It must be remembered that whether it be Giyaarwi shareef, Qul shareef, three day khatam, ten day khatam, forty days or yearly Esaale Thawaab, these are all different forms of Esaale Thawaab. Therefore, since the law of the complete concept is acceptable which is conveying Thawaab to those who have passed away, it would be only proper that the various methods of this would also be proper. There is no doubt that if a person is a Muslim, he or she would have absolutely no objection to convey Thawaab to those who have passed away. At least no sensible Muslim would object to this. There are numerous Quranic ayats and Ahadith which prove this beyond a shadow of doubt. The amazing thing is that even those who presently object to these forms of ibadaah would be surprised to know that even their elders have never objected to Esaale Thawaab.

There is a very simple law which explains that what is found in the total sum is also found in its parts. For example, if we look at human, we would have to say that since zaid, bakr and umar are part of humans, hence what is found in humans would be found in zaid, bakr and umar. If we negate this and say that no, zaid should not be part of this, then we are completely ignoring the actual meaning of a human which is applicable on zaid. Therefore, if we accept Esaale Thawaab as a whole or a total sum, we will have to agree that since Giyaarwi shareef is part of Esaale Thawaab, it means that it cannot be eliminated from the various forms of Esaale Thawaab.

Proof of Esaale Thawaab from the Quran

In Surah Hashr, verse 10, the Almighty (azza wa jall) declares that:

وَ الَّذِينَ جَآءُوۡ مِنۡ بَعْدِهِمْ یَقُوۡلُوۡنَ رَبََنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَ لِِِخْوٰنِنَا الََِّیۡنَ سَبَقُوۡنَا اَنۡ سَبَقُوۡنَا بِالِۡیۡمَنِ وَ لَا تَجۡعَلْ فِِۡ قُلُوۡبِنَا غِلَّا لَِلََِّیۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا رَبََنَا

“And those who came after them submit, O our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in the faith, and put not into our hearts any rancour towards those who believe. O our Lord! Undoubtedly, you are the Beneficent the Merciful”
In this verse, the Almighty (azza wa jall) has divided the Muslims into 3 groups until the day of Judgement. The first is the Ansaar, the second is the Muhaajir and the third is of those Muslims who will appear until the day of Judgement. This verse clearly proves that those who come after, continue to make Dua for those who came before. This is a clear proof of Esaale Thawaab.

This form of making Dua for those who come after and those who came before is clearly mentioned in verses from:

Surah Ebrahim - verse 41:

'O our Lord, forgive me, and my parents and all Muslims on the Day when reckoning shall take place.

Surah Yusuf verse 92

He said, 'There is no reproach today upon you. May Allah forgive you. And He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.

Surah Yusuf; verse 98

'Soon I shall beg my Lord to forgive you.' Verily He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

Surag Araf verse 151

'O my Lord, forgive me and my brother, and cause us to enter Your mercy

Even the Angels make Dua for the Muslims on earth

In Surah Shura, verse 5, the Quran declares:

"And the angels sanctify their Lord with His praise and beg forgiveness for the people of earth"

Question:

In Surah Najm, verse 39:

And that the man will not get but what he endeavours.

The Almighty (azza wa jall) has informed us that there is nothing for man besides what he strives for.
In Surah Baqarah also, it is clearly mentioned that “only that is for someone which he has earned.” Therefore, how can we say that reward can reach others?

**Answer:**

The answer to this is to be found in Mishkaat shareef where Hadrat Sa’ad (radi Allahu anhu) dedicated a well to his mother and the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) clearly informed everyone that this was for the mother of Hadrat Sa’ad (radi Allahu anhu). In other words, the Thawaab would go to his mother. Even though, the effort of digging this well and all the other physical work for the preparation of this well was done by others, yet, the Thawaab would go to the mother of Hadrat Sa’ad (radi Allahu anhu). This proves that the effort of others can be passed on to other Muslims whether they are living or have passed away.

**Interesting point:**
Once there was a person who continued to insist that absolutely nothing reaches a person who has died. His intention was to prove that whatever Thawab we convey to a deceased person never reaches him or her. Hearing this, the opponent began to swear and insult this person’s mother. When he heard this, he became extremely angry. The Sunni debater then replied calmly, “This issue has now been solved. When you have proven that even this type of foul language is a direct insult against your mother and that she is indeed insulted by this and that, without doubt it reaches her, why then would Quran which is read for others not reach them?”

**Question:**
When a person enters Jannah, what use does he have for all of these sweet dishes and food which are prepared for an Esaale Thawaab. There are better reward in Jannah.

**Answer:**
When did we ever say that these sweet dishes reach a person? This is the so-called currency of the world, insha Allah, when we do these things, it would be transformed into the currency of the Alim-e-Barzakh. In other words, real reward.

As a testimony of this, the act of Qurbani clearly proves this to us. In Surah Hajj, verse 37, the Almighty (azza wa jall) declares:

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لَنۡ یََنَالَ اللہَ لُحُوۡمُہَا وَلَِ دِمَآؤُہَا وَلٰکِ نۡ یََنَالُُُ التََقْوٰی مِنۡکُمْ
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“Neither their flesh reaches to Allah nor their blood, but your piety reaches Him”.

In other words, even though Qurbani was an exercise in which a person slaughtered an animal, yet, nothing of the animal reaches the Divine Court of the Almighty (azza wa jall) but what is in the hearts of people. How sincere they were etc. The meat is eaten by the people in this world and other parts of the animal are dispensed in this world. Shall we now not perform Qurbani because certain people are claiming that the Almighty (azza wa jall) does not require meat in His Divine Court? Or shall we not perform Salah because there are millions of Angels busy in ibaadah hence, what need is there for our ibaadah in the Divine Court of the Almighty (azza wa jall). We cannot say these things.

If we remember the incident of Hadrat Sa’ad (radi Allahu anhu) whereby he had a well prepared so that the reward for this could be conveyed to his mother, it is quite obvious that at that time people could have always asked what is the need for this water for this female who has passed away, there
is plenty of water in the Hereafter! But no, everyone agreed that this was a noble act because the intention was to convey Thawaab to a deceased person.

In like manner, when people prepare food and other sweet dishes during an Esaale Thawaab, we are not saying that it is this food which reaches them, this food is in fact for the people who attend the Esaale Thawaab and the Thawaab of feeding people and reading Quran etc. is then conveyed and passed on to the deceased person.

There is tremendous reward in feeding and serving people. The following hadith shareef clearly highlights the status of this act. On the day of Judgement, the Almighty (azza wa jall) would ask a person who was wealthy, “I was hungry, thirsty and naked in the world, why did you not feed me, give me water or clothe me?” The person would reply, “O Allah! You are pure of all of this.” The Almighty (azza wa jall) would declare, “My servants were hungry, thirsty and naked and if you had fed them, gave them a drink and clothed them, you would have found me with them. (In other words, if you had helped these poor people, you would have received abundant reward and so much of reward as if you had fed and clothed your Creator).”

Answer #2:

At the same time, it is the Infinite Mercy of the Almighty (azza wa jall) that this same food is also presented to the person in the next world as a token of respect or as a mark of increase in a person’s sustenance.

Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlwi (rehmatullah alaihi) narrates that, “My father once explained that, ‘every year on the occasion of Meeladun Nabi, in happiness and joy, I used to prepare food and distribute it. One year, due to the fact that I was extremely poor, except for cooked chana (chick pea), I had nothing else and decided to distribute that. In a dream, I saw that Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) and in front of him, this same cooked chana was placed and he was looking extremely pleased.’"

This act of the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) of showing pleasure and happiness with the actions of his Ummah have appeared many times in history.

Once, he was travelling past two graves and informed all those around these two people were been punished in the grave. He then informed everyone to place two green and fresh branches on these graves and that as long as these branches remained fresh, it would continue to make the Tasbeeh of the Almighty (azza wa jall) and through this, the punishment of the people in the grave would decrease. If a person can get benefit in the grave from merely two branches of a tree what benefit would that person get if Quran and other wazaa’if are read on his behalf?

Wrong interpretation of certain verses of the Quran

There are certain verses of the Quran which clearly explain that no person would carry the burden of another on the day of Judgement or that man would only receive what he himself has made an effort for. However, we should not be deceived by this. The commentators of the Quran explain that verses 38 and 39 of Surah Najm:

اَلََِ تَزِرُ وَازِرَۃٰ وَِزْرَ اُخْرٰی ﴿

That no soul-bearing burden bears the burden of another.
And that the man will not get but what he endeavours.

Was revealed for a special reason.

There was person named Waleed bin Mugheerah who used to sometimes come and listen to the Quran being read in the court of the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam). After this, he used to reveal to his companions, all of whom were ardent enemies of Islam including this Waleed bin Mugheerah that, “Indeed this is the most beautiful word. Its branches are over flowing with fruits and its light seems to captivate the heart, and neither is it magic nor mere poetry.”

When his companions heard this, they feared that perhaps he would accept Islam and one day, one of his companions approached him and asked him about it, he replied, “I have great fear for the punishment in the hereafter.” His companion then advised him to give him so much of wealth so that on the day of Judgement, we would carry the punishment of Waleed on his head! It is on this occasion that the Almighty (azza wa jall) is said to have revealed these verses of the Quran.

Also explaining this, Peer Karam Shah declares, “Before Nabi Ebrahim (alaihis salaam), it was a law that if anyone was murdered, then in retaliation, either the murderers father, his son, his brother, his wife or his slave was killed. In other words, whoever was captured was killed. On the day of Judgement, we would carry the punishment of Waleed on his head! It is on this occasion that the Almighty (azza wa jall) is said to have revealed these verses of the Quran.

Also explaining this, Peer Karam Shah declares, “Before Nabi Ebrahim (alaihis salaam), it was a law that if anyone was murdered, then in retaliation, either the murderers father, his son, his brother, his wife or his slave was killed. In other words, whoever was captured was killed.”

However, this verse of the Quran clearly informed everyone that no sin of one person would be placed on another person. In other words, Islam arrived to eliminate this oppressive and unfair law. At the same time, it must be remembered that this behaviour of people was NOT based on the shariah of any previous Prophet but it was based on the ignorant laws of people of that era. In other words, it was a law during the days of ignorance. Such is the universal message of Islam that it came to end this type of ignorant behaviour and clearly educated people of each other’s own personal accountability on the day of Judgement.

Before the arrival of the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) the early Arabs had this behaviour of killing innocent people as a method of revenge. If a slave or a female from a weak tribe killed a person from a strong tribe, it was not sufficient for them to kill only this slave and female, instead, they used to also kill a free person from this tribe. However, when the Quranic verse was revealed that only a free person would be killed in lieu of a free person and a slave could be killed in lieu of a slave who was killed, then this ignorant law and practice was stopped.

Confusion:

There is a possibility that people could be come confused by this and declare that this sometimes seems opposed to the message of a hadith shareef. Hadrat Sayyiduna Jareer bin Abdullah (radi Allahu anhu) narrates that the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) has stated that:

مَنْ سَنَّ سُنَّۃً سَیِّئَۃً فَلَہُ وِزْرُہَا وَوِزْرُ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِہَا اِلَّا یَوْمَ الْقِیَامَۃِ

“Whosoever invents a bad practise, then the burden of this is on the person himself and until the day of Judgement whosoever practised upon this evil, that burden would also be placed on this person.”

(Muslim shareef and Imam Ahmed).
From this, we come to understand that the sins of others would be placed on this single person even though this is contrary to the message of the above Quranic verse. The answer to this is simple. Because this person was a means and reason for others performing this evil act or deed, he would also receive punishment. However, it does not mean that others would be spared. Everyone would be punished including the person who started this evil or bad innovation.

Another hadith shareef narrated by Hadrat Abdullah ibn Umar (radi Allahu anhu) explains that,

“إِذَا أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بِقَوْمِهٖ عَذَابًا اَصَابَ الْعَذَابُ مَنْ كَانَ فِیْهِ ثُمَّ بُعِثُوْا عَلٰی اَعْمَالِھِمْ”

“When the Almighty (azza wa jall) reveals punishment upon a nation then all the people of this nation experience this punishment whether good or bad. Then, on the day of Judgement, they will arise from their graves according to their (own individual) actions and deeds.” (Bukhaari and Muslim shareef).

From this hadith shareef, we come to realise that even the innocent people experience this punishment even though this is contrary to the message of the Quranic verse mentioned earlier. The answer giving to this is that it refers to those people who even though they themselves did not commit any sin, yet, at the same time, they did not even endeavour or strive to stop this sin being committed. In fact, they stood silently while this transgression was been committed and it is because of this, that they would also experience this punishment in this world.

There is another hadith shareef which is to be found in the Sunan Arba’ah in which it is clearly stated that, “When people see oppression been committed and do not stop this oppression with their hands, then they too will suffer the punishment that is to come”. In another hadith shareef, it is mentioned that when a person dies and his family continues to wail and cry out aloud, this punishment for this act is felt by the person in the grave. Even this hadith shareef seems contrary to the above mentioned Quranic verse, however, the Ulama have explained this in a very simple manner. They have declared that this is only applicable to that person who clearly and strictly instructed his family to wail and cry out loud before his death or if he was aware that his family would wail and cry aloud and yet, he did not advise them before dying not to do this. Hence, this sin would be considered as his own sin and not the sin of others unfairly placed on him!

In the present time, there are still many people who continue to insist that people will only get what they earned and no one else would be able to help and assist these people through Esaale Thawaab etc. Yet, we cannot remain silent when these people then try to use certain Quranic verses to substantiate their baseless claim. We ask this people, a simple question. Are there not verses in the Quran which explains inheritance and the laws of inheritance? There are people who would receive the wealth of a person when he dies and these are people known to all those who calculate inheritance. We ask, did these people do anything to achieve this wealth. Did they struggle to amass the wealth of this person who died? Yet, the Quran clearly informs us that these people who are left behind would become total owners of this wealth and yet they themselves did not struggle to achieve this wealth. In the same manner, if we inspect the laws of zakah or sadqa or other forms of charity. When this is given to a certain person, that person becomes a total owner of that wealth and is allowed to spend it how he or she wishes to. Yet, these people who received this wealth, did not take part at all in acquiring of this wealth or money! Will these people who object to a person being of benefit to another Muslim whether alive or dead also object to the many rules of inheritance etc. which clearly proves that one can benefit another even though the person receiving did not take part in achieving anything.
We will now present a few Ahadith shareef which clearly prove that one can benefit another person even though that person has passed away.

Hadith (1)

عَنْ آبِی هُرَیْرَۃَ رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنْہُ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ اِذَا مَاتَ النْسَْسَانُ اِنْسَْقَطَ عَمَلٌ اِلَّ مِنْ ثَلََاثٍ؛ صَدَقَۃٍ جارِیَۃٍ وَّ عِلْمٍ یُنْفَ ُ بِہٖ اَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ یَدْعُوْ لَہٗ۔

The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) has explained that, "When a person passes away, then his actions cease. However, there are three actions whose continuance does not cease. They are Sadqa Jaariyah (or continued charity), such knowledge which is beneficial and good and pious children who continue to make Dua for him."

(Muslim shareef).

We can see that the person did actually commit the first two actions himself personally, however, the actions performed by his children was not performed by him and yet he is receiving the benefit in the grave!

Hadith (2)

عَنْ آبِی هُرَیْرَۃَ رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنْہُ قَالَ، قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ اِنَّ اللّٰہَ لَیَرْفَ الْدَّرَجَۃَ لِلْعَبْدِ الصَّالِحِ فِیْ الْجَنَّۃِ وَیَقُوْلُ یَا رَبِّ اِنِّیْ لِیْ ھٰذِہٖ فَیَقُوْلُ بِاِسْتِغْفَارِ وَلَدِکَ لَکَ۔

The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) has declared that, “A certain pious persons status would be elevated on the day of Judgement. That person would ask, “O my Lord! how did my status increase or become elevated?” The Almighty (azza wa jall) would reply, “You son has made Dua Istighfaar for you and through the barakah of this, your status has been increased.”

(Tabarani shareef).

Hadith (3)

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ، قَالَ النَّبِیُّ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ مَاالْمَیِّتُ فِیْ قَبْرِہٖ اِل شِبْہَ الْغَرِیْقِ الْمُتَغَوِّثِ يَنْتَظِرُ دَعْوَۃً مُّلْحِقَۃً مِنْ اَبٍ وَّاُم ٍ اَوْ وَلَدٍ اَوْ صَدِیْقٍ ثِقَۃٍ وَاِذَا لَحِقَتْہُ کَانَتْ اَحَبَّ اِلَیْہِ مِنَ الدُّنْیَا وَمَا فِیْہَا وَانَّ اللّٰهَ لَیُدْخِلُ عَلَی الْقُبُوْرِ مِنْ دُعَاءِ اَهْلِ الْرْضِ اَمْثَالَ الْجِبَالِ وَ اِنَّ ھَدْیَۃَ الَْحِبَّاءِ اِلَی
The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) has stated that, “A person in the grave is like someone drowning and is calling out for help. He is also waiting for the Dua of his parents, his children or his loyal friends which would reach him. When this happens, its respect and status is even greater than the world and everything within it. The Almighty (azza wa jall) sends a mountain of reward to the grave through the Dua made by the people in this world. The gift for a deceased person from his friends is when they make Dua for his forgiveness.”

(Bahiqi and Daylemi).

Hadith (4)

A person once asked the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam), “O Prophet of Allah! my mother passed away suddenly and could not leave any advice or waseeyat for me. I believe that if she was given the time to speak, she would have given charity. If I give charity on her behalf, would she receive the reward for this?”. The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) replied, “Yes”.

(Bukhaari and Muslim shareef)

Hadith (5)

Hadrat Sayyiduna ibn Abbas (radi Allahu anhu) narrates that the mother of Sa’ad ibn Abaadah passed away and he was not present. When he returned, he presented himself in front of the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) and inquired, “O Prophet of Allah! my mother passed away when I was not present. If I give charity on her behalf, would its benefit reach her?” The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) replied, “Yes”. He then declared, “O Prophet of Allah! please be a witness that I have given my orchard as charity on her behalf.”

(Sahih Bukhaari shareef)
Hadith (6)

Hadrat Anas (radi Allahu anhu) narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) declare that, “When a person dies in a certain house and the people of the house give charity on his behalf, Jibraeel Ameen, places this on a tray of light. He then approaches the grave of this person and standing at his head side, he declares, “This is a gift which the people of your household have sent you. Please accept it”. (Thereafter) there is no end to the joy of this person. His neighbour who was not sent any gift becomes sad.”

(At Tabarani - Awsat).

Hadith (7)

Hadrat Anas (radi Allahu anhu) narrates that once a person approached the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) and asked, “My father has passed away and he did not perform his Hajj”. The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa salam) replied, “Tell me, if your father had debts, would you repay them?”. The person replied that he would do so. The Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) then declared, “This Hajj is also a debt of his, therefore, you should fulfil (or complete) it.”

(Bazzaaz, Tabarani)

Hadith (8)

Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali (radi Allahu anhu) narrates that the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa
sallam) has stated that, “Whosoever passes by a graveyard and recites eleven times Surah Ikhlaas and conveys this Thawaab to the people of the grave, he will receive thawaab equal to the amount of people in the graveyard.”  

(Imam Samarqandi)

Hadith (9)

عَنْ آبِی ھُرَیْرَۃَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ دَخَلَ الْمَقابِرَ ثُمَّ قَََاَ فَاتِحَۃَ الْکِتَابِ وَقُلْ ھُوَ اللّٰہُ اَحَدٌ وَ اَلْھَاکُمُ التَّکَاثُرُ ثُمَّ قَالَ اِنِّیْ جَعَلْتُ ثَوَابَ مَا قَََاْتُ مِنْ کَََ مِکَ لَِھْلِ الْمَقَابِرِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ کَانُوْا شُفَعَاءُ لَهٗ اِلَی اللّٰہِ۔

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah (radi Allahu anhu) narrates that the Holy Prophet (salal laahu alaihi wa sallam) has declared that, “When a person enters a graveyard and then recites Surah Fatiha, the Qul shareef and Surah Takaathur and then makes dua, “O Allah! whatever I have read, with the thawaab of this, please pardon all the Muslim men and women of this graveyard,’ These people (in return) would intercede for this person with Allah (azza wa jall) on the day of Judgement.”

(abul Qasim Sa’ad bin Ali).

There are numerous Ahadith which can be presented and which clearly proves beyond a shadow of doubt the permissibility of Esaale Thawaab. It is seen that this practice of conveying Thawaab to the marhumeen was a practice of the Ashaab and the pious among the Ummah.

Hadrat Imam Hasan and Hadrat Imam Husain (radi Allahu anhum) freed a slave after the martyrdom of Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali (radi Allahu anhu) and conveyed the thawaab to their father. The same was done by Hadrat Sayyidah Ayesha (radi Allahu anha) after her brother Hadrat Abdur Rahman (radi Allahu anhu) passed away and she also declared, “I have great hope that after passing away, these things (conveying thawab) would be of great benefit to him.”