



Shaikh ‘Abdul Fattaah Abu Ghuddah (rahimahullah), the renowned Syrian ‘Aalim, writes that he heard the following incident from an ‘Aalim of Pakistan:

Once, a certain person went to visit one of the rulers in Northern Pakistan. When the ruler (received him and) asked him how he was, he launched into a lengthy list of complaints, explaining all the difficulties and grievances that he was suffering.

After listing his extensive complaints, he remarked to the ruler, “How fortunate you are! You lead a good and comfortable life! You enjoy the best quality of food, drink and sleep, and your life is free from all problems and worries! You are the ruler, so everything (you wish for) is presented before you!”
Hearing this, the ruler remained silent and did not say anything.

Sometime later, the ruler invited this person to his home for a meal. However, over this person’s seat, he had suspended a sharp, unsheathed sword. Furthermore, the sword was hanging from a thin thread which could snap at any second. When the man saw the sword hanging over him, threatening to fall on him at any moment, he was filled with such fear that he lost his appetite and interest in the food!

The ruler encouraged him to eat saying, “You should eat from all the different varieties and dishes (that we have served), for they are all tasty and delicious.” However, the man responded, “As tasty as the food may be, my fear of the sword falling on me has robbed me of the enjoyment of the food and has made me lose all interest in eating!”

The ruler then said, “That, exactly, is the state of my life which you envy. You yearn to lead the type of life which I lead, whereas you are completely ignorant of the reality of my life and what I go through. My entire life is similar to yours at this moment, while you fear the sword

falling on you. The reason is that my life is in danger at every moment from my enemies and close associates who wish to seize power from me. They wish to take my rulership through having me assassinated and killed, or slipping poison into my food, or killing me in my sleep, or through inciting an uprising and rebellion against me.

“I constantly suffer from insecurity, insomnia, fear and anxiety. At every moment of my life, I am forced to remain vigilant and on guard. However, you are so fortunate! You sleep in peace and safety, walk in peace and safety, eat in peace and safety, and whether you are traveling or at home, you enjoy peace and safety. YOU are the one who leads an envious life – *not me*.”

Hearing this, the man acknowledged that the ruler was correct. He thus praised and thanked Allah Ta‘ala for the life that he had given him.

(Risaalatul Mustarshideen pg. 223 – footnotes)

Lessons:

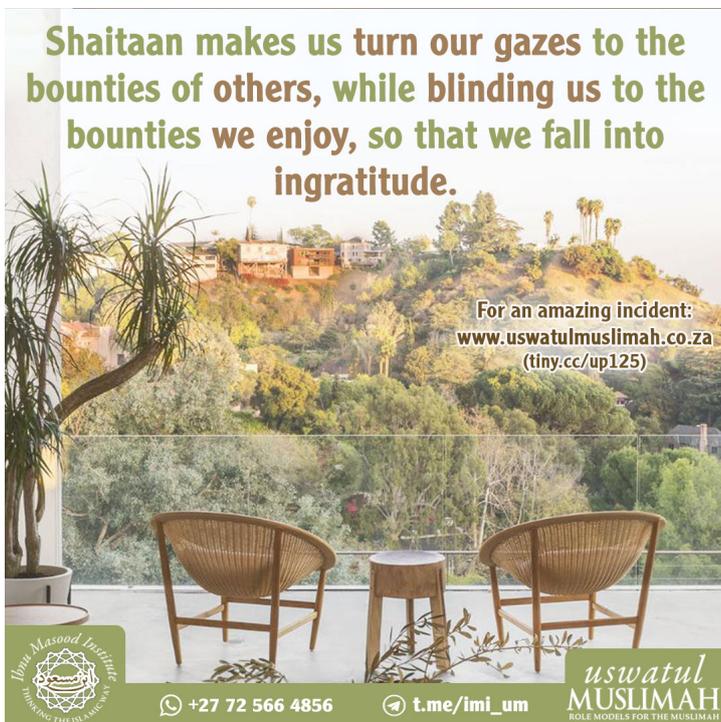
1. An English proverb states, “The grass is always greener on the other side.” In other words, no matter how good a person’s life may be, and how many bounties of Allah Ta‘ala he may be enjoying, he will always feel as though other people are more fortunate than him and are enjoying more than him. In reality, this is the trap of Shaitaan. Shaitaan makes us turn our gazes to the bounties of others, while blinding us to the bounties we enjoy, so that we fall into ingratitude. Hence, the hadeeth teaches us that in regard to the bounties of this world, we should always look at those who are less fortunate and less privileged than ourselves, as this will cause us to become grateful by making us realize how much we enjoy.

2. Allah Ta‘ala loves us, and He knows what is best for us. At times, we want something for ourselves, but He does not give it to us, as He knows that it is not good for us. Instead, He gives us something better – in this world or the next. We may not understand or see the infinite wisdom behind the decision of Allah Ta‘ala, but we should nevertheless trust in Him and always

remain pleased with His decision.

3. Most people labour their entire lives to amass wealth, convinced that abundant wealth will guarantee them lives of happiness and joy. However, wealth, power and position do NOT guarantee happiness and peace, as many wealthy people live in constant fear and stress regarding the safety of their lives and wealth.

Conversely, there are many people who are not wealthy, but lead happy and contented lives. Thus, we should learn to be content and grateful for what we have – this is the key to a ‘good life’.



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