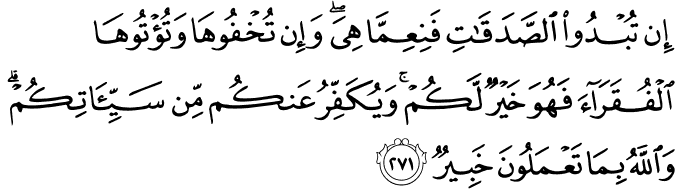
# THE SEVEN GROUPS THAT WILL BE PROTECTED BY THE DIVINE SHADE



**2.271**. If you dispense your alms openly, it is well, but if you conceal it and give it to the poor (in secret), this is better for you; and God will (make it an atonement to) blot out some of your evil deeds. God is fully aware of all that you do.(1)

55:46

**55.46**. But for him who lives in awe of his Lord and of the standing before his Lord (in the Hereafter), there will be two Gardens.(2)

“God will shade seven (groups of) people under His shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His: the just ruler; young people who grew up in worship of God; a person whose heart is attached to mosques; two persons who liked one another for God’s sake, who came together and departed on this basis; a man who was called upon (to sin) by a woman of high status and beauty and turned down her offer, saying that he fears God; A person who gave charity in such secrecy that even his left hand did not know what his right hand had given; and a person whose eyes filled with tears on mentioning God in solitude.” (3)

**THE SEVEN GROUPS**

Many of the topics mentioned in the above hadith may appear to be difficult to perform and very demanding, but each carries great significance for human willpower. Some people may be able to escape one of the pitfalls facing them, yet be lured into another. The only possible way to escape or avoid these disastrous and sometimes fatal pitfalls is to seek refuge in the mercy of the Creator and to embrace the divine commands of His eternal power. Therefore, human salvation, which lies in the strength of self-control, depends on a person’s devotion and their bond with the Creator.  
The above hadith is an offering to those who have willpower; it is for those who possess a power of devotion and a connection with God. An opportunity to attain the greatly sought-after divine protection of the Hereafter is offered. The hope that one will be able to fulfill these tasks, which are demanding and require endurance, and as a result be able to obtain a great reward in the Hereafter, fills our souls with aspiration and desire.  
On the Day of Judgment, when the burning sun scorches through, the shade provided by the clouds, gleaming like flames of fire, when the means of salvation have faded away and everything weighs against mankind, there will be no other shade provided but that created by God’s grace and protection. On that day the important fact will not be that the shade is the shade of Heaven; the important factor will be a shift in the rules, the transformation of the skies into shade for those who have earned it. Nobody will be able to aid or assist others on this devastating day, and there will certainly be no protection or favoritism. Who could possibly protect others on a day of such intensity when everyone will hold their breaths in both fear and anticipation of their reward or punishment?  
On such a day there is only one possible place to seek refuge and that will be with Divine mercy. The ones who will be granted the shade of benevolence are:(4)

**1. The Just Ruler:** Justice is the principle of equity, fairness and upholding what is just, passing fair judgment, and refraining from injustice and favoritism and prejudice. It is declared in the verse recited at the end of every Friday sermon, “Allah enjoins justice (and right judgment in all matters), and devotion to doing good, and generosity towards relatives, and He forbids you indecency, wickedness and vile conduct (all offenses against religion, life, personal property, chastity, and health of mind and body). He exhorts you (repeatedly) so that you may reflect and be mindful!” All people are charged with justice. Where there is justice, there is peace and goodness. Consider a family in which a father does not adhere to the standards of justice when dealing with family members, treats them differently and does not love them equally. Can there be peace in such a family? Can the members of that family retain their mutual love and respect? This is not possible. That the people whom Allah will esteem the most on the Day of Judgment are those who are just in their dealings, has been revealed by the Prophet: “The most loved person by Allah the Almighty on the Day of Judgment and nearest to Him is a just ruler.”

**2. Young People Who Have Grown up in Worship of Allah:** A young person who is grows up in worship of Allah implies one who unswervingly observes all their obligatory worship from the age of puberty onwards, and who is preoccupied with good works and service towards their family and all humanity. The human being has three phases throughout their life: childhood, youth, and old age. The most important of these and that which is most instrumental in a person’s life is undoubtedly their youth. For the most part, during this phase a person is in good health. They are impressionable and resolute in the face of events. They have the strength to undertake whatever task they put their mind to and perform their worship of Allah in great joy and happiness. Like all other bounties, the importance of youth is known after it is lost. A poet expresses this as follows: “If but youth could have returned and I explained to it what old age has done to me!” However, those days have long passed and it is not possible to bring them back. Hence, one must know the value of youth while they still possess it and must actively seek to make the best use of it. Thus, it is these people who make use of their youth well that Allah the Almighty will reward in on the Day of Judgment.

**3. Those People Who Are Greatly Attached to Mosques:** Mosques are places wherein Allah is worshipped and where the spirit attains tranquility. These places are those in which only the worship of Allah is observed. A person whose heart is attached to the mosque is one who observes their Daily Prayers in the mosque. The Prayer can, in effect, be performed everywhere; however, the reward for Prayer performed in congregation in mosques is greater by virtue of their being sites of worship exclusively. A person whose heart is attached to the mosque is a person who seeks this reward.

**4. Love for Allah’s Sake:** The greatest of love is to love a person for the sake of Allah. There are many people whom we do not know, but love. Just as we do not see them, a relationship based on self-interest is not in question. We love them purely for the sake of Allah and due to the works they undertake in view of earning Allah’s approval. The Companions of the Prophet, the first Muslims who served Islam, are among these people whom we love, despite our not being able to see them. We love them because they were the first to believe in Allah’s Messenger and they patiently endured every kind of sacrifice in this cause.

**5. Fear of Allah:** A human being’s carnal self seeks to do whatever it may desire, without differentiating between the shameful and prohibited, and the lawful. That which discerns good from evil is the intellect. It is through the intellect that a person refrains from the base and unlawful and desires to do what is good and beneficial. That which ensures that a rational individual distinguishes between good and evil and avoids wickedness is either the law or fear of Allah. The latter is without a doubt the most powerful of these. If a person are able to commit an evil or injustice away from the gaze of the people and, as a result, from the gaze of the law, they will. As the people are not aware of what they have done, they go unpunished and, therefore, assume that they will get away with what they have done. A person, however, who believes in Allah, is conscious of all that they do, and knows that He will call them to account cannot perpetrate evil or injustice even when alone. The fact that those in whose hearts the fear of Allah and reverence towards Him has become firmly established will live in happiness in the world and that they will attain great rewards in the Hereafter has been announced in the Qur’an as follows:

But as for him who lived in awe of his Lord, being ever conscious of His seeing him and of the standing before Him (in the Hereafter), and held back his carnal soul from lusts and caprices, surely Paradise will be his (final) refuge;” (an-Nazi’at 79:40-46) “But for him who lives in awe of his Lord and of the standing before his Lord (in the Hereafter), there will be two Gardens. (ar-Rahman 55:46).

**6. Spending in the Way of Allah Secretly:** It is declared in the Qur’an:

If you dispense your alms openly, it is well, but if you conceal it and give it to the poor (in secret), this is better for you; and Allah will (make it an atonement to) blot out some of your evil deeds. Allah is fully aware of all that you do. (al-Baqarah 2:271)

The verse reveals that the charity given to the poor and needy can be given publicly, but that giving in secret is better than giving openly, as alms offered in secret is free of show and preserves the self-respect of the needy. However, if giving alms openly serves the purpose of encouraging others to give in alms also, then giving in such a way is more meritorious. The Prophet said, “Giving alms secretly is more meritorious than giving them openly. For the person who wishes others to follow him, it is more meritorious to give them openly.” When it comes to the prescribed annual alms, or the *zakah*, it is better to give these openly.

**7. The Eyes Filling with Tears When Mentioning Allah in Seclusion:** While Allah can be invoked at any time and place, invoking Him in seclusion is an attitude that is free of pretense. A person’s eyes welling with tears in solitude is an expression of fear of Allah as well as the deep reverence felt towards Him. Allah is pleased with His servant’s thus refraining from affectation. The Prophet states: “There is nothing more beloved to Allah than two drops and two marks: A tear shed due to fear of Allah, and a drop of bloodshed in the path of Allah. And the two marks are the marks caused in the path of Allah, and that caused by fulfilling one of the duties made obligatory by Allah.” Thus, the Messenger of Allah announces that these seven groups of people will rise to a level on the Day of Judgment which even the Prophets will envy and that they will attain the happiness of being shaded in the shade of Allah. How happy are those who can rank among these seven groups!(5)

**WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED**

1. Allah is pleased with only those deeds of His servants aimed towards His approval and takes them under His protection when there will be no other refuge.

2. The characteristics and deeds of the seven groups of people mentioned in the hadiths are of an exemplary and superior nature.

3. At the root of every good and acceptable undertaking lies a superior virtue such as loving another for the sake of Allah.

4. It is essential to keep hearts animated with love of Allah, and both love and dislike for the sake of Allah.

**References**

**(1) 2:271.The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal**

**(2) 55:46.The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal**

**(3) Bukhari, Adhan, 36; Muslim, Zakat, 91**

**(4) 40 Hadiths, Ali Budak, Tughrabooks, The Light Inc.**

**(5) An Introduction to Hadith, Ayhan Tekines, Tughrabooks, The Light Inc.**