



Investing our time 1 of 2 (Our life's most precious assets)

By Dr. Ratib Al Nabulsi

In the holy Quran there is a short chapter which is very unique in its content. Often, when any two of the Prophet Muhammad's companions used to part ways, they made sure to remind each other of this chapter.

The chapter refers to the importance of using one's limited time on earth wisely. It highlights the importance of living a full and fruitful life that respects the creator's intentions. There is only one route that leads to eternal paradise and all other paths lead to loss and misery. The Quran urges us to use our time wisely, following the route to eternal happiness

— “By the declining day (time), (1) Lo! ;[To be]Human is a state of loss, (2) save for those who believe and do good works, and exhort

one another to truth and exhort one another to endurance. (3)" (Al-ASR (Time))

Every human life is, basically, a given period of time. Life consists of a limited number of days

and every day that passes results in a loss of our time on earth until the day when our time here

is finished. According to one of Prophet Muhammad's Hadiths, at every break of dawn the day calls saying: "Oh Human, I am a newly born creature and a witness to your deeds, so make the most out of me for I never come back till the end of days."

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God said that to be human is to be in a general state of loss. With the passing of time our life on earth

is gradually consumed. Consequently, time is one of mankind's most precious assets since it can never be replaced or renewed once it has passed. When we squander our time it is much like someone investing his capital unwisely and not using it to generate profit.

However, when we invest our time wisely, we can avoid this inevitable loss. When we invest our time in that which is right and just, using it to uphold right beliefs, perform good deeds, offer honest advice and speak the truth we are making a wise investment.

Investing time in the right belief Our belief system is what connects us- tiny, mortal and limited creatures that we, as humans, are - with the ultimate, old and everlasting source of our existence. Through our beliefs we can escape the limitations of our physical, earthly existence and engage the powers of a limitless universe, entrusting our limited self-powers to the greatness of hidden universal powers thereby expanding our human limitations and satisfying the quest for meaning we all yearn to grasp.

Through our belief systems, we replace our selfish tendencies with just actions. We substitute earthly man-made laws with perfect laws defined by the creator himself, who understands best what pleases us and what is in our best interest.

Investing time in good deeds Our beliefs form the basic foundation of our life, and those whose beliefs are founded on the Quran, are expected to act on those beliefs by devoting themselves to doing good deeds. The moment the right belief settles in one's heart and one has the conscience of a believer, it is anticipated they will immediately substantiate it in the form of doing good deeds.

Good deeds don't come by chance or by accident, rather, one is motivated to carry them out to honor their beliefs and achieve certain goals.

Perhaps one of the best ways to describe how best to use one's time wisely, investing in good deeds were the words spoken by Omar Bin Abdul Aziz, one of the Islamic empire's former rulers, who was just and upright:

"Day and night work their ways in you, so make sure you work your own way in both of them; they also take as much as they can of you, and so make sure you take as much as you can of them."

The value of a good deed is measured by its effect, comprehension and permanence. One of the greatest deeds ever undertaken in a lifetime was that of the Prophet Muhammad who devoted just short of 23 years of his life to guiding mankind from darkness to light, from the bottom of ignorance to the highest level of humanity.

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The Prophet Muhammad changed the history of mankind. This feat led Michael H. Hart to rank Prophet Muhammad as the top one of the 100 most influential people in history. Many readers of Hart's book were surprised to learn that the Prophet Muhammad was the first person on Hart's list. Although Islam is not the largest religion, Hart claims he selected Muhammad ahead of Jesus and Moses because Muhammad was successful in both the religious and political realms.

For many humans who invest a significant portion of their time in doing good deeds, their life and the fruits of their life endure long after they have departed. It as though their power endures beyond the grave. Their commitment to a just cause on earth enables them to continue to pursue their mission long after they are buried underground. "When a human dies, they stop being credited by God with their deeds except three categories of Deeds: leaving behind an ongoing charitable project that humans continue to benefit from; leaving behind knowledge or scientific findings that futures the understanding of mankind; and leaving behind good and wellraised children who always remember their parents and pray for them." (Prophet Muhammad's Hadith)

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Investing time in exhorting the truth Truth can, at times, be very difficult to identify. With so many complexities and obstacles in our daily lives, it is not easy to proclaim, and follow the truth. Sometimes,

we can identify the truth, but adopting and following it proves challenging. One may be reluctant to adopt the truth because of human selfishness, bad influences, a difficult atmosphere, bad customs or basic greed. It is important to exhort others to seek out and respect the truth and thereby create an encouraging atmosphere to adopt truth. Once adopted in a society by the majority, truth will prevail, leading to increased stability and justice.

— “And there may spring from you a nation who invite to goodness, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. Such are they who are successful.” (Al-E-Imran: 104)

Investing time in exhorting endurance God, in his wisdom, made life on earth full of tests and trials for humans. Trials are an inevitable part of life for each and every one of us. The trials we face take different forms; some may be related to health, others to financial or social issues. However, regardless of the nature of our trials, we all face them and must learn to exhort each other to endure.

In Islam, Muslims are to exhort everyone to endure the challenges life presents. They are encouraged to help others accept and endure the difficult tests and challenges life gives to them. It is only through endurance that we can overcome life’s most difficult hardships.

God promised many rewards for those who endure trials and pass them successfully with steadfastness. — “And surely we shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast, (155) who say when a misfortune strikes them: Lo! We are Allah’s and lo! Unto Him we are returning. (156) Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided.” (Al-Baqara:155) —

End of part 1 of 2

*All excerpts from the holy Koran taken from:

www.quranexplorer.com/quran

*All articles can be downloaded from:

www.iltezam.org