

Such people deserve to be the ones who hope for the mercy of Allah, because they have taken measures that lead to mercy. This indicates that hope can only come after implementing the means that lead to blessing. As for hope that is accompanied by laziness and failure to take proper measures, this is helplessness, wishful thinking and self-defeat; it is indicative of weak resolve and lack of reason, like the one who hopes to have a child without getting married, or the one who hopes for a harvest without sowing any seed and irrigating it, and so on.

﴿it is they who have the hope of Allah's mercy﴾ – these words indicate that even if a person does these deeds, he should not rely on them, rather he should hope for the mercy of his Lord, and hope that his deeds will be accepted, his sins forgiven and his faults concealed.

Hence Allah says, ﴿And Allah is Oft-Forgiving﴾ that is, to the one who repents sincerely ﴿Most Merciful﴾ – His mercy encompasses all things and His kindness extends to every living creature.

This indicates that the one who does the deeds mentioned will attain the forgiveness of Allah, because good deeds erase bad deeds, thus attaining the mercy of Allah.

If he attains forgiveness, punishments in this world and in the hereafter, which are the consequences of sin, will be warded off from him, because his sins have been forgiven and their effects erased. If he attains mercy, he will attain all that is good in this world and in the hereafter. In fact the deeds mentioned are part of Allah's mercy to them: were it not for His guiding them, they would not have wanted to do them; if He had not helped them, they would not have been able to do them; were it not for His kindness towards them, they would not have completed them and they would not have been accepted from them. To Him be all praise, from beginning to end, for He is the One Who granted the means and the outcome.