

Class 7

‘Deeds that are Acceptable’

Importance of doing Good Deeds

Of first and foremost importance for a Muslim is having "faith (Eemaan)". Faith is the fundamental belief in Allah, His Angels, the Prophets, the divine books and the day of judgement and the Qadr. Your heart and mind accepts these fundamental beliefs and thus you become a "believer".

Being a believer however require that deeds subscribe to your beliefs. And that you demonstrate with your actions what you believe in your heart, doing good and having the right belief go hand in hand in Islam. In fact, doing good in practice is the proof of having the right belief in the heart. This is why the Quran speaks of true Muslims very often as "*those who believe and do good deeds*", so Eemaan (faith) is "*belief in the heart, words on the tongue and actions of the body.*"

In the Quran, Allah says clearly (interpretation of the meaning): "*And he who comes before Him as a believer having done righteous deeds, exalted ranks are for such people, evergreen gardens beneath which streams flow. They shall abide therein forever and this shall be the reward of those that keep themselves pure.*" (20:75-76)

Also says "*Indeed this Qur'an gives guidance to the path which is the most upright and gives glad tidings of a great reward to those among its believers who do good deeds.*" (17:9) Hence refuting the people who say faith is your heart and you don't need to do anything about it and deeds are not of importance.

Faith increases with Good Deeds

So it is important to note that "faith" and belief in the almighty and his designs are interlinked with righteous deeds. The more you do righteous deeds, the more your faith grows. The more you believe but do not do. The more your faith and belief suffers. Such is human nature. The good deeds may involve words or actions. So dhikr increases faith in quantity and quality, and prayer, fasting and Hajj also increase faith in quantity and quality.

Righteous Deeds are not only Salah, Fasting, Umrah & Hajj

A very commonly spread and repeated saying is that "*Islam is a way of Life*" and hence anything you do in the prescribed way of life is a Good deed and the amazing part is that anything that you save yourself from which is not the way of Life of a Muslim is also a Good Deed. SubhaanAllah Allah has blessed us with this beautiful religion with the ideal role model in our Beloved Prophet ﷺ having a good character and performing good deeds is so important in Islam. Here is a hadith Qudsi (hadith Qudsi are from Allah, revealed in a dream or through revelation and expressed in Prophet Muhammad's own words):

“Allah will say on the Day of Judgment, ‘O son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit Me.’ He will say, ‘O my Lord, how could I visit You, when you are the Lord of the Worlds.’ Allah will say, ‘Did you not know that My servant so-and-so was sick and you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you had visited him, you would have found Me there?’

Allah will say, ‘O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you fed Me not.’ He shall say, ‘O my Lord, how could I feed you and you are the Lord of the Worlds?’ and Allah will say, ‘Did you not know that My servant so-and-so was in need of food and you did not feed him? Did you not know that if you had fed him, you would have found that to have been for Me?’

‘O son of Adam, I asked you for water and you did not give Me to drink.’ The man shall say, ‘O my Lord, how could I give You water, when You are the Lord of the Worlds?’ Allah will say, ‘My servant so-and-so asked you for water and you did not give him to drink water. Did you not know that if you had given him to drink, you would have found that to have been for Me?’ (Muslim)

So we must remember the importance of helping those in need for the sake of Allah. We must bear in mind that all our deeds are going to come before us on Judgement Day. We will see all of the deeds we have ever done, which are being recorded and will be shown to us in a book.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) taught us to carry out good deeds, no matter how small they are. In Islam, even a smile to a neighbour or removing a harmful object from the road, is classed as an act of charity. Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "A man passed by a fallen branch in the middle of the road and said, 'By Allah, I will remove this from the path of the Muslims so that it does not inconvenience them' and he was admitted into the Garden (Paradise)." (recorded in Muslim)

The Prophet's wife Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *“O people, you should do whatever good deeds you can, for Allah does not get tired (of giving reward) until you get tired. And the most beloved of good deeds to Allah is that in which a person persists, even if it is little. If the family of Muhammad ﷺ started to do something, they would persist in it.”* (Bukhari, Muslim)

Narrated Abu Dharr: The Prophet said, *“Do not disdain any good deed, even your meeting with your brother with a cheerful face.”* (Muslim) The most beloved of people is he who brings most benefit, and the most beloved of deeds, is that you bring happiness to a fellow Muslim, or relieve him of distress, or pay off his debt or stave away hunger from him. So everything that a person does to benefit his soul (by worshipping Allah) or to benefit mankind (preferably fellow Muslims) is a good deed.

Conditions the Deeds are accepted

For acts of worship to be acceptable to Allah and for a person to be rewarded for them, there are two conditions which must be met:

1. For the Sake of Allah

2. In accordance with Sunnah

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him).” [al-Bayyinah 98:5]

The Prophet ﷺ said: *“Whoever does any action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours (i.e., Islam), will have it rejected.”* (Narrated by Muslim, *al-Aqdiyyah*, 3243).

Some might ask for general acts of worship this is ok but how can one do general good to people in the way of Sunnah or only for the Sake of Allah because we might actually want to help the brother in need. But all of them come under the general category of either helping someone by removing hardship or making things easy for them.

It was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *“The Muslim is the brother of his fellow Muslim; he does not wrong him or let him down. The one who meets the needs of his brother, Allah will meet his needs. Whoever relieves a Muslim of distress, Allah will relieve him of distress on the Day of Resurrection.”* Narrated by al-Bukhaari (2442) and Muslim (2580).

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *“Whoever removes a worldly hardship from a believer, Allaah will remove one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection from him. Whoever grants respite to (a debtor) who is in difficulty, Allaah will grant him relief in this world and in the Hereafter. Whoever conceals (the fault of) a Muslim in this world, Allaah will conceal him (his faults) in this world and in the Hereafter. Allaah will help a person so long as he is helping his brother.”* Narrated by Muslim (2699).

These ahadeeth covers almost anything that we do for our brothers and sisters, and if we are doing it to help our muslim brother then that indicates it is for the Sake of Allah.

Also we see that a lot of non-Muslims also do a lot of good deeds in terms of helping others being truthful and standing up for justice etc the general principle is that these people are rewarded in the Duniya itself and that’s why we see them being famous and having a good life but in the hereafter Faith take precedence.

Day to day actions can be a source of reward

How!?! By our intention.

Yahya Ibn Abu Kathir said: *“Learn about intentions, for their importance is greater than the importance of actions”*

In a hadeeth, on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab who said, I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: *“Actions are but by intention and every man shall have but that which he intended. Thus he whose migration was for Allah and His messenger, his migration was for Allah and His messenger, and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his migration was for that for which he migrated.”* [Related by Bukhari and Muslim]

Our 'niyyah', or intention, is what dictates the value and the reward we hope to obtain, so the first thing we need to do is 'un-categorize' our day to day actions. View them as actions we can use to advance us in our journey towards Jannah insha'Allah. Treat these actions as deeds (big or small), as a valid opportunity to bank some ajr (reward). In order to keep the good deed counter ticking, we need to make a conscious effort to adjust our perspective. This will help you reap the maximum benefits from your daily routines!

In brief, what turns an act into a righteous deed is the intention behind it. If the intention is a righteous one, then the deed also becomes righteous, even if the desired result is not attained. For instance, with the intention of seeking the approval of Allah, a Muslim may work hard towards a desired end, yet the result may turn out different. However, this is not important; they shall still have their reward from Allah. Every Muslim should acknowledge that there is a reason why Allah does not always let the individual reach his goal: *"It is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knows, and you do not know."* (2:216) Only Allah knows if the desired end will have beneficial consequences for man.

And Hasten to Do Good

Abu Hurayrah may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allah, said: *"Hasten to do good deeds before you are overtaken by one of the seven afflictions."* Then (to warn of them) he, said: *"Are you waiting for such poverty that would make you unmindful of devotion, or wealth that would make you corrupt, or sickness that would disable you, or such senility that would make you mentally unstable, or sudden death, or Ad-Dajjal (the Anti-Christ) who is the worst expected absent person, or the Hour? And the Hour will be most grievous and most bitter."* [At-Tirmithi]

Abu Barzah may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allah, said: *"Man's feet will not move on the Day of Resurrection before he is asked about his life, how he had spent it ..."* [At-Tirmithi]

'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez was told one day about something he wanted to do: *"Delay this until tomorrow"* He replied: *"Woe to you! One day's task is enough to busy my entire day. What would I do if I had to finish the tasks of two days?"*

Remember... the smallest good deed is better than the grandest intention.