

Do we need to worry about our deeds not being accepted?

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1. In our daily lives as Muslims, we must engage in various acts of worship as a sign of our desire to draw closer to Allah and as an expression of gratitude, as being obedient to Allah's commands is a way of showing thankfulness.
2. However, have you ever wondered or questioned whether the worship we perform is accepted or not? Do we ever ponder if Allah accepts all the acts of worship we engage in, or are there some that are not accepted? If not accepted, why is that? Have you heard about prayers being answered and rejected? The same applies to our deeds.
3. It's like working in an office, diligently carrying out tasks as instructed by the boss. We do our best based on what we believe is right, and then when we submit our work to the employer, suddenly they refuse to accept it because we did it differently than instructed. They wanted it done one way, and we did it another way, thinking it was correct. How would we feel? We would undoubtedly feel frustrated and consider our efforts wasted.
4. How would it feel if all the acts of worship we have diligently performed throughout our lives were suddenly not accepted by Allah? Can such a thing happen? Yes, it can, because Allah mentions in the Quran, as seen in Al-Baqarah 266:

أَيُّوُدُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Would any of you wish to have a garden with palm trees, grapevines, and all kinds of fruits with rivers flowing underneath and as they grow very old with dependent children, a fiery whirlwind hits the garden, burning it all up? This is how Allah makes His revelations clear to you, so perhaps you will reflect.

5. There are those who feel they have been engaged in the best of deeds from their youth to their old age, only to find it all in vain when a scorching wind destroys their orchard. Cultivating a garden and planting trees from a young age until old age is not a small effort; they poured all their hard work into it, only for it to turn into dust. This is the example Allah gives for those who give in charity but follow it with hurtful reminders and words. Their charity is not sincere and not for the sake of Allah; it all goes to waste, leaving them only with exhaustion.

6. Do you remember the story of the sons of Prophet Adam, Habil and Qabil, when they offered sacrifices to Allah SWT? This story is narrated in Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 27. One of their sacrifices was accepted, while the other was not. Why? Because it lacked sincerity and righteousness. Worship was performed casually, without giving their best and without sincerity. Meanwhile, Habil offered the best he could with sincerity.

وَأْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

Relate to them in truth 'O Prophet' the story of Adam's two sons—how each offered a sacrifice: one's offering was accepted while the other's was not, so he threatened 'his brother', "I will kill you!" His brother replied, "Allah only accepts 'the offering' of the sincerely devout.

7. Prophet Abraham prayed and implored Allah to accept his worship and the construction of the Kaaba with his son, Prophet Ismail. Despite being a prophet and beloved of Allah, he still sought guidance from Allah to ensure that his deeds were accepted, fearing that what they were doing might not be in accordance with Allah's wishes. He was uncertain and did not want their efforts to go in vain. You can find this in Al-Baqarah, verse 127:

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And 'remember' when Abraham raised the foundation of the House with Ishmael, 'both praying,' "Our Lord! Accept 'this' from us. You are indeed the All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

8. So, indeed, there are acts of worship that may be accepted and others that may not be. We should not feel complacent or assume that every act of worship we perform is accepted by Allah. When we overlook or do not contemplate this matter, it is a sign that our deeds are in danger. That's why it is crucial to seek Allah's guidance to show us the right way to worship because nowadays, many practices are mixed with ancestral customs and old traditions to the point where we ourselves don't know what constitutes true religion and which practices are genuinely religious.

Therefore, in the Sunnah (the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad), it is recommended to recite a supplication after the Fajr (morning) prayer, asking Allah for beneficial knowledge, good sustenance, and accepted deeds. This supplication helps us remain on the right path and ensures that our actions are in accordance with true religious practice.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ عِلْمًا نَافِعًا، وَرِزْقًا طَيِّبًا، وَعَمَلًا مُتَقَبَّلًا

9. Indeed, there are three main conditions for our worship to be accepted: faith (iman), sincerity (ikhlas), and following the way of the Prophet (ittiba' Sunnah). Without any one of these three elements, our deeds are likely not to be accepted. The saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasizes this:

مَنْ أَحْدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ مِنْهُ فَهُوَ رَدٌّ. [رواه البخاري ومسلم]

*"Whoever innovates something new in our religion that is not from it will have it rejected."
(Hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim)*

10. If one could create their own way of worship, then Prophet Abraham would have devised his own way long ago because he was a prophet, and surely there would have been a special provision for him, or he wouldn't have gone wrong. However, Prophet Abraham himself did not take liberties in this matter. That's why Allah sent messengers and prophets to every community, to show them the correct way of worship. We should not be like the Children of Israel, who were known for altering Allah's commands when He instructed them one thing, they did something else. They acted independently, thinking their reasoning was sound. What is narrated in the

Quran about them is not just a historical account; we know that history tends to repeat itself, and this is what Allah wants us all to take as a lesson. Because these occurrences are indeed happening among the Muslim community today.

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

Our Lord! Make us both 'fully' submit to You¹ and from our descendants a nation that will submit to You. Show us our rituals, and turn to us in grace. You are truly the Acceptor of Repentance, Most Merciful.

11. So, be cautious and don't engage in worship only to end up feeling tired, only to have it not accepted by Allah. It is a significant loss. Those who do not have complete faith in their connection with Allah tend to forget, become complacent, and perform worship in a manner not prescribed by the Quran. The Quran instructs us to follow the Prophet, but some people follow other practices that are not from the Prophet. It is crucial to have sincere faith, to remember that Allah is the focus of our worship, and to follow the guidance of the Prophet in our acts of worship. Otherwise, our efforts may be in vain, and our worship may not be accepted by Allah.

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيَّهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا

"They are" those whose efforts are in vain in this worldly life, while they think they are doing good!"

12. In the Quran, Allah recounts numerous instances of how He saved the followers who followed their prophets and messengers. For example, in Surah An-Naml, verse 53, Allah informs us how He saved the followers of Prophet Saleh. The followers of the prophets in the past were often not numerous because adhering to the truth could be challenging. Having a large following is not necessarily an indicator of truth. If a large following were a sign of truth, then Pharaoh's followers would have outnumbered those of Prophet Moses. However, Allah saved the few who followed the right path.

وَأَنْجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ

And We delivered those who were faithful and were mindful 'of Allah'.

13. So, today, let's ask ourselves whether the prayers and rituals we perform align with the way of the Prophet or not. Did the Prophet perform them or not? Because if it's called an act of worship, the Prophet must have already shown us how to do it because he was trustworthy, and

he would not leave out any part of the religious practice. The religion is already complete! If what we do follows the Sunnah, then Alhamdulillah, God willing, we are on the right path. If not, it's a waste of time. May we be able to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet in every aspect of our lives, as therein lies success and salvation. This is what it means to follow the Prophet, not following others, not following our own whims, feelings, or dreams. If we seek the intercession of the Prophet, ensure that what we do complies with the law he brought!