

What is “Taqwa” and How to increase it

Allah has used word “Taqwa” 251 times in Quran either as noun or verb. Person who practices Taqwa is called “Muttaqeen”. Since it is very important term used in Quran, we need to understand what it means, its benefit and how to increase it. There are so many different definitions of Taqwa defined by different scholars that it is very difficult for a reader to understand it in simple words. An attempt has been made in this research paper to simplify and list different easy to understand meaning of Taqwa.

Arabic word Taqwa means “Forbearance, fear and abstinence “

From Islamic and religious point of view, the following is included in the definition of “Taqwa”

1. God consciousness, piousness, fear of Allah, love of Allah and self restraint.
2. Literally “to protect”. In general, to protect yourself “From the punishment of Allah” by not “indulging in things that Allah forbids”
3. A high state of heart, which keeps one conscious of Allah’s presence and His Knowledge. “Taqwa motivates the person who possesses it “to perform righteous deeds” and avoid forbidden activities.
4. It also means protection and taking precaution.
5. Taqwa is to place a barrier/shield/protection between you and the punishment/anger of Allah by fulfilling His commands and abstaining from His prohibitions, avoiding the doubtful, fulfilling the recommended, and not doing the disliked
6. Taqwa is to obey Allah (SWT), so that He is not disobeyed, to remember Allah (SWT), so that He is not forgotten, and to thank Allah (SWT), so that no ingratitude is shown to Him”
7. It was reported that Umar bin al-Khattaab (RA) asked Ubay ibn Ka`ab (RA) about *Taqwa*. Ubay said: “Have you ever walked on a path that has thorns on it?” Umar said: “Yes.” Ubay said: “What did you do then?” He said: “I rolled up (my garment) and struggled (through the path).” Ubay said: “That is *Taqwa*.”

8. Taqwa contains four things, Fearing Allah (wherever you are, alone, with people as you are within Allah's sight), obeying Allah, being pleased with "Qaleel" means not only content but happy with whatever little you have and finally preparing for the Day of Judgment.
9. Taqwa is to prevent yourself from shirk. To fear Allah's punishment for failing to follow what you know to be guidance and hope for His Mercy with regard that which you believe came from Him."
10. Taqwa has three levels.

A) One: protecting the heart and limbs against sin and forbidden actions. B) Two: protecting them against undesirable matters. C) Three: protection against curiosity and whatever is not one's concern
 From the above definitions of Taqwa described by different companions of prophet and great Islamic scholars, it should be clear what "Taqwa" is. Finally to summarize

So Taqwa refers to the precautions you take as a result of fear, the things you do because you are afraid. For example, you are afraid your house will get burgled so as a precaution/protection you lock your door. So TAQWA is to take precaution. It is a feeling that results in some kind of action (Precaution here refers to make sure you obey Allah's commandments and refrain from His forbidden things all the time.

The best practical example of Taqwa is during the month of Ramadan. When we fast, you see nobody sees us if we eat or drink secretly; only thing holding us is the fear of Allah that He watches us all the time and everywhere. This is Taqwa, because we know His presence no matter where we are and we do not want to disobey Him. That is the reason Allah says in Quran "Fasting is prescribed upon you so that you become "Muttaqoon"
As a side note, Reward for Fasting: Allah says that fasting is for me and I will reward Myself, why? See any sins or disobediences you do, it not only affects you but others in the

society as well and it has consequences. For robbery, you affect other people, for adultery, you affect other person, family and society as a whole and you will have consequences. Similarly if you cheat in business, you are violating somebody's right. But by not fasting you are not breaking any law as eating and drinking is perfectly allowed, you are also not violating anybody else rights and no worldly consequences either. But you are only abstaining from it for certain time period just for the sake of Allah as He ordered you to do so. That is why Allah says fasting is for me and I will reward myself.

Benefits of Taqwa from Quran

Below we will discuss some benefits of Taqwa from Quran:

- **Guidance:** There is guidance for those who are Muttaqin (the people of taqwa) as Allah says in Quran: **“guidance for those conscious of Allah”** (Quran, 2:2). People who fear of Almighty Allah will seek guidance from the Holy Book Quran.
- **Ease of Matters:** In Holy Quran, Allah Almighty says: **“And whoever fears Allah, He will make for him ease in his matter.”** (Quran, 65:4). Whoever has Taqwa, Allah makes matters easy for him in this world as well as the hereafter. This does not necessarily mean that the person will not face difficulty, but through the blessings of his Taqwa, he is guaranteed ease and the strength to bear these difficulties without losing faith or hope by Almighty Allah. The reward of facing these difficulties will be given by Allah in the hereafter.
- **Allah's love for Muttaqin:** In holy Quran Allah Almighty stated that: **“Truly Allah loves the Muttaqin”**(Quran, 3:76). From this verse, we can conclude that Allah loves those who are piety that is who does righteous deeds. Taqwa is the source of gaining Allah's love and blessings.

- **A way out of Difficulties:** Allah says in Holy Quran about those who are facing problems in a verse that: **“And whoever fears Allah, He will make for him a way out.”** (Quran, 65:2). People who are facing difficulties but still remain steadfast in their faith for the sake of Allah then He (SWT) will surely make a way for them to get rid off of these problems. Taqwa serves as a divine guard against trials of this world as well as the difficulties of the hereafter.
- **Acceptance of Actions:** Allah says in Quran about the acceptance of actions or deeds in these words: **“Allah only accepts from the people of taqwa“**(Quran, 5:27). People who are Muttaqin Allah loves them and accept their actions and deeds.
- **Unexpected Sustenance:** Almighty Allah is the creator and sustainer of the universe. Whatever a person requires and desires of sustenance can be found in His vast treasures. In Holy Quran Allah says: **“And if the people of the towns believed and had Taqwa, certainly We should have opened for them blessings from the heavens and the earth.”** (Quran, 7:96)
- **Salvation from the Fire:** Allah says that: **“Then We will save the ones who had taqwa“**(Quran, 19:72). Allah will save the Muttaqin from hellfire so try to do righteous deeds. Be piety and get rewards from Allah Almighty.
- **Ability to distinguish truth from falsehood:** When a believer sees to it that his obedience to Allah and love for him stay above everything else, he is gifted by Allah with the sight of distinguishing between true and false or we can say good or bad deeds. In Holy Quran Allah says: **“O you who believe! If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion (furqan).”** (Quran, 8:29)
- **Success from Taqwa:** Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran: **“Have taqwa of Allah in order that you might succeed”** (Quran, 3:200). Anyone who wants to get succeed in this life and the hereafter has to do righteous deeds for the pleasure of Almighty

Allah. Taqwa is also to do righteous deeds for fear of Allah Almighty.

- **Tranquility:** Allah says in Holy Quran: **“It is He (Allah) who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers.”** (Quran, 48:4). People who want calmness and tranquility should do taqwa that means fear of Allah Almighty in result they became piety. When they become piety they feel calmness and tranquility in their hearts as Allah mentioned in Quran.

How one can Develop Taqwa?

Acquiring taqwa is a process that takes time, and grows with the increase of faith in the heart of a believer until they become convinced that Allah is aware of everything they do and each word they say.

In the famous Hadith of Jibreel when he asked Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about Islam, iman, and ihsan, the Prophet responded about **ihsan**, saying it is ‘to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you can’t see Him you know that He sees you. That is the highest level of faith.’

There are several ways to gain taqwa, through fear and love, including the following:

Remember Allah Often

In order to fear Allah, a Muslim needs to **remember death** and remember the Hereafter.

This is one of the fruits of reading the Quran often, as reflecting on its verses and chapters with the many reminders of the Hereafter help the heart increase in *taqwa*.

Mention Allah often, as the remembrance of Allah increases the heart in God-consciousness.

Learn More About Allah

Also gaining more knowledge about the [Names and Attributes of Allah](#) helps a Muslim remember how dependent we are on His Mercy and Forgiveness.

Repent Often

Always repenting to Allah, as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) advised his companions, saying that he repents to Allah at least seventy times each day.

Fast Often

One of the fruits of [fasting the month of Ramadan](#) is to increase in taqwa, and fasting is not only limited to Ramadan, but optional Sunnah fasting can also be done the rest of the year to get closer to Allah and increase in taqwa.

Make Dua that God increases you in taqwa.

Do as many other good deeds as you can, especially those which Allah loves.

More Tips and Steps to Increase Taqwa:

- 1- Be alert to whatever may divert you from Allah.
- 2- Be alert to the carnal pleasures that may lead to the realm of the forbidden.
- 3- Ascribe all material and spiritual accomplishments to Allah.
- 4- Never consider yourself higher or better than anyone else.
- 5- Long for Allah's pleasure and satisfaction in all affairs.
- 6- Renew the fountains of your *iman* by studying and reflecting on Allah's creation.
- 7- Remember death, and live with the conscious knowledge that it may happen at any time.

For the success in this life and the hereafter, we have to do taqwa. We should not delay in increase our taqwa. Should pray to Allah Almighty to guide us towards the right path and help us become pious and righteous Muslims. Ameen