understand that a muslim must fulfil two aspects of faith in order to achieve success. The first are the duties in respect to Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory prayer. The second aspect is in

respect to people which includes treating them kindly. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998, that a person cannot be a true believer until they keep they physical and verbal harm away from the life and possessions of others.

It is important to understand that Allah, the Exalted, is infinitely forgiving meaning, He will forgive those who sincerely repent to Him. But He will not forgive the sins which involve other people until the victim forgives first. As people are not so forgiving a muslim should be fearful that those who they have wronged will exact revenge on them by taking away their precious good deeds on Judgment Day. Even if a muslim fulfils the rights of Allah, the Exalted, they may still end up in Hell simply because they have wronged others. It is therefore important for muslims to strive to fulfil both aspects of their duties in order to obtain success in both worlds.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted; they fasted during the day; they fulfilled their promises; they commanded good and forbade evil; and upheld justice. Whereas, the Romans commanded evil and forbade what pleases Allah, the Exalted.

A part of hypocrisy is that a person not only commits evil deeds themself and abstains from righteous deeds but they encourage others to do the same. They want others to be in the same boat as them so that they find some comfort in their evil character. They not only drown themself but take others down with them. Muslims must know that a person will be held accountable for every other person who commits a sin because of

their invitation. This person will be treated as if they committed the sin even though they only invited others towards it. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 203. This is why some have said that blessed is the person whose evil dies with them because their sins will increase if others act on their evil advice even though they are no longer alive.

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted; they fasted during the day; they fulfilled their promises; they commanded good and forbade evil; and upheld justice. Whereas, the Romans spread corruption on the Earth.

Corruption is when a person abuses the blessings they possess, especially their social influence, in order to gain worldly things, such as power and wealth. It affects a muslim's duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and leads to much sins against people, such as oppression.

A Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4019, warns that when the general public cheats each other financially Allah, the Exalted, punishes them by appointing oppressive leaders over them. One aspect of this oppression is corruption which causes the general public great distress. The same Hadith warns that when the general public break their covenant of sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted, then they will be overpowered by their enemies who will illegally confiscate their wealth and property from them. Again, this is an aspect of corruption where people of influence, such as government officials, freely take the belongings of others without any fear of the consequences. When the general public becomes corrupt then their leaders and other people in

influential social positions are inspired to act in the same way believing this behaviour is accepted by the general public. This leads to corruption on a national level. But if the general public obeyed Allah, the Exalted, and avoided mistreating others through corruption then their leaders and those in an influential social position would not dare act in a corrupt way full well knowing the general public would not stand for it. And according to the Hadith quoted earlier, if the general public remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, He would protect them from corrupt officials by appointing people into influential positions who are just in their affairs.

Instead of taking the immature path of blaming others for the widespread corruption observed in the world muslims should truly reflect on their own behaviour and if necessary adjust their attitude. Otherwise, corruption in society will only increase with the passing of time. No one should believe that as they are not in an influential social position they have no effect on the corruption which occurs in society. As proven by this discussion corruption occurs because of the negative behaviour of the general public and it therefore can only be removed by the good behaviour of the general public. Chapter 13 Ar Ra'd, verse 11:

"…Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves…"

The elderly leader also added that they were defeated because the muslims stood up at night to pray to Allah, the Exalted; they fasted during the day; they fulfilled their promises; they commanded good and forbade evil; and upheld justice. Whereas, the Romans drank alcohol; took part in illegal relationships; broke their promises; oppressed others; commanded evil and forbade what pleases Allah, the Exalted; and

spread corruption on Earth. After hearing this reply Haraql, the Roman king, confirmed that he had spoken the truth.

A final point to understand is that none of these characteristics are linked to warfare yet they were listed as the reasons for the Muslim victory and Roman defeat. This indicates that a person's day to day activities influences their success and peace in all aspects of their life. Meaning, a muslim cannot only behave as a muslim during the prayers, which takes less than an hour of a day to complete. They must instead practice on the teachings of Islam with every breath. Otherwise they will not achieve success and peace in all aspects of their life. This reality is obvious if one turns the pages of history, obvious, yet so overlooked by muslims today.

Strictly Following the Truth

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was extremely strict with his leaders and soldiers thereby ensuring they did not cross the limits of Islam, even if they actions appeared justified. He achieved this by commanding all to adhere strictly to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, once a messenger sent by one of his leaders brought with him the severed head of one of the leaders of the Romans. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, became enraged with this action and when he was told that this was how the Romans treated the muslims during war, he rebuked them by asking them that should he follow the customary practices of the Romans and Persians, thereby abandoning the teachings of Islam. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 692.

Muslims should not follow and adopt the customary practices of non-muslims. The more muslims do this the less they will follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is quite evident in this day and age as many muslims have adopted the cultural practices of other nations which has caused them to become distant from the teachings of Islam. For example, one only needs to observe the modern muslim wedding to observe how many non-muslim cultural practices have been adopted by muslims. What makes this worse is that many muslims cannot differentiate between Islamic practices based on the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the cultural practices of non-muslims. Because of this non-muslims cannot differentiate between them either which has caused great problems for Islam. For example, honour killings is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam yet because of

the ignorance of muslims and their habit of adopting non-muslim cultural practices Islam is blamed every time an honour killing occurs in society. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, removed the social barriers in the form of casts and brotherhoods in order to unite people yet ignorant muslims have resurrected them by adopting the cultural practices of non-muslims. Simply put, the more cultural practices muslims adopt the less they will act on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

The Power of Allah (SWT)

One of the major reasons why the muslims fought so hard in the face of impossible circumstances and succeeded was due to their knowledge of the supreme power and will of Allah, the Exalted. They understood that their deaths were decreed for a specific and unchangeable time, therefore fighting or fleeing would not change this. Whatever they were destined to encounter would occur even if they remained hidden in their homes. So it did not make sense to shy away from striving in the cause of Allah, the Exalted, and His obedience.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated the infinite and absolute power and authority of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2516. This Hadith advises that the entire creation cannot benefit a person if Allah, the Exalted, did not desire them to do so. Similarly, the entire creation together could not harm someone if Allah, the Exalted, did not desire them to. This means only what Allah, the Exalted, decides happens within the universe. It is important to note, that this advice does not indicate one should abandon using means, such as medicine, but it means that one can use the means as they have been created by none other than Allah, the Exalted, but they must understand that Allah, the Exalted, is the only One who decides the outcome of all things. For example, they are many sick people who take medicine and recover from their illness. But they are others who take medicine and do not recover. This indicates that another factor decides the end result namely, the will of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 51:

“Say, "Never will we be struck except by what Allah has decreed for us…”

The one who understands this knows that anything that affected them could not have been avoided. And those things which missed them could never have been obtained.

It is important to note, that whatever the end result even if it is against a person's desire they should remain patient and truly believe Allah, the Exalted, has chosen the best for them even if they do not observe the wisdom behind the outcome. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

When one truly understands this truth they stop relying on the creation knowing they cannot innately harm or benefit them. Instead, they turn to Allah, the Exalted, seeking His support and protection through sincere obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This leads a muslim to trusting in Allah, the Exalted. It also encourages one to only fear Allah, the Exalted, as they know the creation cannot harm them without the will of Allah, the Exalted.

Recognising that all things which occur within one's life and the universe originate from Allah, the Exalted, is a part of understanding the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted. This is a topic which has no end and goes beyond only superficially believing that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the Exalted. When this is fixed in one's heart then they only hope in Allah, the Exalted, knowing He is the only One who can help them. They will only submit and obey Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. In reality, a person only obeys another in order to receive protection from harm or gain some benefit. Only Allah, the Exalted, can grant this therefore only He deserves to be obeyed and worshipped. If anyone chooses the obedience of another over the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, this shows they believe that this other can bring them some sort of benefit or protect them from harm. This is a sign of the weakness of their faith. The source of all things which occur is Allah, the Exalted, so muslims should only obey Him. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 2:

"Whatever Allah grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter…"

It is important to note, that obeying a person which encourages the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in reality is obeying Allah, the Exalted. For example, obeying the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 80:

"He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah…"

Perception

One of the major reasons why the muslims fought so hard in the face of impossible circumstances and succeeded was due to their certainty of faith. Through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge they were able to perceive the superiority of the hereafter compared to this material world and as a result they did not shy away from sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, even if this meant certain death. They understood that sacrificing the moment in this world for the sake of eternity in the hereafter and the drop of this world for the sake of the ocean of the hereafter, was the wise thing to do.

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

hereafter and the pure and eternal blessings therein. When one shifts their focus to the bliss of the hereafter worldly problems do not seem like such a big deal. Therefore, patience becomes easier to adopt. But if one keeps their focus on this world then it will seem like everything to them. They will argue, fight, love and hate for it. Just like the person in the example mentioned earlier who only focuses on the cup of murky water.

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

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

How to Succeed

One of the major reasons muslims were able to overthrow two of the greatest super powers in history: the Romans and Persians, is linked to the behaviour of these super powers. The majority of their leaders and the common masses were drowned in injustice and sins and the Roman Christians had abandoned the teachings of their divine scripture. When a society reaches this level of decadence then it is only a matter of time before they are destroyed. History has painted this reality vividly for those who desire the truth.

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

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

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

Turning the Hearts

It is important note that even though parts of the Islamic empire increased through fighting yet the goal was never to gain land or power, unlike all other empires in history. The aim was to give the people of foreign lands the opportunity to hear the teachings of Islam, which was being prevented by foreign powers, so that they could willingly either accept or reject Islam. As Islam is a faith which must be accepted by the heart, forcing people to accept Islam through the sword is simply not possible. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah verse 256:

"There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become distinct from the wrong…"

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, commanded his leaders and soldiers to respect and fulfill the rights of the citizens of the newly-conquered lands who chose to reject Islam. They gave the same rights to those who accepted Islam all muslims are owed, even though they might have recently fought against the muslims. By implementing the teachings of Islam just and peaceful societies were formed and through this many people accepted Islam after witnessing its widespread benefits and truths. Whether people accepted Islam or not, the muslims gained the loyalty of the citizens as they acted with justice.

Dangers of Speech

Umar Ibn Khattab, once came upon Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, while the latter was pulling his own tongue. Umar, may Allah be pleased him, implored him to stop to which he replied that his tongue had brought him to dangerous places. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Imam Malik's, Muwatta, Book 56, Hadith Number 12.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2501, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared that whoever is silent is saved.

This means the one who is silent from vain or evil speech and only speaks good words will be saved by Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. This is important to understand as the main reason people will enter Hell is because of their speech. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616. In fact, it only takes a single evil word to cause a person to plunge into Hell on Judgement Day which has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314.

Speech can be of three types. The first is evil speech which should be avoided at all costs. The second is vain speech which only causes one to waste time which will lead to a great regret on Judgment Day. In addition, the first step of sinful speech is often vain speech. So it is safer to avoid this type of speech. The final type is good speech which should

always be adopted. Based on these aspects two thirds of speech should be removed from one's life.

In addition, the one who speaks too much will only reflect on their actions and the hereafter a little as this requires silence. This will prevent one from assessing their deeds which inspires one to perform more righteous deeds and sincerely repent from their sins. This person will then be prevented from changing for the better.

Finally, those who speak too much often discuss worldly things and things which are entertaining and fun. This will cause them to adopt a mentality whereby they dislike discussing or listening to serious issues like death and the hereafter. This will prevent them from preparing adequately for the hereafter which will lead to a great regret and a potential punishment.

All of this can be avoided if one simply remains silent from sinful and vain speech and instead only speaks good words. Therefore, the one who is silent in this way will be saved from trouble in this world and from punishment in the next world.

Honouring Neighbours

Abu Bakkar, once passed by Abdur Rahman Ibn Awf, may Allah be pleased with them, while the latter was arguing with his neighbour. Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, told him not argue with his neighbour, as they will remain with a person after others leave them. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 95.

This indicates the importance of being kind to one's neighbour.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6014, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that he was encouraged to treat neighbors kindly to such an extent that he thought that a neighbour would become an heir of every muslim.

Unfortunately, this duty is often neglected even though treating one's neighbours kindly is an important aspect of Islam. First of all, it is important to note that a person's neighbour in Islam includes all those people who are living within forty houses in each direction to a muslim's home. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, Number 109.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once connected belief in Allah, the Exalted, and Judgment Day to treating a neighbour kindly in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 174. This Hadith alone is enough to indicate the seriousness of treating neighbours kindly. A Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 119, warns that a woman who fulfilled her obligatory duties and offered much voluntary worship would go to Hell because she mistreated her neighbours through her speech. If this is the case for the one who harms their neighbour through words can one imagine the seriousness of physically harming one's neighbour?

A muslim must be patient when mistreated by their neighbor. In fact, a muslim should treat them kindly in cases like this. Repaying good with good is not difficult. A good neighbour is the one who repays harm with good. A muslim should respect the private space of their neighbour’s property but at the same time greet them and offer them help without being too intrusive. They should be supported by whatever means is available to a person, such as financial or emotional support.

A muslim should always conceal the faults of their neighbors. The one who conceals the faults of others will have their faults concealed by Allah, the Exalted. And the one who exposes the faults of others Allah, the Exalted, will expose their faults and publically disgrace them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4880.

All Difficulties

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, once advised that a muslim is rewarded for everything, even a pain caused by a stone, the breaking of their sandal strap or something which they thought was lost and then they found it in their garment. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 99.

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

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

A muslim should remember that it is far better to have their minor sins erased through these difficulties then to reach the Day of Judgment

while still possessing them. A muslim should constantly repent and strive to perform righteous deeds in order to erase their minor sins. And if they encounter any physical or emotional difficulties they should remain patient hoping for their minor sins to be erased and to obtain an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

Using Things Correctly

During his Caliphate, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, had a house, which acted as the public treasury, which was initially located in the outskirts of Medina. Later on, it was moved to the central part of Medina, within his home. He never appointed a guard over it and instead secured it with a lock. Whenever any public wealth would come to him he would store it in the public treasury but had the habit of swiftly distributing it equally to the needy. After his death, Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the public treasury with the two trustees who were appointed over it by Abu Bakkar: Abdur Rahman Ibn Awf and Uthman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with them. After entering it they found nothing inside, as Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, disliked storing wealth. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 67.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, understood a fact that is ignored by many today, namely, wealth is only useful when it is used in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Hoarding or misusing it prevents this benefit.

In reality, in most cases nothing in this material world in itself is good or bad, such as wealth. What makes a thing good or bad is the way it is used. It is important to understand that the very purpose of everything which was created by Allah, the Exalted, was for it to be used correctly according to the teachings of Islam. When something is not used correctly it in reality becomes useless. For example, wealth is useful in both worlds when it is used correctly such as being spent on the necessities of a person and their dependents. But it can become useless

and even a curse for its bearer if it is not used correctly, such as being hoarded or spent on sinful things. Simply hoarding wealth causes wealth to lose value. How can paper and metal coins one tucks away be useful? In this respect, there is no difference between a blank piece of paper and a note of money. It is only useful when it is used correctly.

So if a muslim desires all their worldly possessions to become a blessing for them in both worlds all they have to do is use them correctly according to the teachings found in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. But if they use them incorrectly then the same blessing will become a burden and curse for them in both worlds. It is as simple as that.

Final Illness of Abu Bakkar (RA)

Remaining Focused

When Khalid Bin Waleed headed for Syria, Al Muthannah Ibn Haarithah, may Allah be pleased with them, was appointed in charge of the Iraq expedition. He continued marching forward until he reached the capital of the Persian empire. He desired to enlist some of the former apostates, who had now repented and returned to the fold of Islam, in order to finish the expedition of Iraq. He sought permission from Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, but did not receive a response for some time and then decided to visit him in person. When he reached Medina, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was on his deathbed. Even though he was facing death it did not deter him from focusing his efforts on serving the people. He ordered Umar Ibn Khattab to fulfill the request of Al Muthannah, may Allah be pleased with them, and urged them both to remain firm on the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, irrespective of the calamity that might befall them. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 614-615.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, remaining focused on serving Islam and the people, even on his deathbed, indicates his steadfast nature.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 159, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a short but far reaching piece of advice. He advised people to sincerely declare their belief in Allah, the Exalted, and then remain steadfast on it.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith means that they must strive in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. It consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, which relate to Him, such as the obligatory fasts and those which relate to people, such as treating others kindly. It includes refraining from all the prohibitions of Islam which are between a person and Allah, the Exalted, and those involving others. A muslim must also face destiny with patience truly believing Allah, the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

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

Steadfastness can include refraining from both types of polytheism. The major type is when one worships something other than Allah, the Exalted. The minor type is when one shows off their good deeds to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. Therefore, an aspect of steadfastness is to always act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

It includes obeying Allah, the Exalted, at all times instead of obeying and pleasing oneself or others. If a Muslim disobeys Allah, the Exalted, by

pleasing themself or others they should know neither their desires nor people will protect them from Allah, the Exalted. On the other hand, the one who is sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from all things by Him even if this protection is not apparent to them.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith includes following the path set out by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and not adopting a path which deviates from this. The one who strives to adopt this path will not need anything else as this is enough to keep them steadfast on their faith.

As people are not perfect they will undoubtedly make mistakes and commit sins. So being steadfast in matters of faith does not mean one has to be perfect but it means they must strive to adhere strictly to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as outlined earlier, and to sincerely repent if they commit a sin. This has been indicated in chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 6:

"…so take a straight course to Him and seek His forgiveness…"

This is further supported by a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1987, which advises to fear Allah, the Exalted, and to erase a (minor) sin which has occurred by performing a righteous deed. In another Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book 2, Hadith number 37, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims to try their best to remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even though they will not be able to do it perfectly.

Therefore, a muslim's duty is to fulfil the potential they have been given through their intention and physical actions in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They have not been commanded to achieve perfection as this is not possible.

It is important to note, that one cannot remain steadfast in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, through their physical actions without purifying their heart first. As indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984, the limbs of the body will only act in a pure way if the spiritual heart is pure. Purity of heart is only achieved by gaining and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Steadfast obedience requires one to control their tongue as it expresses the heart. Without controlling the tongue steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, is not possible. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2407.

Finally, if any deficiency in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted, occurs one must make sincere repentance to Allah, the Exalted, and seek the forgiveness of people if it involves their rights. Chapter 46 Al Ahqaf, verse 13:

"Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."

Nominating the Next Caliph – Umar Ibn Khattab (RA)

Seeking Advice

During his final illness Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, sought the advice of the senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in respect to nominating the next Caliph of Islam. Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 724-725.

Muslims should only consult a few people in respect to their affairs. They should select these few people according to the advice of the Holy Quran. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 43:

"…So ask the people of the message if you do not know."

This verse reminds muslims to consult those who possess knowledge. As consulting an ignorant person only leads to further trouble. Just like a person would be foolish to consult a car mechanic over their physical health a muslim should only consult those who possess knowledge about it and the Islamic teachings linked to them.

In addition, a muslim should only consult those who fear Allah, the Exalted. This is because they will never advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, those who do not fear or obey Allah, the Exalted, might possess knowledge and experience but they will easily advise others to disobey Allah, the Exalted, which only increases one's problems. In reality, those who fear Allah, the Exalted, possess true knowledge and only this knowledge will guide others through their problems successfully. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 28:

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

For the Greater Good

During his final illness Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, sought the advice of the senior Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in respect to nominating the next Caliph of Islam. Each Companion, may Allah be pleased with them, who was consulted confirmed that Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, was the right man for the job, as he was undoubtedly the best of them, second only to Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him. Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 724-725.

The first thing to note is that Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was not considering the next Caliph based on worldly reasons, such as family ties, friendship, etc. He did not appoint a relative, like his son, desiring thereby to carry on his name. Unlike the leaders of today, his decision was solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, and based on who was best for the job.

Since the passing of the righteous predecessors the strength of the muslim nation has weakened dramatically. It is logical that the greater the number of people in a group the stronger the group will become yet muslims have somehow defied this logic. The strength of the muslim nation has only decreased as the number of muslims have increased. One of the main reasons this has occurred is connected to chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2 of the Holy Quran:

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

Allah, the Exalted, clearly commands muslims to aid each other in any matter which is good and not support each other in any matter which is bad. This is what the righteous predecessors acted on but many muslims have failed to follow in their footsteps. Many muslims now observe who is doing an action instead of observing what they are doing. If the person is linked to them for example, a relative, they support them even if the thing is not good. Similarly, if the person has no relationship with them they turn away from supporting them even if the thing is good. This attitude completely contradicts the traditions of the righteous predecessors. They would support others in good irrespective of who was doing it. In fact, they went so far on acting on this verse of the Holy Quran that they would even support those they did not get on with as long as it was a good thing.

The other thing connected to this is that many muslims fail to support each other in good as they believe the person they are supporting will gain more prominence than them. This condition has even affected scholars and Islamic educational institutes. They make lame excuses not to aid others in good as they do not have a relationship with them and they fear their own institution will be forgotten and those they help will gain further respect in society. But this is completely wrong as one only needs to turn the pages of history to observe the truth. As long as one's intention is to please Allah, the Exalted, supporting others in good will increase their respect within society. Allah, the Exalted, will cause the hearts of the people to turn to them even if their support is for another organisation, institution or person. For example, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, departed this world Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, could have easily challenged for the Caliphate and would have found plenty of

support in his favour. But he knew the right thing to do was to nominate Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, as the first Caliph of Islam. Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, did not worry about being forgotten by society if he supported another person. He instead obeyed the command in the verse mentioned earlier and supported what was right. This is confirmed in the Hadiths found in Sahih Bukhari numbers 3667 and 3668. The honour and respect of Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, within society only increased by this action. This is obvious to those who are aware of Islamic history.

Muslims must reflect on this deeply, change their mentality and strive to aid others in good irrespective of who is doing it and not hold back fearing their support will cause them to be forgotten within society. Those who obey Allah, the Exalted, will never be forgotten in both this world and the next. In fact, their respect and honour will only grow in both worlds.

Fearing Leadership

When Abu Bakkar made his decision to appoint Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, as the next Caliph, the latter blankly refused out of fear for the trials leadership brings with it. But, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, insisted until he forced Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, to agree. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 728.

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.

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 prestige.

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 themself 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 worse 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.

Obeying in Good Things

During his final illness, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, publicly addressed the people of Medina and informed him of his decision to appoint Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, as the next Caliph of Islam. They all declared that they would listen and obey Umar, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Page 728.

According to one account, before naming Umar Ibn Khattab, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, asked the people if they would be content with the person he chose. Ali Ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, stood up and declared they would not be pleased unless it was Umar, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 71.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards the leaders of society. This includes kindly offering them the best advice and supporting them in their good decisions by any means necessary, such as financial or physical help. According to a Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book number 56, Hadith number 20, fulfilling this duty pleases Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 59:

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

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

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

Accepting Destiny

During his final illness, people visited Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, and enquired whether he called a doctor. He replied that the Doctor had already seen him and said, “I do whatever I want.” This has been discussed in Imam Al Asfahani’s, Hilyat Al Awliya, Number 53.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was referring to Allah, the Exalted. He adopted contentment with the decree and choice of Allah, the Exalted, as he understood that all His decrees are best for those involved, even if the wisdoms behind them are hidden.

It is important for muslims to understand a simple thing which can aid them with patiently facing destiny and the difficulties it brings. A person happily takes a bitter medicine which their doctor prescribes fully trusting in their knowledge, experience and choice all the while believing that their doctor knows what is best for them. This is true even though they are only human and prone to errors. Yet, many muslims fail to place this same level of trust in Allah, the Exalted, even though His knowledge is infinite and His choices always the wisest. Muslims should try to accept destiny and the troubles it brings just like they take the bitter medicine without complaining knowing it is best for them. They should understand that the troubles and difficulties they face are best for them even if they do not understand or observe the wisdoms in them just like they do not understand the science behind the bitter medicine they happily take. Even though in most cases, they will never understand the science behind the bitter medicine they take a time will certainly come, whether in this world or in the hereafter, when the wisdom behind the bitter difficulties they faced will be revealed to them. So a muslim should

anticipate this time patiently knowing all will be revealed shortly. Pondering deeply over this can increase one's patience when dealing with difficulties. 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.”

Beyond Justice

During his final illness, Abu Bakkar told his daughter, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with them, to return the few items he was given from the public treasury during his Caliphate to Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. They were a camel whose milk he and his family used to drink, a bowl in which they prepared food and some clothes they used to wear. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Page 66.

These things were allocated to him as he was busy leading the Muslims. Instead of allowing his family to inherit them from him he returned them to the next Caliph.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4721, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that those who acted with justice will be sitting on thrones of light close to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day. This includes those who are just in their decisions in respect to their families and those under their care and authority.

It is important for muslims to always act with justice in all occasions. One must show justice to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. They must use all the blessings they have been granted in the correct way according to the teachings of Islam. This includes being just to their own

body and mind by fulfilling their rights of food and rest as well as using each limb according to its true purpose. Islam does not teach muslims to push their body and minds beyond their limits thereby causing themself harm.

One should be just in respect to people by treating them how they wish to be treated by others. They should never compromise on the teachings of Islam by committing injustice to people in order to obtain worldly things. This will be a major cause of people entering Hell which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

They should remain just even if it contradicts their desires and the desires of their loved ones. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 135:

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.[1] So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just…”

One must be just towards their dependents by fulfilling their rights and necessities according to the teachings of Islam which has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2928. They should not be neglected nor handed over to others such as school and Mosque teachers. A person should not take on this responsibility if they are too lazy to act with justice in regards to them.

To conclude, no person is free of acting with justice as the minimum is acting with justice in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and oneself.

Best Conduct

During his final illness, Abu Bakkar told his daughter, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with them, to distribute his paltry wealth to his inheritors according to the Holy Quran and to include his unborn child, as his wife was pregnant at the time. He suspected the unborn child was a girl and after his death, she was born. This has been discussed in Imam Suyuti's, Tarikh Al Khulafa, Pages 71-72.

This indicates how concerned Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was in respect to treating his relatives with kindness and justice. A branch of Islam which is often overlooked by muslims.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2612, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the one who possesses complete faith is the one who is best in conduct and most kind to their family.

Unfortunately, some have adopted the bad habit of treating non-relatives in a kind manner while mistreating their own family. They behave in this manner as they do not understand the importance of treating one's own family kindly and as they fail to appreciate their family. A muslim will never achieve success until they fulfill both aspects of faith. The first is fulfilling their duties towards 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. The second is to fulfill the rights of people which includes treating them kindly. None have more right to this kind treatment than one's own family. A muslim must aid their family in all matters which are good and warn them against bad things and practices in a gentle way according to the teachings of Islam. They should not blindly support them in bad things simply because they are their relatives neither should they fail to help them in good matters because of some ill feelings towards them as this contradicts Islamic teachings. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 2:

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

The best way to guide others is through a practical example as this is the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and is much more effective than just verbal guidance.

Finally, one should generally choose gentleness in all matters especially, when dealing with their family. Even if their commit sins they should be warned in a gentle manner and still be aided in matters which are good as this kindness is more effective in bringing them back to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, than treating them harshly.

Preparing for Death

During his final illness, Aisha, recited a poem to her father, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them. But he directed her attention to the words of Allah, the Exalted: chapter 50 Qaf, verse 19:

“And the intoxication of death will bring the truth; that is what you were trying to avoid.”

This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee’s, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 732-733.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was reminding her and by extension others, the importance of preparing for death.

Death is something which is certain to occur but the time is unknown so it therefore makes sense that a muslim who believes in the hereafter prioritises preparing for it over preparing for things which might not occur, such as marriage, children or their retirement. It is strange how many muslims have adopted the opposite mentality even though they testify that the world is temporary and uncertain whereas the hereafter is permanent and they are certain to reach it. No matter how one behaves they will be judged regarding their deeds. A muslim should not be fooled into believing that they can and will prepare for the hereafter in the future

as this attitude only causes them to delay further until their death occurs and they leave this world with regrets that will not aid them.

So the important thing is not that people will die as this is unavoidable but the key is acting in such a way that one is fully prepared for it. The only way to prepare for it correctly is by acting on the teachings of Islam namely, fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny with patience. This is only possible when one prioritises preparing for the hereafter over preparing for things which might not occur.

Sending Ahead Good

During his final illness, Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised his family to wash the clothes he was wearing and enshroud him in them, instead of buying a new garment as his shroud. When he was requested for permission to buy a new shroud for him, he replied that the living were more deserving of new garments than the dead. Even though Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, was the Caliph of the muslim nation, yet he chose to lead a simple life, a life of poverty, just like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He was too busy striving to benefit the people to worry about his own needs. By sacrificing his own comfort he aimed to make the lives of his people comfortable. The paltry salary he took from the treasury over his two years as Caliph was also returned to the public treasury thereby ensuring he served the muslims solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. He took nothing from this world and the world took nothing from him. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 734-735.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, concentrated more on preparing for his final journey to the hereafter then to accumulate, hoard and enjoy the luxuries of this world. How far are the leaders of today and the common muslims from this blessed attitude!

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 for example, wealth is required to support one's dependents. Islam only discourages muslims from striving for them beyond their needs and prioritizing them over more important duties, such as performing righteous deeds.

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 preoccupy them from fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, and refraining from His prohibitions 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 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.

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 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. 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 will benefit them. This can be achieved by spending on fulfilling one's responsibilities, such as the education of their children. All wealth spent incorrectly will become a burden for the owner and may well lead to their punishment. 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.

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 in reality 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 spend 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 much loved wealth behind, which will occur when they die. The one who dislikes the hereafter will not adequately prepare for it.

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 realise 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 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 act correctly with their possessions 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].”

A Final Counsel

During his final illness, Abu Bakkar summoned Umar Ibn Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, and gave him some final advice, which has been discussed in Imam Al Asfahani's, Hilyat Al Awliya, Number 59.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, advised him to firstly fear Allah, the Exalted, at all times.

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

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

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2451, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, advised that a muslim cannot become pious until they avoid something which is not harmful to their religion out of caution that it will lead to something which is harmful. Therefore, an aspect of piety is to avoid things which are doubtful not just unlawful. This is because doubtful things takes a muslim one step

closer to the unlawful and the closer one is to the unlawful the easier it is to fall into it. It is why a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1205, advises that the one who avoids unlawful and doubtful things will protect their religion and honor. If one observes those who have become misguided in society, in most cases, this occurred gradually not in one sudden step. Meaning, the person first indulged in doubtful things before falling into the unlawful. This is the reason why Islam stresses the need to avoid unnecessary and vain things in one's life as they can lead them to the unlawful. For example, vain and useless speech which is not classified sinful by Islam often leads to evil speech, such as backbiting, lying and slander. If a person avoids the first step by not indulging in vain speech they will undoubtedly avoid evil speech. This process can be applied to all things which are vain, unnecessary and especially, doubtful.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him that Allah, the Exalted, had set obligations that must be done by day, which He will not accept if they are completed at night. And He had set obligations that must be done at night, which He will not accept if they are done during the day. And He does not accept voluntary deeds until the obligatory deeds are performed first.

This advice indicates the importance of adhering to the teachings of Islam and avoiding charting one’s own course in life.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4606, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that any matter which is not based on Islam will be rejected.

If muslims desire lasting success in both worldly and religious matters they must strictly adhere to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Even though, certain actions which are not directly taken from these two sources of guidance can still be considered a righteous deed it is important to prioritize these two sources of guidance over all else. Because the fact is that the more one acts on things which are not taken from these two sources even if it is a righteous deed the less they will act on these two sources of guidance. An obvious example is how many muslims have adopted cultural practices into their lives which do not have a foundation in these two sources of guidance. Even if these cultural practices are not sins they have preoccupied muslims from learning and acting on these two sources of guidance as they feel satisfied with their behaviour. This leads to ignorance of the two sources of guidance which in turn will only lead to misguidance.

This is why a muslim must learn and act on these two sources of guidance which have been established by the leaders of guidance and only then act on other voluntary righteous deeds if they have the time and energy to do so. But if they choose ignorance and made up practices even if they are not sins over learning and acting on these two sources of guidance they will not achieve success.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him that a person’s scale on Judgement Day will weigh heavy in their favour when they follow the truth in this world, even though it was heavy upon them to do so. And a person’s scale on Judgement will be light in their favour when they follow falsehood in this world.

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1971, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, discussed the importance of truthfulness and avoiding lies. The first part advises that truthfulness leads to righteousness which in turn leads to Paradise. When a person persists on truthfulness they are recorded by Allah, the Exalted, as a truthful person.

It is important to note, that truthfulness as three levels. The first is when one is truthful in their intention and sincerity. Meaning, they act only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and do not benefit others for an ulterior motive, such as fame. This in fact is the foundation of Islam as every action is judged on one's intention. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. The next level is when one is truthful through their words. This in reality means they avoid all types of verbal sins not just lies. As the one who indulges in other verbal sins cannot be a real truthful person. An excellent way of achieving this is by acting on a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2317, which advises that a person can only make their Islam excellent when they avoid getting involved in the things which do not concern them. The majority of verbal sins occur because a muslim discusses something which does not concern them. The final stage is truthfulness in actions. This is achieved through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without cheery picking or misinterpreting the teachings of Islam which suit one's desires. They must adhere to hierarchy and priority order set by Allah, the Exalted, in all actions.

The consequences of the opposite of these levels of truthfulness namely, lying, according to the main Hadith under discussion, is that it

leads to disobedience which in turn leads to the fire of Hell. When one persists on this attitude they will be recorded as a great liar by Allah, the Exalted.

Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, also advised him that a servant must be balanced between fear and hope: fear of Hell and hope of obtaining Paradise. The servant should not consider their devotion as valuable, nor should they despair of the mercy and favour of Allah, the Exalted.

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

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

keeping the crop healthy and then hopes for a large harvest. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has summarised this explanation in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2459.

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

Final Words

After requesting to be buried next to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, his final words was a supplication from the Holy Quran, which again highlights his great attachment to the Book of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 101:

"…Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous."

Then he departed this material world at the age of 63, the same age the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, passed away. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 735-738.

Every muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, yet they barely know him as they are too busy to study his life, character and teachings. This is foolish as how can one truly love someone they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on the life, character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not

be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

A Truthful Eulogy

After Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, passed away, Medina sank into sadness, similar to the sadness it faced during the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Ali Ibn Abu Talib stood outside the home of Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with them, and gave the following eulogy: “O Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with you. You were the closet Companion and friend of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. You were a comfort to him and the one he trusted the most. If he had a secret, he would tell it to you; and if he needed to consult someone regarding a matter, he would consult you. You were the first of your people to embrace Islam and you were the most sincere of them in faith. Your faith was stronger than any other person’s, as was the degree to which you feared Allah, the Exalted. And you were wealthier than anyone else in religious knowledge. You cared most for both the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Islam. Of all people, you were the best Companion to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him; you possessed the best qualities; you had the best past; you ranked highest; and you were closest to him. And of all people you resembled the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the most in terms of his guidance and demeanor. Your ranking was higher than anyone else’s, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, honored you and held you in higher esteem than anyone else. On behalf of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and Islam, may Allah reward you with the best of rewards. When the people disbelieved in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, you believed in him. Throughout his life, you were both his eyes with which he saw and his ears with which he heard. Allah, the Exalted, has named you truthful in His book when He said:

“And the one who has brought the truth [the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] and [who] believed in it [Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him] - those are the righteous.” Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 33.

When people were stingy in their support for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, you comforted him. And when people sat still, you stood side-by-side with him, facing the same hardships that he faced. In times of hardship, you were truly a good and noble Companion of his. You were the second of the two, his Companion in the cave; and the one upon whom tranquility descended:

“If you do not aid him [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] - Allāh has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Makkah] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he [Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him] said to his companion [Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him], "Do not grieve; indeed Allāh is with us." And Allāh sent down His tranquility upon him and supported him with soldiers [i.e., angels] you did not see...” Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 40.

You were his Companion during the migration (to Medina) and you were his successor regarding the religion of Allah, the Exalted, and his nation. And a truly good successor you proved to be when the people apostatized. You did what no other Caliph of a Holy Prophet, peace be upon them, did before you. You stood up firmly and bravely when his other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, lost their resolve and became soft. And when they became weak, you adhered to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon

him. You truly were as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said: weak in your body, but strong regarding the commands of Allah, the Exalted; humble in yourself, but lofty in your ranking with Allah, the Exalted; well-esteemed in the eyes of people, honored and great in their hearts. Not a single one of them had any reason to dislike you, to be suspicious of you or hold you in contempt. You always treated the weak and humble as strong and honorable, making sure you gave them what was rightfully theirs. And in this regard, you treated relatives and strangers equally. Of all people, you respected those who were most obedient to Allah, the Exalted, and who feared Him, the most. In your overall character, you embodied truth and compassion. Your speech was always characterized by the qualities of wisdom and decisiveness. And you always struck a noble balance between gentleness and firmness. You always based your decision on knowledge and once you made your decisions, you always kept a firm resolve to execute them. Indeed, to Allah, the Exalted, we belong and to Him is our return. We are pleased with Him and submit to His decrees. And by Allah, the Exalted, other than the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Muslims have never been afflicted with a greater calamity than the calamity of your death. You were always a protector, a sanctuary, and a source of honour for this religion. May Allah, the Exalted, join you with the company of His Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and may He not deprive us of your reward and may He not let us go astray after you." After hearing his eulogy, the people responded by declaring that Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, had spoken the truth. This has been discussed in Imam Muhammad As Sallaabee's, The Biography of Abu Bakr As Siddeeq, Pages 736-738.

Conclusion

It is clear when studying the blessed life of Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, that he dedicated all his efforts in pleasing Allah, the Exalted. He supported his verbal declaration of faith by practically obeying and following the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. He did not cherry pick the commands which suited his desires, rather, he submitted completely to Allah, the Exalted, and diligently implemented every command of Allah, the Exalted, and refrained from every prohibition. His single aim was to please Allah, the Exalted, and all his words and actions were directed to this noble goal. This attitude encouraged him to spiritually detach from the material world, which involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, instead of according to one's own desires. And he spiritually attached to the hereafter by dedicating his efforts towards practically preparing for it. It was this characteristic which made him and the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, the best group after the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. This truth has been discussed in Imam Abu Na'im Al-Asfahani's, Hilyat Ul Awliya Wa Tabaqat Al Asfiya, Narration 278. Therefore, muslims must follow in his footsteps by learning and acting on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that they too achieve peace and success in both worlds.

In addition, when studying his life, it is clear that the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, did not reach the future generations easily. They reached them through the blood, tears, sweat and sacrifices of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Unfortunately, this fact is often overlooked by

muslims today, as the teachings of Islam are so readily available nowadays. One can imagine how disappointing Abu Bakkar, may Allah be pleased with him, would be if he could see how the majority of muslims dismiss the teachings of Islam, even though he and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, sacrificed everything so that Islam could reach the future generations. No doubt, the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, will receive their rewards for their sacrifices but muslims must acknowledge the fact that they are indebted to them. This acknowledgement must be shown in actions not just words. This involves sincerely learning and acting on the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This is the only way one acknowledges, honors and loves the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Words without actions is closer to hypocrisy than love.

Finally, every muslim openly declares that they desire the companionship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the other Holy Prophets, peace be upon him them, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in the hereafter. They often quote the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 3688, which advises that a person will be with those they love in the hereafter. And because of this they openly declare their love for these righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted. But it is strange how they desire this outcome and claim love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, yet they barely know them as they are too busy to study their lives, characters and teachings. How can one truly love a people they do not even know?

In addition, when these people are asked for proof of their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, on Judgment Day what will they say? What will they present? The proof of this declaration is studying and acting on their lives, characters and teachings. A declaration without this evidence will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted. This is quite obvious as no one understood Islam better than the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did and this was not their attitude. They declared love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and supported their claim through actions by following in his footsteps. This is why they will be with him in the hereafter.

Those who believe love is in the heart and does not require it to be shown through actions is as foolish as the student who hands back a blank exam paper to their teacher claiming that knowledge is in their mind so they do not need to practically write it down on paper and then still expects to pass.

The one who behaves in such a manner does not love the righteous servants of Allah, the Exalted, only their own desires and they have undoubtedly been fooled by the Devil.

Finally, it is important to note that members of other religions also claim love for their Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. But as they failed to follow in their footsteps and act on their teachings they will certainly not be with them on Judgment Day. This is quite obvious if one ponders over this fact for a moment.

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.

Complete AudioBooks – Lives of the Companions (RA) of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

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