# The Great Pleasure and Happiness[[1]](#footnote-1)

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*“Those who believe in the Unseen*.” (2:3)

# First Point

If you want to understand what great happiness and bounty, what great pleasure and ease are to be found in belief in Allah, listen to this story which is in the form of a comparison:

Since the selfish man was both conceited, self-centered, and pessimistic, he ended up in what seemed to him to be a most wicked country due to his pessimism. He looked around and everywhere saw the powerless and the unfortunate lamenting in the grasp of fearsome bullying tyrants, weeping at their destruction. He saw the same grievous, painful situation in all the places he traveled. The whole country took on the form of a house of mourning. Apart from becoming drunk, he could find no way of not noticing this grievous and somber situation. For everyone seemed to him to be an enemy and foreign. And all around he saw horrible corpses and despairing, weeping orphans. His conscience was in a state of torment.

After some while he returned and came across the other man. He understood his condition, and said to him: *“You were out of your mind. The ugliness within you must have been reflected on the outer world so that you imagined laughter to be weeping, and the discharge from duties to be sack and pillage. Come to your senses and purify your heart so that this calamitous veil is raised from your eyes and you can see the truth. For the country of an utterly just, compassionate, beneficent, powerful, order-loving, and kind king could not be as you imagined, nor could a country which demonstrated this number of clear signs of progress and achievement.”* The unhappy man later came to his senses and repented. He said, *“Yes, I was crazy through drink. May Allah be pleased with you, you have saved me from a hellish state.”*

As for the other man, he is a believer. He recognizes and affirms Almighty Allah. In his view this world is an abode where the Names of the All-Merciful One are constantly recited, a place of instruction for man and the animals, and a field of examination for man and jinn. All animal and human deaths are a demobilization. Those who have completed their duties of life depart from this transient world for another, happy and trouble-free, world so that place may be made for new officials to come and work. The birth of animals and humans marks their enlistment into the army, their being taken under arms, and the start of their duties. Each living being is a joyful regular soldier, an honest, contented official. And all voices are either glorification of Allah and the recitation of His Names at the outset of their duties, and the thanks and rejoicing at their ceasing work, or the songs arising from their joy at working. In the view of the believer, all beings are the friendly servants, amicable officials, and agreeable books of his Most Generous Lord and All-Compassionate Owner. Very many more subtle, exalted, pleasurable, and sweet truths like these become manifest and appear from his belief.

That means that salvation and security are only to be found in Islam and belief. In which case, we should continually say, *“Praise be to Allah for the religion of Islam and perfect belief.”*

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# Second Point

Just as belief is a light which illuminates man and makes legible all the missives of the Eternally Besought One inscribed upon him, so too it illuminates the universe, and delivers the past and the future from darkness. I shall explain this mystery with a comparison I saw during a vision, which concerns one meaning of the verse:

*“Allah is the Protector of those who believe; He leads them out of darkness into light*.” (2:257)

It was like this: I saw in a vision an awesome bridge built between two high mountains situated opposite one another. Beneath the bridge was a valley of great depth. I was on the bridge. A dense darkness had enveloped every part of the world. I looked to my right and saw a vast grave swathed in an unending dense gloom, that is, I imagined it. I looked to my left and as though saw violent storms and calamities gathering amid terrifying waves of blackness. I looked beneath the bridge and imagined I saw a profound abyss. I had a dim torch in the face of this terrifying darkness. I used it and could see a little with its light. A most horrific situation appeared to me. In fact, such awful dragons, lions, and monsters appeared around me and on the bridge in front of me that I exclaimed: *“Oh! This torch brings me only trouble!”,* and I angrily cast it to the ground and broke it. Then on smashing it, the darkness suddenly dispersed as though I had turned on the switch for a huge electric lamp that lit up the whole world. Everywhere was filled with the lamp's light. It showed everything as it was in reality.

I saw that the bridge I had seen was a highway through a plain passing over even ground. The vast grave I had seen on my right I realized consisted from top to bottom of beautiful, verdant gardens and gatherings for worship, service, conversation, and the remembrance of Allah under the direction of luminous men. The precipices and peaks on my left which I had imagined to be tempestuous and stormy I now saw fleetingly to be a vast, lovely, and elevated place of feasting, recreation, and enjoyment behind mountains that were adorned and pleasant. And the creatures I had thought to be terrifying monsters and dragons, I saw were familiar domestic animals like camels, oxen, sheep, and goats. Declaring, *“All praise be to Allah for the light of belief,”* I recited the verse,

*“Allah is the Protector of those who believe; He leads them out of darkness into light*,” (2:257)

and I awoke from my vision.

Thus, the two mountains were the beginning and end of life; that is, this world and the Intermediate Realm. The bridge was the road of life. To the right was the past, and to the left, the future. As for the small torch, it was the human ego, which is egotistical, relies on what it knows, and does not heed the heavenly revelation. The things imagined to be the monsters were the events and strange creatures of the world.

Thus, one who relies on his ego, who falls into the darkness of heedlessness and is afflicted with the blackness of misguidance resembles my first state in the vision, which, like with the pocket-torch and due to deficient and misguided knowledge, saw the past in the form a huge grave amid darkness imbued with non-existence. It showed the future to be a stormy and desolate wasteland governed by coincidence, and events and beings, which are all submissive officials of One All-Wise and All-Compassionate to be monsters. Such a person as though manifests the verse,

*“And those who reject belief, their protectors are the evil ones; they lead them out of light into darkness*.” (2:257)

But if such a man attains to Divine guidance and belief enters his heart, and if the tyranny of his soul is smashed and he heeds Allah's Book, he will resemble my second state in the vision. Then the universe will suddenly take on the color of day and be filled with Divine light. The world will recite the verse,

*“Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth*.” (24:35)

Then he will see with the eye of the heart that the past is not a vast grave, but where the groups of purified spirits who each century having performed their duties of worship under the leadership of a prophet or saint exclaim, *“Allah is Most Great!”* on completion of the duties of their lives, and fly to elevated abodes, moving on to the past. He will look to the left, and through the light of belief distinguish in the distance a feasting-place of the Most Merciful set up in palaces of bliss in the gardens of Paradise, beyond the mountainous revolutions of the Intermediate Realm and the hereafter. And he will realize that the storms and earthquakes and tempestuous events are all submissive officials, and understand that they are the means for instances of wisdom which though apparently harsh are in fact most gentle, like the storms and rains of spring. He will even see death to be the introduction to eternal life, and the grave, the door to everlasting happiness. You can deduce further aspects for yourself. Apply the reality to the comparison!

1. From the 2nd Word, The Words, BSN [↑](#footnote-ref-1)