

50

Life Rules

from the

Qur'an

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INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillah ir Rahmaan Ar Raheem.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful.

This series is derived from the book, **QAWAID QURANIYAH FI AN-NAFS WA AL-HAYAT** by Umar bin Abdullah Al Muqbil, and comprises of a selection of life rules taken from the Qur'an.

Every organization, whether it's a family, school, hospital, or a government, is regulated by clear transparent rules. Rules and adherence to them help in establishing standards, maintaining order, resolving disputes, and protecting the rights of people. Without rules our societies would cultivate injustice, abuse and unrest to say the least.

Rules in Islam aim to preserve five fundamental things: deen (religion), intellect, life, property, and lineage/honour. In this book, we will see how Allah has made clear the rules relating to a vast array of situations we may find ourselves in, cultivating the expected etiquette of the believers, thereby preserving a balanced nation. It is important to note that many of the rules can be taken generally, even though they may refer to a specific context.

We ask Allah to make us obedient to His beautiful rules and to guide us to the best of manners.

SOURCE:

قواعد قرآنية في النفس والحياة – عمر المقبل

GOOD SPEECH

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

“And speak good to people [i.e. enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, and say the truth about Muhammad ﷺ]”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:83*)

This is a fundamental and universal rule from our Creator governing all our communication with people to be conducted with *husna*.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF HUSNA?

Husna refers to good speech that is both beautiful in meaning and the manner in which it is conveyed. Speaking with husna means:

- To speak in a beautiful manner, so that our tone is soft, gentle and kind, never reverting to rudeness or harshness.
- To speak with the right intention.

Sometimes a person may speak the truth but their tone may be harsh, or a person may speak gently but their speech may be false, or their intention may be insincere. Such speech is not considered *husna*. Allah commands the believers to speak with husna at all times and with everyone especially those closest to us. Our parents, spouse, children and house help are most deserving of our good speech. This principle is repeated throughout the Qur'an and teaches us the impact that good speech can have on our relationships with others.

عن النبي ﷺ قال: "من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر، فليقل خيراً، أو ليصمت"

The Prophet ﷺ said, "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day must either speak good or remain silent." (*Sahih Muslim 47*)

THERE IS GOODNESS IN EVERY DECREE

وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ

“And it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you”

(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:216*)

In another verse, Allah says:

فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

“If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.”

(*Surah An-Nisaa', 4:19*)

This rule is based on the belief in the decree. It is, therefore, a fundamental principle as it is a part of the pillars of faith. We come across many situations in life that we may dislike or misunderstand such as a certain quality of our spouse, behavior of our child or hate a comment made. However we need to be clear that whatever situation Allah has decreed for us, even if we dislike it, there is without doubt immense goodness in it. It may be through this painful decree, you attain protection, abundant reward, honor and numerous hidden blessings that you may not initially perceive.

Likewise, if you find a command of Allah difficult for you, know that Allah commands only what is best for us. Therefore, it is incumbent on us to submit to the commands of Allah with the certainty that Our Creator commands only what is good for the creation. A Muslim is one who submits and subjugates himself to the commands of Allah, without allowing his emotions to divert him from this goal.

REMEMBER & BE PATIENT

What you hate may be good for you and what you love may be bad for you. Believe in Allah, He is the best Disposer of affairs and do not be deceived by your emotions.

Suhai reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (God), thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it. (*Sahih Muslim 2999*)



وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Allah knows but you do not know.”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:216*)

DO NOT FORGET THE GOOD DONE TO YOU OR THE GOOD TIMES

وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ

“And do not forget liberality between yourselves.”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:237*)

This is a **GOLDEN** rule that shows us how to maintain good relations with people. This ayat was revealed in the context of divorce that may occur before any marital relations. In times of conflict, we are being reminded to think about the good times, and not abrogate any good that a person may have done for us. Imagine, this ayah was revealed in context of early days of marriage yet still we are commanded to focus on the goodness, so how should we behave when we have had years of good amicable relations with people?

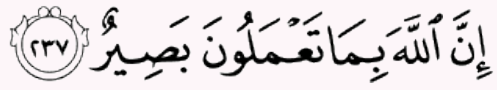
MARRIAGE IS OF THE NOBLEST RELATIONSHIPS. If there is a separation, keep all the good memories alive in your heart. Pardon the other if you have been wronged and if you are at fault, confess to your transgression and seal the end of the marriage with a good heart.

THIS RULE CAN BE APPLIED TO ALL OUR RELATIONSHIPS:

- It is a critical factor in every relationship that individuals feel they are valued and the good they do is appreciated and recognized. Allah teaches us to remember the good that someone has done for us, no matter how little, because this will rid us of bad feelings and negativity in times of hostility and increase us in gratitude and positivity in times of ease.
- Remember the favors of your parents, your teachers, friends and relatives. Even if they have passed away or you are unable to connect with them, keep the good memories alive.

It's important for us to accept that humans are all different in nature, which may lead to conflicts in our interactions. However, there is an inherent reason why certain people are a part of our lives, some are a test for us, others teach us, some nurture us, yet each has a part to play in our lives. The crucial thing

for us to remember is the good that each person has brought to us, and to not allow a dark hour, to overshadow an entire relationship.



“Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:237*)

MAN AS SUFFICIENT WITNESS FOR HIMSELF

بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ ۝ ١٤ وَلَوْ أَلْقَى مَعَاذِيرَهُ ۝ ١٥

“Nay! Man will be a witness against himself [as his body parts (skin, hands, legs, etc.) will speak about his deeds]. Though he may put forth his excuses (to cover his evil deeds).” (*Surah Al-Qiyamah, 75:14-15*)

This rule from the Qur'an teaches us that success lies in purification of the self from every action that is displeasing to Allah. There is no deed which is hidden from the Knowledge of Allah and on the Day of Judgment there will be no escape for man as the self will confess and admit to its transgressions. No one knows our vices more than we know them ourselves, even if we give ourselves excuses and justification, we know our reality. However, confession on that Day will be of no benefit, rather we need to admit to our shortcomings in this life so that we may repent and mend our ways.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

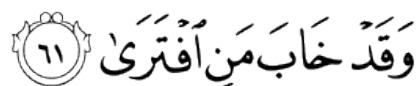
How do we behave when we find ourselves falling into something forbidden or leaving an obligation? Do we justify our actions, giving the self excuses or are we able to see our reality and admit to our shortcomings? Our time in life is fleeting, and we need to occupy ourselves with identifying our vices and treating them.

DIG DEEP WITHIN YOURSELF AND SEARCH FOR YOUR INNER SINS. The more you interact with people, the more your true self will surface. Keep in mind, we are in this life to be reformed. When you see your faults, you will treat yourself and seek to better yourself.

DO NOT BE DECEIVED BY THE OPINION OF OTHERS REGARDING YOURSELF, as no one knows your inner reality but yourself. Therefore, do not allow the self to be affected by the praise or dispraise of others. We need to be truthful with the self, this will give us balance in our lives.

Take charge of yourself, admit your faults, confess your sins and seek Allah's forgiveness. This is the way to your ultimate success.

FABRICATING LIES AGAINST ALLAH IS A SERIOUS OFFENSE



“And surely, he who invents a lie (against Allah) will fail miserably.”
(*Surah Taha, 20:61*)

This ayah was revealed in the context of Musa (peace be upon him) addressing the magicians of Fir'aun. He strongly warned them not to make up any lie against Allah. Although this was a warning, it softened their hearts and woke them up to the truth.

Fabricating lies leads to nothing except failure and disappointment. Lies will never bring any benefit. It is a cause for corruption and the spreading of mischief. Anyone who spreads mischief in life will surely fail and will not be guided.

The **WORST** of lies is when one lies against Allah.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- **WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL OF OUR UTTERANCES AND WHAT WE CONVEY TO OTHERS:** To say that Allah has said something which He did not, or He has done something which He has not done, is a big crime. This is also the case when claiming a “permissible” thing as forbidden or a forbidden thing as permissible.
- **SPEAKING WITHOUT EVIDENCE OR KNOWLEDGE:** i.e when one invents their own version of tafseer of the Qur'an or makes up hadith to attract and motivate people to do good.

These are the worst lies and whoever commits them will surely fail. Therefore, speaking about such matters without knowledge is not permissible. People may also lie out of jealousy and greed, to harm people or gain some benefit. They will not attain any good, rather their plotting will fail and they will be the ones to suffer the harm instead.

MAKING PEACE IS BETTER

وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ

“And making peace is better.”
(*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:128)

This is a golden rule to build and help society, starting from our own family. This ayah was revealed in the context of fixing relations between a husband and wife. Reconciling and remaining in the marriage is better than divorce, even if it is at the cost of forgoing some of your rights. If the wife fears that her husband does not desire to have relations with her, it is better to accept what he can give her (from her rights) than to separate.

MAKING PEACE BETWEEN PEOPLE IS ALWAYS THE BETTER OPTION. Apply this rule to every relationship including your children, family, relatives and friends. A true reconciliation is when the matter is resolved: when there is peace and there are no grudges between the people.

WHAT STOPS US FROM RECONCILING WITH PEOPLE?

Our self is inclined towards greed. We don't like to give people their rights, but instead demand all our rights from them. This disrupts families and societies.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

وَأَحْضَرَتِ الْأَنفُسُ الشُّحَّ

“And human inner-selves are swayed by greed.”
(*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:128)

OVERCOME YOUR INNER GREED by foregoing your rights and give others even if your own rights are not fulfilled.

HAVE TAQWA by not following your desires. Reconciling may be difficult but it is the better option, be easy going, give others their rights and do not demand your rights. Rely on Allah to give you your dues, this will give you peace and improve your relations with others. Strive against the greed of the self.



وَإِنْ تَحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

“But if you do good and keep away from evil, verily,
Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.”

(Surah An-Nisaa', 4:128)

FOR THOSE WHO DO GOOD

مَا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ

“No ground (of complaint) can there be against the Muhsinun (good-doers - see the footnote of V.9:120).”
(*Surah At-Tawbah, 9:91*)

This verse was revealed at the time of the battle of Tabuk. There was no sin on those who refrained from the battle with a valid excuse if they had the right intention and were truthful in their speech.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

CHECK YOUR INTENTIONS: If you have a valid excuse to refrain from an obligation then check your intention and words. For instance, if you are not fasting in Ramadan due to sickness or travelling, are you glad about it, as if a burden is off your shoulder? Or do you feel a void from within? Were you eagerly and willingly intending to fulfill the obligation?

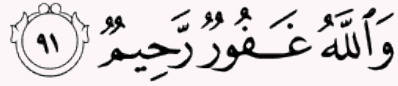
BE CAUTIOUS OF YOUR SPEECH: Are you truthful in your intention and words? Do you discourage others to do the obligation?

If you are true in your intention and words, then there is no sin on you to refrain from the obligation if you have a valid excuse. We need to remember that Allah is All-Knowing of what is in our hearts, and He knows the truthfulness of our intentions.

POINT TO NOTE: There is also no blame on those who do good voluntarily but fail or fall short in their work. When your child does something extra to make you happy out of his own goodwill, do not scold or blame him if he makes mistakes. Understand that he is doing his best. Encourage your children and appreciate the good they decide to do.

This rule applies to any volunteer work, either at home, school, dawah-related activities, or charity work. We must not discourage people for their acts of goodness by criticizing or blaming them if they make mistakes. We must remember nobody is perfect and that they were not obliged to do it in the first place! Criticism and blame discourages people to continue their acts of

goodness. If this happens because of us then we are accountable for it. As long as there is no commitment or contract involved. We cannot blame someone for the extra good they do. APPRECIATE AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO GOOD.



“And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”
(*Surah At-Tawbah, 9:91*)

NO SOUL WILL BEAR THE BURDEN OF ANOTHER

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ

“No bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another.”

(Surah Az-Zumar, 39:7)

This is a great rule on justice. We are born with the quality to love justice and we hate to be treated unjustly. This rule is true for all the humanity and not only for the ummah of Muhammad ﷺ and it is also emphasized in previous scriptures.

We will be recompensed for what we do, good for good and evil for evil. No one will bear the sin of another except if the person was the reason behind committing the sin. This is from Allah's great wisdom.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

Deal with people according to this rule. Do not punish someone for a sin that he has not done. Just because we are upset at one person, we do not possess the right to deal unfairly with others because of changes in our mood. For instance, a mother should not scold and punish all her children because of one child's misbehavior. At work, the boss should not penalize all the employees with cutting their salaries due to the misconduct of one individual.

If someone harms us, it is not permissible to harm their loved ones in revenge for the injustice we endured.

THE MALE IS NOT LIKE THE FEMALE

وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنثَىٰ

“And the male is not like the female.”

(Surah Aale-Imran, 3:36)

Allah tells us in the Qur'an that the man and the woman are not the same. The man can not be like a woman nor can the woman be like the man. They are different in nature and in their abilities.

Out of Allah's great wisdom and knowledge, He has given man the role of caretaker of the woman. He has given man the physical and mental strength to fulfill this responsibility and honored him by allocating this role to him.

As for the woman, she has certain shortcomings in her physical ability and emotional strength. A woman also goes through natural periods of weakness, such as during her menses, pregnancy, and postnatal stage. Her shortcomings are, however, outshined by her beauty and sensitivity. She is the attractive and the “soft” gender. No matter how strong the man may be, he needs a woman to complete him and vice versa.

HOW PERFECT IS ALLAH IN HIS KNOWLEDGE & WISDOM!

Due to their differences, Allah has set different laws and obligations upon them. Men are obliged to pray in the masjid and to attend the friday prayer; they get a different share of inheritance and a different standing with regards to witnessing in the courts.

Allah has given each of them qualities and prescribed laws that are perfect for them and their coexistence.

We must admit that indeed a man is not like a woman and a woman can not be like a man. They are different and unique *except* where their accountability to Allah is concerned as each one will be rewarded or punished according to his/her faith and good deeds.

THE VICTORIOUS ONES

وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ

“Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause).”
(*Surah Hajj, 22:40*)

WHAT IS THE 'REAL VICTORY'?

- Real victory is when you are an obedient slave of Allah.
- Real victory is when you follow the commands of Allah and stay from His prohibitions.
- Real victory is when you support and follow the messengers.
- Real victory is when you strive against shaytan, your evil nafs and the people who incite you towards evil.
- Real victory is when you give victory to Allah and His Deen.

This does not mean that Allah needs us to give victory to His religion but shows us how Allah honors the believer who serves His deen, supports and strives in the cause of Allah.

HOW CAN WE GIVE VICTORY TO THE DEEN (RELIGION)?

- By establishing the Salah (prayer) - your victory is when you are connected to Allah through prayer, this is the source of your strength and comfort. For truly, you can not attain victory without salah.
- Give Zakat (giving alms) as it purifies you from your greed and stinginess.
- Enjoin good and forbid evil - your victory is when you enlighten the people around you, this reforms you and the society as well.
- Remember that victory is only in the Hands of Allah.

WHAT CAUSES FAILURE?

- Not following the leader and the one in authority.

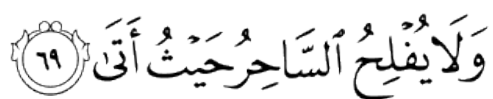
- Self amazement and pride.
- Not obeying Allah and the way of the Prophet ﷺ.
- Fighting and arguing for material and worldly concerns.

ان النصر مع الصبر

VERILY, VICTORY IS WITH PATIENCE

*So be patient. Give victory to Allah's
deen and wait for the promise of Allah.*

MAGICIANS WILL NEVER BE SUCCESSFUL



“And the magician will never be successful, no matter whatever amount (of skill) he may attain.”

(Surah Taha, 20:69)

This is a universal rule and warning to the practicers of magic that they will never succeed. People easily get deceived by the power of magic. They either fear it or use it to get what they want. Allah tells us that no matter how skilled the magicians may be, they will never succeed in front of the truth of لا اله الا الله (Tawhid). Firaun gathered the most qualified magicians but they could not withstand the power of the truth. They repented and fell into prostration.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- Distance yourself from anything that involves magic or the magicians. They cannot harm or benefit you by their own might and power.
- Beware of even thinking about practicing magic. Magic involves dealing with jinns as well as mind illusions and tricks. Do not take any kind of magic lightly as all forms of magic are forbidden.
- Anyone who practices magic or goes to a magician has sold his religion. It is an ugly crime! The shaytan will be his teacher, guiding and dictating him.
- **REPENT!** People often use magic to create conflict and separation between married couples. If you have fallen into this or any kind of magic, you must hasten to repent to Allah. And indeed, Allah will forgive. Allah forgave the magicians of Firaun and He forgives all those who turn back to Him in true repentance.
- Trust Allah. All the might and power belongs to Allah alone. Magicians have no power to harm anyone by themselves, so we should not fear them, neither should we ascribe power to them.

Rest assured that anyone practicing magic lives a miserable and difficult life. He has disbelieved and turned far away from the remembrance of Allah and he will never be happy and at rest unless he repents.

Never be deceived by the power of magic even if you see it with your own eyes. Believe in the power of Allah.

THE MOST HONORABLE ONES WITH ALLAH

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْفَقَكُمْ

“Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa [i.e. one of the Muttaqun (pious - see V.2:2).”
(*Surah Al-Hujuraat, 49:13*)

This rule teaches us that all of humanity are equal in terms of lineage. We were created from the same parents Adam and Hawwa. With time, Allah divided us into tribes and nations so that we may know each other. Honor in the sight of Allah, does not lie in one's lineage, race, skin color or wealth rather it is the level of **TAQWA** one attains.

WHAT IS TAQWA?

1. Taqwa is to obey the commands of Allah and refrain from His prohibitions out of love, hope and fear of Him.
2. Taqwa is to be cautious of your actions. It is a shield, a barrier from following your own desires. It is also a shield that protects you from the anger and punishment of Allah.

WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF TAQWA?

- To remember Allah and not to forget Him.
- To be grateful to Allah and not to be ungrateful.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- Work on your taqwa. This is your honor and this is your worth.
- Do not judge others as only Allah alone knows the inner state of the hearts of the people.
- When you have taqwa, you will have the best of manners with everyone. You will not place anyone's word above the word of Allah and His

Messenger ﷺ. You will fix matters between yourself and the people, and will deal justly even with those who have transgressed against you. You will refrain from all the bad traits such as mockery, suspicion, backbiting, spying, insulting others and calling each other with derogatory names.

Honor is a result of one's belief and taqwa of Allah. Humiliation is from one's disbelief, transgression and disobedience of Allah's commands. You are honored not because of who you are rather because what you do as an honored slave of Allah.

May Allah grant us taqwa. Ameen.

THE RULES OF INHERITANCE SET BY ALLAH

ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا

“You know not which of them, whether your parents or your children, are nearest to you in benefit”
(*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:11)

This rule sheds light on Allah's great and perfect wisdom, and our limited vision and knowledge.

This ayah mentions the share of inheritance set by Allah, the All-Knower, the All-Wise. It is not on us to decide what portion of wealth our children or parents should get after we die. This is Allah's decision based on His perfect Knowledge and Wisdom. We may think our child will benefit more from our wealth than our parents and vice versa but we need to believe in Allah and trust His Wisdom and perfect law.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- Do not belittle any of your children as you do not know which of them will benefit you most in this life and the hereafter. Your eyes may be set on one specific child to bring you the most benefit but perhaps the child whom you underestimated or belittled may be the one who takes care of you and benefits you most. Perhaps your child with disability benefits you more than your healthy child as he teaches you to be humble and patient and could be your way to paradise.
- Do not belittle any good deed as you do not know which deed will take you to Paradise. Your eyes may be on a certain good deed you might have done but perhaps removing some harm from the path of others could benefit you most. Perhaps a sincere advice or a kind word brings you more reward than spending hours on a dawah project.

What benefitted Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) the most was not his role as a muezzin but his two units of prayer after every wudhu.

Therefore, do not belittle any good deed. Take every opportunity to gain Allah's pleasure. A small deed with sincerity may be far heavier than a great deed that lacks sincerity. Moreover, do not belittle any of your children.

Submit to the Laws of Allah and be pleased with all that He decrees.

RELIGION IS NOT BASED ON OUR DESIRES

فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

“But if they answer you not (i.e. do not believe in your doctrine of Islamic Monotheism, nor follow you), then know that they only follow their own lusts.”

(Surah Al-Qasas, 28:50)

This ayat was revealed in the context of the people who denied both the Taurat and the Qur'an claiming that it was magic. Allah told the Prophet ﷺ that if they do not respond to him then know that they are only following their desires.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

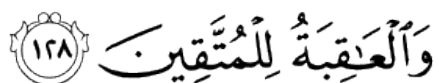
Religion is not based on our desires. We can either follow our desires or follow the truth. We cannot combine both together. Either our utterances are based on the Qur'an and Sunnah or based on our desires. Therefore, we need to check the motive behind our utterances. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ never spoke out of desire. All of his emotions and utterances were based on the truth.

We must not follow the desires of the people. After the knowledge and guidance has come to us and become clear to us, we should speak and act on it because it is the truth and not seek to please the desires of the people.

We must also be careful not to do “fatwa shopping” i.e go around asking multiple scholars about matters where there is a difference of opinion so that we can find an answer that suits our desires.

You know the reality of yourself. So be alert and check yourself. Follow the truth because of the truth. Do not follow the truth merely out of desire. Do not follow the truth only when it suits you, and leave it when it goes against your desires. Rather be a believer who enters the religion completely.

THE GOOD END



“And the (blessed) end is for the Muttaqun (pious - see V.2:2).”
(*Surah Al-A'raf*, 7:128)

This rule gives us so much hope, trust and certainty in the promise of Allah.

WHAT DOES الْعَاقِبَةُ MEAN?

It refers to the end of matters and it is mostly used for a good end. For those who remain within the boundaries of Allah and control their desires, Allah promises them a good end in this life and the hereafter. In this life, they are the ones who will gain victory and be established in the land. And in the hereafter, they will be saved from the hellfire and enter Paradise.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

WITH TAQWA:

- When faced with oppression, have taqwa by seeking help from Allah and being patient. You will not succeed by fighting, and demanding your rights. **WE NEED TO CONTROL OUR DESIRES FROM DEMANDING OUR RIGHTS AND ARGUING WITH OTHERS. THE KEY TO TRUE FREEDOM IS TO PRACTICE TAQWA, AND RESTRAIN OUR DESIRES.**
- When Banu Israel faced oppression from Firaun, Musa (peace be upon him) did not tell them to protest or do demonstrations. Instead, he told them to seek help from Allah and be patient.
- When faced with the temptations of this life such as wealth, power and position, have taqwa. Qarun did not restrain himself with his wealth and indulged excessively in his finery, creating envy among people, and causing corruption.
- Be patient and have taqwa. Do not seek 'a high standing' in front of people nor spread corruption with your wealth. The good end is for those who control themselves. On your path of dawah (calling people to Allah), you will be tested with both the good and the evil.

We must have taqwa in all demonstrations We must have taqwa in all situations. If we follow our desires, we will fail. If you control your desires, you will succeed. Allah told the Prophet ﷺ to command his family to offer prayer and to be patient on it. This is taqwa.

Never think that anyone can succeed by following their desires, and crossing the boundaries set by Allah. Remember that the good end is always for those who have Taqwa.

GOOD & EVIL CAN NEVER BE EQUAL

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): ‘Not equal are Al-Khabith (all that is evil and bad as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.) and At-Taiyib (all that is good as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.)’”
(*Surah Al-Ma'idah*, 5:100)

A ground rule for us to be able to differentiate between the good and the bad, with regards to utterances, actions, beliefs and behavior.

WHAT DOES الْخَبِيثُ (EVIL) MEAN?

It is something that is hated due to its despised nature, whether it is tangible such as food and drink or intangible such as belief, utterances and actions. Al khabeeth is not loved by Allah nor is He pleased with it, and it ultimately leads to the place of evil, the hellfire.

WHAT DOES الطَّيِّبُ (GOOD) MEAN?

It is something that is loved and approved due to its pure nature, whether tangible or intangible. At-tayyib is all what Allah loves and is pleased with and ultimately leads to the place of the pure, Paradise. It includes the obligations, recommended actions, and all the beloved utterances, belief, behaviors and deeds.

The khabeeth and the tayyib can **NEVER BE EQUAL**.

Disbelief is **NOT EQUAL** to belief.

Disobedience is **NOT EQUAL** to obedience.

Evil deeds are **NOT EQUAL** to good deeds.

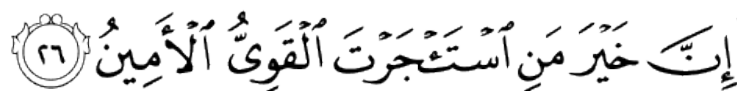
We recognize this fact due to our innate human nature.

- Allah tells us this to motivate us to do all the acts that are tayyib, even though the majority are amazed by the khabeeth.
- There may be some pleasure in doing the khabeeth but what follows it, is misery and deprivation. As for doing the tayyib, you taste constant pleasure and joy.

- Allah is **AT-TAYYIB** and He does not accept except that which is tayyib.
- Never be impressed by the majority. Some of the messengers had few or no followers though they were tayyib. Whereas, Firaun had a lot of followers though he was khabeeth.

Be pleased with the tayyib and do all that is good.

CHOOSING THE BEST ONE TO HIRE



“Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy.”
(*Surah Al-Qasas*, 28:26)

This ayah mentions the story of Musa (peace be upon him). When he went to Madyan after his escape from Egypt, he saw two women hesitant to fetch water amongst the group of men. He helped them out of his good character. One of the two women called him to meet their father, and advised her father to hire him as the best one to hire is the strong and trustworthy.

THE 2 BEST QUALITIES NEEDED TO HIRE SOMEONE FOR A SPECIFIC JOB AND POSITION

- **STRENGTH IN THE FIELD OF WORK.** Do not hire someone who is incapable and incompetent in the job they are being hired for.
- **TRUSTWORTHY IN PERFORMANCE.** He must be someone whom you trust.
 - Jibreel (peace be upon him) had the honorable position of being the messenger of all the messengers. He is responsible for delivering the revelation. Allah describes him as being strong in carrying the commands of Allah and trustworthy (*Surah At-Takwir*, 81:19-21).
 - Yusuf (peace be upon him) told the king to make him in charge of the finances and treasury. His said he would guard the money and was knowledgeable in this field (*Surah Yusuf*, 12:55).
 - Suleiman (peace be upon him) asked his army to bring the throne of Bilqees from the Kingdom of Saba. One of the Ifreet from the jinns (ifreet are strong jinns) said he would bring it as he was strong in carrying this command and trustworthy in doing his job! (*Surah An-Naml*, 27:38-39).

STRENGTH MEANS TO HAVE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCY IN THE FIELD OF WORK AND TRUSTWORTHINESS COMES FROM PIETY AND FEARING ALLAH.

To have both these qualities is very rare. If you cannot find someone with both of these qualities, then hire someone closest to these qualifications. Imam

Ahmad was asked who amongst two men should be chosen for the army, the strong sinner or the weak pious person? He said the strong sinner as his strength was good for the Muslims overall, whereas his sins were harmful to himself alone.

May Allah make us strong and trustworthy. Ameen.

EVIL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ONE WHO PLOTS

وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ

“But the evil plot encompasses only him who makes it.”
(*Surah Faatir, 35:43*)

THIS IS A RULE TO WARN THOSE WHO PLOT AGAINST OTHERS.

- If a person plots against another then the plot will come back to him. He will harm no one except himself. This is the way of Allah, and there is no change or alteration in the way of Allah.
- The brothers of Yusuf (peace be upon him) plotted against Yusuf (peace be upon him) because their father loved him the most. Jealousy can lead one to plot against others, even one's own family. The brothers wanted to separate Yusuf (peace be upon him) from his father, but the opposite happened. The father still loved him and in the end Yusuf (peace be upon him) had the upper hand.
- Banu Israel plotted to kill Isa (peace be upon him) but Allah raised Isa (peace be upon him) and placed the features of Isa (peace be upon him) on the face of the one who plotted against him. So, he was crucified instead.
- The Quraish plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ. They waited outside the door to kill him but when he came out of his house, Allah put a covering on their eyes and they could not see him.

REMEMBER THAT WHEN WE DEAL WITH PEOPLE, WE ARE ACTUALLY DEALING WITH ALLAH. When you are generous to people, Allah will be Generous with you. When you are merciful to people, Allah will be Merciful to you. When you pardon people, Allah Pardons you.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- Do not plot against anyone. Plotting against anyone is a sign of a wicked heart that is full of jealousy and hatred. When you plot against others you are putting yourself in a trap.

- Do not support anyone who plots because you will be included in this crime.

IF SOMEONE PLOTS AGAINST YOU, HOW SHOULD YOU REACT?

Ask Allah to strengthen you with patience as it is a provision from Him alone. This is a solution to face all the negativities in your life. A strong believer is not grieved by the actions of others as he knows that Allah grants victory to those who are patient and those who rely on Him alone.

*Remember: whoever does good, does so for his own benefit
and whoever does evil, does so only against himself.*

QISAS

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ

“And there is (a saving of) life for you in Al-Qisas
(the Law of Equality in punishment)”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:179*)

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF AL QISAS?

Al Qisas is ‘the law of equality’ in punishment as prescribed by Allah. It dictates that the murderer should be killed by law. If the murderer is pardoned by the family of the killed, then it should be done with goodness and without transgression(fairness).

THIS IS A SOLID AND STRUCTURED RULE TO ESTABLISH A JUST SOCIETY. Life is not free from transgression and oppression. We need these rules to know how to deal with people of different nature and temperaments.

- A country that follows this law of equality has a lower rate of murder than a country that does not. This is true in the case of Muslim countries who apply this law.
- Life is a trust given to us by Allah. Everyone's life is honorable as with it, we can fulfill our goal to achieve Paradise.
- Your life is a trust from Allah. Honor it! The one who commits suicide has committed a big crime and will be punished in the same way as he killed himself, in hell fire.
- Islam is against violence and oppression. This law helps to remove these crimes.
- In Al Qisas, there is life. Only those who have insight and true understanding can see the great wisdom behind this law.
- Al Qisas helps one to have taqwa. It stops one from committing murder out of fear of the consequences.
- Al Qisas is a means of consolation to the family of the one killed. If there was no such law, the family members may commit transgression out of anger.

Al Qisas protects the society from the chaos of people taking revenge on an individual basis. This law should be implemented by the government (the one in authority) and not by individuals.

The laws of Islam bring peace and protection in society. Indeed, there is life in al Qisas.

ALLAH HONORS WHOMEVER HE WILLS

وَمَنْ يُهِنِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ مُكْرِمٍ

“And whomsoever Allah disgraces, none can honour him.”
(*Surah Al-Hajj, 22:18*)

This is an established rule of justice and recompense which means a rule of justice as Allah humiliates a person only because of his own evil doing. Honor and humiliation is from Allah alone. He honors and humiliates whomever He Wills based on His Perfect Knowledge and Wisdom. We all seek honor and love to be honored.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE FOR HONOR?

The entire universe around us prostrates to Allah in submission. When we worship Allah, and submit to Him alone, when our heart prostrates and surrenders to Allah - this is the real honor.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE FOR HUMILIATION?

When our heart does not submit to our Creator and is divided and split apart with shirk (associating partners with Allah). The real humiliation is when the universe around us submits to its Creator and man does not, such a person is the worst of creation, and most disgraced of all. How can we expect respect from people when we do not respect the laws of Allah?

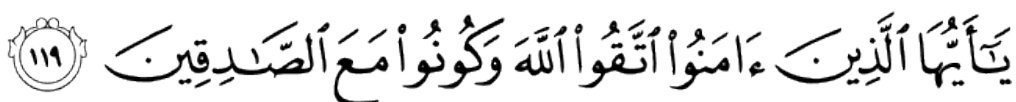
- Honor comes from taqwa. A person who has taqwa will be honored and praised by Allah.
- Humiliation comes from shirk and disobedience. Don't blame people when they don't respect you. Account yourself!
- Our heart shows our worth as it is the place of ibadah (worship). If it is covered with sins then it shows that the person has no value.
- Sins remove the honorable reputation of a person.

SEEK HONOR FROM THE OWNER OF HONOR. Do not waste your time and energy seeking honor from the creation. Seek honor by doing good deeds and

being steadfast on the straight path. Seek the protection of Allah from disgrace by refraining from shirk, disbelief and sins.

*May Allah honor us with obedience and
never disgrace us because of our sins. Ameen.*

BE WITH THE TRUTHFUL ONES



“O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds).”

(Surah At-Tawbah, 9:119)

This verse was revealed after the mention of the three believers who did not participate in the battle of Tabook. When a believer commits a sin, he feels as if the entire earth has tightened around him. Whereas when a hypocrite commits a sin, he feels as if he has done nothing wrong. Allah will guide the believer to repent and will accept his repentance. This is a well established rule that teaches man manners with his Creator and with the creation.

OUR WAY OF DEALING SHOULD ALWAYS REFLECT OUR TAQWA, AS WE ARE NOT ONLY DEALING WITH PEOPLE, BUT RATHER WE ARE DEALING WITH ALLAH.

- When you deal with taqwa and are with the truthful ones, you will be saved in this life and next.
- When you deal with taqwa and are with the truthful ones, you will have a sound and healthy social life. Lying and cheating can never bring any goodness.
- When you are not swayed by your desires and have truthful companions, it is a proof of your strong willpower and lofty goals. It is also a proof of sound judgement and strong willpower. Whereas those who follow their desires and are with liars, this indicates poor judgement and weakness in their character.

TRUTHFULNESS IS IN:

- **SPEECH:** When you say something, it is based on the truth and reflects reality, it also includes saying what you mean.
- **ACTIONS:** When you do something, you are sincere.
- **CONDITION:** You are living for the truth. You are always in a state of truthfulness.

WHEN YOU ARE TRUTHFUL:

- You are on the path of those whom Allah has favored, such as the Messengers.
- You have Allah's aid and support. Allah will subject the means to give you victory in this life and next.
- You are walking towards the path of Paradise.
- You will be saved on the Day of Judgement.
- You will be worthy of Allah's forgiveness. Start by being truthful in your speech and surround yourself with the truthful ones.

May Allah grant us taqwa and a truthful tongue. Ameen.

THE REWARD FOR THE MUHSINEEN (GOOD DOERS)

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ
أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“Verily, he who fears Allah with obedience to Him (by abstaining from sins and evil deeds, and by performing righteous good deeds), and is patient, then surely, Allah makes not the reward of the Muhsinun (good-doers - see V.2:112) to be lost.” (*Surah Yusuf, 12:90*)

This is an established rule that shows how Allah deals with His creation. The secret ingredients to be amongst the Muhsineen (those who excel in goodness) is: **TAQWA & SABR**.

- Taqwa is when one is obedient and leaves the prohibitions out of love, fear and hope of Allah.
- Sabr (patience) is to be steadfast on what Allah and His messenger prescribed.

When both taqwa and Sabr are mentioned together, taqwa is to do the commands and Sabr is to abstain from the prohibitions. Sometimes we may have taqwa but not patience. We may do the commands or refrain from sinning but complain from within.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

YUSUF (PEACE BE UPON HIM) FACED TWO TYPES OF OPPRESSION:

1. When his brothers threw him in the well and took him from a state of freedom to slavery. This was forced on him, and not of his choice.
2. When he had to choose to either commit a sin with the wife of Azeez or to go to jail, he chose to leave the sin and remained patient on his decision. Yusuf (peace be upon him) faced both situations with taqwa and patience but which one required a higher level of taqwa and sabr? The second case as it was out of his choice. When you choose to become a Muslim, to wear hijab, to pray or you choose to leave something forbidden such as haraam income, and then remain patient on it, this is a greater level of taqwa and Sabr.

TRAIN YOURSELF TO HAVE TAQWA AND PATIENCE IN ALL THE SITUATIONS YOU FACE, WHETHER BY FORCE OR CHOICE. If you are faced with a decree such as being afflicted with envy, which is not out of your choice, how should you react? Train yourself to have taqwa and to be patient.

And indeed, Allah will not lose the reward of the muhsineen.

ENTERING THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR

وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا

“So enter houses through their proper doors”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:189*)

It was a practice of the mushrikeen (those who commit shirk) to enter from the back door of their homes when they returned from travel. They thought this was a sign of righteousness. However, righteousness is when you have taqwa. This is the correct (front) door.

Do not resort to back doors in your life. The back door is when you follow your desires and this leads to failure. The front door is to have taqwa and this lead to success.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

We all desire Paradise, so we need to work towards it through the proper door:

1. **DO YOUR DEEDS WITH AL IKHLAAS (SINCERELY FOR ALLAH ALONE) AND ACCORDING TO THE SUNNAH.** These are the front doors that are the quickest way to attain Paradise and Allah's pleasure. Whereas shirk and bidah are the back doors. They lead to nothing but failure.
2. **FOR ANY MATTER YOU SEEK, OF THE DEEN OR DUNYA, GO THROUGH ITS PROPER DOOR.** Go to the person in authority; go to the one who has knowledge; go to the one responsible. Don't use back doors to get your work done.
3. **CLOSE THE DOOR TO CHEATING.** Cheating is the back door. It cannot bring any goodness. Never think that cheating can bring you any good. You may attain some temporary benefits but it will never bring you success.
4. **WHEN YOU SEEK KNOWLEDGE OR PROVISION, ATTAIN IT THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR.** Take knowledge from the learned people. Don't seek it simply from "google search" or any websites. Acquire knowledge from the correct authentic means.
5. **WHEN SEEKING PROVISION, STRUGGLE AND WORK HARD FOR IT.** Don't look for forbidden shortcuts to earn your living.

6. **CONFRONT PEOPLE FROM THE FRONT DOOR.** If you face an issue, talk directly to the person responsible. Do not spread rumors and ill feelings by involving others and talking about it in his absence. These are back doors. Be brave and talk directly to the person involved. Do not encourage others to make you the backdoor to an issue. Also, talk to everyone according to their level. For instance, you need to talk to the children according to what suits them.

THE PROPER DOOR MEANS STARTING FROM YOURSELF. A man complained to Ibn Jawzi about his wife disrespecting and hating him. Ibn Jawzi replied saying that his complaint was the back door to the solution. Instead he told him to account himself, seek forgiveness and repent. Do not complain about people disrespecting and insulting you. Unlock the solution by seeking forgiveness for your sins as you do not know which sin of yours is causing others to disrespect you.

Enter from the front door for every matter and you will attain success.

STRIVE FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا

“As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allah's Religion - Islamic Monotheism).”
(*Surah Al-Ankaboot, 29:69*)

In life, we are being tested for our faith. When we say we believe, are we being truthful in our claim or are we lying to ourselves and others? When we are blessed with provision, do we believe that it is from Allah, Ar-Razzaq, the All-Provider? When the provision is cut off from us, do we still believe and turn to Allah to provide for us? We are tested with our children, husband, parents and beloved ones. We are even tested with our enemies.

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

“Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested.” (*Surah Al-Ankaboot, 29:2*)

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION? HOW CAN WE BE TRUTHFUL IN OUR CLAIM?

We need to struggle and push ourselves to show our truthfulness. We need to strive to be patient, grateful, to trust in Allah and turn to Him. Our struggle must be for Allah alone. Some struggle but for the sake of others or themselves and some are sincere but do not struggle. Do not just leave yourself in these trials without struggling and going beyond your comfort zone.

Faith is not just mere words. It is a trust and comes with obligations and responsibilities. The more faith you have, the more you will be tested to be purified and elevated. If you are truthful, you will strive. If you are a liar, you will neither strive nor be sincere.

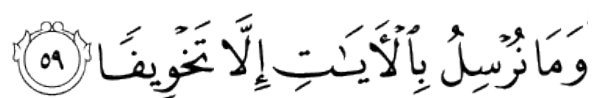
- We must struggle against our evil nafs to overcome jealousy, greed, pride and other kinds of sicknesses of the heart.
- We must struggle against our desires, and whispers of shaytan.

- We must struggle not to get attached to the glitters of this life.

When you struggle, you will be guided. But when you are easy with yourself, you will not be guided. Sins stop us from struggling against ourselves. Seek forgiveness abundantly and Allah will give you the energy to strive and struggle.

Seeking forgiveness is the master key to guidance and success.

THE SIGNS OF ALLAH



“And We sent not the signs except to warn, and to make them afraid (of destruction).” (*Surah Al-Israa', 17:59*)

This rule shows us the way of Allah. Allah does not send us "ayaat" (clear signs that shows the Oneness of Allah) except to warn us and make us fear the wrath of Allah. We are surrounded by numerous signs of Allah such as the day and night, the rain from the sky, the creation of human, the relationship between husband and wife.

There are different types of signs such as the universal signs, the miracles of the Messengers, calamities such as earthquakes, storms, floods, deadly plagues and other such signs. We are constantly surrounded by the ayaat from Allah.

The only reason why Allah sends us these ayaat is to make us fear Him so we may return to Him. This is a beneficial fear that pushes us to move forward in seeking forgiveness and doing good deeds.

IF WE FEEL SECURE FROM ALLAH'S PUNISHMENT, WE WILL NOT MOVE FORWARD. If the signs of Allah do not make us to return to Him then this shows a hardened heart, a heart that is nearing its death. May Allah protect us!

CHECK YOURSELF. When you see a great sign such an eclipse, volcanoes, hurricanes and floods, what is your reaction?

Many explain these signs with tangible, scientific facts and this can weaken our tawheed. The purpose behind these signs is not to be amazed by them or merely explain their occurrence through scientific reasoning. The reason why Allah sends us these ayaat is to make us seek forgiveness and return to Him.

It is understood by Ibn Mas'ud that these ayat are a blessing for us as the fear they instill in us helps us to return to Allah, and this is good for us. The next time you see an unusual great universal sign of Allah, remember it's only purpose is to warn us and fear the wrath and punishment of Allah.

May Allah make these ayaat a blessing for us and not a proof against us on the day of Judgement. Ameen.

VERIFY NEWS FROM A FASIQ (EVIL DOER)

إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا

“If a rebellious evil person comes to you with a news, verify it”
(*Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:6*)

This rule is one of the principles for good manners. It gives us the criteria of how to make a judgement upon receiving news. If the news is from a **FASIQ**, we must verify it first before accepting or rejecting it.

WHO IS A FASIQ?

It refers to the one who commits big sins openly, such as drinking alcohol in public.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO VERIFY THE NEWS?

Allah does not ask us to confirm the news but to verify it (التبين). To **CONFIRM** news means to know whether it took place or not. To **VERIFY** news means to know the reality behind it, to know why it occurred.

For example, if you heard that someone ate during the day in Ramadan, you are not told to simply confirm it, but to verify why he ate in the first place? Perhaps he was a traveler or sick.

NEWS FROM A JUST, TRUSTWORTHY AND PIOUS PERSON IS ACCEPTABLE WITHOUT VERIFICATION.

This rule covers a beautiful principle on how to deal well with people even if they openly commit evil. Do not turn away or reject someone, even a fasiq.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- **THINK GOOD OF PEOPLE.** This attitude can open hearts of people towards goodness. Do not be hasty in broadcasting news to others. The news can come from a person or any other means (such as social media).
- **VERIFY BEFORE SPREADING IT.** This is especially critical when it is regarding the Qur'an and Sunnah. Verify the ayah and Hadith and do not spread it if you are in doubt.
- **DON'T BE A TOOL OF SPREADING SLANDER AND NEGATIVITY ABOUT PEOPLE.** On the Day of Judgement, we will be accountable for what we spread and the rights of people will weigh heavy on us. To spread news without verifying can lead to severe consequences, especially if it is against scholars.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا
بِجَهْلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

“O you who believe! If a rebellious evil person comes to you with a news, verify it, lest you harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful to what you have done.”

(Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:6)

THE ONES WHO PURIFY THEMSELVES

وَمَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ

“And he who purifies himself (from all kinds of sins),
then he purifies only for the benefit of his ownself.”

(*Surah Faatir, 35:18*)

This is a profound rule that has a deep impact on the life of a believer. It tells us no one will carry the load of another's sins. Each one of us will be held responsible for what we earn in this life. When we purify ourselves, we are the ones who benefit from it. When we corrupt ourselves, we are the ones who are harmed by it.

The place of *At-Tazkiyah* (purification) is the heart. If the heart is pure, it will give the right signals to all our limbs, and if it is corrupt, it will give evil signals to all our limbs.

AT-TAZKIYAH INVOLVES 2 OPERATIONS OF THE HEART WHICH OCCUR SIDE BY SIDE

1. **REMOVAL:** Purification of any kind of sickness of the heart.
2. **REPLACEMENT:** Increment and growth with praiseworthy manners. You grow with tazkiyah, that is with praiseworthy manners.

Some examples:

- Removal of *ar-riyaa* (seeking people's praise) and replacing it with *ikhlaas* (sincerity).
- Removal of arrogance and replacing it with humbleness.
- Removal of lying and cheating and replacing these with truthfulness and honesty.
- Removal of plotting and replacing it with advising others in goodness.

When you really purify yourself by removal and replacement, you are the one who benefits.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AT-TAZKIYAH FROM THE QUR'AN

1. In *Surah Al-Shams*, Allah swears by 11 things for this verse: "He has succeeded who purifies it. And he has failed who instills it [with corruption]."
2. Musa (peace be upon him) called on Fir'aun to purify himself. (*Surah An-Naziat*, 79:18)
3. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) invoked Allah for a messenger to be among his offspring who would recite Allah's verses to the people, teach them the book and wisdom and purify them: "Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own (and indeed Allah answered their invocation by sending Muhammad Peace be upon him), who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:129)

HOW CAN I DO TAZKIYAH AL NAFS (PURIFICATION OF THE SELF)?

- Build on your Tawheed.
- Ponder over the Qur'an.
- Remember Allah much.
- Perform obligatory and voluntary prayers especially the night prayers.
- Account yourself.
- Remember death and the Day of Judgement.
- Read about the life of the messengers and the companions.

& FINALLY INCREASE IN MAKING DU'AA

اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، زَكَّاهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا

"O Allah! Grant me the sense of piety and purify my soul as you are the best to purify it, You are its Guardian and Protecting Friend." (*Riyad As-Saliheen, Muslim, Book 17, Hadith 1479*)

DO NOT CHEAT PEOPLE

وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ

“And defraud not people by reducing their things”
(*Surah Ash-Shu'ara*, 26:183)

This is a golden rule that dictates fair dealing with people. If you implement it, you will be at peace with others and will not wait for accountability in the *Qantara* (a station in the hereafter where the rights of people will be settled).

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- Be fair in your dealings with people. Do not take more than what you deserve from people nor give people less than what they deserve. Your gain should not be at the cost of another. Deal with others in a win to win situation.
- This a general rule that is not only with the regards to money but includes the rights of people.

HOW DOES ONE DEAL UNFAIRLY WITH PEOPLE?

- With **TANGIBLE RIGHTS** such as wealth, land, property. Do not purchase something of high value for a cheap and low price.
- With **INTANGIBLE RIGHTS** such as not fulfilling the rights of parents, husband, the one in authority, friends, or believers in general. Deal with people in way that you love be dealt with. Respect others as you like to be respected. Don't cheat or oppress others as you hate to be cheated or oppressed.

WHY ARE WE UNFAIR WITH OTHERS?

- **ENMITY**. Enmity and hatred for someone can lead us to be unjust in fulfilling their rights. Don't let your emotions dictate how you deal with others.
- **LOVE FOR DUNYA AND INNER GREED**.

- **SELFISHNESS AND ONLY THINKING ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL GAIN.** When the husband and wife only think about their own rights, it can create many problems in their marriage. We need to think as "we" and not "I". Remember that life is a test. No one leaves this world taking all his rights. If you have been oppressed, ask Allah for your rights. Do not lower yourself by demanding rights from the people.
- **SEEING THE FAULTS OF PEOPLE.** Just because of one mistake, we must not cancel out all the good someone has done for us in the past. Do not forget the favors of people nor focus on their mistakes. When you view people from an angle of their mistakes, you can easily oppress them. Instead look at their goodness and appreciate the good they have done.

May Allah protect us from oppressing others and grant us noble manners. Ameen.

ALLAH HAS FULL KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR ENEMIES

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ

“Allah has full knowledge of your enemies”
(*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:45)

In this Ayah, Allah tells us about our enemies who purchase misguidance rather than guidance and wish to mislead us as well. This profound rule gives us so much console when faced with enmity. It is not important for us to know our enemies and their plots. It is sufficient that Allah knows them and what they do.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF ENEMIES:

APPARENT ENEMIES:

- Disbelievers who publicly declare their hatred for you.
- Iblis who is labeled in the Qur'an as our clear enemy.

HIDDEN ENEMIES:

The hypocrites who are double-faced as they show they are Muslims, but hate and betray them in secret. These are the worst enemies. Allah describes their enmity in a form that is defined (العدو) and gives us detailed and clear descriptions of their traits.

You may not know them but it is sufficient that Allah knows about them. Do not be deceived by your enemies as their prime goal is to mislead you.

HOW CAN I WIN OVER MY ENEMIES?

Truly believe that:

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

“Allah has full knowledge of your enemies, and Allah is Sufficient as a Wali (Protector), and Allah is Sufficient as a Helper.” (*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:45)

- **SUFFICIENT IS ALLAH AS YOUR GUARDIAN.** Allah is the One who takes care of all your affairs and He is the One who brings all the goodness to you.
- **SUFFICIENT IS ALLAH AS THE ONE WHO GRANTS YOU VICTORY.** Even if your enemies are hidden and plotting against you, Allah will expose them and protect you from all their evil.

Your happiness is when Allah brings you all the good and protects you from all the evil. Don't fear your enemies. Indeed, sufficient is Allah as your Guardian and Grantor of victory.

ALLAH IS SUFFICIENT FOR THE ONE WHO TRUSTS HIM

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

“And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him.”
(*Surah At-Talaaq*, 65:3)

This rule is based on faith as it shows how much you believe in Allah.

WHAT IS TAWAKKUL?

Tawakkul means to depend on Allah with complete trust. You may depend on someone but not trust him or may trust someone but cannot depend on him. To Allah belongs the highest example and to Him belongs our complete trust.

YOU DEPEND ON ALLAH FOR THREE MATTERS:

1. To bring you benefit (such as provisions, knowledge, health).
2. To avert harm from you (such as sickness, calamity).
3. To do what Allah commands you to do (prayer, fasting, dhikr).

You trust that Allah will make it easy for you to do the above. For instance, don't depend on yourself to fast. Depend on Allah and trust Him that He will help you do it. This rule comes after the mention of divorce. When there is a separation, people tend to follow their desires (and not the laws of Allah) and trust the means around them. Both *taqwa* and *tawakkul* are needed in a divorce. *Tawakkul* is mentioned here as a warning to both husband and wife to not transgress out of hatred towards one another. It is also a console to the one who is following the laws but is oppressed by the his/her spouse.

PERFECT TAWAKKUL MEANS TO TAKE THE MEANS WHILST RELYING ON ALLAH

Take the means but do not rely on them, rather rely on Allah alone. For example, I will take the means to nurture my child but I depend only on Allah.

TAWAKKUL IS NEEDED IN ALL MATTERS OF OUR LIFE

THE PLACES WHERE TAWAKKUL IS MENTIONED IN THE QUR'AN ARE:

- For victory and relief. (*Surah Aali-'Imran*, 3:160)
- When turning away from the enemy. (*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:81)
- To fix relations between people. When there is a conflict between people, don't depend on yourself but on Allah alone to fix it. (*Surah Al-Anfaal*, 8:61)
- When people turn away and forsake you, don't run behind the people but rely on Allah. (*Surah At-Tawbah*, 9:129)
- When a decree befalls you. (*Surah At-Tawbah*, 9:51)
- If your enemy plots against you, don't fear him but depend on Allah.
- To attain Firdaus al 'Alaa (the highest place in Paradise), rely on Allah and not your worship.
- To Worship Allah, rely on Him and do not depend on yourself. (*Surah Hud*, 11:123)
- For guidance, be sure that **ONLY** Allah is the One who can guide you.

IF YOU WANT ALLAH TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, RELY ON HIM ALONE

We need to first and foremost rely on Allah to attain Paradise and His pleasure. People may do tawakkul for worldly related matters (dunya) such as marriage, and earning money but when it comes to worshipping Allah and attaining His love, they don't depend on Him but on themselves. May Allah forgive us!

NOTE: If you are going through a period of high faith and energy, do not be heedless from relying on Allah. Rely only on Allah's might and power and not on your strength. Whether we have the means or not, we must feel and believe that truly everything is from Allah alone.

May Allah help us to do tawakkul and make us amongst the 70,000 people who will enter Paradise without reckoning. Ameen.

LIVING HONORABLY WITH PEOPLE

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

“And live with them honourably.”

(*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:19)

A beautiful rule on how to deal with people, especially the women and those close to you. It is a very practical rule for our social life. In this Ayah, Allah addresses the men to deal with their wives with goodness, despite the problems and conflicts that may arise between them. Women are fragile and sensitive and they need to be treated with kindness regardless of the situation. In the times of ignorance, women were degraded and treated as a piece of furniture. Indeed there is no religion that honors women more than Islam. This rule is based on our faith. If we believe in it, we will apply it.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

The tests and situations we face in this life are to reform us. Hence, we will surely encounter people who are different from us and neither can we expect all the people to be good or perfect. If that was the case, we would be in Paradise. We are here to be tested, especially with people and more so with those close to us. Although this rule is for the dealing with one's wife, it can be applied to everyone such as parents, children, relatives and friends and more so to those weaker than us such as the house helpers and drivers.

عَاشِرُوهُنَّ comes from the word عَشَرَ which means “ten.” The number ten indicates completion and perfection. Just as the number 10 is a complete number, the husband and wife and the family should complete each other as one perfect unit.

HOW SHOULD WE DEAL WITH OUR HOUSEHOLD?

With مَعْرُوف – which means something that is known and acceptable as good behavior. This varies from culture to culture.

HOW CAN THE HUSBAND DEAL WITH HIS WIFE WITH معروف ؟

- With regards to Mahr, to give her what is known and acceptable in one's culture.
- Spend on her.
- If he has more than one wife, be fair in dealing with each one of the wives.
- Do not harm her with words nor with actions.
- Do not frown at her.

A beautiful practical rule to bring peace and harmony in the family and in the society.

THE PROMISE OF ALLAH

وَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ

“And Allah fails not His Promise.”

(*Surah Al-Hajj, 22:47*)

This profound rule is based on faith and is deeply connected with the our experience in our lives. This rule came after the mentioning of the destroyed nations who had belied their Messengers. Allah destroyed them because of their disbelief. This was a lesson and warning for the disbelievers of the Quraish. However, instead of taking heed, they asked the Prophet ﷺ that if he was indeed truthful then why weren't they afflicted by Allah's punishment?

INDEED, THE PROMISE OF ALLAH IS TRUE. VICTORY WILL SURELY COME TO THE BELIEVERS, BUT AT ITS SPECIFIC TIME AND THROUGH CERTAIN MEANS.

As we come closer to the Day of Judgement, we are experiencing rapid changes around the globe, and this may arise doubts about the promises of Allah. The truth is that nothing in this life is random. There is a reason behind everything that happens. This rule is a warning for the disbelievers who mock and make fun of the deen(religion) and a console for the believers. We must believe in the unseen promises of Allah more than what we see with our own eyes. We may not see the results of Allah's promises but we need to believe without a doubt that Allah will fulfill these at a stated time and through certain means.

THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES OF THE PROMISES OF ALLAH IN THE QUR'AN

- When you have taqwa, Allah promises that He will make a way out for you in every situation. (*Surah At-Talaq, 65:2-3*)
- When you make du'aa, Allah promises that He will respond. (*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186*)
- When you are grateful to Allah, Allah promises that He will increase you in favors and blessings. (*Surah Ibrahim, 14:7*)
- We should never doubt the actions of Allah, but should be greatly concerned about our own actions.

PONDER & REFLECT

What are we doing to attain these promises? The actions of Allah are perfect, whereas our actions are deficient and full of faults.

WHY THEN DO WE NOT HAVE CERTAINTY IN THE PROMISES OF ALLAH?

This is because of our attachment to the dunya. Promises of Allah are intangible, unseen. People who are attached to the dunya primarily believe in what they see. They believe for instance, "If I meet so and so I will get the job. If I do a certain treatment, I will get cured." They don't see Allah, so their certainty in Him is very weak. The more we are attached to this dunya, the weaker our certainty in the promises of Allah. When we believe in Allah's promise, we will understand that they are fulfilled by the Wisdom and Will of Allah. We are in no position to assign a time limit of when these promises should be fulfilled. This is misbehaving with Allah. You may go through a tough phase of trials and may feel that you cannot take it anymore. When you reach the bottleneck, hold on to your faith, as this is when the relief from Allah is near.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلاَ إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ﴿٢١٤﴾

"Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, 'When (will come) the Help of Allah?' Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near!" (*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:214*)

DO NOT FORGET YOUR SHARE OF THE WORLD

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا

“But seek, with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and forget not your portion of legal enjoyment in this world”
(*Surah Al-Qasas, 28:77*)

This rule teaches us how to attain the balance in deen and dunya. Islam is a religion of moderation as it teaches us balance in how we eat, sleep and socialize. The problems we face in life are because of our imbalance in our actions. This rule solves and fixes shortcomings in our life and is a great measure of how we must deal with wealth, relationships, emotions etc. We shouldn't be too attached to matters of this life but neither can we detach ourselves from it. We need to adhere to the straight path as it is the path of balance.

This rule was revealed regarding Qaroon, who over indulged in his wealth, attributing it to his own knowledge and ability. This self adoration and pride led to his imbalance and ultimately his own destruction. He didn't attribute his blessings to Allah nor did he use them to benefit his akhirah(hereafter).

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

FOLLOW THESE FOUR PRINCIPLES:

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ

1.

SEEK THE AAKHIRAH FOR EVERYTHING ALLAH HAS BLESSED YOU WITH. Use your wealth, children, spouse, job, car and every blessing for the akhira. This is your goal. Imbalance is when you use the blessings only for this life and not invest in them for the akhira, our final abode.

2. وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا

DO NOT FORGET YOUR SHARE OF THE DUNYA. When Allah bestows His favors on us, we should not shun them thinking that depriving the self from the dunya will bring us closer to Allah. We learn from our beloved Prophet ﷺ that he would wear new clothes, adorn himself, mix with the people and he forbade his companions to fast constantly, or to remain unmarried. However, the Prophet ﷺ did this not out of his own desire but for the Pleasure of Allah. In a Hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said “Indeed Allah loves to see the results of His favors upon His slaves” (*Jami At-Tirmidhi, Vol 5, Book 41, Hadith 2819*)

We learn from this rule to not neglect the self, rather we should take care of the self and enjoy the blessings of Allah but in a balanced way, without overindulging in them and always attributing the blessings to Allah and increasing in gratitude to Him and seeking the akhira with the blessings.

3. وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ

BE GOOD TO PEOPLE, AS ALLAH HAS BEEN GOOD TO YOU. When you shower your child with love and care and fulfill his needs, he will grow up to be a balanced and a productive member in the society. And to Allah belongs the highest example. Allah showers us day and night with His favors and infinite bounties. Instead of being only at the receiving end we need to also give back to others. In fact, the more we are blessed with, the more we need to give back to others. Imbalance is when we hoard all the blessings and use them for dunya.

4. وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ

DON'T SPREAD CORRUPTION. Don't spoil your acts of goodness to others by following it with hurtful words and reminders of your favors on them.

DO NOT FOLLOW THE DESIRES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ

“Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you
(O Muhammad ﷺ) till you follow their religion.”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:120)

This rule is a warning for those who follow the desires of the People of the Book after clear knowledge has come to them. Those who do so will not find Allah as their Guardian or Helper. We need to believe in this rule with complete certainty as Allah is the All-Knower of what is in their hearts. Allah has disclosed what they hide from within, though they may show otherwise. One might think that by following their desires, they will be pleased and accept Islam. But Allah says that they will never be pleased until you follow their religion.

ALLAH HAS DIVIDED THE
MATTER INTO 2 PARTS:

We either:

1. FOLLOW ALLAH'S GUIDANCE.

قُلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ

“Verily, the Guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) Guidance.” (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:120)

2. FOLLOW THEIR DESIRES. If you do not follow the guidance of Allah, you will for sure follow your desires or other people's desires.
- Do not be deceived by the power and wealth of the People of the Book.
 - Distinguish between that which you can take from them and that of which you must reject.

For instance, you can benefit from their beneficial innovations in worldly matters, such as in technology, education, discoveries and other matters regarding the dunya.

However, when it comes to the deen, we cannot follow their ways. The pleasure of Allah and following the path of Islam should be our main concern and our goal, not whether the people are pleased with us or not.

Honor is when you follow the way of Islam. Humiliation is when you follow your other people's desires.

THE NEARNESS OF ALLAH WHEN WE INVOKE HIM

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ

“And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge).”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186*)

This rule is about the importance of making du’aa. It comes after the mention of fasting which shows the connection between fasting and du’aa i.e. a fasting person's du’aa is accepted. This beautiful rule shows us the nearness of Allah when a slave invokes Him.

There are 14 places in the Qur’an where it is mentioned “they ask you” and it's always followed by **قُلْ** (say), but in this verse, there is no **قُلْ** which shows us the direct connection between us and Allah. He hears and responds to our invocations without any mediators in between. When we make du’aa to Allah, we get the title of being among “His slaves.” Allah is close to everyone by His Hearing, Seeing and Knowledge but there is a special, deep closeness to those who make du’aa and worship Allah. Du’aa requires presence of the heart. Allah will not respond to a du’aa from a heedless heart. We need to feel that we are in desperate need of Allah and only He can answer our invocation. When we invoke Allah, Allah promises us that He will respond.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “There is no Muslim who does not offer any du’aa’ in which there is no sin or severing of family ties but Allah will give him one of three things in return: either He will answer his du’aa’ sooner, or he will store it up for him in the Hereafter, or He will divert an equivalent evil away from him because of it.” They said: “We will say a lot of du’a’.” He said: “Allah is more generous.” (*Narrated by Ahmad (10749), classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Targheeb wa'l-Tarheeb*)

The more du’aa you make, the closer you draw to Him, and the higher you rise in rank.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

- Don't be hasty for the response of your du'aa. Remember always, du'aa is not simply done to get a response, but it is an act of worship for which you will be rewarded. Du'aa shows our tawheed, our belief, our certainty and trust in Allah alone.
- Increase in making du'aa and make du'aa in all conditions, whether you are poor or rich, sick or healthy, happy or sad. Allah loves to hear our du'aa. If you don't make du'aa, it shows that you feel self-sufficient and not in need of Allah and His vast favors. Rather, we are in utter need of any good Allah gives us. We can't live without making du'aa. **MAKING DU'AA IS THE WAY TO RUSHD (رشد), A CLEAR AND DETAILED GUIDANCE TO REACH YOUR DESTINATION. YOU WILL NOT BE LOST IN THE CHALLENGES AND TRIALS OF THIS LIFE.**

Ibn Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said that guidance and success is when Allah does not leave you to trust yourself in any matter. Whereas, disappointment and failure is when you trust and rely on yourself.

Remember in Allah's Hands is all the goodness. Invoke to Allah with all your heart as a true slave, who is poor and in dire need of Him.

FEAR ALLAH AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

فَانْقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

“So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can”
(*Surah At-Taghabun, 64:16*)

This is a profound rule on how to deal with the daily affairs in our life. In the previous Ayah, Allah tells the believers that there are enemies from amongst their children and spouses. This means that they may weaken our faith and can be a cause for us to commit sins.

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

“Your wealth and your children are only a trial, whereas Allah! With Him is a great reward (Paradise).” (*Surah At-Taghabun, 64:15*)

Allah also mentions that the wealth and children are a fitnah (a test) for us. This shows that we need to be extra cautious and alert when dealing with money, spouse and children. We can't be totally attached to them nor can we neglect them.

HOW MUST I DEAL WITH WEALTH AND CHILDREN?

WITH TAQWA: If we follow our desires when dealing with our spouse, children and wealth, we may end up committing sins and cause many problems. Taqwa is a protection from the Anger of Allah by doing all that He has commanded us to do, and avoiding all that He has forbidden. We need to strive for Taqwa in every situation, to the best of our ability.

WHAT IS MODERATION?

Depending on the situation you face, you must fulfill the rights of taqwa. This is the obligatory level of taqwa, if you don't fulfill these three rights then you are not doing taqwa.

1. REMEMBER ALLAH, AND DON'T FORGET HIM (يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ فَلَا يَنْسَى): When you forget Allah you will follow your desires.
2. BE GRATEFUL TO ALLAH, AND NOT UNGRATEFUL TO HIM (يَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ فَلَا يَكْفُرُ): We need to be extra cautious of complaining and being ungrateful especially to our spouse and children.
3. OBEY ALLAH, AND DON'T DISOBEY HIM (يَطَاعُ اللَّهَ فَلَا يَعُصِي): When Allah tells you to obey your husband, you need to listen and obey. When Allah tells you to deal kindly with your wife, you need to listen and obey. When Allah tells you to be patient, you need to listen and obey.

You can make the following du'aa:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعْنِي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ، وَشُكْرِكَ، وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

“O Allah! Assist me in remembering You, in thanking You, and in worshipping You in the best of manners.” *(Sunan Abi Dawud 1522, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih)*

WHERE ELSE CAN WE APPLY THIS RULE?

- **HAJJ:** You need to perform it if you are physically and financially able.
- **PURIFICATION:** If water is not available perform tayammum instead of wudu or Ghusl.
- **PRAYER:** If you can't stand in prayer due to sickness, you can pray sitting or lying down (depending on your ability).
- **FASTING:** If you can't fast due to sickness, you need to make it up later or feed the poor (depending on the sickness).
- **ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL:** If you see an evil, change it with your hands, or tongue or deny it in your heart, depending on your position.
- **ZAKAH / SADAQAH:** you need to give it in line with the commandment / spend as much as you can, neither excessively nor with stinginess.
- **WHEN HIRING PEOPLE FOR WORK / WHETHER FOR DUNIYA OR DEEN:** It's best to hire a person who is strong and trustworthy, but if you cannot find one then the one closest to the above requirements.

Whether it is with regards to dealing with people or following the commands, you must have taqwa as much you are able. Have taqwa and purify yourself.

REMAIN FIRM ON THE STRAIGHT PATH

فَاسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ

“So stand (ask Allah to make) you (Muhammad ﷺ) firm and straight (on the religion of Islamic Monotheism)”
(*Surah Hud, 11:112*)

This is a profound rule that covers important concepts in a few words. In this ayah, Allah commands the Prophet ﷺ to remain firm on the deen. Similarly when we face any trial, we need to keep firm in our faith and deeds.

WHAT IS AL ISTIQAMAH?

It is to be on the straight path without exaggeration or negligence. It is the middle path, where one is not too easy or too hard on the self.

The Prophet ﷺ said that Surah Hud made his hair turn grey. There are about 10 places in the Surah where Allah firmly commands the Prophet ﷺ. This ayah is the backbone of Surah Hud. Al Istiqamah is to be steadfast on our religion and that is the straight path.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE UPRIGHT IN THE DEEN?

- **DO** all the obligations
- **LEAVE** all the prohibitions

AL ISTIQAMAH IS FIRMNESS IN THE HEART. When your heart is firm, your limbs will be firm. When you are shaky from within, your actions will reflect the same. Allah commands us to keep firm on the straight path. We don't want to start any project and then give it up. We must keep up the standard.

- The heart is the king and the limbs are its soldiers.
- The hypocrites fix their outer acts but their heart is corrupt.
- The key is to fix the heart and the rest will follow.

- No matter how high we may reach in faith and good deeds, we need to be reminded of istiqamah. The Prophet ﷺ, the greatest man who walked upon this earth, was reminded of it, so what about us?

HOW CAN I MAKE MY HEART STRAIGHT AND FIRM?

WITH TAWHEED: When everything you do is for Allah alone, your heart will be firm and upright. Your tongue is the spokesperson of your heart. It translates what is deeply hidden in your heart.

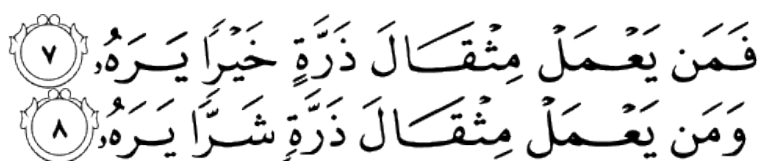
When your heart is upright, your tongue will be busy remembering Allah. When your heart and tongue are upright, you will attain happiness in this life and next.

فَأَسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَمَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٢﴾

“So stand (ask Allah to make) you (Muhammad ﷺ) firm and straight (on the religion of Islamic Monotheism) as you are commanded and those (your companions) who turn in repentance (unto Allah) with you, and transgress not (Allah's legal limits). Verily, He is All-Seer of what you do.” (*Surah Hud, 11:112*)

We ask Allah for this great favor.

ALL OUR DEEDS WILL BE RECOMPENSED



“So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it.”

(Surah Az-Zalzalah, 99:7-8)

This rule is a foundation of justice, accountability and recompense. This rule is mentioned in Surah Az-Zalzalah, which is about the final earthquake, the day the entire earth will shake. It talks about the horrors of the Day of Judgement. This final quake will bring out all the hidden treasures and bodies dug inside the earth. People will come out from their graves for accountability but before they see the results of their actions, they will see their own deeds.

ANYONE WHO DOES AN ATOM OF GOOD, WILL SEE IT.

ANYONE WHO DOES AN ATOM OF EVIL, WILL SEE IT.

In this life, we do not see our deeds as they are not tangible. But on the Day of Judgement, our eyesight will be extra sharp (beyond our imagination) and we will see our prayers, our fasts, our dhikr and all deeds, even the tiniest act of good or evil.

When the good doers are shown their deeds, they will see the vast mercy and favors of Allah. They will know that it was Allah alone who made them accomplish all their good deeds.

When the wicked doers are shown their deeds, they will see Allah's perfect justice. Allah did not wrong them but they wronged themselves.

The khair mentioned in the first ayah includes all the good deeds, from Ibadah, good character, fulfilling family relations, etc. The sharr includes all the evil deeds.

WHY WILL WE SEE OUR DEEDS? SO THAT WE WITNESS ALLAH'S VAST MERCY AND JUSTICE.

This rule teaches us never to underestimate even the smallest of deeds or the smallest of sins. Magnify every command and prohibition of Allah. Do not be heedless or careless.

To be able to magnify Allah, and His commands is from the great favors and bounties of Allah.

Remember you are dealing with Allah. When a good deed comes your way, such as removing a harmful thing from the road, go forward and do it. Don't regard it as a small deed. Likewise, don't be careless of committing small sins.

A believer whose heart is alive will be affected by even the smallest of sins, just as a drop of dirt on a white cloth is spotted immediately. A sin on a white pure heart is affected right away, and hence, it is quick in cleaning it with forgiveness and repentance. As for a black heart covered with sins, another stain of sin will not be noticed nor affected - even if it is big one. May Allah protect us.

This is why constant tawbah and istighfar (seeking forgiveness) are very important. You do not know which deed can be a means to take you to paradise and you do not know which sin can be a means to take you to hellfire.

Take the example of a woman who used to fast the days and pray at nights, but locked up a cat with no food and it ended up dying. Allah admitted her into hellfire for this evil act. Another woman spent her nights in prayer and her days fasting but harmed her neighbors by her tongue and as a result was thrown to hellfire. On the other hand, a prostitute gave water to a thirsty dog and as a result was forgiven and admitted to Paradise. Allah appreciated her little yet great deed (because of her sincerity). Similarly, a man removed a branch of a tree in the middle of the road to prevent harm to others and as a result was admitted to Paradise. These examples are with regards to how we deal with Allah's creation – including the animals.

MAGNIFY ALLAH & MAGNIFY HIS COMMANDS

For indeed:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ
وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

“So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it.” (*Surah Az-Zalzalah, 99:7-8*)

TURN TO ALLAH ALONE

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ۖ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ﴿٨﴾

“So when you have finished (from your occupation), then stand up for Allah's worship (i.e. stand up for prayer). And to your Lord (Alone) turn (all your intentions and hopes and) your invocations.”
(*Surah Al-Inshirah*, 94:7-8)

This profound rule is the key for disciplining ourselves. It comes after the mentioning of various blessings from Allah, the expansion of the heart, elevation in ranks, and the ease with the difficulty.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO AFTER WE ACCOMPLISH AN IMPORTANT TASK?

This rule teaches us that once we have completed an important task, we need to move on to another task and not slacken in our remembrance of Allah. Keep moving ahead, from one deed to another, from one task to another, seeking Allah's pleasure alone. The life of a Muslim is serious. We are not here to play around but to work and strive.

As Muslims we do enjoy periods for celebration, leisure and relaxation but all of this is to refresh and energize us for our next amal (task). Similar to when the end of Ramadan approaches, we need to continue our good deeds and work harder for other deeds, whether related to the affairs of the deen or dunya.

THE GOLDEN FORMULA IS:

*Before you do a deed, seek Allah's help.
After you do the deed, hope for His reward.
Our life is for Allah. We are created to work.*

We need to devote all our actions to Allah, with longing and yearning for His reward. We can't spend these precious moments of our life doing nothing. An idle mind is easily affected by whispers from shaytan and heedlessness. If you do not busy yourself with something good, you can easily fall into something harmful.

It is best to avoid people who sit idle and waste time, as they can have a bad influence on us. We need to accompany people who remember Allah, have taqwa and are busy devoting their time for Allah. Allah has created us in the best form, and subjected everything for us, so nothing but the best is required from us.

This rule teaches us not to procrastinate. Do not delay today's work for tomorrow. Be productive. The truthful ones used to feel ashamed when the work of today was the same as the day before. They wanted each day to be better than the previous day. There is always something better to do, and a higher goal to accomplish.

BE JUST IN ALL YOUR AFFAIRS

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ ❁

“Verily, Allah enjoins Al-Adl (i.e. justice and worshipping none but Allah Alone - Islamic Monotheism)”
(*Surah An-Nahl, 16:90*)

- Allah commands man to be just when fulfilling the rights of Allah and the rights of people.
- Justice is when you fulfill all the rights and obligations, whether it is between you and Allah or you and the people.
- Justice is obligatory upon us and Allah commands us to do it.
- Justice is a fortress that every fearful and oppressed person turns to.
- Justice is loved by everyone. Even an oppressor loves justice for himself.

Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said that justice is a collection of all good deeds whereas injustice is a collection of all evil deeds. Justice fixes our affairs in this life whereas corruption spoils it. When you are just, you protect yourself and others from harm. When you are imbalanced and unjust, you hurt yourself and others. This includes being just and balanced in your speech, eating, sleeping and relationships. Justice nurtures love between one another. It motivates others to obedience. Justice increases our wealth as Allah blesses it. Whereas, injustice causes corruption on earth. It corrupts the heart and the land.

JUSTICE IS REQUIRED BETWEEN:

- **CHILDREN:** When you are fair and just between them, they will grow up to be balanced and productive adults. Injustice amongst them instigates bad behavior and makes them rebellious. It is incumbent that wives are dealt with justly also.
- **WHEN EVALUATING THE PEOPLE:** For work or other matters, you should be just and objective.
- **WORSHIP:** Don't be negligent or extreme.
- **SPENDING:** Don't be a miser or extravagant.

JUSTICE IS BETWEEN TWO DISPRAISED CHARACTERS: *BEING NEGLIGENT AND EXCESSIVE.*

In addition to justice, Allah commands us to do ihsaan. This is not obligatory but recommended. When we do Ibadah and deal with people, we should not just do the bare minimum but should do to the best of our ability.

Allah forbids us to do fahsha (hateful and shameful acts related to people), munkar (sins) and transgression.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّتِي نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَا
تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخْلًا بَيْنَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِيَ أَرْبَى مِنْ
أُمَّةٍ إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَلِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ مَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ
تَخْلِفُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

“And be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun after it has become strong, by taking your oaths a means of deception among yourselves, lest a nation may be more numerous than another nation. Allah only tests you by this [i.e. who obeys Allah and fulfills Allah's Covenant and who disobeys Allah and breaks Allah's Covenant]. And on the Day of Resurrection, He will certainly make clear to you that wherein you used to differ [i.e. a believer confesses and believes in the Oneness of Allah and in the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ which the disbeliever denies it and that was their difference amongst them in the life of this world].” (*Surah An-Nahl, 16:92*)

Allah mentions a profound parable telling us not to undo a covenant after we have confirmed it. Our covenant with Allah continues till we meet Him. Do not spoil the beautiful fabric of faith and good deeds that you earned or allow one instance of careless behavior undo all what you did.

*May Allah keep us firm in doing justice and ihsaan
(excellence) and avoiding all the evils acts.*

THE CAUSE OF MISFORTUNE

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ فِيمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

“And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much. (See the Qur'an Verse 35:45).”
(*Surah Ash-Shuraa, 42:30*)

This rule shows us the reality that many people fail to realize or find it difficult to accept.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF PROBLEMS & CALAMITIES?

Any problem that we have faced, related to our health, wealth, family, job, house or any other affairs is because of what our hands have earned. This means that our sins appear in the form of calamities and problems. However, that's not the case for all sins. Allah pardons and overlooks most of our sins, and only some of the sins strike us with calamities. This is from His vast mercy. If Allah would seize us for all our sins, no one would remain on this earth.

WE NEED TO TRULY ADMIT THAT:

- Any problem that strikes us is because of our sins, even a headache. So, don't accuse anyone but yourself. Don't blame it on your spouse, parents, friends or even your enemies.
- Allah overlooks and pardons much.

ALLAH MENTIONS THIS FACT REPEATEDLY IN THE QUR'AN:

قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ

“Say (to them), ‘It is from yourselves (because of your evil deeds).’” (*Surah Aali-Imran, 3:165*)

وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ

“But whatever of evil befalls you, is from yourself.” (*Surah An-Nisaa*, 4:79)

تُصِيبَهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ

“A calamity should seize them for (the deeds) that their hands have sent forth” (*Surah Al-Qasas*, 28:47)

وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ

“And never would We destroy the towns unless the people thereof are Zalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, oppressors and tyrants).” (*Surah Al-Qasas*, 28:59)

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ

“Evil (sins and disobedience of Allah, etc.) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds, etc.)” (*Surah Ar-Room*, 30:41)

Sins do not only affect the person himself, but also pollute the universe. This is why seeking forgiveness constantly and profusely is so important as the consequences of sins can affect the whole environment. You will only accept this reality from Allah, your Rabb, your reformer.

فَمَنْ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ

‘If you find good then praise Allah, and if you find other than that (meaning any evil) then blame no one but himself.’ (*Part of a Hadith, Sahih Muslim 2577*)

When Abu Bakr As Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) asked the Prophet ﷺ to teach him a du‘aa, he told him the du‘aa below:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ظُلْمًا كَثِيرًا وَلَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، فَاعْفِرْ لِي مَغْفِرَةً مِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَارْحَمْنِي، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“O Allah, verily I have wronged myself much and there is None who forgives sins except You. Grant me forgiveness from You and have mercy on me for You are the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (*Sahih al-Bukhari 7387*)

If Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was told to say this then what about us?

Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said that what helps one to be patient and a role model (leader) in the deen is when one only looks at his own sins. He knows that due to sins, people can overpower and harm him. When your children, your servants or those under you become rebellious and don't listen to you, then don't blame anyone but yourself. Seek forgiveness. You don't know which sin of yours could be the cause of this behavior or harm. Although this realization can be very painful, don't let it depress you, rather we need to use these emotions in a positive way.

RUN TO ALLAH AND SEEK HIS FORGIVENESS. WHEN YOU SEEK FORGIVENESS, ALLAH WILL ELEVATE YOU AND OPEN DOORS OF HIS MERCY.

Ali Ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Don't hope from anyone except Allah. Don't fear anything except your own sins. No calamity befalls except because of one's sins, and it will not be lifted except with sincere repentance.

May Allah protect us from hardened hearts that only see others' faults and not their own. Ameen.

PROTECT YOUR OATHS

وَأَحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ

“And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).”
(*Surah Al-Ma'idah*, 5:89)

This rule is connected to our life's affairs as many people tend to fail fulfilling their oaths. Before this rule, Allah mentions the expiation for not fulfilling an oath intentionally, which are:

- **FIRST OPTION:** To feed 10 needy people.
- **SECOND OPTION:** To free a slave.
- **THIRD OPTION:** To fast three days (if unable, do the first and second option).

GUARD YOUR OATHS FROM 3 MATTERS:

1. **SWEARING BY ALLAH WHILE LYING.** This is from the major sins. This oath is called **اليمين الغموس** (an oath submerging its owner in sins). Why would one do this?

- *To seek the dunya*, i.e. wealth, power, position, marriage.

عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ لِيَقْتَطَعَ بِهَا مَالاً لَقِيَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبَانُ

Narrated Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever takes a (false) oath to illegitimately have access to others property, then Allah will be angry with him when he will meet Him.” (*Sahih al-Bukhari* 2673)

- *To protect oneself from harm.* For example, a person swears by Allah he didn't commit a crime in order to be spared of punishment (though he is lying).

2. **SWEARING BY ALLAH EXCESSIVELY.** The one who does this is dispraised by Allah in the Qur'an.

وَلَا تُطِيعُ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾

“And obey not everyone who swears much, and is considered worthless,”
(*Surah Al-Qalam, 68:10*)

People tend to underestimate the one who swears oaths excessively, even for small matters. His words do not hold much weight or value. The one who swears by Allah a lot will not consider it as a big matter, and may even swear for a lie. This shows that he does not magnify Allah. Over time, he will lose the trust of the people.

The Prophet ﷺ swore by Allah only 80 times in his 23 years of Prophethood, and many times it was in the Hadith.

3. **NOT FULFILLING YOUR OATHS.** When a believer swears by Allah, it is obligatory on him to fulfill it. This is a sign that he magnifies Allah. However, there are exceptions. If, for instance, out of anger you swear that you will not enter your relative's house, you can break it to protect yourself from a greater evil (such as breaking family ties) or for a better outcome. However, you need to fulfill the expiation of breaking the oath.

Allah made these rulings and ayaat so clear to us so that we may be grateful.

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

“That you may be grateful.”
(*Surah Al-Maidah, 5:89*)

PROTECT YOUR SOUL FROM STINGINESS

وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

“And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, then they are the successful ones.”

(*Surah At-Taghabun*, 64:16)

This rule is related to manners and good character by reforming and purifying the heart. There are many good manners that can be established if this rule is applied, and many bad manners can be established if it is not applied.

الشح: means to withhold with greed. Anyone who can overcome his greed will not cross his boundaries.

IT IS MENTIONED IN 2 SURAHs IN THE QUR'AN:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ

“And those who, before them, had homes (in Al-Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Bani An-Nadir), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.” (*Surah Al-Hashr*, 59:9)

ALLAH PRAISES THE ACTIONS OF THE ANSAR. 3 OF THEIR ACTIONS OF THE HEART MENTIONED REVEAL THAT THEY HAD FREED THEMSELVES FROM THEIR INNER GREED:

1. يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ

THEY LOVED THOSE WHO MIGRATED TO THEM. They didn't complain nor felt constricted in accommodating the muhajiroun, those who emigrated from Makkah and stayed in their homes.

2. وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ

THEY DID NOT HOLD ANY GRUDGE IN THEIR HEARTS against them for being given something that they did not get.

3. وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ

THEY PREFERRED THE MUHAJIROUN OVER THEMSELVES – though the muhajiroun were the ones in need. So, keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can; listen and obey; and spend in charity, that is better for yourselves.

وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

“And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, then they are the successful ones.” (Surah At-Taghabun, 64:16)

TO OVERCOME YOUR INNER GREED:

WHEN DEALING WITH THE TRIALS OF WEALTH, CHILDREN AND SPOUSE, YOU NEED TO DO THE FOLLOWING TO OVERCOME YOUR INNER GREED:

- Have taqwa.
- Listen and obey by pardoning and overlooking much.
- Spend in charity.

In a similar ayah, Allah says:

وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنفُسُ الشُّحَّ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾

“And human inner-selves are swayed by greed. But if you do good and keep away from evil, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.” (Surah An-Nisaa', 4:128)

Our human inner self is swayed by greed. However if you do ihsaan and keep away from evil, verily Allah is well acquainted with what you do. If a woman is afraid that her husband will desert her then it is better if she forgoes some of her rights to keep the marriage. Our fitrah is inclined towards greed, we want to take all our rights.

HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THIS GREED?

By practicing ihsan that is to give the other more than they deserve, and by having taqwa. Overcoming this greed cannot happen except if Allah makes it easy. If you can overcome it, then truly you have succeeded. Abdul Rahman bin Awf (may Allah be pleased with him) whilst making tawaaf uttered only one du'aa:

رب قني شح نفسي

“My Rabb, protect me from greed of myself.”

When asked why he only made this du'aa, he replied saying that “If I can overcome my inner greed then I will not steal, lie, and do other sins, and it will make me among the muttaqeen.” The opposite of الشح is آثار which means to prefer others over yourself. Whoever is protected from the greed of himself, he is truly successful in this life and Akhirah.

May Allah make us amongst the successful.

FOLLOW THE WAY OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

“And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it)”
(*Surah Al-Hashr, 59:7*)

This is one of the greatest rules that helps your heart to be obedient to Allah. All of that which the Prophet ﷺ has brought to us, we need to take it, and all that he forbade us we must abstain from it. This rule disciplines us to submit and surrender. We need to follow our leader, Prophet ﷺ. Allah has made it obligatory on us to obey the Prophet ﷺ absolutely, without conditions or exceptions. Allah has ordained us to take the Prophet ﷺ as a role model in every matter of life. There are no exceptions.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ٢١

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.” (*Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:21*)

The Prophet ﷺ is the best example for us, in all his actions and sayings such as how he would eat, sleep, speak, walk, and deal with people. We can't blindly follow and take anyone else as a complete example to emulate, except him. Even with regards to the other Messengers, we follow their ways for some matters but not in everything. Allah did not say that we need "to do" all what the Prophet ﷺ brought to us, but we need to take it. This means we need to have taqwa and do as much as we can (as we cannot do everything) and accept all his sayings and actions with a good heart. Whereas for what he forbade us, we must abstain from it.

REGARDING THE AQEEDAH

We need to take all what the Prophet ﷺ informed us about, such as about the dajjal, the Day of Judgement and other unseen matters. We need to accept it even though it is not mentioned in the Qur'an. If we reject it, then it is as if we deny the above ayah in the Qur'an.

REGARDING THE FIQH MATTERS

We need to take it from the Sunnah, such as how to pray, fast, perform Hajj, not to pluck the eyebrows, etc. The above ayah is sufficient for us to take the way of the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and it includes all that the Prophet ﷺ forbade and commanded us.

THIS RULE SHOWS US HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO GUARD THE SUNNAH

HOW CAN IT BE GUARDED?

1. By memorizing the Sunnah.
2. By the work of the scholars of Sunnah. They dedicated their lives for verifying the authenticity of the hadith in order to guard the sunnah.

The above ayah includes all the obligations and recommended deeds, and it includes all the prohibited and disliked deeds.

When we see the example of the sahabah, they would do the commands as much as they could, without differentiating between what was obligatory and recommended. And they abstained from all the prohibitions, without differentiating between what was forbidden and disliked. **THEY HAD TAQWA AND DID NOT JUST FOLLOW WHAT THEY DESIRED FROM THE SUNNAH.**

Ali bin abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) never left the adhkar the Prophet ﷺ told him to say before sleeping, even in one of the tough battles. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) never left the rawatib prayers until she died. **THEY TOOK THE SUNNAH SERIOUSLY AND WITH COMPLETE SUBMISSION.**

We must not follow the sunnah according to our desires. We should not take the makrooh (disliked) matters lightly nor should we neglect the recommended acts. Anyone who is going forward in following and submitting to the Prophet ﷺ, will find great pleasure and happiness in his heart. When we follow his way, we are magnifying Allah.

This rule is a reply to the sect of people (فرآئین) who only follow the Qur'an and reject the sunnah.

GOOD DEEDS REMOVE THE BAD DEEDS

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

“Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e. small sins).”
(*Surah Hud, 11:114*)

Every believer needs this rule, especially those who have the will and determination to draw closer to Allah and to return and repent to Him. If we truly want to come closer to Allah, we need to wash away the stains of past sins with repentance and then beautify the self with good deeds.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF HASANAT (الحسنات)?

- **TRUTHFUL REPENTANCE:** when a person is truthful and sincere in his repentance, this is a good deed in itself. For example, the man who killed 100 people and then followed it by sincere repentance, Allah accepted his repentance and wiped his past sins.
- **RIGHTEOUS GOOD DEEDS:** such as fasting, prayers, umrah, reciting the Qur'an and other deeds.

Once a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him of his great regret for kissing a non-mahram woman, so he ﷺ told him to increase in righteous deeds.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN اذهاب السيئات (REMOVES THE EVIL DEEDS)?

1. The good deeds removes the occurrence of that sin and the love for that sin. You will hate it and will quit doing it in the future. If you desire to commit a sin, then increase in good deeds, and Allah will replace the love for it with hate for the same sin.
2. It will completely erase the sin when it occurs.

Have taqwa no matter wherever you are, at home, outside, alone or with people. If, however, you fall into a sin, follow it with good deeds as they will erase the sin. Mop the dirt of your sins right away so that these do not pile up.

And deal with others with good character, whether they are our near ones or strangers. Our behavior with others reflects our level of faith.

Work as a factory of good deeds. Never make yourself “out of order.” Never take a break from doing good deeds. We are created to worship Allah. We all need to work and strive and hence are never jobless. Be in a constant state of worship, by doing everything for the pleasure of Allah.

Prayer to prayer is an expiation of sins.

Ramadan to Ramadan is an expiation of sins. Umrah to umrah is an expiation of sins. When we follow our Ramadan with fasting 6 days of shawwal, then it makes up for our shortcomings in Ramadan and is equivalent to fasting the entire year. We have plenty opportunities to do good deeds.

THE MEANING OF THIS RULE IS FOUND
IN DIFFERENT AYAAT OF THE QUR’AN:

1. IN SURAH AR RA’AD:

وَيَذَرُوهٗ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ

“And defend against evil with good” (*Surah Ar-Ra’ad*, 13:22)

This ayah is about the people of Paradise. One of their traits is that they remove their sins with good deeds.

2. IN SURAH AL-MA’IDAH:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَرْنَا عَنْهُمْ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَادْخُلَتْهُمْ جَنَّاتُ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

“And if only the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) had believed (in Muhammad ﷺ) and warded off evil (sin, ascribing partners to Allah) and had become Al-Muttaqun (the pious - see V.2:2) We would indeed have blotted out their sins and admitted them to Gardens of pleasure (in Paradise).” (*Surah Al-Ma’idah*, 5:65)

3. IN SURAH AL-FURQAN:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

“Except those who repent and believe (in Islamic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (*Surah Al-Furqan, 25:70*)

Belief and taqwa expiate the sins. For those who believe and repent, Allah replaces their sins with good deeds.

This rule gives hope and motivates those who seek nearness to Allah.

ALLAH IS ALL-KNOWING OF EVERYTHING YOU DO

وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ

“And whatever good you do, (be sure) Allah knows it.”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:197*)

This rule came in context of Hajj and is deeply connected to our relationship with Allah and with people. When hajj was prescribed, Allah forbade us from indulging in all haram acts of indecency, fusooq (transgression) and disputes, and encouraged us to all kinds of goodness.

Allah did not specify what kind of good deeds, but kept it open to any acts of goodness, which include deeds of the limbs, tongue and heart.

WHATEVER GOOD YOU DO, KNOW FOR SURE THAT ALLAH KNOWS ABOUT IT, AND HE WILL REWARD YOU FOR IT. When you do a good deed such as reciting the Qur'an, helping others, giving charity or smiling at someone, it is not important whether people know about it, rather, it is sufficient for you that Allah knows about it.

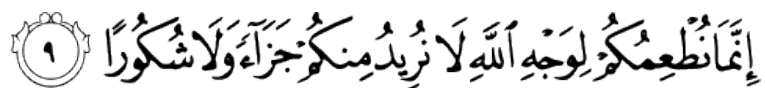
ALLAH CONCLUDES THE AYAH WITH 2 COMMANDS

- **TO TAKE PROVISIONS FOR HAJJ:** For the body and heart, and the best of provisions is taqwa.
- **TO HAVE TAQWA:** This is addressed to the people of understanding as only they will realize the true importance of this provision.

This rule reforms and nurtures us in our journey to Allah. If we are only motivated when people appreciate and recognize the good we do, then we can easily get discouraged on the way and may even stop doing good deeds. When we apply this rule in our life, we will continue to race forward as our intention and motive is to gain Allah's appreciation and reward.

THIS RULE HELPS US IN 2 MAIN WAYS:

1. **IT NURTURES US TO DO DEEDS WITH SINCERITY**, i.e. purely for the sake of Allah. The successful one will hide his deeds from people as much as he can, especially the actions of the heart. Some acts of worship cannot be hidden from people (such as dawah, prayer) but some can be hidden, especially the state of your heart. Your longing and yearning for Allah, your trust in Him, your feelings of loving Him and enjoying His closeness is a secret between you and Allah, and should not be disclosed to anyone. Keep your relationship with Him a top secret as it can easily cause jealousy amongst people or it can lead to pride and self-admiration. Only a person who is well grounded in faith can speak of these matters as an example for others.
2. **THIS RULE WILL MAKE US NOT WAIT FOR APPRECIATION AND PRAISE FROM PEOPLE**, as it can slow us down in our journey to Allah. When you are sincere, you are indifferent to people's praise or dispraise. Their praise will not be a motivator for you to do more good nor will their dispraise discourage you from your goal.



“(Saying): ‘We feed you seeking Allah's Countenance only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you.’” (*Surah Al-Insan, 76:9*)

The believer does good to others for the sake of Allah and only wants Allah to reward him; he doesn't want anything from the people. This ayah is a great way of reforming us as it helps us to be patient when people do not appreciate the good we do. Remember with firm belief: When you do a good deed, Allah knows about it and He will praise you and reward you.

ALLAH GUIDES THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN HIM

وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ

“And whosoever believes in Allah, He guides his heart [to the true Faith with certainty, i.e. what has befallen him was already written for him by Allah from the Qadar (Divine Preordainments)]”
(*Surah At-Taghabun, 64:11*)

We are in dire need of this Qur’anic rule, especially when faced with problems and calamities. Any type of calamity that befalls us, such as sickness, loss of wealth, related to our children and family is all by the permission of Allah, that is, He has decreed it.

WE NEED TO BELIEVE:

- Allah knew about this decree even before we were created.
- He wrote it in the Preserved Tablet. He wills it to happen out of His perfect Wisdom and creates the means for it to happen.

HOW MUST WE REACT WHEN AFFLICTED WITH A PROBLEM?

- It is obligatory on us to be patient and surrender to the decree of Allah.
- It is recommended to be pleased with the decree, and this reflects a higher level of faith.

HOW CAN WE BE PATIENT & PLEASED WITH THE DECREE?

The more we believe in Allah and His Perfect Names and Attributes, the more our heart will worship Him with different actions. In times of trials, we cannot rely on our own will and power to control the state of our heart. When we

believe in Allah and His perfection, Allah will guide our heart to the best actions that are pleasing to Him.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A GUIDED HEART?

Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Allah will guide the believer's heart to have yaqeen (certainty) in knowing that whatever struck him was never meant to miss him, and whatever missed him was never meant to strike him.

Alqamah bin Qais said: Allah will guide his heart to know that this is from Allah and so he will submit and be pleased.

Abu Uthman said: The one who has the correct belief, Allah will guide his heart to follow the sunnah.

Ikrimah said: Allah will guide his heart to be at rest and tranquil.

This rule nurtures and reforms the heart to submit to the decree of Allah. It helps one to accept afflictions with tranquility and calmness within oneself. On the other hand, the lesser the faith, the more restlessness you experience. This rule is a remedy during afflictions. It gives positivity and great hope for the one who believes in Allah and His perfection. Depression and negativity comes from low level of faith i.e. when we believe in the means.

Believe in Allah and not in the means. Focus on increasing your faith, and for sure, even during storms in your life, Allah will guide your heart to what is pleasing to Him.

NURTURE YOUR UNIQUE STRENGTHS AND ABILITIES

قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرِبَهُمْ

“Each (group of) people knew its own place for water.”
(*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:60)

This rule teaches us to be organized and have a system in place so that no one transgresses against the other. It was revealed when Musa (peace be upon him) asked Allah for water for his tribe, Allah told him to strike the stone with his stick, and it gushed forth 12 springs, a spring for each tribe. Musa (peace be upon him) took the means by striking the stone, and Allah gave them beyond what they imagined.

Allah bestowed this great favor upon Banu Israel. Allah did not only give them one spring but 12 springs for 12 tribes. Each tribe knew where to drink from, without confusion, overcrowding or a clash amongst them.

APPLICATION OF THIS RULE:

This Qur’anic rule draws light on Allah's great wisdom to make everything clear and organized. When everyone knows what tasks to do, whether it is in the house or workplace, there is productivity, creativity and quality work.

قُلْ كُلُّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَى شَاكِلَتِهِ

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to mankind): ‘Each one does according to Shaklatihi (i.e. his way or his religion or his intentions, etc.)’” (*Surah Al-Israa’*, 17:84)

Everyone works according to their nature, capability and expertise. Allah has given each one of us strengths and talents that we must focus and build on. If everyone does the same job, then everything will be chaotic.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Carry on doing good deeds. Everyone will find it easy to do such deeds for which he has been created.” (*Riyadh As Saliheen, Al Bukhari & Muslim, Book 7, Hadith 945 Part of a longer Hadith*)

This draws light on the importance of knowing your strengths to benefit society, whether it is in writing, speech, design or other fields. When you recognize it, focus on it and your creativity and ihsaan(excellence) will flow.

With regards to Ibadah, if your strength is in prayer, then increase in performing it; if it is fasting, then increase in it. (This is concerning the voluntary acts and not the obligations).

The same is true of matters of the dunya. People are different and not at the same level. Do not drain your energy on doing deeds just because others are doing it or they want you to do it. It is crucial to place the strength in its right place. The Companions understood and applied this rule and as a result were so advanced. The Prophet ﷺ placed each one according to their strength.

Once Imam Malik, who had dedicated his life for dawah, received a letter from a worshipper, who advised him to slow down on dawah and focus on personal acts of worship. Imam Malik beautifully responded to him saying, "Allah has divided the deeds just as He has divided the provision." He then said that to spread and teach knowledge is the best of deeds as you go beyond yourself and benefit others. He was grateful for what Allah had given him and he hoped both were on goodness and pleased with what Allah opened for them.

Therefore, never be intimidated by people nor imitate them nor compare your children as each one is unique and a gem in his/her own way. All the deeds of goodness cannot be opened for one individual. (except for Abu Bakr as Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him)). So focus on what you are good at, and do not look at others as this can cause ingratitude.

Jealousy, competition and ingratitude is spread in families and societies because people are wasting their energy on what is not their strength. Discover your strength and appreciate everyone around you as we all complete each other as a puzzle in a beautiful, perfect picture.

CONSULT THE PEOPLE OF KNOWLEDGE

فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

“So ask of those who know the Scripture [learned men of the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], if you know not.”
(*Surah An-Nahl*, 16:43)

This Qur’anic rule corrects our way in our journey to Allah. Do not wander blindly in this journey. If you do not know about a matter, then ask someone who knows. For instance, if you do not know how to pray then ask someone who does. This is the case even for worldly matters. This rule gives us control, in our worship, behaviors and dealings with people.

THIS RULE IS MENTIONED
TWICE IN THE QUR’AN:

1. IN SURAH AN-NAHL:

فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

“So ask of those who know the Scripture [learned men of the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], if you know not.” (*Surah An-Nahl*, 16:43)

This Surah is about the blessings of Allah and indeed, it is a huge blessing that if I do not know about something, I can ask someone who knows.

2. IN SURAH AL-ANBIYAA’:

فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧﴾

“So ask the people of the Reminder [Scriptures - the Taurat (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel)] if you do not know.” (*Surah Al-Anbiyaa’*, 21:7)

This Surah is about the role of the Prophets and this ayah addresses the disbelievers. Instead of just disbelieving, they should ask those who know from the People of Book.

This rule praises the people of knowledge as Allah asks us to refer to them and the best of knowledge is knowledge of Allah's book. The best of the knowledgeable ones are the people of the Qur'an. They are truly the special, exclusive people of Allah. Moreover, the best of the knowledge regarding deen or dunya can be acquired from the Qur'an, which contains the knowledge of everything, psychology, history, science, marriage and other important fields of knowledge.

WE ARE TOLD TO ASK THOSE WHO KNOW, WHICH TEACHES US NOT TO BE ARROGANT OR PROUD TO ASK WHEN WE DO NOT KNOW A MATTER.

However, the earlier nations were destroyed because of asking too many questions, such as Bani Israel. Allah knows your intention behind asking questions. Do you ask to sincerely seek knowledge or do you want to cause fitnah (problems), especially amongst scholars and teachers? Some people ask to test the teachers or make fun of them.

IT IS FORBIDDEN TO GIVE A FATWA (RULING) IF YOU ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO DO SO, even if asked about a matter. Only the ulema (scholars) are qualified to give a fatwa, and not just any da'ee (the one giving dawah). For matters concerning the dunya, people tend to ask the specialists. So what about matters of our faith and deen?

WE NEED TO BE MORE CAUTIOUS ABOUT WHOM WE ASK. We need to take special care by searching for and investigating the scholars who are specialized in the field. For instance, if you seek answers on matters such as inheritance, marriage and divorce, you must ask a scholar who has specialized in that field. He must be a scholar and not just any teacher or student of knowledge.

We should apply this rule for deen (religion) and dunya (worldly matters), but more importantly for matters regarding the deen (religion).

TAKE THE QUR'AN AS YOUR GUIDE

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

“Verily, this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and right”
(*Surah Al-Israa', 17:9*)

This essential and comprehensive rule increases our certainty in the greatness of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is sufficient for us and we are in great need of its guidance to light up our life to all what is best and upright. Without the guidance of the Qur'an, we are lost in darkness.

It is the only Book that is suitable for all times, for all places and all people. It guides each one of us according to our level and background.

The scholar Qatadah (may Allah have mercy on him) said that the Qur'an shows us our sicknesses as well as the cure for them. Your sicknesses are the sins and the cure is seeking forgiveness. If you seek success in any matter, seek forgiveness. If you are sick, seek forgiveness. If you are faced with any obstacle, seek forgiveness. If you have problems with your beloved ones or anyone in general, seek forgiveness. **THE CURE FOR EVERYTHING IS ONE, ISTIGHFAAR (SEEKING FORGIVENESS).**

SHEIKH AS SA'DI SAID THAT THE QUR'AN
GUIDES US TO WHAT IS UPRIGHT IN:

- Aqeedah (belief)
- Deeds
- Manners

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE
GUIDED TO THE UPRIGHT WAY?

- **THE QUR'AN GUIDES US TO THE MOST UPRIGHT WAY TO MAKE US BALANCED.** It brings balance between what is in our heart and our outer

actions. When our internal state is different than our external state, this shows hypocrisy or disbelief that creates the imbalance in our life.

- **THE QUR'AN BRINGS BALANCE BETWEEN OUR EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOR.** If we are emotionally imbalanced then our behavior will be disturbed. For instance, when someone mistreats you, if you are emotionally imbalanced then you will shout at your kids.
- **THE QUR'AN BRINGS BALANCES BETWEEN OUR FAITH AND ACTIONS.** Each ayah that touches the heart should change us. Our acts of worship should come from the heart.
- **THE QUR'AN BRINGS BALANCE BETWEEN WHAT WE ARE COMMANDED TO DO AND OUR CAPACITY.** If we do more, then we may feel overburdened, or bored and leave it, and if we do less, we can become careless.
- **THE QUR'AN MAKES US BALANCED IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS,** whether with males or females, young or old, near ones or far. We should not love someone so much that we give all our heart to them, nor hate someone so much that we misbehave and transgress against them. When we are balanced, we will know our boundaries, clear with highlighted borders. We will not transgress nor be careless with others. When we do not know our boundaries with people, we end up hurting ourselves and others.

Though this rule concludes this book, it opens the door to search and ponder upon numerous other rules mentioned in the Qur'an. The Qur'an is a complete guidance for us from our Rabb, our Nurturer and Reformer, and the wisdom behind it has no end. May Allah forgive our shortcomings, forgive our sins.

May Allah make the Qur'an the spring of our hearts, Ameen.



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