



# Hope and fear: The two wings of a believer

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I begin with the Name of Allaah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

There's no religion on the face of earth that has succeeded in creating a balance between hope and fear like Islam.

"The revelation of the Book (this Qur'an) is from Allaah the All-Mighty, the All-Knower. The Forgiver of sin, the Acceptor of repentance, the Severe in punishment, the Bestower (of favors), none has the right to be worshipped but He, to Him is the final return." Qur'an 40:2-3

People are divided into two categories with regards to their actions - they either fall into the category of those obeying Allaah or of those disobeying Allaah. Whichever one a person falls into, there is a window opened for him to still connect to Allaah.

He who finds himself in the category of those obeying Allaah should fear falling back into sins, should fear losing his deeds to riyah (show-off), should fear complacency and holier than thou demeanor, should fear arrogance and pride. If he does that, he connects to Allaah more.

Similarly, he who finds himself in the category of those disobeying Allaah, should have hope in the mercy of Allaah, should not despair, should not become defeated, this hope is only kept alive as long as the sinful servant seeks for Allaah's forgiveness and repents to him, a sincere repentance.

Even shirk, Allaah forgives, provided the mushrik (polytheist) repents and turns back to Allaah before it's too late. Early is when an 80 year old repents before he dies, while late is when an 18 year old dies without repenting.

The methodology of the Qur'an and nay, the Shariah is that of creating an atmosphere of hope and fear. The message is simple, oh obedient soul, do not become complacent and oh the disobedient soul, do not become despondent.

In his exegesis of Qur'an 40:3, ibn Katheer said: "The Forgiver of sin, the Acceptor of repentance," means, He forgives sins that have been committed in the past, and He accepts repentance for sins that may be committed in the future, from the one who repents and submits to Him." (The Severe in punishment,) means, to the one who persists in transgression and prefers the life of this world, who stubbornly turns away from the commands of Allaah and commits sin.

This is Allaah exalted be He, whom the Muslims worship Alone. Are there luckier people than the Muslims?

As long as the sinner is not stubborn by persisting in his sins, he will find it easy to repent and in that lies his or her salvation.

Allaah exalted be He says: "Declare unto My servants that truly I am the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Merciful. And that My torment is indeed the most painful torment" Q15:49-50.

These two attributes (mercy and punishment) are often mentioned together in the Qur'an, so that people will remain in a state of both hope and fear.

Hence, as an ambassador of Islam, as a scholar, as a student of knowledge, as a preacher, do not ONLY preach fear such that you drive people away from Islam, also do not ONLY preach hope such that you make people lazy in Islam and unmindful of their duties to Allaah. Create a balance between the two extremes.





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The Tafseer of ibn Katheer under Suratul Ghafir verse 2.