SHABAN GOOD DEEDS TO Purify your heart

[**Good Deed Purify your heart**](http://muslimcommunityblog.blogspot.com/2010/12/good-deed-purify-your-heart.html)

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26:88-89 (Y. Ali) The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, But only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart;

2:10 (Y. Ali) In their hearts is a disease; and Allah has increased their disease: And grievous is the penalty they (incur), because they are false (to themselves).

5:52 (Y. Ali) Those in whose hearts is a disease – thou seest how eagerly they run about amongst them, saying: “We do fear lest a change of fortune bring us disaster.” Ah! perhaps Allah will give (thee) victory, or a decision according to His will. Then will they repent of the thoughts which they secretly harbored in their hearts.

9:125 (Y. Ali) But those in whose hearts is a disease,- it will add doubt to their doubt, and they will die in a state of Unbelief.

47:29 (Y. Ali) Or do those in whose hearts is a disease, think that Allah will not bring to light all their rancor?

*Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: “A group of people will enter Jannah – their hearts are like the hearts of the birds.” (Muslim)*

*Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: “Lo! Verily, there is in the body a small piece of flesh; if it is good, the whole body is good, and if it is corrupted, the whole body is corrupted; lo! it is the heart”(Bukhari) Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said “Verily, Allah looks not at your bodies nor at your faces but He looks at your hearts.”(Muslim)*

**Action Plan**

**The Heart**

Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*says, “*On that day nothing will benefit the human being, neither wealth nor children, only the one who brings Allah a sound heart*.” A sound heart is one that is free of defects and spiritual blemishes. Though the spiritual heart is centered in the physical heart, the heart being referred to here is the spiritual heart, not the physical heart. In ancient Chinese medicine, the heart houses what is known as “*chen*” which is “a spirit.” The Chinese character for “thinking,” “thought,” “love,” “virtue,” and “intending to listen” all contain the ideogram for the heart. In fact, in every culture in the world, people use metaphors that deal with the heart; in English, we call people who are cruel, “hard-hearted people.” There is also the idea of having “a cold heart” and “a warm heart.” People who do not hide their emotions well “wear their hearts on their sleeves.” When deeply affected, we say, “he affected me in my heart” or “in my core.” In fact, the English word “core” means “inner most,” and in Arabic, the equivalent “*lub*” comes from the Latin word, meaning “heart.” Thus, the core of the human being is indeed the heart. The word “courage” also comes from the same root word as for “heart” because courage is centered in the heart. The most ancient Indo-European word for heart means “that which leaps.” The heart leaps or beats in the breast of man. For example, people say, “my heart skipped a beat” in reaction to seeing somebody. Many such metaphors are used for the heart.

**Three Types of People**

The ancients were aware of the spiritual diseases of the heart, and this is certainly at the essence of the Islamic teaching. One of the first things the Qur’an does is define three types of people: the *mu’minun*, the *kafirun,* and the *munafiqun*. The *mu’minun* are people whose hearts are alive while the*kafirun* are people whose hearts are dead. The *munafiqun* are people who have a disease or a sickness in their hearts; thus, Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*says,“In their hearts is a disease, and they were increased in their disease.” This is also in accordance with another verse: “When their hearts deviated, Allah made them deviate further.” When somebody turns away from Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala*, Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala* causes them to deviate even further from the truth.

**The Heart and the Brain**

The actual physical heart in our breast beats about 100,000 times a day, pumping two gallons of blood per minute, 100 gallons per hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year for an entire lifetime! The vascular system that sends this life-giving blood is over 60,000 miles long: it is more than two times the circumference of the earth. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the heart starts beating before the brain is formed; the heart begins to beat without any central nervous system. The dominant theory was that the central nervous system is what is controlling the entire human being from the brain, yet we know now that in fact the nervous system does not initiate the heartbeat. It is actually self-initiated; we would say, it is initiated by Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala.*

The heart is the centre of the human being. Many people think the brain is the centre of consciousness, yet the Qur’an clearly states, “They have hearts that they are not able to understand with.” According to the Muslims, the centre of human consciousness is the heart and not the brain itself, and it is only recently that human beings have learned there are over 40,000 neurons in the heart; in other words, there are cells in the heart that are communicating. Now, it is understood that there is two-way communication between the brain and the heart: the brain sends messages to the heart, but the heart also sends messages to the brain. The brain receives these messages from the heart, which reach the amygdala and the thalamus. The cortex receives input from the amygdala and thalamus that it processes to produce emotion; the new cortex relates to learning and reasoning. These processes are recent discoveries, and although we do not fully understand them, we do know that the heart is an extremely sophisticated organ.

According to the *hadith*, the heart is a source of knowledge. The Prophet,*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said that wrong action is what irritates the heart. Thus, the heart actually knows wrong actions, and this is one of the reasons why people can do terrible things, but, ultimately, they are affected negatively. In *Crime and Punishment*, the brilliant Russian author Dostoevsky indicates that crime itself *is* the perpetrator’s punishment because human beings have to live with the result of their actions: their souls are affected. When people do something against the heart, they act against the soul, and that actually affects human beings to the degree that they will go into a state of spiritual agitation, and people will use many ways to cover this up. This is what*kufur* is: “*kufur*” means “covering up.” To hide their agitation, people use alcohol, drugs, and sexual experimentation; they also seek power, wealth, and fame, taking themselves into a state of heedlessness, submerging themselves into the ephemeral world which causes them to forget their essential nature and to forget their hearts. Thus, people become cut off from their hearts.

**Wrong Actions Sicken the Heart**

One of the things about being cut off from the heart is that the more cut off from the heart one becomes, the sicker the heart grows because the heart needs nourishment, and heedlessness starves the spiritual heart.  
  
When one goes into a state of unawareness of Allah and the *akhira*, one becomes unaware of the infinite world in relation to the finite world, unaware that we are in this world for a temporary period. When we look at the infinite world in relation to the finite world, suddenly our concerns become focused on the infinite world and not on the finite world. On the other hand, when people are completely immersed within the finite world, believing that they will be here forever, believing that they will not be taken to account for their actions, this action in and of itself ultimately leads to the spiritual death of the hearts. However, before it dies and becomes putrid and completely foul, the heart will show many symptoms. These are the spiritual diseases of the hearts.

***Shubahat* and *Shahawat*: Two Types of Diseases**

There are two types of diseases of the heart. The first are called *shubahat*, and these are diseases that relate to understanding. For instance, if somebody is fearful of his provision from Allah, afraid he will not get his food for the day, then there is a disease in his heart because a sound heart has complete trust in Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*, and a sick heart has doubt. For this reason, a sound heart does not worry. It is the *nafs* (ego),*shaytan*, *hawa* (caprice), and *dunya*(the love of this ephemeral world) that lead to this state of fear or of anxiety. The heart in [and] of itself is an organ designed to be in a state of stillness, but the stillness will only come about by the remembrance of Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*. The Qur’an states, “Isn’t it by the *dhikr* of Allah that the heart is stilled?” This is what the heart wants: it wants to remember Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*. When Allah is not remembered, the heart goes into a state of agitation: it goes in a state of turmoil, and it becomes diseased because it is not being fed. Just as we need to breathe because cells need life-giving oxygen and if we stop breathing, cells die, similarly, the heart also needs to breathe, and the breath of the heart is the remembrance of Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*. *Dhikr* is what feeds and nourishes the heart. The company of good people is the food and exercise of the heart. All of these things are necessary for the heart to be sound and healthy, and this is basically the purpose of Revelation. The Qur’an has come to remind people that our hearts need nourishment. Thus, Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala*tells us that the human being who will be in a good state in the next world is the one who brings a sound heart.

When we are born, we enter the world in a state of *fitra*: the original inherent nature of the human being; then we learn to be anxious. We learn anxiety from our mothers, fathers, and society. Thus, the Qur’an says that the human being is created in a state of anxiety (*hala’*), and the one group of people who are removed from this state of anxiety are the *musallin*: the people of prayer. This “prayer” is not the five daily obligatory prayers; rather, it is the prayer of people who are *always* in a state of prayer (*dhikr*); they are always in a state of connection with Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*, and this is the highest station. This is the station of people who are not diverted from the remembrance of Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala* by buying, commerce, or anything else. They are the ones who remember Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala*, as the Qur’an states, “standing, sitting, and reclining on their sides.” These are the people who are not the people of heedlessness (*ghafla*).

The second type of the diseases of the heart is called *shahawat*, and these are the base desires of the self. For instance, food and sex are *shahawat*; they are appetites. These become diseases when they grow out of proportion from their natural states. In Islam, we have a method or a means by which our hearts can be remedied and return to their sound state again. The *dhikr* that the Prophet *sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* did more than any other *dhikr* was “Oh Turner-Overer of the hearts, make my heart firm on your *deen*,” and it is important that Muslims be reminded of this.

**The Text: *Mat-hartul Qulub***

In Arabic, “*Mat-hara*” is *ism makaan* (a noun of place), and it means “a tool of*tahara*(purification),” and that is what *Mat-hartul Qulub* is. This text is the alchemy of the heart: it explains how to transform the heart. *Mat-hartul Qulub*was written by a great scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Maulud al-Musawir al-Ya’qubi from Mauritania. He was a brilliant scholar of West Africa who mastered all of the Islamic sciences as well as the inward sciences of Islam. He wrote this didactic poem in order to teach people the means to purify their hearts because he looked around and realized that everybody he saw had a diseased heart. Though he recognized the benefit in learning the abstract sciences of Islam, such as grammar, rhetoric, and logic, he felt that people may not have a great deal of need for that knowledge given the fact that on the Day of Judgment, the heart is the only thing about which we will be asked. The state of our hearts is the only thing that may benefit us because “actions are by intentions” as the*hadith* states. Since all our actions are rooted in intentions, and the place of intention is the heart, every action we do is rooted in our hearts. Thus, in reality when we are asked about our actions, we are asked about the intentions behind the actions, and given the fact that intentions emanate from the heart, what we are actually being asked about is the human heart.  
  
When Shaykh Muhammad Maulud realized this, he said that suddenly Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala* inspired him to write this text, and he based it upon many of the previous texts that had gone before, such as the last book of the*Ihya ‘Ulumudin*by Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali.

**Rectification Begins with the Self**

If we look at the world today, the tribulations, the trials, and every war that we have, we will see that every bit of human suffering is rooted in human hearts. The reason people are aggressive against other people is due to diseases of the heart: covetousness, the desire to conquer, the desire to exploit other people, and the desire to steal their natural resources are all from diseases of the heart. A sound heart cannot commit such acts. Every murderer, every rapist, every idolater, every foul person, every person showing an act of cruelty has a diseased heart because these actions emanate from diseased hearts. If the hearts were sound, none of these actions would be a reality. Therefore, if we wish to change our world, we cannot go about it by attempting to rectify the outward; rather, we change the world by rectifying the inward because it is the inward that precedes the outward.

In reality, everything that we see outside of us comes from the unseen world. The phenomenal world emerges from the unseen world, and all actions emerge from the unseen realm of our hearts. Thus, if we want to rectify our actions, we must first rectify our hearts. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the famous American preacher and civil rights activist, said that in order for people to condemn injustice, they have to follow four stages: the first stage is that they must ascertain that injustices are indeed being perpetrated. People must point out the injustices, and in his case, it was injustices against the African-American people in the United States. The second stage is to negotiate: people must go to the oppressors and demand justice. If the oppressors refuse, then Dr. King said that the third stage is self-purification. He said that we must ask ourselves, are we ourselves wrongdoers? Are we ourselves oppressors? The final stage is to take action once we have looked into ourselves.

One of the things the Muslims of the modern world fail to recognize is that when we look at all of the terrible things that are happening to us, we often refuse to look at ourselves and ask ourselves, why are these things happening to us? If we ask that in all sincerity, the answer will come back in no uncertain terms that this is all from our own selves. We have brought all of the suffering upon ourselves. This is the only empowering position that we can take, and this is the Quranic position. Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala* says quite clearly that He places some of the oppressors over other oppressors because of what their hands were earning. According to Fakharudin ar-Razi’s explanation, *radi Allahu ‘anhu*, this verse means that whenever there is oppression in the earth, it is a result of other people’s oppression. Thus, those people who are being aggressed upon are being oppressed because of their own oppression. However, this is obviously with the exception of tribulation.  
  
There are definitely times when the*mu’minun* are tried, but if they respond accordingly with patience and perseverance, Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala* always gives them victory.

**The Impure Oppress and the Pure Elevate**

There is no doubt that the Prophet *sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and the *sahaba*were being oppressed when they were in Makkah, but Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala* later gave them victory. Within 23 years, the Prophet *sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was not only no longer oppressed, he had conquered the entire Arabian peninsula, and all of the people who had previously oppressed him were begging him for mercy. Even though they deserved to be recompensed with punishment, the Prophet *sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* forgave them, and this is the difference between somebody whose heart is pure and somebody whose heart is impure. The impure people oppress, and the pure people not only forgive their oppressors, they actually conquer them by the power of Allah*subhanahu wa t’ala*, and then they elevate them. This is what Muslims must recognize: the only solution to all of our problems is that we have to purify ourselves, and this is what *Mat-hartul Qulub* is about; it is a book of self-purification. If we take this book seriously, work on our hearts, and actually implement what we learn from it, we will begin to see changes in our lives, around us, and within our own family dynamics. It is a blessing that we have this book and that this teaching still exists in our community. All that is left is for us to take this teaching upon ourselves and to take it seriously.

**Medicine for the Diseased Heart**

If you use the techniques that are given by the imams, you will see results. However, it is just as the prescription that the doctor gives you: the doctor can only write the prescription; he can give you the medicine, but he cannot force you to take the medicine. It is left for us to take the medicine. The imams have given us the medicine: our teaching is there; it is clear; it does work; and we can change ourselves with it. If we do, Allah *subhanahu wa t’ala* has promised that we will be rewarded in this world and in the next. Thus, all that is left for us to do now is to go through these diseases and then set out to implement their cures *in sha Allah*.

[**Hasad- Evil Eye and Envy**](http://muslimcommunityblog.blogspot.com/2011/03/hasad-evil-eye-and-envy.html)

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On the authority of Abu Huraira (ra) who said: The Messenger of Allah (saw) said

“Do not be envious of one another; do not artificially raise prices against one another; do not hate one another; do not turn one’s back on each other; and do not undercut one another in business transactions. And be, [O] servants of Allah, brethren. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He does not wrong him. He does not fail him [when he needs him]. He does not lie to him. And he does not show contempt for him. Piety is here” - and he pointed to his chest three times.

“It is enough of evil for a person to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. All of a Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim: his blood, his wealth and his honor.” Recorded by Muslim

…If the Muslims were to apply the sublime teachings of this hadith, there would be a great change and improvement in their interrelationships and love for one another.

This disease of the heart and the sin which is known as hasad was one of the first sins ever committed. It was one of the main things that drove Satan away from his Lord. In fact, two aspects drove Satan to the horrendous situation that he is in today: pride and envy… In addition, the people with whom Allah is displeased and those who have gone astray, the Jews and the Christians, are people of hasad. Hence, any time a Muslim has this characteristic, he is taking on one of the characteristics of the people whom Allah despises…[See al-Baqara 109].

According to ibn Taimiya, hasad is always accompanied by hatred. This is one of the evils of hasad. First the person is envious of the other person. After some time, this envy develops into hatred. [Ibn Taimiya, Majmu vol. 10, p. 127. Also see al-Duhami, Al-Hath ala Salamah al-Sadr (Riyadh: Dar al-Watn, 1416 A.H.), pp. 38-39.]

Hasad is a kind of opposition or discontent with what Allah has decreed…he is putting his religion into a dangerous and precarious position. He is practically declaring himself a better decision maker than Allah. [Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh Riyadh, vol. 4, p. 704.]

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said,

“Iman and hasad do not gather together in the heart of a slave [of Allah].”

[Recorded by al-Nasai. According to al-Albani, it is sahih. See al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami, vol. 2, p. 1262.]

According to ibn Uthaymin, one of the strong signs that a person is inflicted with the disease of hasad is that he always tries to conceal the virtues and goodness of others. He does not like it when others talk about the good that a person has done. He remains silent and pretends like he does not know of the good that the other one has done. A true believer who is free of hasad likes it when good things are said about others and when the good deeds of others are appreciated and spoken about…He has no envy in his heart for what Allah has bestowed upon the others and, therefore, he spreads that good news to others. [Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh Riyadh, vol. 4, p. 707.] This sign that ibn Uthaymin has explicitly mentioned should be considered a type of subtle sign that people may not notice in themselves. They must take note of this sign and repel it as quickly as possible as it is a stepping stone to the greater forms of hasad.

With respect to that feeling of hasad, people can be divided into the following categories:

1. There are some people who actively work to remove that bounty from the other person, without necessarily destroying the bounty itself. By their speech and their actions they will wrongly do whatever they can to bring an end to the other person’s blessing from Allah.

2. There are others who do not just seek to remove that bounty from the other person, but they also work to get the bounty for themselves.

3. The worst are those who simply wish to destroy the bounty, regardless of whether they themselves get it or if it is simply destroyed. They only want to destroy that blessing because it was not given to them in the first place.

4. There are those who cannot remove the feeling of envy from their souls. They cannot control it but they do not like it and wish they could remove it. Those people, Allah willing, are not sinful for their state that they cannot control. According to ibn al-Qayyim, the evil of hasad comes about when the person acts upon his hasad, even if just in his heart. This is why Allah guides the Muslims not to simply seek refuge of the envious one, but to seek refuge of the envious one when he is being envious. Allah says, “From the evil of the envious one when he envies” (al-Falaq 5). [Quoted in al-Salihi, vol. 6, p. 529.]

5. There are also those who, although they do not act upon their hasad, willingly have thoughts of envy, are pleased with them and continue to think in such a manner while putting up no resistance to such evil thoughts as removing blessings from one’s brother. This person is like a person who is dead set upon committing a sin.  
  
There is a difference of opinion among the scholars concerning whether this kind of person is a sinner or not.  
  
Al-Haitami says that such a person is definitely a sinner. [Al-Haitami, Fath, p. 249.] Ibn Rajab, furthermore, points out that such a person is rarely safe from doing some wrong act against his brother out of spite and envy. Therefore, in the end, he may definitely become sinful in action, without question. [Ibn Rajab, Jami, vol. 2, p. 262.]

6. Another group of people recognize the hasad that exists within them. They do their best to remove that hasad from themselves and to treat the one they are envious of in the best possible fashion. They pray for the person; they tell others of his goodness and of the bounties that Allah has bestowed upon him. They remove that hasad to the extent that they love their Muslim brother and they love that Allah has blessed him and bestowed him and bestowed His bounties upon him. This category of people are among the people of the highest level of faith, they love for their brothers what they love for themselves. [Ibn Rajab, Jami, vol. 2, p. 263.]

[**Beware of Jealousy**](http://muslimcommunityblog.blogspot.com/2010/07/beware-of-jealousy.html)

[http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_iGO9Q79AkT8/TD3-yJQO7QI/AAAAAAAADaY/fcV98JXbk84/s200/left_menu_design.jpg](http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_iGO9Q79AkT8/TD3-yJQO7QI/AAAAAAAADaY/fcV98JXbk84/s1600/left_menu_design.jpg)

Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger (sallallaahu 'alayihi wa sallam), his household and companions.

**"Beware of jealousy, for verily it destroys good deeds the way fire destroys wood."**

Hasad (jealousy and envy) is among the most destructive emotions or feeling which a man may have towards his fellow human being. It causes him to wish evil for others and to be happy when misfortune befalls them. The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) warned against envy by comparing it to fire that completely burns the wood.

He (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) said:**"Beware of jealousy, for verily it destroys good deeds the way fire destroys wood."** [Abu Dawud]

Hasad is a disease of the heart and it causes impurity to the heart, when **Allah's Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) was asked who are the best of people? He (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) replied: "The one with a clean heart and truthful tongue."They asked: 'We understand a truthful tongue, but what does a clean heart mean?' he answered: 'It is the heart of one that is pious, pure, and is free of sin, transgressions, hatred and Hasad."**[Ibn Majah]

Hasad is such a dangerous characteristic that Allah revealed verses of the Qur'an to be recited as a protection from the jealous,

***"Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn… from the evil of envious when he envies."*** [Surah al-Falaq (113): 1]

At-Tirmîdhî narrated from al-Zubayr Ibn al-Awam that the **Prophet (sallallâhû alaihi wa-sallam) said: "There has come to you the disease of the nations before you, jealousy and hatred. This is the 'shaver' (destroyer); I do not say that it shaves hair, but that it shaves (destroys) faith…"**[(Hasan) Jamî at- Tirmîdhî (2434)]

Hasad can cause the person to indulge in disbelief because it causes the individual to feel that Allah has not been fair with him; he forgets all the mercy and blessings which Allah has bestowed upon him.**The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) said: "They are enemies for Allah's bounties." They asked: "Who are they?" He said: "Those who envy people for what Allah has given them of Bounty."** [at-Tabarani]

Allah through His Absolute Wisdom has given some people more wealth, intelligence, beauty, strength, children, etc. than others. The believing Muslim should be content with what Allah has destined for him.

***Allah says: "Allah favored some of you over others with wealth and properties… Do they deny the favors of Allah?"*** [Surah an-Nahl (16): 71]

And:***"Do they envy men for what Allah has given them of His Bounty?"*** [Surah an-Nisa (4): 54]

***"It is We Who portion out between them their livelihood in this world, and We raised some of them above others in ranks, so that some may employ others in their work. But the mercy of your Lord is better."*** [Surah az-Zukhruf (43): 32]

meaning mercy of Allah is better than the convenience of the world. The materials of this life do not make one superior to another in Allah's Judgment. True superiority lies in Taqwa (righteousness, fear of Allah).

He said:***"Surely, the most noble of you to Allah is the most God-fearing."***[Surah al-Hujurat (49): 13]

***"And the Hereafter with Your Lord is (only) for those who have Taqwa."***[Surah az-Zukhruf (43): 35]

What belongs to the transient world is of no significance before Allah. **The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) said: "If this world were worth a mosquito's wing before Allah, He would not give a disbeliever a drink of water."** [At-Tirmidhi]

The favors of Allah in the world are a test; the more the favors, the more the tests. Al-Hasan al-Basri said: "Umar Ibn Khattab wrote this letter to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, 'Be content with your provision in this world, for the Most Merciful has honored some of His servants over others in terms of provision as a test of both. The one who has been given plenty is being tested to see if he will give thanks to Allah and fulfill the duties which are his by virtue of his wealth…" [Ibn Hatim]

Allah, the Exalted, has therefore forbidden us from desiring what other have,***"Do not wish for what we have favored some of you over others."***[Surah an-Nisa (4): 32]

In order to discourage envy, the **Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) said: "Do not look to those above you. Look to those below you, as it will more likely remind you of Allah's favors bestowed on you." [Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim] On another occasion, he said: "If one of you looks at someone wealthier and better built than him, he should also look at someone of lower standard than himself."**[Sahih Muslim]