

A CODE FOR CONTENTMENT

Rating: 3.7

Description: Islam offers us a code for contentment. Its guidance can be thought of as an instruction manual setting out an easy path to Paradise.

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Life would be easy if we had a code for contentment. Some sort of list or book that could tell us what to do and when to do it. We would follow the instructions, and then amazingly there would be no worry or anxiety, true contentment would be attainable. We would not be looking over our shoulder waiting for the axe to fall. We would not fear financial problems, and we would not be afraid of being alone. These two uniquely human dilemmas could be overcome with such an instruction manual. Following it would make us content, and satisfied.



There is such a book, it is full of guidance, and it does guarantee contentment and success. There is even a set of traditions that explain how to read the book and how to perform our daily tasks. You know the book, it is the Quran, and you also know the traditions, they are the sayings of Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. The thing is we forget that this book is user-friendly. We often imagine that the rules are too hard to follow or that they do not pertain to the lives we lead today. However, that is certainly not the case.

The information is applicable in all places and in all times because, despite differences in place and time, human beings are just human beings. Our Creator did not abandon us to the ever-changing circumstances here on earth; instead, He equipped us with the tools needed to navigate our way from birth to death, and beyond. Some of the greatest tools are the collections of hadith (the traditions of Prophet Muhammad), and they are designed to help us on our journey. Emulating Prophet Muhammad is an excellent way of following God's rules.

"And verily you, O Muhammad, are on an exalted standard of character." (Quran 68:4)

If we closely examine just one of those traditions, we will find that it is, in fact, a code for contentment.

"Look at the person who is inferior to you; and do not look at one who is superior to you. Thereby you would be able to better appreciate the blessings that God bestowed upon you."[\[1\]](#)

Here inferior refers to someone that has less than you in worldly goods and chattels, while superior means someone with more worldly possessions than you. We are so used to looking up and wishing for more that we forget that God has given us more than we could ever need, but we do not recognize its value. Often when we take the time to look at those who have less, we are amazed that they seem so much happier or content than we are. They are happier not because they have less but because they recognize that God has been generous with them and they do not need more.

Sometimes, all too easily, we become distracted by earthly delights. It is true that many of these delights are sins we should be staying away from but just as many, if not more, are things that are permissible even encouraged. There is nothing in Islam that says we should not be wealthy and have money to spare, however, Islam does tell us that our wealth is not ours, it belongs to God and should be shared around; it should pass through our hands and into the hands of others.

Our lives are filled with blessings but often we are so distracted by gaining more and trying to guarantee security by accumulating things, we forget to be grateful for what we have. We see others with more of this or that and complain or try harder to gain insignificant possessions. It is easy to get on this merry go round and keep reaching for more. Often we feel less content with every new acquisition instead of feeling satisfied and grateful. Life can become a difficult task instead of the pleasure God intended it to be.

One way to get off the merry go round and stop the rat race of earthly competition is to take the advice of Prophet Muhammad and look at those who have less than us. When we see that some people have to move through life with less of everything or with ill health and injuries, we become grateful for our meager belongings and our good health. Whatever situation we are in is certainly better than the situation of many others.

There is a time, however, when we should look at those who are superior to us and desire to be like them. This has nothing to do with worldly goods or riches, and everything to do with worship and righteousness. In matters of worship we should not look at those who are below us, rather we should gain inspiration by looking at those who are better than us. We should try to follow the example and lifestyle of those who are more God-conscious and pious.

If we pay attention, we will notice that there are believers who give generously and are kind to all those around them. These are people who enjoy spreading God's blessings. They follow the guidance – their contentment allows them to smile, help those in need, and treat others courteously and compassionately. They know that following the traditions of Prophet Muhammad can guarantee a life of contentment to be followed by a blissful Hereafter.

Islam offers us a code for contentment. It is all laid before us, and we have little to do except follow the commandments of God. Human beings, however, are forgetful and prone to seeing difficulty everywhere when the reality is that Islam is easy, and contentment is easily attainable. Prophet Muhammad said, "This religion is one of ease and not restrictions; if anyone tries to make it difficult, they will be overcome; therefore do what is right, and do what you are capable of. Be happy, and seek help in prayer."^[2]

Footnotes:

[1] *Saheeh Muslim* (With slightly different wording in *Saheeh Bukhari*.)

[2] *Saheeh Bukhari*

The web address of this article:

<https://www.islamreligion.com/articles/11352/code-for-contentment>

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