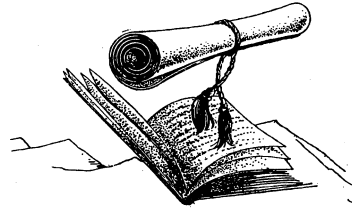


HOW TO ACHIEVE HAPPINESS



BY: Shaikh Abdur-Rahman As-Sa'di
Translated by: Jalal Abualrub



الوسائل المفيدة للحياة السعيدة

How to Achieve HAPPINESS

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الوسائل المفيدة للحياة السعيدة

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By

**Shaikh Abdur-Rahman bin
Nasir bin Abdullah As-Sa'di**

Translated by

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In the Name of Allâh

the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

“Verily, the Muslims (those who submit to Allâh in Islâm) men and women, the believers men and women (who believe in Islâmic Monotheism), the men and the women who are obedient (to Allâh), the men and women who are truthful (in their speech and deeds), the men and the women who are patient (in performing all the duties which Allâh has ordered and in abstaining from all that Allâh has forbidden), the men and the women who are humble (before their Lord — Allâh), the men and the women who give *Sadaqât* (i.e. *Zakât* and alms), the men and the women who observe *Saum* (fast) (the obligatory fasting during the month of Ramadân, and the optional *Nawâfil* fasting), the men and the women who guard their chastity (from illegal sexual acts) and the men and the women who remember Allâh much with their hearts and tongues. Allâh has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e., Paradise).” (33:35)

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Publishers Note

All the praises and thanks are due to Allâh, the *Rubb* of the worlds, and may Allâh exalt the mention of the Prophet Muhammad, the chosen, the trustworthy, and the mention of his Household and all of his Companions.

How to Achieve Happiness, is very enlightening booklet by Shaikh Abdur-Rahman bin Nasir bin Abdullah As-Sa'di, a renowned religious scholar and an expert of Arabic language. The ultimate goal of this booklet is to understand what is happiness and how can we achieve it in the light of the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah*. There are many misunderstanding about this important issue. Every person has his own concept of happiness and every person enjoins his own ways of happiness but the author has explained the concept very politely and lightly that happiness is only in the obedience of Allâh and His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and consequently to enter the Paradise.

In view of its importance, Darussalam has rendered this booklet into the English language with prior permission from the author. Brother Jalal Abualrub accepted the task of translation, and performed it very well.

Finally, I am grateful to all brothers who have contributed in bringing about this valuable book. May Allâh accept our sincere efforts regarding the propagation of His religion throughout the world — *Âmin!*

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager

Foreword

All thanks are due to Allâh, and may Allâh's peace and blessings be on the Last and Final Prophet, Muhammad, and on his progeny, Companions and all those who followed and obeyed him until the Day of Resurrection.

This blessed booklet titled, *How to Achieve Happiness*, explains the meaning of true happiness, which is the ultimate goal that all mankind searches for in the worldly life. There are conflicting views and opinions concerning the meaning of happiness and the ways and means to achieve it. There are those who think that happiness is achieved by collecting money and investing it. Others think that happiness is earned by having a healthy body or security and peace at home. There are those who think that happiness is acquired through collecting wealth from lawful resources and seeking beneficial knowledge, and those who believe that happiness is earned through true faith, righteous conduct and remaining firm on this path. There is no doubt that these traits are all incorporated in the general meaning of happiness, as long as they conform to the guidelines and regulations established by Islam.

There are two types of happiness: first, there is the temporary, limited, changing and finite worldly happiness. Second, there is happiness in the Hereafter, which is infinite and everlasting. Both of these types of happiness are connected to each other, as happiness in this life is only perfected by earning the complete and perfect happiness in the Hereafter, which is earned through Allâh's Pleasure by the faithful believers who fear and obey Him. Allâh the Exalted, said:

﴿ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۗ ﴾

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ [النحل: ٩٧]

“Whoever works righteousness — whether male or female — while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islâmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e., Paradise in the Hereafter).” (16:97)

Hence, true and lasting happiness is earned through the obedience of Allâh, the Exalted and Most Honored, and His honorable Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ. In contrast, misery is earned through the disobedience of Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ. Allâh said:

﴿ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴾ [الأحزاب: ٧١]

“And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger (ﷺ), he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. earned Allâh’s Pleasure and Paradise)” (33:71)

And:

﴿ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ﴾ [الأحزاب: ٣٦]

“And whoever disobeys Allâh and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error.” (33:36)

The author of this booklet is the renowned scholar, Shaikh Abdur-Rahman bin Nasir bin Abdullah As-Sa’di, may Allâh grant him His Mercy, containing the ways and means to achieve true happiness, relying on evidence from the Book (the Qur’ân, and the *Sunnah*), Prophetic traditions. The purpose behind this book is to lead towards the correct path that directs to true happiness, that every Muslim wishes and hopes for, so that the Muslim

Community at large is able to organize their life on a light and true guidance (from Allâh).

Verily, all success comes from Allâh and He guides to the best ways. He Alone is Sufficient for us and how excellent He is as Helper. May Allâh's peace and blessing be on our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his progeny and all of his Companions.

Introduction

This booklet details the general aspects of true happiness that mankind seeks and searches for, removed from human misconceptions by relying on honorable evidence from the Glorious Qur'ân and the wise Prophetic guidance. True happiness is indeed the type of happiness sought by believing men and women and lived and enjoyed by the pure believing community, and surely, it is the only method that organizes the life of this world on the basis of fear from Allâh and abiding by His obedience.

The author of this booklet is the scholar, Shaikh Abdur-Rahman bin Nasir bin Abdullah As-Sa'di, who was born in the city of 'Unaizah, in the province of Qasim, in the area of Najd, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. His parents died when he was still young, but he was endowed with intelligence, vitality and vigor as regards seeking religious knowledge. Abdur-Rahman As-Sa'di started memorizing the Qur'ân early in his life and completed memorizing it when he became twelve years old. He then started seeking religious knowledge with the scholars of his area and those who visited it; he was especially vigorous in this regard, until he acquired a good share of knowledge and religious education.

At the age of twenty-three, Ibn Sa'di combined learning knowledge with teaching it and spent the rest of his life this way, thus benefiting himself and many others who learned from him. Among Ibn Sa'di's teachers were Shaikh Ibrahim bin Hamad bin Jasir, the first teacher he learned from. He also learned knowledge of *Usul* (major aspects) of the religion and jurisprudence, *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), *Tauhid* (Islamic Monotheism), *Tafsir*

(meanings of the Qur'ân) and the Arabic language with Shaikh Salih bin 'Uthman, the judge of the area of 'Unaizah, until Shaikh Salih died.

Shaikh Abdur-Rahman As-Sa'di had excellent knowledge in *Fiqh*, *Usul* and all types of religious knowledge relating to *Tauhid*. He studied the important resource books on these aspects of Islam, especially the books of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Al-Qayyim.¹ Ibn Sa'di was also excellent in the knowledge of *Tafsir* and authored several books on it which are as follows.

1 – *Taisir Al-Karim Al-Mannan fi Tafsir Kalami ar-Rahman*, in eight volumes.

2 – *Taisir Al-Latif Al-Mannan fi Khulasati Tafsir Al-Qur'ân*.

3 – *Al-Qawa'id Al-Hisan li-Tafsir Al-Qur'ân*.

He also authored several other beneficial books, as follows:

1 – *Al-Irshad 'ila Ma'rifat Al-Ahkam*.

2 – *Ar-Riyadhu An-Naadhirah*.

3 – *Bahjatu Qulubi Al-Abrar*.

4 – *Manhaju As-Salikin wa Taudhihu Al-Fiqh fi Ad-Din*.

5 – *Hukmu Shurbi Ad-Dukh-khan wa Bai'ih wa Shira-ih*, (Ruling on the of smoking and selling and buying tobacco).

6 – *Al-Fatawa As-Sa'diyyah*.

7 – Three books that contain Friday Sermon Speeches.

8 – *Al-Haqqu Al-Wadhih Al-Mubin bi-Shra'hi Tauhid Al-*

¹ Two of the most renowned scholars of Islam of all times.

Anbiyâ' wal-Mursalin.

9 – The explanation of *Al-Kafiyah Ash-Shafiyah*, otherwise known as, Nuniyyat Ibn Al-Qayyim.

Ibn Sa‘di authored many other books on the knowledge of *Fiqh, Tauhîd, Usul, Hadith* and aspects of social life and *Fatwa*.²

On a Thursday in the year of 1376 after *Hijrah*,³ on the twenty-third day of the lunar month of Jumada Al-Akhirah, Abdur-Rahman Al-Sa‘di suddenly fell ill in the city of ‘Unaizah and died. Ibn Sa‘di’s death left a deep scar and sadness in the hearts of all those who knew him or were taught by him, may Allâh bestow His widest mercy on him and benefit us with his knowledge, *Amîn*.

¹ A religious opinion or decree based on evidence from the Qur’ân and *Sunnah* with regard to various aspects of life and religion,

² Or 34 lunar years ago. The *Hijrah* is the Prophet’s Migration from Makkah to Al-Madinah in the year 623 CE

Preface

All thanks are due to Allâh, Worthy of all praise, and I bear witness that there is no deity of worship except Allâh, Alone without partners. I also bear witness that Muhammad is Allâh's slave and Messenger, may Allâh's peace and blessings be on him, his progeny and Companions.

The heart's comfort, delight and eradication of sadness and depression are traits that are sought by all mankind, in order to ensure good life, happiness and delight for themselves. There are religious, natural and practical aspects to achieve this goal, but these aspects are only combined for faithful believers. Other than the believers, even those who feel some sort of happiness sometimes on account of a philosophy that they incorporated in their lives, or for other reasons, they would still miss more delightful and beneficial aspects of happiness that have a better destination and delightful end.

In this booklet, I will mention some of the means and ways to earn happiness, which all mankind vigorously seeks. Some of mankind acquired a better part of happiness and lived a good life with it, while many others failed to acquire any share of happiness and lived a miserable life, as a consequence. Some of mankind was in the middle, acquiring parts of happiness according to the degree of success that they achieved (by Allâh's Will). Allâh Alone directs to success, and He Alone is sought for all that is good and righteous and to fend all types of evil.

Correct Faith and Righteous Deeds

Islamic Faith and performing righteous good deeds are the basis and the greatest way and means to acquire happiness. Allâh, the Exalted said:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ [النحل: ٩٧]

“Whoever works righteousness — whether male or female — while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islâmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e., Paradise in the Hereafter).”
(16:97)

Allâh states in this *Āyah* that He has promised those who combine faith and righteous actions, of having a good life in this world and excellent rewards in this life and the Last Life. There is a good reason behind this promise. Those who have correct faith in Allâh (fruits of which include performing good deeds that purify the hearts, behavior, this life and the Hereafter) have the basis and resources to rely on to deal properly with whatever they receive of happiness and delight, as well as, depression, sadness and worry. For instance, the believers receive happy and delightful bounties with acceptance and thankfulness and use them in an advantageous manner. This better conduct gives them more delight, resurrects hope in them that these bounties will remain and be blessed further, and they also anticipate Allâh’s rewards for thankful believers. This way, they earn types of goodness and blessings that outweigh the original delights and bounties they received

and which produced these fruits and traits in them.

Moreover, faithful believers receive whatever harm, afflictions, depression and sadness that befall them by resisting whatever they can resist, striving hard to lessen their impact, and observing patience for whatever they cannot repel or defy. By doing so, they acquire various types of benefits, experience and strength from resisting the effects of the afflictions. They also taste tremendous delights from patience and awaiting the rewards with Allâh, that which diminishes the afflictions and replaces them with contentment, happiness and anticipation of compensation from Allâh. The Prophet ﷺ described the believers in this authentic *Hadith*:

«عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ، إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَّاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَّاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ

إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ» [رواه مسلم]

“Amazing is the matter of the believer, for all of his affairs are good for him. If a bounty was bestowed on him, he thanks for it, and this is better for him. If an affliction touches him, he observes patience, and this is better for him, and this is only for the believer.” (*Muslim*)

This *Hadith* states that the believer’s rewards and goodness, and the fruits of his good deeds multiply when he receives bounties, as well as, when he suffers afflictions. This is why when you compare any two persons who receive a similar bounty or suffer a similar affliction, they vary greatly in the way they respond to the bounty or affliction, according to the degree of faith and righteous good deeds each one has. The believer who has good deeds in his records receives the bounty or affliction in the manner we described thankfulness and patience.

This conduct brings him happiness and elation and dissipates sadness, depression, worry, bother and various discomforts of life; he thus lives a good life in this world.

He who has the opposite characteristics, receives the bounty with arrogance, extravagance and tyranny, and as a consequence, his behavior worsens and he acts like a beast when catching prey. Yet, this type is never content in their hearts, always feeling unease and weary that they might lose whatever they covet. Further, they always long for more and never stop at any limit, even though whatever they long for might and might not come. And even if they acquire what they wish for, they would still feel the concerns we mentioned. On the other hand, this type receives the afflictions with worry, fright, fear and annoyance. Hence, do not ask about the enormity of misery they receive in this life and the mental and psychological problems they suffer from, because they do not long for Allâh's rewards nor have adequate patience that might comfort them in difficult times.

Islam teaches and encourages the believers to always feel contentment with Allâh's bounties, favors and generosity He bestows on them. If the believer is tested with an illness, poverty or a type of affliction that touches all mankind, he becomes complacent on account of his faith, content with Allâh and accepting of what He has destined for him. In this case, the believer does not long in his heart for another destiny that was not meant for him and compares himself to those below him rather than those above him. This behavior brings him a type of delight and comfort more than that felt by those who have all types of worldly possessions but do not feel contentment. This latter type feels utter misery when tested with poverty or loss of material possession, because they do not act upon

their faith, if they have any.

There is another parable that pertains to happiness, that when a matter of concern strikes, you will find those who have correct faith at ease and striving to resolve the fear or problem with the necessary thoughts, statements and actions. These qualities bring relief to people and strengthen their resolve. In contrast, those who do not have faith feel disturbed, become anxious, have confused thoughts and fall prey to fright and fear when a matter of concern strikes, thus, combining an outward fear and inward anxiety that cannot be duly explained. Unless they have some type of natural strength to draw on (with temporary effect), this type of people feel fatigue and utter mental exhaustion, because they do not have faith that directs them to patience, especially in delicate times and situations.

Even though the believer and the disbeliever both have the ability of training themselves to be brave in the face of fear or affliction, the believer has added qualities. These are the strength of faith, patience, total dependence and reliance on Allâh and awaiting His rewards. All this increases the believer's strength and lessens the effect of concerns and hard times. Allâh, the Exalted, said:

﴿إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْمِنُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْمِنُونَ كَمَا تَأْمِنُونَ ۗ وَرَجُونَ مِنْ اللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَرْجُونَ﴾ [النساء: ١٠٤]

“If you are suffering (hardships) then surely, they (too) are suffering (hardships) as you are suffering, but you have a hope from Allâh (for the reward, i.e. Paradise) that for which they hope not.” (4:104)

Therefore, the believers earn Allâh's help and special aid that will dissipate all concerns and fears. Further, Allâh the Exalted said:

﴿وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ [الأنفال: ٤٦]

“...and be patient. Surely, Allâh is with those who are *As-Sâbirûn* (the patient).” (8:46)

Kindness towards the Creation

Being kind to creation in words and action and (granting them) all that is good and righteous, are among the means and ways to eradicate depression, anxiety and worry. Allâh fends off depression and sadness from the wicked and the righteous, if they are kind and generous to creation. Yet, the believer gets a better share, due to his kindness being generated by sincerity and awaiting Allâh’s reward. As a consequence, Allâh makes easy for him the path of generosity and lessens the impact of hardships on account of his sincerity and anticipating His reward. Allâh the Exalted said:

﴿لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١١٤]

“There is no good in most of their secret talks save him who orders *Sadaqah*, or *Ma’rûf* (Islâmic Monotheism and all the good and righteous deeds which Allâh has ordained), or conciliation between mankind; and he who does this, seeking the good Pleasure of Allâh, We shall give him a great reward.” (4:114)

Allâh states that all these acts are righteous, and righteousness brings about all that is good and beneficial and fends off evil. Also, Allâh states that He gives the faithful believer a great reward, such as dissipating depression, worry and sadness.

Seeking what is Beneficial

Seeking beneficial knowledge and engaging in a beneficial profession repel worries that result from anxiety and dissipate the heart's depression that consumes it, by busying the heart away from what made it depressed. In this case, one's innerself will feel at ease and his vitality will increase. This is also shared between the believer and all others. Yet, the believer is especially endowed with his faith, sincerity and seeking Allâh's reward when occupied in seeking knowledge, teaching, or indulging in the job he is performing, whether it is an act of worship or a worldly job that he does with a good intention in obedience to Allâh. All this has an impressive effect with regards to repelling sadness, depression and anxiety, and is especially important since worry and depression cause various types of illnesses. The remedy for these illnesses includes forgetting the reason that caused worry and depression by being busy performing some kind of a job, as we explained.

Concentrate on the Present

Dedicating attention to the job at hand, rather than thinking about prospects for the future, and avoiding sadness for whatever happened in the past, help dissipate worry and depression. This is why the Prophet ﷺ sought refuge with Allâh from sadness and depression (in a *Hadith* that *Al-Bukhâri* and *Muslim* collected). Feeling sad for the past, which can never be brought back, and worrying for the future, can be overcome when one becomes the son of that day, dedicating his attention and vitality in correcting the present time. When one does this, he will be able to perform whatever job is at hand and be comforted instead of succumbing to sadness and

depression. We should assert that whenever the Prophet ﷺ invoked Allâh with a supplication or directed his nation to use it, he also encouraged vitality and zeal with regard to seeking what one is supplicating to Allâh for, as well as, avoiding what He is invoking Allâh to fend off of him. The invocation is the companion of action, and therefore, the slave seeks what benefits him in matters of life and religion, invokes Allâh to direct his efforts to success and begs Him for His Aid. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«اِحْرَصْ عَلَى مَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَاسْتَعِزْ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْجِزْ، وَإِذَا أَصَابَكَ شَيْءٌ فَلَا تَقُلْ: لَوْ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ كَذَا كَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا، وَلَكِنْ قُلْ: قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَّ، فَإِنْ لَوْ تَفْتَحُ عَمَلَ الشَّيْطَانِ» [رواه مسلم]

“Seek what benefits you, rely on Allâh and do not succumb to feebleness. And when an affliction strikes you, do not say, ‘Had I done this, that and that would have happened.’ Rather, say, ‘Allâh has decided, and He does whatever He will,’ for ‘if opens the door for Satan’s work.’” (*Muslim*)

In this *Hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ combined between ordering the Muslim to seek what benefits him in all conditions, invoke Allâh for help, avoid feebleness, which pertains to harmful laziness, surrender to Allâh’s Will and submit to His Decisions and appointed destiny.

The Prophet ﷺ divided matters into two parts, a part that the slave is able to seek all or a part of, or repel all or a part of. With regards to this type, the slave makes his best efforts and invokes his Lord for help. There is another part that efforts do not avail concerning its final outcome, and this type requires the slave to be contentful and submissive to it with full submission. There is no doubt that remembering these facts is a major reason behind acquiring happiness and dispersing sadness and depression.

Remembrance of Allâh

Dhikr, remembering Allâh, is one of the biggest reasons behind the heart's pleasure and comfort and has a unique effect on the heart concerning dissipating its sadness and depression. Allâh, the Exalted, said:

﴿أَلَا يَذَكِّرُ اللَّهُ تَطْمِينُ الْقُلُوبِ﴾ [الرعد: ٢٨]

“Verily, in the remembrance of Allâh do hearts find rest.” (13:28)

Remembering Allâh has the unique effects of bringing contention to the heart and acquiring all that the slave seeks of Allâh's rewards and bounties.

Acknowledging Allâh's Favors

Allâh fends off depression and sadness as compensation for the Muslim who acknowledges His apparent and hidden bounties and favors on him or her. This better mannerism helps the slave attain the rank of appreciative slaves of Allâh, the best and highest rank there is. And even if the slave suffers from poverty, illness or any other type of affliction, he would belittle these hardships in contrast to the tremendous bounties and favors of Allâh that cannot be counted except by Him.

Rather, when the slave observes patience, contentment and submission in the face of the afflictions and harm he is being tested with, the effect of these afflictions will be lessened and their impact made milder. Also, the slave hopes for the reward that these afflictions carry if he worships Allâh in observing patience and content, thus, turning the bitterness of observing patience into sweetness.

Look at those Below you and not those Above You

Among the best means and methods of acquiring happiness, it is earned by implementing the Prophet's recommendation in this authentic *Hadith*:

«أَنْظُرُوا إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَنْظُرُوا إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ فَوْقَكُمْ

فَإِنَّهُ أَجْدَرُ أَنْ لَا تَزِدَّوْا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ» [رواه البخاري ومسلم]

“Look at (or compare yourself to) those who are below you, not those above you; for this way, you will not belittle Allâh's bounty on you.” (*Al-Bukhâri and Muslim*)

When the slave places the better attribute mentioned in this *Hadith* between his eyes, he will realize that he is above a greater segment of the creation regarding health and sustenance, no matter how little it is; and this compels him to forgo worry, depression and sadness. Also, his delight and simple pleasure in the bounties that Allâh has granted him above many others, who do not have what he has, will multiply.

The more the slave thinks of Allâh's apparent and hidden favors on him, with regard to worldly and religious affairs, the greater his realization will be that Allâh has indeed granted him great goodness and fended off many afflictions of various types. There is no doubt that all this repels sadness and depression and replaces them with delight and sheer happiness.

Avoiding Means of Sadness and Seeking Means of Happiness

Striving to eradicate whatever produces sadness and earn the ways and means that ensure happiness, are also among the methods to achieve happiness and avoid misery. For instance, one should try to forget past afflictions that have occurred, for they are a matter of the past, and realize that thinking about the past is a type of playfulness, foolishness and sometimes plain insanity. Achieving this requires strength and resolve to prevent the heart from thinking about the past and worrying about the future and whatever poverty or disaster one thinks it might bring him. One should feel certain that the future is unknown to him with whatever goodness, evil, hopes or pains it might carry. The future is in the Hands of the Most Great, Most Wise and never in the hands of the slaves. Yet, the slaves are required to work to achieve whatever is good for them and fend off the inconveniences and hardships that might touch them.

Hence, every Muslim should feel certain that when he or she stops worrying about the future and instead relies on Allâh to bring him all that is good and comfortable, all the while trusting in His Decision, then his heart will feel contentment and his affairs will be set aright. Moreover, he will overcome his fears and worries.

Supplications of the Prophet ﷺ

Among the best methods to prepare for the future, is by reciting this *Du'â* that the Prophet ﷺ invoked Allâh with:

«اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ
الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي، وَاجْعَلِ
الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ، وَالْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ»

[رواه مسلم]

*"Allâhumma asli'h li dini al-lathi howa 'ismatu
amri, wa asli'h li dunyaya al-lati fiha ma'ashi, wa
asli'h li akhirati al-lati ilaiha ma'adi, waj'al al-
'hayata ziyadatan li fi kulli khair wal mauta
ra'hatan li min kulli shar.*

(O Allâh! Set aright for me matters of my religion, which contains my immunity (from error); set aright for me my life, which contains my livelihood; set aright my Last Life for me, for to it is my return; and make life an ever increasing goodness for me and death a relief for me from all types of evil."
(Muslim)

Also, the Prophet ﷺ invoked Allâh:

«اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُو فَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَأَصْلِحْ
لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ» [رواه أبو داود باسناد صحيح]

“O Allâh, I invoke You for Your Mercy. Please, do not make me reliant on myself even for an instant, and set aright for me all my affairs. Verily, there is no deity worthy of worship except You.” (Abu Dâwud)

When the slave recites these supplications (that assure the

correctness of his future religious and daily life affairs) with an attending heart, sincerity and striving hard to achieve what he is seeking,⁴ then Allâh will grant him what he invoked Him to earn. And, as a bonus, his depression will turn to delight and happiness, Allâh willing.

Preparing for the Worst

Among the best methods and ways to dissipate worry and sadness in hard times, is that the slave should try to lessen the impact of the affliction by preparing as much as he can for the worst that could happen. This way, not only will his worries and sadness disappear, but will also be replaced by vitality earned while striving to bring benefit and fend off harm.

When and if one is stricken by fear, illnesses, poverty and unavailability of what he likes and covets, let him or her receive these afflictions with calmness and dedication in resisting the worst that these afflictions could bring. Thus, one combines the qualities of determination and tireless efforts that keep him or her engaged rather than feeling anxiety on account of the afflictions that struck him. As we stated, one can achieve all this by striving to revitalize his energy, which is essential in resisting harm, reliance on Allâh Alone and trust in Him, and surely, these qualities have tremendous value in earning happiness and comfort in the heart. In addition to that, the slave anticipates Allâh's rewards that will surely come sooner and later.

¹ Such as by performing more acts of worship, correcting his conduct, working, earning money from righteous resources, being dutiful to parents, and so forth.

The Heart's Inner Strength

One of the best remedies for ills of the heart and the body is earned through the heart's inner-strength that prevents succumbing to anxiety and troubling thoughts, which usually accompany anticipating the worst. When one succumbs to worries and his heart becomes affected with feelings of fear of illnesses, anger, confusion, anticipation of harm and losing coveted things, then his heart will be driven to the brink of depression, sadness and various ills that strike the heart and body, as well. A nervous breakdown might occur as a consequence, with all of its harmful effects and impact that are witnessed on many among mankind.

Reliance upon Allâh

When the heart relies on Allâh, has trust in Him, refuses to surrender to evil thoughts and anxiety and longs for Allâh's favor and bounty, all types of depression and sadness will dissipate, Allâh willing. Also, various types of diseases that might strike the body and the heart will be avoided, earning the heart inner-strength, delight and comfort that cannot be duly explained with words.

It is a fact that there are many people who fell ill and were hospitalized because they succumbed to worries and depression. Such ills can cause deep effects on strong hearts, let alone weak hearts, leading many to insanity and foolishness. Only those whom Allâh grants well-being and success, who strive hard against their own lusts and seek means of protection for their hearts, so as to resist worry and earn immunity from these types of illnesses. Allâh said:

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ﴾ [الطلاق : ٣]

“And whosoever puts his trust in Allâh, then He will suffice him.” (65:3)

Therefore, he who puts trust in Allâh has a strong heart that is never bothered by troubling thoughts or worries, due to his knowledge that to succumb to worries is a sign of a weak inner self and unsubstantiated fear. He also knows of Allâh’s promise to support and aid those who have trust in Him. Consequently, he has trust in Him and feels certain in the deliverance of His promise; this is when his worries and fears dissipate and all hardships turn into ease, sadness into delight and fear into calmness. We ask Allâh to grant us well-being and strength of heart by directing us to have trust in Him perfectly, so that we earn His promise of all that is good and righteous.

Kind Treatment towards People

There are two tremendous benefits in the Prophet’s statement:

«لا يفرِّكُ مؤمِنٌ مؤمِنَةً إن كرهَ منها خُلُقًا رَضِيَ مِنْهَا خُلُقًا آخَرَ»

“Let not a male believer hate a female believer (i.e. his wife), for if he dislikes a type of conduct from her, he will surely be pleased by another.” (*Muslim*)

First, the *Hadith* directs to kind treatment of one’s wife, relative, companion, friend and all those with whom one has relationship. One should also realize that each person has some shortcomings or a type of conduct that another dislikes. When one feels dislike for such shortcomings, he should remember the way he is required to treat these

people and preserve good relations with them. In addition, one should remember their good qualities and forgo minor deficiencies in their personalities. This is how friendship, companionship and good relations are preserved and peace at heart is earned and acquired.

Second, this *Hadith* helps, Allâh willing, to dissipate worry and sadness, and directs to preserving good ties, being dutiful with regards to the rights and responsibilities one has and keeping healthy relationship between people. In contrast, when one does not heed by the advice of the Prophet ﷺ in this *Hadith* and instead notices errors and forgets good qualities, he would surely feel worried and his relationship with people would be spoiled. In this case, one would not be perfectly dutiful regarding the rights and duties that such relationships bring about and require.

It is amazing that some people who have strong resolve, observe patience and calmness when disasters strike, but worry for silly things and their calmness vanishes. This occurs to them because they dedicate their intention to deal with major afflictions but forget to prepare for minor troubles, and this shortcoming brings them undesirable effects, and spoils their peace and comfort. Therefore, firm and wise people dedicate themselves to deal with and resist major and minor problems and afflictions. They always invoke Allâh for help in that eventuality, so that He does not abandon them or leave them reliant on their own selves even for an instant. This is how small afflictions will seem easy to deal with and also major afflictions will seem easy to deal with! Implementing this method also preserves one's inner peace and contentment of his heart.

Enjoying Moments of Happiness

The wise person knows that the best life he could live is that filled with happiness and tranquillity, even though it is rather short. Bearing this in mind, one should not make his happy moments in life even shorter by filling them with various worries and depression, but instead, should be a virtual miser regarding spoiling these precious moments. We should again state that this better way, if implemented, is shared by the righteous and the wicked, but the believer takes the fullest share and the better benefit in this regard, before long and later on.

Remembering the Bounties During Calamities

When harm actually strikes one or he fears that it might touch him, he should remember the many religious and worldly bounties he is enjoying, as compared to the harm that overcame him. Implementing this method carries the benefit of realizing the abundance of goodness one is enjoying and the smallness of the harm that has touched him.

Moreover, one should compare the worst that might occur to him and the many ways out of that harm that he might have available; he should not make the lesser possibility overcome the many good odds. In this case, his worry will decrease, his fear will vanish and he will dedicate his energy to dealing with whatever harm that might come, thereby striving to resist whatever of it he can, or at least minimize its impact on him.

Overlooking People's Harms

Know that whatever bother the people can cause you, especially by uttering evil words, will not harm you but will harm them⁵, unless you concern yourself about it and allow the concern to consume your thoughts. In this case, you will be bothered (become depressed, sad and aggrieved) just as they will be bothered (by Allâh for their errors); but if you do not concern yourself (about people's evil actions and statements against you), then they will not bother you in the least.

Keeping Good Thoughts

Know that the quality of your life is connected to the quality of your thoughts. Consequently, when your thoughts are the kind that brings benefit to you in your life and religion, then you will live a good, happy life, and the opposite brings the opposite result.

Do not Expect Thanks

Among the best methods to repel depression is to intend to await Allâh's reward Alone for whatever good he or she grants to those who have rights on them and to all others. Kindness is a type of good mannerism with Allâh. Therefore, do not worry about receiving thanks from whomever you have granted a favor, just as Allâh described the quality of His chosen slaves among creation:

﴿ إِنَّمَا نَطْعَمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا ﴾ [الإنسان : ٩]

¹ because Allâh will record whatever harm they do or say, reward you for it and recompense them.

“(Saying): ‘We feed you seeking Allâh’s Countenance only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you.’” (76:9)

This is especially the case with regard to kind treatment and fending harm off of family, children and close relations. Surely, there is comfort and tranquillity in performing acts of generosity, according to the intentions behind these acts.

Engage in Beneficial Thoughts

In order to busy yourself away from the causes of sadness and misery, then dedicate your attention and thoughts to all that carries benefit, and strive to achieve them, and do not engage your mind thinking about harmful things or thoughts. Further, make good use of leisurely time so that you gather your strength to perform the important jobs that necessitate your attention.

Complete Immediate Tasks

Finish immediate duties, so that you are able to dedicate more time and energy to whatever responsibilities the future holds. This way, the previous jobs that had to be done in the past will not be added to whatever one has to do in the future, so as to avoid making the workload heavier. When you firmly conclude the present duties, you will be able to handle future responsibilities with fresh thoughts and a sufficient reserve of energy.

Prioritize Work

Work on the most beneficial and important aspects (or jobs at hand), then the less important. Concentrate your energy on whatever you like and feel eager to do, for the opposite are the jobs that will cause boredom, depression and bothersome. To help you decide, use deep thinking and ask for advice, for those who seek advice will never be sorry. Carefully plan what you intend to do, if you feel that there is good benefit in doing it, then intend to do it while having trust in Allâh, for He likes those who have trust in Him.

All thanks are due to Allâh, Lord of the worlds, and may Allâh's peace and blessings be on Muhammad, his progeny and Companions.

