

The state of our imaan fluctuates from time to time. It increases upon doing good deeds and decreases upon committing sins and following Shaytan.

A HADITH THAT COMBINES HOPE AND FEAR

A believer must understand the following hadith to find the right balance between hope and fear.

“The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) stated *“one of you may do the deeds of the people of Paradise until there is nothing between him and it but a cubit, then the decree overtakes him and he does a deed of the people of Hell and enters it. And one of you may do the deeds of the people of Hell until there is nothing between him and it but a cubit, then the decree overtakes him and he does a deed of the people of Paradise, and enters it.”* [al-Bukhaari (3208)]

Thus, as believers, we must hope in the Mercy and Forgiveness of Allah, and for Jannah. At the same time, we must fear His Punishment and displeasing Him,

and our hearts must be filled with Love for Him.

“Be in this world like a stranger...”

On the authority of Abdullah ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) took me by the shoulder and said, “Be in this world as though you were a stranger or a traveller.”

Since then, He (May Allah be pleased with him) always acted upon it till his death as he understood how the Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized it.

Therefore, it is incumbent on every Muslim to work hard, seek knowledge, worship Allah with insight, wisdom, and knowledge. This religion is the greatest blessing conferred upon us. Only by living our lives in accordance with it, can we attain success in this world and the hereafter. ■



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STUCK ON THE CROSSROADS

BY ISMAIL FARAH

FINDING true happiness

Today's youth are at a crossroads in their quest for happiness. With the rising fitnah, many resort to haram activities like consuming alcohol, drugs, and zina, for a quick dopamine boost. However, none of these would ever bring contentment or peace.

Real happiness lies in obeying and worshipping Allah. By leading a life adhering to His commandments, such as offering Salah, fasting, giving zakah, and avoiding His prohibitions.

Another misconception we have is that materialistic things such as money, fame, women, etc, will make us happy. If that were the case, then why do we observe the highest rates of depression, drug-overdoses, and suicides, among celebrities? This is solely because they haven't discovered their purpose in life, and thus, retreat from one distraction to another. Without ever finding their true calling.

We all have two paths before us. One that leads us to Allah, and another that drives us away from Him. Believers are those who choose the former, as they are the ones who truly understand the reality of this world.

Ibn al- Qayyim (May Allah have mercy on him) said, *"How can a person stay sane who sells paradise and all that it contains, for an hour of desire?"* (Al-Fawa'id p.408)

HOW CAN ONE STAY ON THE RIGHT PATH?

Since life is filled with trials and tribulations, staying on the right path can be challenging at times. To combat this, a believer is required to combine Hope, Fear, and Love of Allah, as the scholars say this is the worship done in the heart.

1. Hope and Fear

A believer worships Allah in the same way that a bird has two wings to keep it balanced and able to fly. He balances them both because losing one would cause him to fall. Thus, he does good deeds in the hope that Allah will accept them, seeks forgiveness in the hope that Allah will forgive him, and fears Allah's punishment and reckoning.

"[O Muhammad], inform My servants that it is I who am the Forgiving, the Merciful. And that My torment is indeed a painful torment." [Surah Hijr:49-50]

A believer must never lose hope of Allah's mercy. Imam ibn Qayyim(May Allah have mercy on him) mentions the following hadith where a prostitute was forgiven because of her kindness towards an animal: Abu Huraira reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"A prostitute had once been forgiven. She passed by a dog panting near a well. Thirst had nearly killed him, so she took off her sock, tied it to her veil, and drew up some water. Allah forgave her for that."* [Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 3321, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2245]

There's another story below from the time of Bani Israel about a man who had killed 99 people and was still forgiven by Allah- The Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"Amongst the men of Bani Israel there was a man who had murdered ninety-nine people. Then he set out asking (whether his repentance could be accepted or not). He came upon a monk and asked him if his repentance could be accepted. The monk replied in a negative way and so the man killed him. He kept on asking till a man advised him to go to such and such village. (So, he left for it) but death overtook him on the way.*

While dying, he turned his chest towards that village (where he had hoped his repentance would be accepted), and so the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment quarrelled amongst

themselves regarding him. Allah ordered the village (towards which he was going) to come closer to him, and ordered the village (whence he had come), to go far away, and then He ordered the angels to measure the distances between his body and the two villages. So, he was found to be one span closer to the village (he was going to). So, he was forgiven."(Sahih al-Bukhari)

This teaches us to always remain hopeful of Allah's mercy and never to abandon it.

2. Love

Believers have love for Allah in their hearts. They are the ones who;

1. Love for the sake of Allah
2. Perform every righteous action out of their love for Allah.
3. Abstain from acts disliked by Allah and hate them only for His sake.
4. Spend from their means for Allah's sake, seeking reward from Him alone.
5. Withhold from doing something which may anger Allah.

Such are those who have perfected their Imaan.

IMAAN GOES UP AND DOWN

Imaan is the belief in the heart, affirmation with the tongue, and action with the limbs.