

they provide nourishment, staple foods and sweet fruits. In that garden there are rivers that irrigate it without the need for a great deal of effort. The owner is very happy with his garden, but then he grows old and becomes too weak to work, so he becomes more concerned about it. He has small children, none of whom are able to help him; rather they are all dependent on him, and his livelihood and theirs comes from that garden. Whilst they are like that, a storm or whirlwind in which there is fire comes to that garden and burns it up. Do not ask about what that man goes through of grief and distress; if grief could kill a person it would have killed him. This is the likeness of the one who does something for the sake of Allah; his deeds are like the seeds that are sown to get crops and fruit. He carries on like that until his efforts yield a garden of utmost splendour. The things that invalidate his deeds are like the storm in which there is fire. The individual is in the greatest need of his good deeds when he dies and is in a situation where he cannot do anything; then he finds his deeds, which he hoped would benefit him, like floating dust scattered about.

﴿...But he finds [the punishment of] Allah waiting, thus Allah will requite him in full, for Allah is swift in reckoning.﴾ (an-Noor 24: 39)

If a person could imagine this scenario and had the slightest understanding, he would not do that which will harm him and bring the utmost regret. But weakness of faith and reasoning, and lack of insight, bring one to this state which, if an insane person who does not understand anything were to do that which leads to the same fate, it would be a grievous matter. Hence Allah (ﷻ) instructs and encourages us to reflect, as He says: ﴿Thus Allah makes clear to you [His] revelations; that you may reflect﴾.



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ
الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْنِشُوا فِيهِ ۚ