

The Heavy Book of Deeds and Its Effect on Our Bliss or Misery

What Does the Heavy Book of Deeds Mean, and How Can We Measure Something That Is Not Material?

The book of deeds and its weight are concepts that always raise questions. For instance, how can we measure something related to the soul and the immaterial dimension of our existence? What are the criteria and scales for this measurement?

If you recall from previous lessons, we discussed the concept of the 'scale' and mentioned that the Almighty God created everything in a mathematical manner, assigning a specific number and measure to each thing.¹ Any increase or decrease in these measures can lead to difficulties. For example, when a fetus is born, their health is assessed against worldly standards; that is, the conditions of life in this world determine whether the newborn is classified as robustly healthy, healthy, weak, sick, or defective.

We typically refer to a healthy newborn as one that meets the minimum standards of the world, requiring no special life support and able to enjoy the conditions of life easily. When the baby's eyes, ears, heart, and other organs can properly connect with the wavelengths, frequencies, air, and other biological conditions of this world, it is said that this newborn has 'filled all their scales.' That is, the newborn is completely adapted to and integrated into the physical and sensory environment of this world. Similarly, in our journey toward eternity, we will thread the same path. After birth into the Hereafter, we will be evaluated based on the

¹. Quran, 65:3

living conditions there, which are infinitely more complex and advanced than those of this world. All our relationships, decisions, thoughts, and behaviors will be measured against predetermined factors that have been introduced to us as patterns and scales.

We have previously stated that the criterion and scale on the Day of Judgment is the truth, and its perfect manifestation is Prophet Muhammad and his family (Peace be upon them). Therefore, our deeds are measured against the most perfect human actions. The more an action aligns with the truth, the greater its validity and value. Truth does not merely signify knowledge; rather, it refers to true assets within the soul. Consequently, the stronger our existential connection with the truth, the heavier our book of deeds will be. What contributes to a heavy book of deeds are our righteous deeds; conversely, bad deeds, being entirely void, hold no weight or value and are light.

Given what we have discussed, you may find yourself pondering the following questions:

- How can we determine whether we have a heavy book of deeds is or a light one?
- What is the relationship between the weight of our deeds and our bliss or misery?
- What actions contribute to a heavy book of deeds?

If you are eager to know the answers to these questions, join us.

The Importance of a Rich Soul and a Heavy Book of Deeds

As we have previously mentioned, on the Day of Judgment, our deeds will be weighed against the scale of truth, which is the complete alignment with the most perfect human being. Our level of harmony with this most perfect example will be determined. Those who possess a greater share of truth—meaning they have a deeper existential connection with the divine names and their manifestations, namely the Ahl al-Bayt (Peace be upon them)—will experience more joy and satisfaction in the hereafter. Conversely, those who have a lesser share of truth will suffer due to their lack of alignment with the conditions of the Hereafter.²

It is important to note that the heavy book of deeds has nothing to do with academic qualifications, wealth, beauty, clothing, or the amount of gold and jewelry one possesses. Rather, what is meant by "heaviness or weightiness" is that our soul and human dimension must be rich and affluent. To enjoy the conditions of life in Heaven, we need a rich and prosperous soul; the heart is our greatest asset and determines our bliss or misery in both this world and the next. Just as in the material world, if an object is richer in value, it is more difficult to discard, undermine, change, or ignore; similarly, the richer our heart and soul are, the fewer sorrows and troubles we will experience, and we will often find ourselves happy, calm, and kind.

Identifying the Lightness or Heaviness of One's Book of Deeds

². Quran, 101: 6-9

It should be noted that the concept of the scale is a real issue, not a conventional one. For instance, prayer is the ascension of the believer into Heaven,³ and the Quran is the wine for the believer. If someone does not feel joy from performing prayers or reading the Quran, it means that their scale in these practices are not filled. A person who lacks a rich soul can easily be shaken by a word, thought, illusion, or status, leading them astray from the Straight Path. In contrast, someone with heavy scales and a rich soul will be less vulnerable; for example, a person who is easily offended or becomes upset over minor incidents has not filled their scales. As we mentioned earlier, each individual has multiple scales based on their role and position in life, and each of their actions is evaluated against one of these scales. Those who do not fill their scales often fall into laziness and apathy, which are the greatest enemies to achieving perfection and success in the hereafter.

Regarding a heavy book of deeds, the Quranic verses and traditions provide us with criteria and weights that we can use to enhance the weightiness of our book of deeds. However, this is on the condition that alongside using these scales and practices, we remain mindful of factors that can nullify the effects of these practices. Below, we will outline several practices and exercises identified in the Quran and traditions as weights for increasing the heaviness of one's book of deeds.

The Effects of *Salawat* on One's Heavy Book of Deeds

³. Nizām al-Dīn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Qumī Nīshābūrī, *Tafsīr Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa-Raghā'ib al-Furqān*, ed. Zakarīyā 'Umayrāt (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1426 AH/2005), 1:114.

Salawat (sending blessings upon the Prophet and his family) is one of the most important actions that contributes to the heaviness of one's book of deeds and enriches our character.⁴ *Salawat* is a supplication that encompasses the invocation, praise, and exaltation of Allah. It serves as a powerful weapon for all our needs in this world and the hereafter; that is to say, it influences not only our physical body but also our imagination, estimation, intellect, supra-rational faculty, and even the realms of *Barzakh* and Resurrection. By sending *Salawat*, we become beloved to God and gain honor and dignity.

The Effects of Charity on One's Heavy Book of Deeds

Charity makes our book of deeds heavier on the Day of Judgment and serves as a protective shade over the fiery atmosphere of that day, transforming it into a cool place for us.⁵

The Effects of Good Character on One's Heavy Book of Deeds

Good character brings blessings and benefits in this world and also makes our book of deeds heavy on the Day of Judgment.⁶

⁴. Imam Sadiq (Peace be upon him) said: "The heaviest thing that will be placed on the scales on the Day of Resurrection is prayer upon Muhammad and his family." (Abdullah ibn Ja'far Humayri, *Qurb al-Isnad*. Edited by The Foundation for the Revival of Islamic Heritage. Qom, Iran: 1413 AH, p. 14).

⁵. The Messenger of God (Peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said: "The land of the Resurrection is fire, except for the shade of the believer, for his charity will shade him." (Muhammad ibn Ya'qub Kulayni, *al-Kafi*, compiled by Ali Akbar Ghaffari and Muhammad Akhundī, Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmīyah, 1389 AH, vol. 4, p. 3).

⁶. The Prophet of God (Peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said: "There is nothing heavier in the scales than good character..." (Ali ibn Hasan Tabarsi, *Mishkat al-Anwar*, vol. 1, p. 223).

The Effects of Silence on the Heaviness of One's Book of Deeds

Silence is one of those actions that requires very little effort and is light in practice; however, it holds great weight and value in the scale of deeds.⁷ In many cases, to take significant steps, we do not need to engage in hard and heavy tasks; often, we just need to remain silent. By controlling our speech and practicing silence, we can remove many obstacles from our path.

In this lesson, we discussed the concept and necessity of one's heavy book of deeds. We stated that the lightness or heaviness of this book is not an abstract concept but is measured based on how well our soul aligns with the conditions of the *Barzakh* (the intermediary realm) and the Day of Judgement. The more compatibility and harmony there is between us and the most perfect human beings, the richer our soul and the heavier our book of deeds will be. We also mentioned that to attain a rich soul, we must fill our scales for the hereafter. The level of happiness and inner peace each person experiences indicates whether their book of deeds is light or heavy. Some of the most important actions that contribute to the heaviness of one's book include sending blessings upon the Prophet and his family (*Salawat*), good character, silence, and charity.

What other weights do you know that can help increase the heaviness of our book of deeds?

⁷. Abu Dharr (may God be pleased with him) says: "The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said to me, 'Shall I not teach you a deed that is light on the body but heavy in the scales?' I said, 'Yes, O Messenger of God, peace be upon you.' He said, 'It is silence, good character, and abandoning what does not concern you.'" (*Majmu'ah Warram*, vol. 1, p. 107).