

# Forty Gems of Beauty

by  
Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A.

## **Forty Gems of Beauty**

An English rendering of  
*Chālīs Jawāhir Pārei* (Urdu)

A collection of forty sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad  
(May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
with commentary by Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad<sup>ra</sup>

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Gracious, ever Merciful

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ

فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

*Verily, you have in the Prophet of Allah an  
excellent model*

(The Holy Quran, al-Aḥzāb, 33:22)



The Holy Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), said:

مَنْ حَفِظَ عَلَىٰ أُمَّتِي أَرْبَعِينَ  
حَدِيثًا مِنْ أَمْرِ دِينِهَا بَعَثَهُ اللَّهُ  
فَقِيهَاً وَكُنْتُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
شَافِعًا وَشَهِيدًا

(شُعَبُ الْإِيمَانِ لِلْبَيْهَقِيِّ، بَابُ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ)

*Whoso, [with a view to the welfare and reformation of my people] committed to memory at least forty of my Ahādīth, Allah will raise him as a jurist and religious divine, and I will be his intercessor with Allah and a witness to his faith on the Day of Resurrection.*

(Shu‘ab al-Īmān Lil-Baihaqī, Chapter: 17, Chapter: To seek knowledge, Hadith No: 1597)



# CONTENTS

<i>Editor's note to the fourth edition</i> .....	xi
<i>Transliteration</i> .....	xiii
<i>Author's preface to the first edition</i> .....	xv
<i>Author's note to the second edition</i> .....	xix
<b>FORTY GEMS OF BEAUTY: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<i>The Method of Narration</i> .....	2
<i>Categories of Narrators</i> .....	2
<i>Standard Works of Hadith</i> .....	3
<b>CATEGORIES OF AHADITH</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HADITH &amp; SUNNAH</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>THE COLLECTION OF FORTY AHADITH</b> .....	<b>15</b>
1— SIX ARTICLES OF FAITH .....	17
2— FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM.....	20
3— FIVE DISTINCTIONS GRANTED TO THE HOLY PROPHET	26
4— THE HOLY PROPHET IS THE LAST LAW-GIVER .....	30
5— ACTIONS ARE REWARDED ACCORDING TO THE MOTIVES BEHIND THEM.....	35
6— ALLAH SEES HEARTS .....	38
7— DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ACTIVE & INACTIVE MUSLIM .....	42
8— TRY TO REMOVE EVIL.....	46
9— LIKE FOR YOUR BROTHER WHAT YOU LIKE FOR YOURSELF .....	51

---

10— HELP YOUR BROTHER, BE HE THE OPPRESSOR OR THE OPPRESSED.....	54
11— THE HIGH CONCEPT OF OBEDIENCE IN ISLAM.....	58
12— A WORD OF TRUTH TO THE WRONGDOING RULER IS THE BEST FORM OF JIHAD .....	61
13— SHOW COMPASSION TO YOUNG ONES & RECOGNISE THE RIGHTS OF YOUR ELDER.....	64
14— ASSOCIATING PARTNERS WITH GOD, DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS AND LYING ARE THE GREATEST OF SINS .....	67
15— RESPECT YOUR CHILDREN AND GIVE THEM THE BEST EDUCATION .....	73
16— CHOOSE YOUR WIFE FOR HER RELIGIOUS PIETY .....	76
17— THE BEST OF MEN IS ONE WHO IS BEST IN TREATMENT OF HIS WIFE.....	80
18— A PIOUS LADY IS ONE WHO DOES HER DUTY TO HER HUSBAND .....	83
19— ONE WHO BRINGS UP AN ORPHAN WILL SHARE HIS ABODE IN PARADISE WITH THE HOLY PROPHET.....	86
20— GOOD TREATMENT OF NEIGHBOURS .....	89
21— DO NOT DESIRE WAR BUT IF IT COMES, FIGHT DETERMINEDLY .....	93
22— VIOLATE NOT YOUR CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY & KILL NEITHER CHILD NOR WOMAN.....	96
23— SEVEN DESTRUCTIVE SINS: HOMICIDE WITHOUT GOOD CAUSE, USURY, SLANDER, ETC. ....	99



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24— INTOXICANTS ARE UNLAWFUL EVEN IN SMALL QUANTITIES .....	108
25— A CHEAT CANNOT BE CONSIDERED A TRUE MUSLIM...	112
26— DO NOT IMITATE OTHER NATIONS.....	114
27— IF THE HEART IS GOOD, ALL THE OTHER LIMBS GET WELL.....	117
28— AVOID THAT WHICH RANKLES IN YOUR MIND.....	120
29—INFERIORITY COMPLEX IS A HIGHLY FATAL FEELING..	123
30—TRUE REPENTANCE WASHES OFF SIN .....	126
31—A BELIEVER IS NEVER BITTEN TWICE IN THE SAME HOLE .....	129
32—NO DEED IS BETTER THAN GOOD CONDUCT .....	132
33—RESPECT THE RESPECTABLE CHIEFS OF OTHER PEOPLE .....	137
34—PAY WAGES TO THE WORKER BEFORE HIS SWEAT IS DRY .....	140
35—THE WORST FEAST IS THE ONE TO WHICH ONLY THE WEALTHY HAVE BEEN INVITED .....	143
36—THE UPPER HAND IS BETTER THAN THE LOWER HAND .....	146
37—LEAVE BEHIND YOUR HEIRS IN A COMFORTABLE CONDITION.....	150
38—EVERY PERSON IS A RULER & WILL BE ANSWERABLE IN RESPECT OF HIS WARDS.....	154
39—SEEKING KNOWLEDGE IS A DUTY OF EVERY MUSLIM ...	157

---

40—EVERY WORD OF WISDOM IS THE LOST PROPERTY OF A MUSLIM .....	161
<b>THE CONCLUDING PRAYER .....</b>	<b>165</b>
<i>Glossary</i> .....	<b>167</b>

# Editor's Note to the Fourth Edition

This compilation of forty *Aḥādīth* by Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad<sup>ra</sup> is a well-known book and already graces many Ahmadi homes worldwide. It was a wish of the author that Muslim men, women and children should memorize the blessed words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and act upon his teachings. He added simple translation and explanatory notes to each Hadith so that readers would internalize the wisdom contained in these words and follow the advice in the true spirit. May Allah enable us all to fulfil the desire of the author. *Āmīn*.

The present edition is being published with many improvements. English words that are no longer in common use have been updated with new vocabulary. Publisher notes have been added in some places to make the context clear where necessary. A new Arabic font with diacritic marks has been used for the ease of the reader and complete references of all forty aḥādīth have been given. Finally, a glossary of difficult words along with an index of topics has also been added.

The English rendering was performed by Nafisur Rahman A. G. Soofi in 1961. This fourth edition has been revised by Wajeeh Bajwa & A. Bushra Salam Bajwa. Prayers are requested for everyone who helped with the publication of this edition, including Ḥāfīz Muzaffar Ahmad, Basil Ahmad Basharat, Mohamed Alburaki, Habibullah Saidiq Bajwa, and Sabahat Ahmad Cheema, who also made notable contributions. May Allah reward them all for their efforts. *Āmīn*.

**Munir-ud-Din Shams**  
Additional Wakīlut-Taṣnīf  
London, May 2021

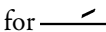
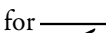
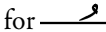


# TRANSLITERATION

In transliterating Arabic words, we have followed the following system adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

- ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word 'honour'.
- ث *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word 'thing'.
- ح *h*, a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.
- خ *kh*, pronounced like the Scotch *ch* in 'loch'.
- ذ *dh*, pronounced like the English *th* in 'that'.
- ص *s*, strongly articulated *s*.
- ض *d*, similar to the English *th* in 'this'.
- ط *t*, strongly articulated palatal *t*.
- ظ *z*, strongly articulated *z*.
- ع ' , a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
- غ *gh*, a sound approached very nearly in the *r* '*grasseye*' in French, and in the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the 'gargling' position whilst pronouncing it.
- ق *q*, a deep guttural *k* sound.
- ئ ' , a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by:

- a* for  (like *u* in 'bud');
- i* for  (like *i* in 'bid');
- u* for  (like *oo* in 'wood');

Long vowels by:

*ā* for اَ or آ (like *a* in 'father');  
*ī* for عِ or اِي (like *ee* in 'deep');  
*ū* for وِ (like *oo* in 'root');

**Other:**

*ai* for عِا (like *i* in 'site')♦;  
*au* for وِا (resembling *ou* in 'sound').

Please note that in transliterated words the letter 'e' is to be pronounced as in 'prey' which rhymes with 'day'; however, the pronunciation is flat without the element of English diphthong. If in Urdu and Persian words 'e' is lengthened a bit more it is transliterated as 'ei' to be pronounced as 'ei' in 'feign' without the element of diphthong thus 'عِے' is transliterated as 'Kei'. For the nasal sound of 'n' we have used the symbol 'ñ'. Thus, Urdu word 'میں' is transliterated as 'meiñ'.\*

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

We have not transliterated Arabic words which have become part of English language, e.g., Islam, Mahdi, Quran, Hijra, Ramadan, Hadith, ulema, umma, sunna, kafir, etc.

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♦ In Arabic words like شيخ (Shaikh) there is an element of diphthong which is missing when the word is pronounced in Urdu.

\* These transliterations are not included in the system of transliteration by Royal Asiatic Society. [Publishers]

*In the name of Allah, most Gracious, ever Merciful  
We praise Him and invoke His Blessings  
on His noble Prophet*

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

I do not know the reason why, but it is true that since my childhood, I have had a sort of natural attachment to the science of the *Aḥādīth* [Sayings of the Holy Prophet] and whenever I read a Hadith, I feel as if I were being transported to the presence of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), and being favoured directly with his holy speech. My imagination takes me 1,400 years back, giving me the pleasing taste of spiritual association and companionship with the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), in the Holy Masjid of exalted Mecca and in the Prophet's Mosque in sacred Medina and in the lanes of these two exalted cities and in the desert paths of Arabia. Then, for a while, I am lost to the world, breathing in the atmosphere where our most loved master spent 23 long years of his God-gifted Prophethood. But probably the Hadith which impressed my heart and mind the most, both in point of depth as well as extent, relates to an observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). It has no bearing on jurisprudence nor does it partake of scholastic theology. But to my mind it is the very life of Islam and of spiritual experience. A report says that once a poor Muslim paid his respects to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). His forehead bore no imprint of worship or penance, but his heart glowed with the spark of the Prophet's love, which had lit up a holy lamp in his bosom.

In his extreme desire for a close personal and permanent association with the Prophet, he asked of him, a little haltingly:

O Prophet of Allah! When will be the Day of Resurrection?

The Holy Prophet replied,

You ask of the Day of Resurrection; have you made any preparations for it?

With trembling lips and palpitating heart, he submitted,

My Lord, I have not made any special preparations in respect of Prayer and fasting but I have in my heart true love of Allah and of his Prophet.

With an affectionate glance at him, the Prophet told him not to worry over much and rest assured that the Loving God would not keep anyone apart from the object of his love.

I read this Hadith during the days of my childhood. But these blessed words of my master have ever since been before my eyes, constant like the pole star and I always felt as if, I had, in person, submitted this query to the Prophet of Allah and that he had been pleased to favour me with the above answer. I have never forgotten since that Prayers and fasting and pilgrimage and Zakat [almsgiving] all have their proper place as obligatory duties but the inner light of the heart and the animation of spiritual life cannot be attained without true love of God and of His Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). If one is granted this boon, then the formal practice, full of the breath of life, follows in his wake. However,



if one is not blessed with this favour, then his soulless practice is no better than a dead carcass that the formalists carry about their bosoms.

God knows well that, in writing this booklet, I have been prompted solely by the love I bear for the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) so that if God so wills, a spark of his love may ignite the hearts of its readers, the spark that is the soul of every virtuous act and life of every moral excellence; and that they may listen to the observations of their most loved master with sincere piety and heartfelt devotion and make them their life-amulets and that, it may also be for me, a means of Allah's forgiveness and protection and of the Prophet's intercession, Amen! O Lord of Mercy, Most Compassionate of all the Merciful.

**Mirza Bashir Ahmad of Qadian,**

Rattan Bagh, Lahore

November 13, 1950



*In the name of Allah, most Gracious, ever Merciful  
We praise Him and invoke His blessings  
on His noble Prophet*

## AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Offering to friends the Second Edition of the 'Forty Gems of Beauty' I have only to remark that besides slight amendments and a few additions to the earlier edition, captions have been given to the Traditions, which, if it pleases God, should make the book more useful.

With these few words and with the [Quranic] prayer, "*In the name of Allah be its course and its mooring.*"<sup>1</sup> I launch this boat, which is but a paper boat, into the vast ocean of learning. Piloting of the boat to the shore and making it profitable to mankind is entirely the work of God. He is the only Helper Whose help is sought in every circumstance and in Him do I repose my trust and towards Him do I incline.

**Mirza Bashir Ahmad of Qadian**  
Rabwah  
October 1, 1959

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<sup>1</sup> The Holy Quran, Ch: 11 (Hūd), V: 42



# FORTY GEMS OF BEAUTY: INTRODUCTION

## Definition of Hadith

Hadith [plural *Aḥādīth*] is an Arabic word; its root-meaning is a statement which may either be an entirely novel one or may have been put in a novel way. Since the speech of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is replete with novel and priceless truths, it has been terminologically described as Hadith. Hadith thus stands for the holy word that our master, the Noble Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) actually uttered or which relates some incident of his holy life, in terms of ocular evidence, and was committed to writing after the lapse of sometime through his companions and the Muslim narrators of a later date.

Arabs were gifted with an extraordinarily excellent memory, as is acknowledged even by Christian historians. Whatever they would hear or see, they could remember distinctly and with the utmost sense of responsibility and since Hadith is a holy and religious discipline and an important branch of learning, the greatest care was especially exercised in dealing with it with a scrupulous regard for truth and veracity. The *Aḥādīth* of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were thus transmitted to the succeeding generations with more than usual caution. There is no doubt that some narrators were not so reliable in respect of memory or intelligence, or, for that matter, even in point of integrity, that their reports may be relied on fully. But the early scholars of *Aḥādīth*, who collected the whole body of the sayings and *Aḥādīth* of the Holy

Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), have laid down such inviolable cannons and criteria as to make a discrimination of the stable from the unstable *Aḥādīth* an easy task, through proper scrutiny.

## **The Method of Narration**

The method of narrating *Aḥādīth* consisted, on the part of a companion who had personally heard the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) make a statement or seen him do a particular thing, in communicating it for the purpose of disseminating knowledge to such others as had not so heard or seen the Holy Prophet or had not seen the blessed period of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The statement, narrating the Hadith, would ordinarily run like this: "I heard it from so and so that he heard from such and such companion of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that he heard the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) say on such and such occasion or saw him do such and such a thing." They would thus convey the report to the other with a view to refreshing faith or spreading knowledge. Thus, it was, that the *Aḥādīth* of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), were preserved for the succeeding generations through a regularly linked and unbroken chain of narrators.

## **Categories of Narrators**

Narrators of *Aḥādīth* are divided into several categories. The highest of them is the Muslim narrator who heard or saw personally the Holy

Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) say or do a particular thing. He is called a “companion.” To the second category belongs the narrator who heard from a companion and transmitted it further. He is called a *Tābiʿī* and the one in the lower category is called a *Tabʿa Tābiʿī*. Thence forward runs the whole chain of ordinary narrators. Similarly, the narrators have been classified according to their respective memory, intelligence and integrity.

## Standard Works of Hadith

The *Aḥādīth* were collected and compiled in book form, roughly speaking, from the middle of the second century of the Hijra, to the end of the third century. There is a large number of books on Aḥādīth, six of which are considered to be of great reliability and treated as standard works. They are, therefore, known as *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, i.e., six authentic books of Aḥādīth. Their names are as follows:

### Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī:

Compiled by Imam Muhammad bin Ismāʿīl Al-Bukhārī (A.H. 194 to A.H. 256). This work of Imam Bukhārī is an authentic book on Aḥādīth and Imam Bukhārī is regarded as the most outstanding figure among the Aḥādīth compiling scholars. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī has therefore been termed as the most genuinely correct book after the Quran, the Book of Allah.

### Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim:

Compiled by Imam Muslim bin Al-Ḥajjāj An-Nīshāpūrī (A.H. 204 to A.H. 261). His work is considered to be the second best among the six standard books of Aḥādīth and is regarded as an

excellent and reliable collection. Most of the scholars of Aḥādīth have named the Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and the Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim as the two correct works (Ṣaḥīḥain).

### **Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī:**

Compiled by Imam Abū ‘Īsā Muhammad bin ‘Īsā at-Tirmidhī (A.H. 209 to A.H. 279). He was a disciple of Imam Bukhārī. His collection of Aḥādīth has been held in high estimation.

### **Sunan Abū Dāwūd:**

Compiled by Imam Abū Dāwūd Sulaimān bin al-Ash‘ath as-Sijistānī (A.H. 202 to A.H. 275). He holds a high place in the collection and collation of legalistic material. But scholars are divided on the question of assigning priority of merit of Jāmi‘ Tirmidhī and Sunan Abū Dāwūd.

### **Sunan an-Nasa’ī:**

Compiled by Imam Aḥmad bin Shu‘aib an-Nasā’ī (A.H. 215 to A.H. 306) Imam Nasa’ī is one of the leading scholars of Aḥādīth and his work is generally accorded the fifth place among the six standard books [Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah].



**Sunan Ibn Mājah:**

Compiled by Imam Muhammad bin Yazīd bin Mājah al-Qazvīnī (A.H. 209 to A.H. 273). This book is placed sixth among the standard *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* [the six correct works]. It is a really good book. All these Muḥaddithīn (compiler-scholars or editors of Hadith) spent the whole of their lives in search of Aḥādīth and compiled their collections out of a vast store of hundreds of thousands of Aḥādīth. The entire Muslim world owes these savants a heavy debt of gratitude. May Allah give them the choicest reward.

In addition to the aforementioned six books, the two works on Aḥādīth listed below are also very well known.

**Mu'aṭṭa':**

Compiled by Imam Mālik Ibn Anas Al-Madanī (A.H. 95 to A.H. 179) Imam Mālik, in addition to holding a leading position among the scholar-compilers of Aḥādīth, is regarded as a leading jurist and is one of the four celebrities of jurisprudence whom the vast majority of Muslims seek to follow in all questions pertaining to *Fiqh* [jurisprudence]. The followers of Imam Mālik are called Mālikīs. Having been born at a time nearest to the period of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and for receiving early training in Medina, Imam Mālik holds a position of great eminence. Ḥaḍrat Shah Waliyyullāh Muḥaddith Dehlavī, Mujaddid of the 12th century Hijra, regarded his work, on account of his personal predilection, superior to Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī. But there is little doubt that the *Mu'aṭṭa'* is a great book indeed.

### **Musnad Imam Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal Al-Baghdādī:**

Imam Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal (A.H. 164 to A.H. 242) is also regarded as a leading scholar of Aḥādīth as well as a celebrated Doctor of Jurisprudence like Imam Mālik. The Muslims who follow his school of jurisprudence are called Ḥanbalīs. His collection is definitely of a high standard. However, due to lack of vigilance on the part of his son, some weak Aḥādīth found their way into his great work.

The other two Imams of *Fiqh* [jurisprudence] are Imam Abū Ḥanīfah (A.H. 80 to A.H. 150) and Imam Shāfi‘ī (A.H. 105 to A.H. 204). Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, popularly known as Imam A‘zam, has the largest following. He has been recognized as the leading figure among the Imams of jurisprudence. He devoted most of his time to questions of Fiqh. [Imam Shāfi‘ī’s collection of Aḥādīth entitled “*Kitābul-Umm*” is also a work of repute.]



# CATEGORIES OF AḤĀDĪTH

Scholars have divided Aḥādīth into several categories. Of these the following are well known.

## **Hadith *Qaulī*:**

This type of Hadith quotes the words of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) as actually uttered by him, as for example, a companion narrates that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) made such and such speech on a particular occasion or conversed in such and such words with a particular person or gave such and such command to so and so companion, and so on and so forth.

## **Hadith *Fi‘lī*:**

This Hadith does not quote any word or statement of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) but narrates some act of his, as for instance, it says the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) did such and such thing on such and such occasion or performed such and such religious duty in such and such a manner.

## **Hadith *Taqrīrī*:**

This type of Hadith relates neither a statement nor an act of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Instead, it records what a particular person did or said in the presence of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and that he did not forbid him to do or say so. In fact, the word “*taqrīr*” in the Arabic language does not mean speech.

Instead, it means to keep up or uphold something. Hadith *Taqrīrī* would, therefore, stand for a Hadith which confirms as correct a statement or an act of a companion made or done in the presence of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and to which he did not object.

### **Hadith *Qudsī*:**

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) ascribes a word or act to God the Excellent, saying that God had commanded him thus. Such a statement is other than the Quranic revelation but does not contradict the Quran in any way.

### **Hadith *Marfū'*:**

This Hadith traces a statement directly to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) without any break in the chain of reporters.

### **Hadith *Mauqūf*:**

The Hadith cannot be traced to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) but stops short and does not proceed beyond a particular reporter. But the nature of the Hadith and the tenor and tone of the testimony should warrant the conclusion that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) must have been heard making the statement.

**Hadith *Muttaṣil*:**

The reporters of this Hadith are known and mentioned and are known and placed in serial order, and none of them is found missing or left unidentified.

**Hadith *Munqaṭi'*:**

All narrators of this Hadith are reliable in point of:

1. Memory,
2. Intelligence, and
3. Integrity

A little reflection will show that these three criteria suffice to test the reliability of a narrator.

**Hadith *Da'if*:**

The Hadith with an unreliable narrator, either in respect of memory or intelligence or integrity, so much so that even if one of the narrators alone is unreliable, in spite of the rest of them being reliable, the Hadith will be treated as weak [*da'if*].

**Hadith *Mauḍū'*:**

A Hadith which is proved to have been invented by a lying narrator.

**Athar [plural *Āthār*]:**

It is nothing more than a report consisting of a statement made by a companion. It does not ascribe any statement to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). It is clear

that Athar has no place in the classification of *Aḥādīth* but is a distinct category in itself. As the books of *Aḥādīth* happen generally to embody Athar as well, ordinary people sometimes fail to make any distinction between the two.



# Difference between Hadith & Sunnah

An important point which should be borne in mind is that, although the general mass of people makes no distinction between *Aḥādīth* and Sunnah, the two are, in fact, quite distinct. *Aḥādīth* consist of the actual words or details of the deeds of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) as reported down the line of successive narrators. But these *Aḥādīth* or reports were committed to memory, jealously safeguarded and treasured in the hearts of the reporters and were communicated verbally at first. They were later collected and edited with great care in the form of books at different times, varying from one hundred to two hundred and fifty years after Hijra. As against this, the Sunnah is not the name of a recorded report but stands for the actual practice of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in respect of a religious matter and which his companions adopted in his own lifetime and under his own supervision. Each generation held fast to this actual form in which the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) practised religion, and which in its turn was passed on to the succeeding generations. As, for example, when the Quranic command about Prayers was revealed to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), it did not contain full details in an explicit manner, such as the number of times a Muslim must pray during the course of the day and night, respective timings of different Prayers, the number of *raka'āt* [which consists of the prescribed movements and words recited while offering Prayers to Allah] in each, and the manner in which each *rak'ah* was to be performed, etc. In this regard he set for his companions a practical example of compliance with these

commands, guided as he was by the implicit inspiration from God and which again was a Divine gift; and in his lifetime ensured that the companions followed his example. The companions, in turn, carried this practical form to the “*Tābi‘īn*”, and the “*Tābi‘īn*” passed it on, through their own example, to the “*Tab‘a Tābi‘īn*”.

Thus, the mode of practising religion was established that was immutable in form and was passed on from generation to generation.

The Sunnah is evidently, therefore, distinct and something apart from the *Aḥādīth* and carries much greater weight and stability than the *Aḥādīth*. We, therefore, hold that the Islamic *Shariah* [Islamic canonical law] is based on the teachings of the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), Hadith and Sunnah) is based originally on the Holy Quran and the Sunnah, for the Quran is the word of God, and the Sunnah is the practical explanation of this word, which the Prophet of God (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) established through his personal example, after which it reached the succeeding generation through the personal example of the companions and thus was one torch lighted from the other torch. But, as against this, the *Aḥādīth* is, in fact, a collection of verbal reports (so much so that even the “*Fi‘lī*” and “*Taqrīrī*” *Aḥādīth* have come down to us through verbal reports), and has the status of a supporting witness. No doubt, it is a forceful supporting witness, which cannot be ignored. In any case, it is not as basic as the Quran and the Sunnah. Nevertheless, there is no gain saying the fact that the *Aḥādīth* is a most precious treasure-house of historical, intellectual, and spiritual wealth. So long as a Hadith is not found contrary to a Quranic verse or a more reliable Hadith, it is the duty of every Muslim to accept it, in obedience to the Quranic command, “*Obey Allah and the*



*Prophet*<sup>22</sup> and make it a source of Divine guidance for life. It is a matter of regret, however, that some of the so-called Muslims of our day seem bent on minimising the importance of this priceless treasure of wisdom.



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2 The Holy Quran, Ch: 4 (An-Nisā'), V: 60



## THE COLLECTION OF FORTY AḤĀDĪTH

With the above introductory note, this humble servant seeks beatitude in presenting the following forty select *Aḥādīth* of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). These *Aḥādīth* have been culled from popular and standard works of *Aḥādīth*. A simple translation of each Hadith, with a brief explanatory note, has also been given. I hope that if Muslim men and Muslim women and children commit these *Aḥādīth* to memory and grasp in their minds their sense and profit by acting in accord with their spirit, they will find it a source of bliss, mercy and forgiveness if it so pleases Allah, the Excellent. The *Aḥādīth* have been purposely selected to the number of forty, firstly because number forty according to the Holy Quran signifies perfection, and secondly because, in a Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) says:

“Whoso, with a view to the welfare and reformation of my people, committed to memory at least forty of my *Aḥādīth*, Allah, the Excellent, will raise him up on the Day of Resurrection as a jurist and religious divine, and I will be his intercessor with Allah and a witness to his faith.”<sup>3</sup>

After this introductory note, I set down hereunder the forty *Aḥādīth* that I have selected and arranged according to my choice and pray that God the Great may be pleased to make it for me and for its readers, a

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means of His Grace and Mercy and Blessing and Protection. Be it so,  
O most Merciful of all Who show mercy!



حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ قَالَ... فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى  
 اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ... الْإِيمَانُ... أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ  
 وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ  
 وَشَرِّهِ-

(مُسْلِمٌ كِتَابُ الْإِيمَانِ بَابُ بَيَانِ الْإِيمَانِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ...)

## 1 —

### SIX ARTICLES OF FAITH

Ḥaḍrat Abdullah bin Umar stated that my father, Ḥaḍrat Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (May Allah be pleased with him), narrated: The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,

1. The [requirements of] Faith are that you should believe in Allah and in His Angels and in His Books and in His Prophets and in the Last Day, [i.e., the Day of Requital] and that you should also believe in Allah's determination of good and in His determination of evil.

(Muslim, Book of Faith, Chapter: Explanation of faith and Islam and favour.....)

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## *Explanatory Notes*

The above tradition carries a definition of faith which, as expounded in the teaching of Islam, consists of six fundamental articles of faith:

1. Belief in Allah Who, as the Creator and Master of the world, is the central theme of all faith and religion. It should be remembered that, in Arabic, the word Allah is not applied to any being other than the One God, and it denotes a being free from all defects and drawbacks, possessing all the best attributes, having all knowledge and all powers.
2. Belief in Angels, who are an invisible but extremely important creation of God. Angels operate the working of the universe under Divine Command and supervise the God-created chain of causes. They also act as media of communication between God and His Prophets.
3. Belief in Books revealed by God through which the world comes to know of the Divine Purpose. The last and everlasting of these books is the Holy Quran which has superseded all the earlier laws that were of a periodic and race-based character and henceforth, there is no law, till the Last Day, except the Quran.
4. Belief in the Prophets of God to whom were revealed, from time to time, inspired Books and who acquainted the world with the purpose of God, by personal example. Prophets appeared among every people, but of Divine messengers, the last law-giving prophet, the Master Prophet, is the Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), who was raised in Arabia 1,400 years ago, and is the pride of the progeny of Adam (May peace be on him), and topmost of the prophets.

5. Belief in the Last Day, which must inevitably follow death, when every individual will be required for the good or bad deeds he performed in this life.
6. Belief in the orderly existence of good and evil which is operating in the world, in the form of a Divine law. It means, in other words, believing that the law of nature and the law of religion [*Shariah*] are both Divinely-devised laws and God alone is the Founder and Guardian of this material and spiritual universe. He it is Who has laid down the principle for everything, whether of a physical or a spiritual nature, that certain actions lead to good results while certain other actions yield evil consequences as a matter of course. And above all, God holds supreme power over the laws He has created. Under certain circumstances, therefore, He brings about phenomenal changes in these laws, for the sake of His prophets and saints. Such changes, however, always form exceptions to these laws and never run counter to His known ways or promises or attributes. The phenomenon of miracles belongs to the category of these exceptional laws.



عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ  
 بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةٌ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ  
 مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ،  
 وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ -

(صحيح البخاري كتاب الإيمان باب دُعَاؤُكُمْ إِيْمَانُكُمْ.....)

## 2 —

## FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abdullah bin Umar (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

“Islam is based on five [pillars]:

1. Giving testimony [by heart and tongue] that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger;
2. Observing Prayer [*Salat*];
3. Paying the Zakat;
4. Performing the Pilgrimage (to the House of Allah), and,
5. Fasting in the month of Ramadan.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Faith, Chapter: Your invocation means your faith)



## *Explanatory Notes*

It must be remembered that while the preceding Hadith defined faith [Īmān], this Hadith gives a definition of Islam, and the difference between the two is that whereas Īmān stands for faith, Islam connotes practice and it will be realised that together the two make religion a complete whole. Belief in God and the Prophet is common to the above two Aḥādīth. In the preceding Hadith, belief in Allah and in the Prophet has been incorporated to emphasise faith by heart and its attestation by the tongue. In the present Hadith this has been included as a basis of action. In any case according to this Hadith, in the definition of Islam, belief in the unity of Allah, the Excellent, and in the Prophethood of the Holy Messenger of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), has been accorded the first place so that the belief of every Muslim is based on the holy article that God is One and Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is His last law-bearing Messenger. This is followed by four practical acts of worship which are:

1. The first act of worship is Prayer, i.e., *Salat*, which in Arabic means “*glorification and praise.*” It has been obligated in the form of five Prayers during the course of the day and is offered after the prescribed *Wuḍū* (ablution) in a prescribed manner. Of these five Prayers, one is the morning Prayer which is offered after the first light of dawn and before daybreak. The second Prayer is the *Zuhr* or midday Prayer which is offered after the decline of the sun at noon. The third Prayer is the ‘*Aṣr* Prayer which is offered when the sun has far advanced in its decline. The fourth is the *Maḡhrib* or evening Prayer which is offered immediately after sundown. And the fifth Prayer is

the 'Ishā Prayer which is offered after the twilight has faded away. Thus, not only different periods of the day but the two ends of the night, too, are dedicated to the glorification and worship of God and for prayers addressed to Him.

The object of Prayer is to establish personal communion with God, keep His remembrance ever-fresh in the heart and cleanse one's inner self of all evil and evil inclinations and seek His aid in all difficulties. According to another saying of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), perfect Prayer is one during which the worshipper has the immediate and sure feeling that he is seeing God or, at least, that God is seeing him.

The timings of Prayers, too, are a subtle hint about the various periods of human life. It is not without purpose, therefore, that the intervals between Prayers are shortened during the latter part of the day when the darkness of night is drawing near. The idea is to remind us that, with the increase in age, the pace of preparation for the next world should be accelerated.

*Salat* is the kind of worship which in reality is the very soul of spiritual life, and therefore, it has been termed the *mi'raj* [the acme of spiritual exaltation] of the faithful. The extent of the Holy Prophet's (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) attachment to and enjoyment of Prayer is shown by the following words of his: "The coolness [delight] of my eyes lies in Prayer".

2. The second item of practical worship enjoined by Islam, is Zakat, which means "purification of property and increase of

goods.” The principal object of Zakat tax is that, on the one hand, the share of the poor should be deducted from the wealth of the rich and on the other, the poor and support less people should be provided with means of assistance to help raise the position of the group and improve the individuals belonging to it. The Zakat is levied on the property which is surplus to a minimum basic slab of property, and it is called “*Niṣāb*” in legal terminology. This is assessed on the value of gold and silver, gold and silver ornaments, gold and silver coins, including paper currency, at the rate of 2½%. It must, however, be remembered that there is no separate “*Niṣāb*” for gold and its “*Niṣāb*” is determined on the basis of the current value of the “*Niṣāb*” for silver, which will vary with the variation in the relative value of the two metals. Commercial goods are also assessed at the rate of 2½%. As far as agricultural land and fruit gardens are concerned, it is 10% of the crop in the case of “*bārānī*”<sup>4</sup> and 20% in the case of lands irrigated by artificial means. Leaving aside details, it is assessed at the rate of one goat per 40 to 120 goat or sheep, one calf per every 30 cows and buffaloes, one goat for every five camels, and one young she-camel for every 25 camels. On mines, hidden treasures and sealed deposits, it is charged at the flat rate of 20%. The whole proceeds of the Zakat tax are to be expended in helping the poor and the destitute, the insolvent, the wayfarers, and those who are not free and in softening hearts and in supporting those who are actively engaged in promoting the cause of the Faith and in remunerating the administrative staff of the Zakat

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4 Bārānī: Land dependent upon rainwater.

- organization. Zakat thus plays a great part in regulating national wealth.
3. The third practical form of worship is Hajj. Hajj means journeying to a Holy Place, and in Islamic terminology, it means visiting the House of God at the Holy City of Mecca, and making a circuit of the Şafā and Marwah Mounts, and halting to pray at the historic site of Arafat plain, 9 miles from Mecca, and on the return, stopping and worshipping at Muzdalifah, and in the end offering sacrifice at Minā, three miles from Mecca. Hajj falls on the 8th, 9th and 10th of the lunar month of Dhul-Hajj. It is not merely a pilgrimage to the holiest of places associated with the sacrifice performed by Abraham and Ishmael (May God shower His blessings on them), but the holy traditions of the early sufferings and sacrifices of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) are also bound up with it. Besides, Hajj offers a great opportunity to Muslims of different countries and diverse races to meet one another, to know one another and to consult one another in matters of general interest. The performance of the Hajj [pilgrimage] is obligatory once in one's lifetime but, as is explicitly stated in another Hadith concerning the subject, good health, necessary funds to cover expenses of the return journey and peaceful conditions on the way are the necessary conditions precedent to the performance of Hajj.
  4. The fourth practical form of worship consists of fasting during the month of Ramadan. It is obligatory on every Muslim who is of age, is neither sick nor is in the course of a journey. The sick and the traveller must fast at another time for the same number of days. Fasting is called "*Şaum*" in Arabic, which means "*holding oneself in restraint.*" This disciplinary form of

worship is performed during the month of Ramadan, which according to the lunar calendar, coincides with different seasons of the year by rotation. After taking a meal before the dawn of the morning light, one must abstain from food and drink and physical relations until sunset. In other words, during the fast, Muslims set a silent example of the sacrifice of their persons and progeny [through self-denial and restraint]. In addition to purifying the mind and inuring one to hardships, fasting creates a sense of fellow-feeling with the poor and has been prescribed to promote the spirit of sacrifice among the Muslims.

In truth, fasting is the source of an infinite blessing.



أَخْبَرَنَا جَابِرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: أُعْطِيتُ خَمْسًا لَمْ يُعْطَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي: نُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ مَسِيرَةَ شَهْرٍ، وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهْرًا.... وَأُحِلَّتْ لِي الْغَنَائِمُ وَلَمْ تَحِلَّ لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلِي، وَأُعْطِيتُ الشَّفَاعَةَ، وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً وَبُعِثْتُ إِلَى النَّاسِ عَامَّةً-

(صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ النَّبِيِّمِ)

3—

## FIVE DISTINCTIONS GRANTED TO THE HOLY PROPHET

Narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

I have been granted five [distinctions] which none of the Prophets was granted before me. [Firstly] I have been reinforced with awe extending as far as a month's journey, [secondly] the entire earth has been made for me a mosque and a means of

purity, [thirdly] the booty of war has been made lawful for me; it was never made lawful for anyone before me; [fourthly] I have been granted the honour of intercession with the Lord [and fifthly] while Prophets [before me] were commissioned to their particular people, I have been sent to the entire mankind.

(*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Tayammum*)

### *Explanatory Notes*

In this Hadith our chief (May my life be dedicated to his service), has detailed five distinctions granted to him exclusively which go to show his exalted station and the abounding mercy of Allah the Excellent on him.

**His first distinction** is the Divine gift of awe extending to as far as a month's journey. The history of Islam furnishes strong supporting evidence showing how notwithstanding his [the Holy Prophet's] apparently slight physical frame and unostentatious living, an enemy would tremble in awe before him, surely a God-given gift. It so happened on many occasions that the enemy planned to attack Medina and as the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sallied forth with a small group of companions to meet him, he [the enemy] fled on the first alarm. Again, when the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) addressed a letter to the Roman Caesar inviting him to accept Islam and the Caesar learnt further details about him, he exclaimed,

If I could go and pay obeisance to this Messenger of Allah, I would indeed consider it a great honour if he permitted me to wash his feet.

**The second distinction** of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is that the entire earth has been made

a mosque for him. As a result of this, a Muslim can offer Prayers anywhere as and when the time for his Prayer comes and he does not require a special place for worship like followers of other faiths. This was necessary in order to facilitate the extensive campaign of the Muslims to carry the message of Islam all over the world. Similarly, the earth was made for him the means of purification. A minor aspect of this is the fact that in the event of non-availability of water, a Muslim can perform *Tayammum* [ablution without water] in place of *Wuḍū* [ablution with water]. This combination of water and earth is in keeping with the creation of Adam (May peace be on him) who was created, according to Quranic idiom, out of moist earth.

**His third distinction** is that, as against the laws of earlier religions, which required the war booty to be burnt, the Islamic law allowed the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to use the booty that fell in his hands, as lawful. The wisdom underlying this was firstly, to stop this needless wastage of national wealth, and secondly, to teach aggressors the lesson that if they did not desist from oppressing others, their own wealth would be taken away from them and given to the oppressed; and thirdly to provide the weak among Muslims with a source of strength in the Islamic defensive wars.

**The fourth distinction** of the Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the grant to him of the highest office of intercession. '*Shafā'at*' literally means 'mate' or 'like,' and according to the idiom, too, it does not mean common prayer. Instead, it signifies the special office held by a favourite of God by virtue of his dual role: on the one hand, of close contact with God and on the other, of his near association with men. He is entitled to intercede with the Lord. The gist of this intercession would run as follows: "O God, in the name of Your past favours to me and my heartfelt solicitude for the good of Your creatures [or some particular individual from amongst



them], I beg and pray You have mercy on Your poor frail creatures and grant them Your forgiveness,” urging, on the one hand, the plea of his special contact with Him and on the other, the heartfelt solicitude for the welfare of His creatures [or for that matter a particular person], begging thereby of Him mercy for His frail creatures and His forgiveness. In this connection, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) says, in another Hadith, that when, on the Day of Judgement, the people will be seized with extreme panic and consternation, despairing of all others, they will ultimately turn to him, and then he will intercede for them with God, and that his intercession will be accepted.

**The fifth distinction** of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is that whereas the former prophets were sent to particular people for particular periods of time, he was raised for the entire world, for all people and for all times. This is a special characteristic and a great distinction indeed. The result was that his God-granted mission extended to every people, to every country and to every age and he was declared the perfect and perfected manifestation of God. In other words, it meant that as the God of the entire world is One, through his appointment, there was likewise one Prophet for all mankind.

O Allah! Bless Muhammad and grant him and his offspring peace.



سَبِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ يَقُولُ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ: إِنِّي آخِرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَإِنَّ مَسْجِدِي هَذَا آخِرُ  
 الْمَسَاجِدِ -

(مُرْشِدُ ذَوِي الْحِجَاءِ وَالْحَاجِّهِ (شَرْحُ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ) كِتَابُ الْأَذَانِ بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي فَضْلِ الصَّلَاةِ)

4—

## THE HOLY PROPHET IS THE LAST LAW-GIVER

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 said:

“I am verily the last Prophet, and this mosque of mine [at  
 Medina] is the last mosque.”

(Murshid – Zavil-Ḥijā’ wal-Ḥājjah, Book: The call to Prayer,  
 Chapter: Virtue of the Prayer)

### *Explanatory Notes*

In this pleasing Hadith, our chief, the Holy Prophet (May peace and  
 blessings of Allah be on him) says he is the last Prophet and no such  
 reformer dare come after him as would terminate his prophetic

dispensation and, instead, initiate another dispensation. If one came along, he would necessarily be of his own following, his disciple, and as a servant of his Shariah, within the fold of his prophethood and not beyond its pale.

In order to clarify its purport, our master (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) added the words: “And this mosque of mine is the last mosque.” It is clear that, by these words, it was not meant, nor do subsequent events support the sense, that there would never be built another mosque in the world. On the contrary, it meant that there would not be a mosque in opposition to his mosque and that all mosques henceforth shall be constructed in line with and in imitation of his mosque, as its copies and as its reflections.

Similarly, اِنِّيْ اٰخِرُ الْاَنْبِيَاءِ [i.e., “*I am verily the last of Prophets*”] means that there can be no prophet, in future, independent of allegiance to him and with rival prophethood and with a religion other than his. On the contrary, whosoever comes along would be his servant, his disciple, his subject, his reflection, and so to say, a part of his person. This is the deep philosophy underlying the designation of *Khātaman-Nabiyyīn* [Seal of the Prophets] given to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in a verse of the Quran. Ponder well the point that, if the sense underlying the saying, “*This mosque of mine is the last mosque*”, remains intact in spite of tens of thousands of mosques having been built in Muslim countries, besides his mosque at Medina, how can then the grant of prophethood to a servant, a disciple, and a subject of his from among his followers, militate against the idea of *Khatm-i-Nubuwwat* [finality of prophethood] or against the spirit of the Hadith, “*I am verily the last of Prophets?*”

This Hadith, therefore, definitely means that he was the last law-bearing Prophet and that no Prophet would come after him, independent of his bondage and with a Shariah, Hadith, and Sunnah

other than that of Islam, and that his mosque [of Medina] was the last and there shall be no mosque in rivalry to it. A little reflection will show that it is not consistent with the exalted status of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that he should be regarded as the terminator of the free-flowing former favours. On the contrary, his glory demands that all the diverse streams should be stopped and issue forth afresh from his vast river. And this is the wholesome explanation that the leading divines of Islam and great reformers have been putting forward in every age. Here are some of them:

The chief of mystics, Ḥaḍrat Shaikh Akbar Muḥy-ud-Dīn Ibn al-‘Arabī (A.H. 560 to A.H. 638), says:

The prophethood that ceased with the coming of the Prophet of Allah, peace of Allah and His mercy be on him, is the law-bearing prophethood.<sup>5</sup>

Ḥaḍrat Imam ‘Abdul-Wahhāb Shīrānī, a reputed Imam (died A.H. 976) observes:

“Prophethood as such did not cease with the advent of the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), but only the law-bearing prophethood came to a close.”<sup>6</sup>

Ḥaḍrat Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī, Mujaddid Alf-Thānī (died A.H. 1034), a leading and reputed reformer of Islam says:

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5 Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah, Chapter:73, Vol: 2, p: 6

6 Al-Yawāqīt wal-Jawāhir, Vol. I, p. 346

It is in no way repugnant to the sense of Khātaman-Nabiyyīn that the followers of the Prophet of Allah should attain to the excellences of prophethood, by virtue of their allegiance to him, as their heritage. So be not of the doubters.<sup>7</sup>

Ḥaḍrat Shah Waliyyullāh Muḥaddath Dehlawī, Mujaddid of the 12th century Hijrah (born A.H. 1114, died A.H. 1176), widely known for his profound learning and whose exalted rank is acknowledged universally, says:

That the prophethood ended with the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) means that no prophet shall be raised after him bearing a new law.<sup>8</sup>

Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Muhammad Qāsim Nānotvī (A.H. 1248—A.H. 1297), a learned scholar of the recent past and the founder of the Deoband University, known far and wide in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent as a centre of oriental science, says:

The idea of the common people is that the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the Khātam, in the sense that his period is at the end of that of rest of the prophets. However, to men of understanding, it is clear that there is no superiority merely in precedence or in subsequence, in terms of period of time, as a mark of praise.” How can then the verse “But he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets”<sup>9</sup> be appropriate in this sense? If, by way of supposition, a prophet was

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7 Maktūbāt-e-Rabbānī, letter No. 301

8 Tafhīmāt-e-Ilāhiyyah, Tafhīm 54, Vol: 2, p: 85

9 The Holy Quran, Ch: 33 (Al-Aḥzāb), V: 41

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to appear after the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) it will not be a breach of the Muḥammadī Khātamiyyat.”<sup>10</sup>

Little doubt, therefore, that the view that prophethood has found its perfection in the august person of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and everlasting Shariah has been revealed and there is no prophet after him, but one who partakes of his garden’s fruit in his service, bearing his seal of authentication, inherits the favour of his reflected prophethood and is raised to serve the religion brought by him. Would that people cared to grasp this minute point and recognise the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).



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10 Taḥdhīrun-Nās, Page 3 and 25

عَلْقَمَةَ بَنٍ وَقَاصِ اللَّيْثِيِّ، يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ  
 رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَلَى الْبَيْتِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ  
 عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ  
 امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى -

(صحيح البخاري كتاب بدء الوحي باب كيف كان بدء الوحي إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم)

5—

## ACTIONS ARE REWARDED ACCORDING TO THE MOTIVES BEHIND THEM

Ḥaḍrat Umar bin al Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) stated that I heard the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say:

Verily deeds are [judged] by intentions and for everyone is a reward, according to his intention .....

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Revelation, Chapter: How Divine revelation started to be revealed....)

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*Explanatory Notes*

This subtle Hadith throws a basic light on the philosophy underlying human deeds. It is evident that seemingly good deeds are of many types. Some acts are done by sheer force of habit, some in imitation of other people, and yet some for show and advertisement. But our master, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), says that all these deeds are barren of result and carry no weight in the balance of the God of Islam and that correct deeds are the ones done with a true intention and a sincere mind. Such a deed is the one that is deserving of a true reward from God. The truth of the matter is that, so long as the heart of a man and his tongue and his limbs, i.e., hands, feet and other parts, are not working in harmony in the performance of a deed, such a deed has no value. A true motive in mind, testimony by word of mouth of this purity of motive, and hands and feet bearing practical witness to this honesty of purpose, make an act deserving of acceptance. If a person lacks the truthfulness of motive, he is a hypocrite. If his tongue bears no testimony to his inner feeling, he is a coward. And if his hands and feet do not act in harmony with his declared purpose, he is a poor performer. A truthful act, therefore, is one that is impelled by a true motive. With the honesty of purpose, a man can make his seemingly worldly acts superior virtues of a religious character. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) says in this connection, that if a husband puts a morsel in the mouth of his wife because it is the will of His Maker that he provides his wife with subsistence and sees to her comfort, this act of his would therefore certainly be treated, in the presence of God, as an act of piety. But it is a matter of regret that thousands of men in this world offer Prayers [only] because they got into the habit from early childhood. And again, there are thousands who observe fast [solely] because the people around them do so. And



there are thousands of men who perform the pilgrimage, so that they may be known as *Hajjīs* among the people and that they may be considered pious and so that their trades may prosper. This Hadith of our chief (May my life be dedicated to his service) voids all such actions. A false act, however virtuous it may appear to be, cannot be deserving of any reward from Allah. Undoubtedly, a truthful deed is the one that has behind it a true and pure motive, for the reward of deeds is measured out in terms of motives.



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ  
 وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ -

(صحيح مسلم كتاب الأيمان والصلوة باب تحريم ظلم المسلم، وخذله، واحتقاره....)

## 6—

## ALLAH SEES HEARTS

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 said:

Verily, Allah does not look at your shapes and your wealth but He  
 looks at your hearts and your actions.

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Righteousness and Relevance, Chapter:  
 The prohibition of Muslim oppression, neglect, contempt .....

*Explanatory Notes*

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has mentioned two things which, in spite of being gifts of God, can and do become, at times, causes of great trial for both men and women. Of these, one is physical beauty and comeliness, which

becomes, generally for women, a source of great trouble. The second is wealth and affluence, which generally put men to a lot of test and temptation. Citing both of these as examples, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that while without a doubt they are great gifts of God, nevertheless, Muslims should take note that Allah does not judge the worth of people by His appraisal of the beauty of women or of the wealth of men. He looks, instead, towards their heads and hearts which are the source and repositories for human thoughts and feelings, and then He looks towards their deeds which are the products of their thoughts and feelings.

The word "*qalb*" used in this Hadith stands both for heart and mind, for "*qalb*" literally means the central point of an organism. The heart and the mind are both, in their respective spheres, centres of the bodily organism, the mind being the centre of overt feelings and the heart that of spiritual experience. By using the words "*qulūb*" [hearts] and "*a'māl*" [deeds], the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in this context, has pointed out that, though physical beauty and material wealth are gifts of God and one should value them, what God takes note of is the heart [*qalb*] of people and their [*a'māl*] actions. It is, therefore, the duty of every Muslim to seek to improve his mind, heart and actions, instead of taking pride in the gifts of physical beauty and property and worldly goods.

It must be borne well in mind that the Holy Prophet's (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) admonition that God, the Excellent, watches the heart and deeds of man, means not only that these things will weigh on him on the Day of Requital, but also that in this world too, real weight is given to feelings of the heart and the motives of the mind and the actions of limbs. The truth is that once a people are granted the favour that the heads and hearts and limbs of its members start operating in the right direction, no power can

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hinder the courses of its progress nor deprive it of realisation of the highest of values.



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ، وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ،  
وَصَامَ رَمَضَانَ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ، جَاهِدًا  
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ جَلَسَ فِي أَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا، فَقَالُوا: يَا  
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَفَلَا نُبَشِّرُ النَّاسَ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ  
دَرَجَةٍ، أَعَدَّهَا اللَّهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، مَا بَيْنَ  
الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ،  
فَأَسْأَلُوهُ الْفَرْدُوسَ، فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ - أُرَاهُ  
قَالَ وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْجَنَّةِ -

(صحيح البخاري كتاب الجهاد والسير باب درجات المجاهدين في سبيل الله)

## 7— DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ACTIVE & INACTIVE MUSLIM

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to say:

Whoso believed in Allah and in His Prophet and established Prayer and observed fast in Ramadan, Allah promises to admit him into Paradise whether he fights for His cause or sits in the garden house where he was born.

They (the companions) said: ‘Should we then communicate these pleasant tidings to the people, O Prophet of Allah?’ The Prophet answered:

“There are a hundred grades in Paradise, prepared by Allah for those who fight in the path of Allah, and, in between each, is as great a distance as is between earth and heaven. So, O Muslims! When you beg of Allah (for heaven), beg of Him the Firdaus, for it is the most central Paradise, and the highest one and aloft of it is the celestial seat of the Gracious God and from there spring the streams of Paradise.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: Degrees  
of the Mujāhidīn in the way of Allah)

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*Explanatory Notes*

Against my ordinary rule of selection, I quoted this comparatively longer Hadith, as through it we come to know of certain facts that are as useful as they are important and basic and which are:

1. That there is not merely one grade in Paradise but that they are numerous, of which Firdaus is the highest and, so to say, is the source of all the streams of the Paradise.
2. That the difference between the highest grade of the sit-at-home Muslims and the lowest grade of the Muslims who fight in His cause will be as great as the distance between heaven and earth.
3. That Muslims should not only strive to deserve the grades reserved for soldiers of God but also that the highest of those grades, i.e., the Firdaus, should be their target.
4. That the various grades of Paradise correspond to the various degrees of nearness to God, the Excellent, and therefore it is that the top-most grade of Paradise has been assigned a place close to the Divine throne.
5. That the gifts of Paradise are not of a material character; they are spiritual in nature for their gradation is demarcated in terms of nearness to God. And though their spirit will partake of the body, as deeds do partake of it, nonetheless, in Paradise, even the human body will be of a spiritual character; therefore, the physical gifts of that place will be, according to their basic spiritual standard, clear and pure.

This is the fine spiritual wisdom that accrues from this Hadith. This observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is aimed at elevating the objective and ideal of the Muslims.

No doubt a Muslim who observes the injunctions about fasting and Prayer and other obligatory duties, with sincerity of heart (Hajj and Zakat have not been mentioned in this Hadith since these are obligatory only on the well-to-do and people of substance and are not obligatory on every Muslim) but sits pretty at home, can attain to his salvation and save himself from Divine reckoning. But he cannot be worthy of the excellent gifts that entitle a man to the special favour of God's nearness. Those faithful ones, who are desirous of higher progress, owe it to themselves to give up their sit-at-home life and take to the role of soldiers of God and engage themselves in the service of the Prophet, day and night. The truth is that a sit-at-home Muslim, the benefit of whose faith and its effect remains confined to his own person, is not only depriving himself of the very best gifts but is courting for himself an hourly danger, for he stands by the brink and a slight swerving on his part can hurl him from the place of salvation and make him the target of punishment. But a Muslim who is a soldier in the way of God is secure against this possible danger.

The question is, what is the way to become a soldier of God? The answer is that there are scores of ways of participating in the great struggle as a soldier of God, but the Holy Quran particularly emphasises two. It says:

Allah has granted eminence to those who fight in His way with their property and their persons over those who sit at home."<sup>11</sup>

It appears that property and life are the two great sinews of the battle in the way of Allah. The property part lies in its generous investment in the propagation and progress of Islam and the consolidation of

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11 The Holy Quran, Ch: 4 (an-Nisā'), V: 96



faith. The life part, in the battle for God, lies in devotion of time, as much and as often as one can spare, in the service of faith (in its propagation and in inculcating discipline among others), and when the call comes, in offering life itself without hesitation. One who takes part in these two types of battles of God with his whole heart becomes worthy of the higher Divine favours meant for the soldiers of Allah. But one who stays at home and offers Prayers and observes the fast should not expect to receive a prize greater than that reserved for a Muslim of the stay-at-home kind.

How intensely solicitous for our welfare is our chief, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him ever and evermore). Like an over-indulgent father, he tells us that while without a doubt we may save ourselves from punishment and attain to salvation through Prayer and fasting, yet he counsels us to have a higher aim and strive to attain to the glories reserved solely for soldiers of Allah. For, without it, the pace of national collective life cannot ascend to the lofty pinnacles. On the contrary, the life of such a sit-at-home people will always be exposed to grave risks. In this connection, it is primarily the duty of parents, and then of the school teachers and college professors, to instil in the minds of children at an early age, the active fervour of faith and a zeal for sacrifice and not to let them rest content with a static stay-at-home life, as well as to make them active servants in the cause of the faith and the nation to which they belong.



فَقَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ -- سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ  
 لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ  
 أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ -

(صحيح مسلم كتاب الإيمان باب بيان كون النهي عن المنكر من الإيمان.....)

## 8—

## TRY TO REMOVE EVIL

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Saeed (May Allah be pleased with him): I heard the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) say:

Whoever of you sees something repugnant [to morals or faith], he should change it by his hand. If he has not the strength to do so, then by the word of mouth. And if he cannot do so, then dislike it at heart and endeavour to reform through prayer, but this was the weakest of faith.

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Faith, Chapter: Forbidding evil is part of faith, .....)

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*Explanatory Notes*

While the preceding Hadith comprises an exhortation to battling in the way of Allah, stating how a true Muslim should devote himself through his property and his person to fighting in the cause of Allah, this Hadith outlines a special field, out of the many fields of Jihad. It pertains to national, family and individual reformation. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) says that many religious and moral evils grow because people connive at their sight and fail to take any oral or practical measures of reformation, the result being that the evil becomes widespread; the bad example of one man infects scores of others. It does not stop at that; the natural fear of evil begins to disappear and to lose its hold on the hearts of men.

It is easily comprehensible by every person that in addition to the deterrent of law, there are the other two great methods of dealing with evil in society. One of these is the supervision and advice of the elders and the virtuous, which is a great means of keeping weak-minded elements firm. The other means is the fear of evil that the weight of public opinion inspires. This serves to keep a large number of people in wholesome check, saving them from going wrong. For instance, a child begins to go wrong through falling in with bad company. But timely control or counsel of his parents or some other virtuous elders checks his fall. Or an individual begins having ideas inclining him to a particular evil, but the weight of social pressure and fear of losing face in public opinion keeps him from slipping. Even in the absence of practical supervision or verbal counselling, the silent prayers of virtuous people go a long way in reforming peoples and families. Through this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) aims at mobilising all the three reformative factors, so that the door to social evils is closed to the Muslims and instead, the road to virtuous activity is opened wide. There are many

in the world who fail to stir even their little finger in protest against a near relation, a friend or a neighbour openly indulging in anti-religious or immoral activity, because they do not want to hurt feelings, or would not want to involve themselves in controversy, or they do not feel concerned about the personal morals of anybody else. Evil takes root before their very eyes, grows from a sapling into a plant and from a plant into a tree, but they stay unmoved, little realising, through stupidity, that the fire that has gutted the house of their neighbour today, might spread far enough to destroy their own house tomorrow.

Little doubt, therefore, that our chief, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has laid down this profound and wise injunction that one should not be a disinterested spectator of the fire of evil and sit in one's environment, but should hasten to put down the fire raging in the neighbour's premises and then save one's own house from the range of its destructiveness. He divided this instructional effort into three parts. Firstly, if someone has the necessary power, he should put down evil by his hand. Secondly, if he has not the power to do so, he should try to eliminate it by word of mouth and, if he cannot do even this, he should at least condemn it at heart.

It should be remembered that the injunction to put down evil by hand does not mean that unconcerned people should be subjected to the use of force or of arms. In fact, it means that for those who are in a position to prevent evil by the strength of their arms, it is their duty to do so. As, for instance, a father seeing a son going the wrong way, or an officer seeing a subordinate going the wrong or evil way, are duty-bound to counteract this evil tendency by use of their legitimate authority.

Preventing by word of mouth means counselling or, if necessary, admonishing. Prevention through condemnation at heart does not

mean merely keeping silent and entertaining a passive feeling of disgust at heart.

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has used the words “transforming or preventing through the feeling of the heart” which cannot be fully implemented by a mere passive feeling of disgust. It means, in fact, a heartfelt prayer which is a proven means of reformation. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) means to say that in the event of a man being unable to prevent evil by the strength of his arm or even by means of word of mouth, he should at least make an effort at reformation through his heartfelt prayer. The observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that the effort to reform through a feeling of the heart is the weakest variety of faith means that it is a weak line to leave the matter solely to prayer. The true soldier of God is one who, in addition to his prayer, makes use of the other available means created by God. One who is contented with prayer and does little else to checkmate evil through practical measures has in fact not understood the philosophy of the reformation of the human self. Prayer has, undoubtedly, a great power. But effective prayer is one accompanied by visible practical effort, so that one may be the recipient of God’s grace, not only through oral activity but also through practical action.

All true Muslims should, therefore, follow this august saying of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If they see some of their relations or friends or subordinates commit a wrong, they should prevent them by their hand, and if one whom they cannot so prevent by means of their hands is going wrong, or there is the fear of the use of hands in his case leading to trouble, they should prevent him through verbal advice and counselling. But, if, because of their own lack of courage or because of fear of trouble, it is not possible for them to act in either way, they should at least fight the evils through

heartfelt prayer. If Muslims adopt these measures, the face and future of the country will be changed in a very short time; they are so effective and of such great practical value and benefit. But those who quietly contemplate the spectacle of evil and sit back passively cannot be termed true Muslims.



عَنْ أَنَسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَا يُؤْمِنُ  
 أَحَدُكُمْ، حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ-  
 (صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ الْإِيمَانِ بَابُ: مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ أَنْ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ)

9—

## LIKE FOR YOUR BROTHER WHAT YOU LIKE FOR YOURSELF

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Anas (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“None of you can be a truly faithful Muslim unless he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Faith, Chapter: To like for one`s brother what one likes for himself is a part of faith)

### *Explanatory Notes*

This Hadith sets forth the true standard of Islamic brotherhood. Firstly, the Holy Quran knits all Muslims into one brotherhood by declaring that “*all the faithful are brothers.*” The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) explained the high standard at which this brotherhood was to be evolved through the words of this Hadith. How forcefully he says, by swearing by the power of his Lord,

that the true standard of the brotherhood of the Faithful consists in choosing for his brother what a Muslim would choose for himself. Through this short observation, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has uprooted all estrangement and feeling of conflict from among the Muslims, combining them into one organic whole. It is unfortunate that most of the people of our day are engrossed in self-interest and in accumulating every benefit for themselves to the exclusion of others. It is about these people that the Holy Quran observes:

Woe unto those who, when they receive the measure from others, they get it in full, but when they weigh it out to others, they give out less. Do they think they will never be raised and brought before their Lord?<sup>12</sup>

Islam cuts at the root of egoism and makes it obligatory on true Muslims to like for their brothers what they would like for themselves. It does not, however, mean that the special rights of relations that the Shariah has laid down should be ignored. As, for instance, a father is bound to maintain his young children, the husband to maintain his wife, and children to support their aged and dependent parents. Likewise, the Shariah has apportioned shares for heirs on the death of a person: widow, children, parents and others inherit definite portions of the legacy as their respective shares. Similarly, it has been enjoined with great emphasis to look after the well-being of other relations, neighbours and friends. These rights as laid down are of course there. Leaving them aside, in our day-to-day relationships and dealings, Islam expects every Muslim and enjoins

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12 The Holy Quran, Ch: 83 (Al-Muṭaffifin), V: 2-5



upon him to like for his brother what he would like for himself and not to have a double measure, one set for himself and another set for others. In another Hadith, our chief the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), has described Muslims as limbs of one and the same body and as the whole body is in discomfort where a limb pains, so should all Muslims feel ill-at-ease when one Muslim suffers. This is the high place of brotherhood to which the Prophet of Allah (May my soul be devoted to his cause) proposes to elevate us. Would that we value this injunction!



عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَنْصُرْ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا، قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، هَذَا نَنْصُرُهُ مَظْلُومًا، فَكَيْفَ نَنْصُرُهُ ظَالِمًا؟ قَالَ: تَأْخُذُ فَوْقَ يَدَيْهِ-

(صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ الْمَظَالِمِ بَابُ: أَعْنُ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا)

IO —

## HELP YOUR BROTHER, BE HE THE OPPRESSOR OR THE OPPRESSED

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Anas (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

Help your brother be he the oppressor or the oppressed.

The companions said, ‘O Prophet of Allah, we understand that we should help him when he is the aggrieved party, but how should we help him when he is the wrongdoer?’ He said: “Hold his hand.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Grievances, Chapter: Help your brother whether he is unjust or oppressed)

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*Explanatory Notes*

This wonderful Hadith is a compendium of the philosophy of brotherhood and the philosophy of ethics. The philosophy of brotherhood postulates that a brother should be helped be he the oppressor or the oppressed; brotherliness is not a value that can be ignored or omitted in any circumstances. One who is our brother is always deserving of help: being the guilty or the injured party does not affect his right to receive help. As against this, the philosophy of morality postulates that whether we have to deal with a brother or a stranger, it is our duty in any case to cleanse this world of all injustice and vice and to establish virtue and justice. If a person happens to be a stranger, it does not mean that we are free to do him wrong, and if someone is our brother, it would not mean that we should, therefore, abet his injustice and be his accessories.

Superficially, the two postulates appear to be out of harmony and in conflict with one another. If a wrongdoing brother is not aided, bonds of brotherhood break down. And if the wrongdoing brother is helped, justice goes by the board. But our chief (May my life be dedicated to his service) linked together these two parallel channels that do not apparently seem to meet. He linked the two by means of an intermediary channel in such a manner that they now flow like a single stream. He observed, in effect, that brotherhood was such a holy relationship that there was no cutting it asunder, under any circumstances: whether a brother is good or bad, an oppressor or oppressed, he remains a brother always, and there is no cutting off brotherly ties. But the God of Islam would not permit injustice and enjoins equity even to enemies. Therefore, the two postulates should be so harmonised that help should be rendered to the brother in any case but, if the brother is an oppressor, the form of help should be changed. If he is the oppressed party, stand by him to fight injustice,

but if he is the wrongdoer, then embrace him and hug him hard and hold tight his oppressive hand and say, “Brother I stand by you, in all circumstances but Islam does not permit injustice and therefore I will not let your hand do wrong .” This is the sacred principle that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has laid down in this Hadith.

It is incorrect to put on it the construction, as some do, that a particular language has been used by the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in this Hadith only for purposes of emphasis and that its gist postulates that if your brother is the aggrieved party you should help him but, if he be the wrongdoer, then line up against him. This is not only wrong but also a travesty of the wise wording of the Hadith. If that was the intention of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), he could very well have enjoined a line-up against injustice, whether its perpetrator was an enemy or a brother. But he did not say so. On the contrary, in this command, he has formulated in the following terms a fine and novel postulate out of two apparent contradictories:

1. A brother is deserving of help in any case
2. Injustice must be resisted in any case

If the brother is the aggrieved party, help him and, if he is the wrongdoer, then change the shape of the help by holding his aggressive hand, so that brotherliness is sustained, and injustice is also prevented.

This is the compound theory which, fourteen centuries ago, the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) put across to the world from the desert of Arabia. But until today, not one of the progressive nations of Europe or America have attained to its ethical height. If they made a pact of brotherhood with any nation to

honour the obligation of brotherliness, they opened wide the gates of unbounded tyranny and if, according to their notions, they turned to prevent some injustice, they tore to bits the covenant of brotherhood.



عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ فِيمَا  
 أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ، مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ، فَإِذَا أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا  
 سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ۔

(صحيح البخاري كتاب الأحكام باب السمع والطاعة للإمام ما لم تكن معصية)

## II —

## THE HIGH CONCEPT OF OBEDIENCE IN ISLAM

Narrated by Abdullah [Ibn Umar] (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 said:

It is binding on a Muslim to listen to and to carry out an order issued by his officers whether he likes it or not, except when it involves the violation of a commandment [of God or His Prophet or of a superior officer]. But when it involves the violation of a commandment [of God or His Prophet or of a superior officer], then one should not listen to it or carry it out.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Judgements, Chapter: Hear and obey the Imam unless he teaches disobedience)

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*Explanatory Notes*

This Hadith lays down the fundamental principle and Islamic criterion of obedience. Islam is a religion of great discipline and orderliness. It does not believe in forcing anybody against his will into its circle and says openly:

“There is no compulsion in the matter of faith.”<sup>13</sup>

But when an individual has, by their free will and open heart, accepted Islam, it expects of them strict observance of its discipline and orderliness, as becomes an organised people. It wants every member of the faith to be an exemplar in obedience. It does not permit criticism of the order of the superiors, nor does it allow selective obedience to such orders, that is, to obey them if one likes them and to disregard them if one does not like them. “Hear and obey” is the eternal command of Islam. There is only one exception permitted in this code of obedience for the Muslims: that when one is commanded to do what is manifestly in contravention of the commandment of God and His Prophet or of superior authority, it should not be obeyed; every other order of whatever nature it is and under whatever circumstances it is given, must be obeyed.

The addition of the word “hear,” with the word “obey,” points to the finer meaning that a negative type of obedience is no part of a Muslim’s obligation and that he is not enjoined to content himself with barren obedience to an order. In fact, he is required to be an exemplar in according to a lively and positive type of obedience. In other words, he should be all ears to the commands of his officer, so

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13 The Holy Quran, Ch: 2 (Al-Baqarah), V: 257

that, as soon as he hears a command, he should implement it forthwith. If simple obedience were the object, the word “obey” would have been enough and served the purpose without the addition of the word “hear.” The addition of this word is definitively for the purpose of replacing barren and formal obedience with enthusiastic and positive compliance. The gist of the Islamic code of obedience therefore is:

1. Obedience of every command of one’s officer whether one likes it or not.
2. To hear the officer with a devoted attentiveness, lest one should miss some of his instructions.
3. Should however, the officer command one to do something contrary to the commandment of God and His Prophet or a superior officer, then one should not obey him within the meaning of this excepting clause.





عَنْ طَارِقِ بْنِ شِهَابٍ، أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ وَقَدْ وَضَعَ رِجْلَهُ فِي الْغُرْزِ، أَيُّ الْجِهَادِ أَفْضَلُ؟ قَالَ:

كَلِمَةُ حَقٍّ عِنْدَ سُلْطَانٍ جَائِرٍ -

(سُنَنِ النَّسَائِيِّ كِتَابُ الْبَيْعَةِ فَضْلُ مَنْ تَكَلَّمَ بِالْحَقِّ عِنْدَ إِمَامٍ جَائِرٍ)

12—

## A WORD OF TRUTH TO THE WRONGDOING RULER IS THE BEST FORM OF JIHAD

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Ṭariq bin Shihab, (May Allah be pleased with him): While the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was (setting forth on a journey and) putting his foot in the stirrup, a person enquired of him which form of Jihad was the best; he said,

The word of truth to the wrongdoing ruler.

(Sunan An-Nasā'ī, Book of Oath of Allegiance, Chapter: The virtues of those who speak the truth to an unjust Imam)

### *Explanatory Notes*

If, on the one hand, the Muslims have been enjoined to be exemplars in obedience to the commands of their rulers and to hear their rulers and their commands with attentiveness and to implement them with wholeheartedness, they are, on the other hand, required to have the moral courage to advise the ruler and to reform his ways if he takes to the wrong path and to oppressive means, and should thus help him to establish justice and equity in the land. Since counselling a wrongdoing and oppressive ruler calls for an act of extraordinary courage and maybe, at times, is even risky, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has described it as the highest form of Jihad.

The truth of the matter is that Islam has established such a wonderful equilibrium between the relations *inter se* of the ruler and the king and the subject, that it is impossible to improve upon its teachings. The first and foremost injunction of Islam is that, irrespective of caste or creed, all public offices from the Head of State down to the lowest grade, should be assigned on the basis of merit. The Holy Quran says in this connection,

All public offices are a public trust, and Allah commands that these should be entrusted to the worthy and fit and the officers should administer with equity and justice.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, Islam enjoins that people should obey their rulers wholeheartedly, hear their commands with attention and comply with enthusiasm.

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<sup>14</sup> The Holy Quran, Ch: 4 (an-Nisā'), V: 59

Thirdly, Islam lays down that in the case of a ruler who goes off the track of justice, his subordinates should try to reform him, by tendering good advice in time, for such counselling being in the interests of public peace is in no way less estimable than the highest form of Jihad. But, since some subordinates are prone to take a wrong step in this direction on account of consideration of personal prestige, or in haste on account of an improper sense of rivalry or sense of personal grievance, therefore, as in the case of Pharaoh, God the Excellent commanded Moses (May peace of Allah be on him) to address the Pharaoh in polite language. Islam forbids a disrespectful attitude or insubordinate language or a rebellious attitude. On the contrary, as has been explained in another Hadith, it considers it better to be patient even in the face of some tyrannies so that the peace of the country and its unity are not endangered, and this is the only middle course along which foundations of real peace can securely be laid in this world.

It is, however, a matter of deep regret that these days instead of giving good counsel to officers and keeping them to the path of justice and equity, quite a few people would corrupt them by means of false flattery or by the still dirtier means of bribery and unmerited recommendations and thus persist in destroying their sense of justice. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has cursed both, the one who gives a bribe and the one who accepts it and has observed in another Hadith,

The one who gives a bribe and the one who takes it, both are the fuel of fire.

If only Islamic countries could get rid of this curse.



عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو ..... عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: مَنْ لَمْ يَزْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا، وَيَعْرِفْ حَقَّ كَبِيرِنَا  
 فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا.

(سُنَنُ أَبِي دَاوُدَ كِتَابُ الْأَدَبِ بَابُ فِي الرَّحْمَةِ)

13—

## SHOW COMPASSION TO YOUNG ONES & RECOGNISE THE RIGHTS OF YOUR ELDERS

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abdullah Ibn Amr (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“One who has no compassion for our young ones and does not recognise the rights of our elders is not of us.”

(Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book of Manners, Chapter: Mercy)

### *Explanatory Notes*

In this Hadith, a fine law regarding the dynamics of mutual relations has been laid down. Many disputes and causes of ill will arise in the

world because the elders do not treat the younger ones with compassion and consideration, and the younger ones forget to extend respect to the elders which is their due, and thus a distasteful chain reaction of 'status' struggle is set off. Islam has, on the one hand, recognised equality of rights for all in the assignment of public offices and distribution of the means of earning wealth. On the other hand, by building a bridge of compassion and consideration of dutiful respect, it has linked all in one chain. Those who get an opportunity to excel others in the struggle of life are required to treat their less fortunate brethren with compassion and affection, so long as the latter are in that situation. As for those who lag behind, they are enjoined to pay dutiful respect to those who are ahead of them, as long as they continue in the position. By means of this golden injunction, our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has cut at the root of unnecessary and unbecoming tension between the different layers of society. It is a matter of regret that few care to respect this injunction, and if someone comes into power because of one thing or the other, he loses his senses and loves to crush those who are beneath him. If then someone slackens behind in the race of existence, he is jealous of those who have outdistanced him so that he is ever-intent on destroying them and bringing them low to earth. Both these types are far gone off the course of Islam.

Islam itself certainly does not create classes. But it does not shut its eyes to facts either and takes due note of the temporary distinctions which arise as a natural phenomenon due to differences in intellectual level or standards of personal industry. It resolves [these differences] in a similarly natural manner and takes proper measures to countermand their unpleasant consequences. This blessed observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is a part of these measures. At the same time, Islam stresses the transitory character of these differences, pointing out that a class of people

which happens to be at the lower rung today may very well forge ahead tomorrow. The Holy Quran says in this behalf,

“Let not one people deride other people, who may be better than they.”<sup>15</sup>

It must be borne in mind that the expression “*younger ones and elder ones*” in this Hadith applies to all, whether they are junior or senior in point of age, or relationship, or wealth, or office, or prestige, or influence. In whatever respect that the difference exists, every senior is required to treat his junior with compassion and consideration, and every junior is required to show due respect and regard to his senior. And whoso does not behave in that manner, our master (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says about him that he is not of us.



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15 The Holy Quran, Ch: 49 (Al-Hujurât), V: 12

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ،  
 قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَلَا أَنْبِئُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرِ  
 الْكِبَائِرِ؟ ثَلَاثًا، قَالُوا: بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: الْإِشْرَاكُ  
 بِاللَّهِ، وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَجَلْسَ وَكَانَ مُتَكِنًا فَقَالَ—أَلَا  
 وَقَوْلُ الزُّورِ، قَالَ: فَمَا زَالَ يُكْرِرُهَا حَتَّى قُلْنَا: لَيْتَهُ  
 سَكَتَ—

(صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ الشَّهَادَاتِ بَابُ مَا قِيلَ فِي شَهَادَةِ الزُّورِ)

14—

Associating Partners with God,  
 Disobedience to Parents and Lying  
 are the Greatest of Sins

Ḥaḍrat Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated: The Prophet of Allah (May peace of Allah and His blessings be on him) said:

Shall I apprise you of the three great sins?

They said, 'Aye, O Prophet of Allah.' He said:

“Hearken! [The biggest sin is] setting up equals to Allah and [then] disobedience of parents [and neglect of duty to them]”

Leaving the cushion, he was leaning against, and sitting up in an aroused manner, he said with great force,

“Hearken! And lying,”

He repeated it so many times that we wished he had left it off at that [and not strained himself so much].

(*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Witnesses, Chapter: What is said about perjury)

### *Explanatory Notes*

In this forceful Hadith, in enumerating cardinal sins, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has selected the three aspects which are fundamental in spiritual and moral ethics. These three aspects are:

1. Rights of Allah,
2. Rights of His servants, and
3. Inner discipline of the soul.

The biggest sin is Shirk, i.e., setting up to God, our Creator as well as our Master, a partner or equal who is neither our creator nor our master.

Shirk is thus a combination of both treason and rebellion. In truth, it is an extreme act of treachery to cultivate such beings as have nothing to do with our existence, or survival, against the One Being who created us and provided us all the means necessary for our mundane, as well as our spiritual progress. It is also the most felonious type of treason to turn away, in revolt from allegiance, to the



dominion of the True Master and the True Ruler and bow to such beings as have no personal power over us. It is, however, painful to note that in our contemporary age, highly progressive nations, in spite of their great cultural advancement, are not free from the filth of Shirk. As for instance, the Christian nations who treat Jesus [who possessed no attribute which was not shared by other prophets] as God, and are thus still caught up in the quagmire of Shirk. The gods of the Hindu Pantheon are legion and well known.

The second great sin, according to this Hadith, is “*aqūqul-wālidain.*” *Aqūq* in the Arabic language means “cutting off”, and idiomatically it will thus signify disobedience to parents, not paying their due respect, or not treating them with tenderness of heart and neglecting to look after them. Obedience to parents and dutiful service to them are obligations that relate to the rights of the servants of God, and in the order of priorities under this heading, it holds probably the first place of sanctity, so that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says in another Hadith:

The pleasure of Allah is in the pleasure of parents, and His displeasure is in their displeasure.”<sup>16</sup>

He (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says in another Hadith:

“Whoso found his parents in old age and did not open for himself the way to Paradise through service to them, is the unluckiest person.”<sup>17</sup>

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16 Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabir, Ch: Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-Aas

17 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Righteousness and maintaining good relations with relatives, Chapter: the disgrace of one whose parents, one or both of them, reach old age...”

His personal example in this respect is clear from an incident. He was giving away some goods when his foster mother called to see him. His own mother had died in his childhood. He at once ran to her, saying, "My Mother, my Mother!" He spread out his sheet with great affection and respectfulness, requesting her to be seated with comfort and ease.

In short, Islam has laid great stress on obedience and service to parents. The Holy Quran emphatically says:

"Incline thy arms with the tenderness of affection and respectfulness before your parents and pray for them to God, 'O my Lord have compassion on my parents in their old age, as they brought me up lovingly when I was in my childhood.'<sup>18</sup>

The third great sin mentioned in this Hadith is lying. The Islamic stand on this is clear from the statement in this Hadith that when the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) referred to it, he sat up in [a state of] fervour and repeated the words "and beware of lying" several times. The truth of the matter is that after *Shirk* [association of partners or equals to God] and disobedience to parents, lying is the next biggest sin. And if the other two are the seed out of which stems forth the tree of sin, lying is for it the irrigating water whereby this tree blossoms and grows. It is lying which promotes sinfulness and lends one the cover to continue in a vice; for lying is proffered as a screen to cover sin and vice; thus, secure behind it, it grows and spreads fast. Therefore, lying is not a sin by itself but the worst kind of support to other evils. It is therefore that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) placed it

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18 The Holy Quran, Ch: 17 (Al-Isrā'), V: 25

immediately next to Shirk and disobedience to parents. In another Hadith, it is related that once a Muslim sought of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) to instruct him about the sin which he should give up first, for he pleaded that he was very weak and too far gone into diverse sins to muster strength enough to banish them all. He (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) advised him to give up lying first. [The man] promised to do so and returned to his home. Later, when through force of habit he felt the urge to commit some other vice, it occurred to him that the matter may reach the ears of the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and he might interrogate him, and since he was committed against lying, he knew not what he would say; or if some other Muslim came to know of it, he could not imagine how he would manage to explain it away. Ultimately, on further reflection, he thought it better to give up all vices, since he had committed himself against false speech. Accordingly, by giving up lying, he was blessed with the strength to give up all other sins too. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has thus by classifying lying as a cardinal sin next to Shirk and disregard of parents, disclosed a psychological truth that can be so helpful to Muslims in suppressing vice.

The truth is that lying is one of the meanest and lowest kinds of vices, and it is the duty of every decent person to first get the better of this evil tendency from among all the vices.

Incidentally, it must be remembered that the injunction to shun lying does not necessarily carry the sense that truth must be told, even when one is not called upon to do so. All that it means is that whatever is deposed should be done truthfully and without an admixture of lies, in any case. There are otherwise many occasions when, in the interests of national, family, or personal situations, some

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matters call for secrecy, and observance of secrecy is in no way contrary to truthfulness.



أَخْبَرَنِي الْحَارِثُ بْنُ النُّعْمَانِ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ  
يُحَدِّثُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: أَكْرَمُوا  
أَوْلَادَكُمْ وَأَحْسِنُوا أَدَبَهُمْ -

(سُنَنِ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ كِتَابُ الْإِدَابِ بِرَأْسِ الْوَالِدِ. وَالْإِحْسَانِ إِلَى الْبَنَاتِ)

15—

## RESPECT YOUR CHILDREN AND GIVE THEM THE BEST EDUCATION

Hāris bin Naumān said, I heard Ḥaḍrat Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) narrate that the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

Respect your children and cultivate in them the best of manners.

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book of Manners, Chapter: Good Behaviour and  
Kindness of Father to Daughters)

### *Explanatory Notes*

Islam has defined the rights of parents over children and vice versa. On the one hand, it emphasises service and respectful behaviour to parents, and on the other, commands parents to treat their children with due understanding and regard, and to handle them in such a way

as engenders in them feelings of dignity and self-respect and to attend to their education and training in particular, so that when they grow, they may observe, with due propriety, their duties to God and to His servants and become pioneers of national progress.

The truth is that no nation can make any progress, nay, no nation can escape degeneration, if its members do not leave behind their children in circumstances better than their own. If every father was to see to it that he will leave his children better off than himself, both in knowledge and in practice, the nation must gain from strength to strength and will, by the grace of God, remain immune to the danger of decline. But it is a pity that most parents disregard this golden principle with the result that many children, far from being better off than their parents, are brought up in such a condition as to give the impression of a dead baby having been born to a live person. Such parents feed and dress their children well and to some extent also mind their secular education, as it provides them with means of economic well-being, but they generally disregard their moral discipline as if it were something unimportant. On the contrary, moral training or discipline is infinitely more important than secular education and certainly has a greater moral value and status. An educationally less-qualified but morally better-disciplined person endowed with qualities of industry, truthfulness, honesty, self-sacrifice and pleasing manners, is far superior to the man carrying the donkey-load of knowledge but totally bereft of qualities of moral excellence. In the Holy Quran, we read the injunction, "*Slay not your children.*"<sup>19</sup> This verse hints at the truth that if you ignore inculcation of good moral qualities among your children and neglect their educational equipment, you will be virtually committing their murder.

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19 The Holy Quran, Ch: 6 (Al-An'ām), V: 152 and Ch: 17 (Al-Isrā'), V: 32

The other portion of this Hadith, the one relating to [showing] respect to children, is of all the religious codes the distinctive feature of Islam; for, no other religion of the world has appreciated the point that without showing a proper measure of respect to children, high moral qualities cannot be cultivated among them. Some foolish parents, in spite of loving their children, treat them evidently in such a low and vulgar manner, frequently indulging in abusive language that their feelings of dignity, self-respect and self-estimation slowly freeze into death. This injunction of our master (May my soul be dedicated to his service) is worthy of being written in gold letters. It enjoins that "*children should be treated with consideration,*" to equip them with dignity, self-respect, and high moral qualities. If only they recognised the value of this wise teaching!



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: تَنْكُحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ: لِمَالِهَا، وَلِحَسَبِهَا، وَجَمَالِهَا، وَلِدِينِهَا، فَأَظْفَرُ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرِبَتْ يَدَاكَ -

(صَحِيحُ مُسْلِمٍ كِتَابُ الرِّضَاعِ بَابُ اسْتِخْتِبَابِ نِكَاحِ ذَاتِ الدِّينِ)

16—

## CHOOSE YOUR WIFE FOR HER RELIGIOUS PIETY

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
said:

“In marrying a woman, a man’s choice of a spouse is determined by the consideration of her wealth, her family and her physical beauty and her religious piety, but you should make your life happy, prosperous, and successful [by choosing a spouse] on account of her religious piety; otherwise your hands will ever remain in the dust.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Breastfeeding, Chapter: It is recommended to marry one who is religiously committed)



### *Explanatory Notes*

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, in this Hadith, after stating the considerations that determine the selection of a wife, enjoined on Muslims that their choice of a spouse should be governed primarily by consideration of religious piety and moral endowments. As a consequence of this, he says, their family lives will be happy and full of bliss. Otherwise, they may enjoy a temporary and superficially pleasant break, but they cannot have true and abiding felicity. This saying of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is pregnant with deep wisdom, for, not only has it opened a way to basing the home life of Muslims on the happiest foundations, but it has also made provision for the well-being and security of the coming generations. But it is a great pity that leaving aside other nations, even the majority of Muslims either totally ignore the aspect of piety and morality while choosing a wife, or give greater consideration to other aspects than to the religious angle. One would fall for her beauty and shut his eyes to other aspects; another would be wholly won over on account of her wealth, while what constitutes the lasting foundation of happy home life are piety and moral dualities of the wife. There are innumerable instances of men marrying wives for their beauty and comeliness of looks, but when their beauty wanes with time, as all beauty must wane, or on the sight of a prettier woman the unprincipled husband turns away from her, it so happens that after daily contact with the wife, the husband discovers some unpleasant aspects of her habits, leave alone a life of felicity, for the husband the home becomes real hell. The same is true in the case of family lineage, on account of which the wife often betrays an air of superiority and an exaggerated sense of pride vis-à-vis her husband, and this is fatal to family bliss. Wealth, of course, is a passing thing. One possesses it today and loses it on the morrow. And

often, a wife's wealth becomes a curse for the husband rather than a source of happiness. Truly, therefore, as the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has observed, the real foundations of family happiness and married bliss are laid on a wife's religious piety and her good moral qualities. Very unlucky is the person who is after short-lived toys and gilded things in preference to solid qualities. The lasting good effect that a virtuous and good-natured wife exercises on children is a permanent gift which no sensible person who, in addition to his personal comfort, also has the welfare of his generations at heart, can afford to ignore. Clearly, the early upbringing of children is in the hands of the mother, for in a family, the child is naturally more attached to the mother, and is more free with her, and spends more of his time with her, while the father, on account of his various other duties, cannot devote much attention to the children. The early training of the children is thus mainly the responsibility of the mother. If, therefore, the mother is pious and of high character, the children will naturally be well-grounded in good morals. But if, on the contrary, a woman has neither piety nor morals, she can never succeed in imbuing the children with good morals and virtuous habits. The truth is that such a wife usually does not appreciate the value and necessity of religion and good morals.

The Hadith under discussion, however, does not mean that, in selecting a spouse, all other considerations should be totally ignored. All that it means is that piety and moral excellence should be preferred. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, on other occasions, drawn attention to other considerations as well, for they too are, to a certain extent, instinctive urges of human nature. As for instance, in spite of strict instructions about the observation of seclusion in purdah by women, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) used to advise that one may have a glimpse of his wife-to-be so that after marriage he is not

unhappy on account of her features and looks. On another occasion when a woman called on him to have his advice in regard to her marriage, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that he would not advise her to marry a certain individual because he was poor and badly off and would not be able to bear her expenses, nor could he advise her to marry a certain another individual, for he was very high-handed, but she could marry one who, in his opinion, was suited to her circumstances. On another occasion, he said to the companions that women of the Quraish were excellent in respect to their loyalty to their husbands and love for their children. And on another occasion, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) advised marriage with women who are prolific in bearing children, so that he could feel happy on the Day of Resurrection over the numerousness of his followers. In short, he has drawn attention to other aspects as well in their proper perspective and within their due limits. But what he stressed most was that preference should, in any case, be given to religious and moral aspects; otherwise, one is bound to have one's hands ever soiled with dust and owe it entirely to himself. This is the golden teaching, observance of which can turn the homes of Muslims into cradles of bliss and felicity. Would that they understood.



عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:  
 خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي-  
 (سُنَنِ الرَّبِيعِ بْنِ أَبِي بَرٍّ فِي الْمَنَاقِبِ بَابُ فِي فَضْلِ أَزْوَاجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

17—

## THE BEST OF MEN IS ONE WHO IS BEST IN TREATMENT OF HIS WIFE

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“The best of you is one who is best in his treatment of his family [wife], and I am the best of you in the treatment of my family.”

(Sunan at-Tirmidhī, Book of Virtues, Chapter: Virtues of wives of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him)

### *Explanatory Notes*

The emphasis on the kindly treatment of one’s wife as enjoined in this Hadith is clear and distinct. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), attached great importance to a husband’s kind treatment of his wife, and observed in this connection that after belief in God and in His Prophet and in His Faith, the deeds of a man in respect of his treatment of God’s servants shall be subject

to Divine scrutiny in light of the rights of His creatures and that the kind treatment of one's wife holds a place of high priority, so much so that in the eyes of God, the best of Muslims is the one who is best in treatment of his wife. But as everyone is likely to feel, according to his own sense of values, that his treatment of his wife is ideal, in order to dispel this likely error, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that the standard of good treatment would not conform to the rules arbitrarily set by individuals, but it will be judged by his own (the Holy Prophet's) example, since, by the grace of God, his treatment of his wives was really the ideal.

Through the above observation, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has raised so high the standard of marital rights of Muslim women that, with the possible exception of temporary unpleasantness which often occurs even in the best-regulated families, a life of torment cannot be the lot of a good wife in the house of a good Muslim. The truth is that if a wife enjoys comfort at the hands of her husband, she is prepared to bear every kind of hardship with pleasure, for no other joy of the world has, in comparison, the least value in her eyes. But if a husband does not treat his wife with kindness, then for the wife, the wealth of her husband is a curse, likewise, his honour is a curse, and his health is a curse. For these gifts are valued only in the context of marital happiness and a husband's love. There is not the least doubt about it, therefore, that this blessed observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) serves to make the four walls of the home a paradise, provided that on her part, the wife abides by the husband's will and appreciates his love. The unity between the husband and wife necessarily makes its impression on the children, and thus the felicity of the present becomes the harbinger of permanent bliss.

This is the lesson that our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) imparted fourteen hundred years ago, while living in a

country, and in the midst of a people, among whom a woman, in general, did not possess a status greater than that of an animal. He, then, bound this command with two such things, to the lofty standard of which the apparently advanced nations of today have not yet reached, nor will they ever be able to reach. For, with these two adjuncts, the command about the good treatment of one's wife reaches heights which are the loftiest in this field:

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِمْ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي

These two qualifications are in conformity with the observation made by our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and are as follows:

1. Kind treatment of one's wife is not only obligatory on the part of a man but is in fact, in the eyes of God, a measure of the excellence of his station and place as a man, in the sphere of his obligations to the servants of God. One who is good in his treatment of his wife is good in the sight of God.
2. The standard for judging one's good conduct towards one's wife does not depend on the arbitrary opinion of an individual, for self-praise is very easy. The standard in this respect lies in the personal example of the Holy Prophet himself (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him ever and evermore). Only that treatment will be termed kindly and good, which conforms and sizes up to the standard set by his example.



عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي أَوْفَى، قَالَ... فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى  
 اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ... وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ، لَا تُؤَدِّي  
 الْمَرْأَةُ حَقَّ رَبِّهَا حَتَّى تُؤَدِّيَ حَقَّ زَوْجِهَا -  
 (سُنَنُ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ كِتَابُ النِّكَاحِ بَابُ حَقِّ الزَّوْجِ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ)

18—

## A PIOUS LADY IS ONE WHO DOES HER DUTY TO HER HUSBAND

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat ‘Abdullāh bin Abī Aufā (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“I swear by the Being Who holds the life of Muhammad in His hands that no woman shall be deemed to have done her duty to her God unless she has done her duty to her husband.”

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book of Marriage, Chapter: Rights of Husband over Wife)

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*Explanatory Notes*

While on the one hand, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has commanded husbands to treat their wives with kindness, he has, on the other hand, enjoined on wives to do their duty to their husbands. For the true felicity and bliss of the home lies in the husband meting out the most generous treatment to the wife and, in the latter, respecting the rights of the husband with faithfulness. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was so particular in regard to this sacred obligation of the wife, that, in another Hadith, he observed that if the husband of a Muslim wife died pleased with her, she would, by the grace of God, enter Paradise. In the same Hadith he had further remarked that if *Sajdah* (a form of worship which consists of the worshipper putting his forehead and knees on the ground) before anyone other than Allah were permissible in Islam, he would have commanded wives to perform *Sajdah* before their husbands.

The reason underlying the observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that the wife who did not do her duty to her husband, did not do her duty to God is twofold: Firstly, in spite of the difference in degree, the two obligations partake of the same nature. For instance, as God loves His creatures with extreme love so does the husband cherish a special kind of love for his wife and again, as with all His love, Allah is the Ruler and Guardian over His servants, likewise is the husband the superintendent and maintainer of the house with all his love for his wife, and as God is the Lord of Providence for His creatures and provides them with means of livelihood, similarly is the husband obligated to provide sustenance to his wife. There are so many other aspects of similarity, making the resemblance so striking that, in our language, the husband has been termed the temporal god of the wife.



Another wisdom underlying it is that the rights of man in Islam have been assigned by God and the law lays extreme stress on these rights, so much so that, according to a Hadith, God forgives the sins relating to man's obligations to Him but does not forgive the sins pertaining to man's obligations to man, until the concerned man himself does not forgive. It is in the spirit of these two underlying realities that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has said in emphatic language, reinforced with an oath, that no woman can be considered as having done her duty to her God until and unless she has done her duty to her husband.

As to the obligations of a wife, according to the Holy Quran and the Hadith, she owes her husband that she be obedient to him, should show him proper respect, should love him, should be faithful to him, should bring up his children well, should look after his property and serve him to the best of her capacity. As against this, the husband is obligated to love her and treat her with compassion and with winsome ways, see to her comfort, respect her feelings and provide her necessary maintenance as best as he can afford. There is hardly any gainsaying the fact that if the husband and the wife respect the rights of one another, a Muslim home can become a veritable paradise.



عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَنَا وَكَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ كَهَاتَيْنِ، وَأَشَارَ بِأَصْبَعَيْهِ يُعْنِي: السَّبَابَةَ وَالْوَسْطَى -

(سُنَنُ التِّرْمِذِيِّ أَبُو أَبِي الْبَيْرِ وَالضَّلَاةُ بِأَبِ مَا جَاءَ فِي رَحْمَةِ الْيَتِيمِ وَكَفَالَتِهِ)

19—

ONE WHO BRINGS UP AN ORPHAN  
WILL SHARE HIS ABODE IN PARADISE  
WITH THE HOLY PROPHET

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Sahl bin Saad (May Allah be pleased with him):  
The Holy Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon  
him) said:

“I and the guardian of an orphan will be in Paradise like these  
two”

And the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on  
him) demonstrated it by [closing] his two fingers [together], meaning  
his index and his middle finger.

(Sunan at-Tirmidhī, Book of Righteousness and Relationship,  
Chapter: Mercy and protection for orphans)

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*Explanatory Notes*

Orphans are a highly valuable possession of a community and Islam lays very great stress on their care and upbringing. The words of this Hadith convey that emphasis accordingly. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says about the Muslim who looks after the orphan that he will be as close to him in Paradise as two fingers of the hand are close to one another. After this peremptory command, which carries with it such extraordinary reward, no true Muslim can neglect the duty of bringing up well and taking good care of orphans. In the care of orphans, it is not only the object of looking after and upbringing of helpless and unsupported children that is served. A little reflection will show that this institution stimulates the spirit of sacrifice among the members of the community when the individual members of a community are assured that, in the event of their death in national service, their orphaned children will not be left helpless and unprotected after them but will, on the contrary, be well looked after by their relatives or other members of the community; they will then certainly be foremost in courageously offering every kind of sacrifice. And this will stimulate the spirit of service and sacrifice among all the members of the community. The proper care of orphans is not only the means of saving minor children from spiritual, moral and financial ruin but is also a great means of stimulating the general prosperity of the community and its spirit of sacrifice.

But it is a matter of deep regret that Muslims of our times are very neglectful in respect of this sacred duty. Often even the near relatives, instead of acting as guardians of orphans, misappropriate their property, and by their neglect of those duties, become the means of their educational and moral morass. In the orphanages, run by different offices, the orphans' feelings of self-respect and self-estimation are so grievously hurt that orphans practically turn into

beggars in the end. It calls for an urgent remedy. The distant and near relations who assume the role of guardians to their orphaned kin, owe it to them to provide adequately for the education, high moral and cultural discipline of their wards and to take good care of their properties. The organisations that take up this service in their hands, that assume custody of this service, likewise, should act as the parents of the orphans, and instead of making them beg from door-to-door, take appropriate measures to train them as self-respecting and useful members of society. Above all, they should never have cause to feel in their hearts that they are helpless and forlorn dependents on the charity of others. The orphans, on the other hand, have little ground to despair. They should always remember that the greatest of mankind, the chief of the two worlds and the pride of prophets (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was himself an orphan who had lost his father before his birth, and his mother departed from this world when he was hardly seven years old. If they take to the path of virtue, God will not let them down. Who can give greater protection than God?



عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَا زَالَ جِبْرِيلُ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ، حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ  
 أَنَّهُ سَيُورَثُنِي۔

(صحيح البخاري كتاب الأدب باب الوصاة بالجار)

20—

## GOOD TREATMENT OF NEIGHBOURS

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

“Gabriel recommended to me good treatment of the neighbour so often that I started thinking that he would perhaps declare him the heir and successor.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of good manners, Chapter: To recommend being kind to one's neighbour)

### *Explanatory Notes*

Neighbours are an important limb of society. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has laid great emphasis on

the generous treatment of neighbours. The truth is that one who does not treat his neighbour well cannot deserve to be called a human being. For man is a civilised being and good neighbourliness is a necessary part of the culture. In the interests of good and strong mutual relations, Islam lays down generous treatment of one's neighbours and puts so much emphasis on this command that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) says that Gabriel reminded him of his obligation in this respect so often and so forcefully that he (the Prophet) concluded that he [Gabriel] might declare the neighbour the heir and successor. In light of this peremptory command, it is the duty of every good Muslim to treat his neighbours with uncommon compassion and kindness, sharing with them their sorrows and their pleasures and looking after their families in their absence. In the matter of good treatment of neighbours, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was so particular that he reminded us of this obligation even in regard to minor things, as for instance, in another Hadith, he said that if one cooked meat, he had better make more gravy so that some of it may serve one's neighbour, should he be in need. In fact, the true standard of a person's social behaviour is reflected in his treatment of neighbours. With people living far away and with those who meet one now and then, one can simulate good manners as a passing phase. But affectation cannot last long with those whom one contacts constantly. Before long, the cultural level of the man comes to surface in its naked form. The blessed observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) contained in this Hadith is not only a useful means of indirectly disciplining one's own social behaviour but also is an exhortation to treat one's neighbours kindly. For only he who is morally good can treat his neighbours well. In order to be able to treat your neighbours kindly, you yourself must become a good fellow indeed, for the false manner of affected morality cannot deceive

for long those with whom one has to deal with day and night. By the same token, in its extensive application, this Hadith obligates upon nations and neighbour countries as far as possible to be generous to them and co-operate with them. For just as an individual is subject to the law of morals, so are nations. The truth is that peace can be established in the world only when nations and governments accept the rule of the moral law.



عَنْ أَبِي النَّضْرِ، عَنْ كِتَابِ رَجُلٍ مِنْ أَسْلَمَ، مِنْ أَصْحَابِ  
النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُقَالُ لَهُ: عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي أَوْفَى،  
فَكَتَبَ إِلَى عُمَرَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ حِينَ سَارَ إِلَى الْحَرُورِيَّةِ،  
يُخْبِرُهُ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ..... فَقَالَ:  
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ، وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ  
الْعَافِيَةَ، فَإِذَا لَقَيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ  
تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوفِ-

(صحيح مسلم كتاب الجهاد والسير باب كراهة تمنّي لقاء العدو، والأمر بالصبر عند اللقاء)



## 21—

DO NOT DESIRE WAR BUT IF IT  
COMES, FIGHT DETERMINEDLY

Narrated by Abū Nazar that ‘Abdullāh Bin Abī-Awfā (May Allah be pleased with him), who was from the tribe of Aslam, was a companion of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and wrote a letter to Umar Bin Ubaidullāh when he was at a place called “*Ḥarūriyyah*.” He stated that the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had said:

“O ye people, desire not to meet the enemy [in battle] and seek of Allah peace and tranquillity. But if you meet the enemy [in battle], then be steady and persevering in fighting and remember that Paradise lies under the shadow of swords.”

(**Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: The wish to meet the enemy is disliked; if the enemy is met, the command is to remain steadfast**)

*Explanatory Notes*

This Hadith carries the pith of Islamic teachings about the treatment of the enemy and the philosophy of Jihad in four basic principles:

1. Do not desire to have war with the enemy and indulge not in any provocative war-like act.
2. Constantly seek of Allah peace and tranquillity.

3. In the event of the enemy committing a hostile act leading to war with them, fight them with patience, perseverance, and determination.
4. In the event of an engagement with the enemy, be sure of one of the two trophies: either you will be victorious, or win martyrdom and gain admittance to Paradise.

No religion of the world, nor any country, nor any period of human history has a better code of morality to offer in respect of wars, whether they are of a secular or of a religious nature. Incidentally, this Hadith also proves that there is no compulsion in Islam in the matter of religious faith. For, if forcible conversions were permissible, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have never warned against seeking war with the enemy. A believer in force tries to find excuses to attack others so that he may subjugate them and thus mould them to his own fashion. Therefore, this command that ‘seek ye not to engage the enemy’ is the decisive argument of Islam against leave to use force in the matter of faith. This is the teaching that the Holy Quran has clearly enunciated in the words:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

*“There is no compulsion in religion.”<sup>20</sup>*

Forbidding Muslims to provoke hostilities, on the one hand, and exhorting them to fight determinedly on the other, points to the subtle truth that while Islam warns Muslims against being aggressors, in any case, it aims at the same time at steeling the hearts of Muslims against the fear of death. And this is the middle course which serves as

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20 The Holy Quran, Ch: 2 (Al-Baqarah), V: 257

the foundation of national progress: on the one hand, they should keep a hold on themselves and be not oppressors in any case or circumstance, and on the other, be so brave and fearless in the face of death, that they should visualise Paradise under the shadow of swords.



عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ بُرَيْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أَمَرَ أَمِيرًا عَلَى جَيْشٍ، أَوْ سَرِيَّةٍ أَوْصَاهُ..... قَالَ اغْزُوا بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ..... فَلَا تَغْلُوا، وَلَا تَغْدِرُوا، وَلَا تَمْثُلُوا، وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا وَلِيدًا- لَا تَقْتُلَنَّ

امْرَأَةً - 21

(صَحِيحُ مُسْلِمٍ كِتَابُ الْجِهَادِ وَالسِّيَرِ بَابُ تَأْمِيرِ الْإِمَامِ الْأَمْرَاءَ عَلَى الْبُعْثِ، وَوَصِيَّتِهِ إِيَّاهُمْ بِأَدَابِ الْعَزْوَ وَغَيْرِهَا)

22 —

VIOULATE NOT YOUR CONTRACT  
WITH THE ENEMY  
& KILL NEITHER CHILD NOR WOMAN

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Buraidah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him),

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21 "لَا تَقْتُلَنَّ امْرَأَةً" These words have been taken from the Hadith stated in *Mu'atta'* by Imam Malik.

whenever he sent out a party to meet the enemy, would advise its commander, saying:

“Go and fight in the way of Allah, in His Name and be not dishonest and break not the covenant with the enemy and mutilate not their dead and kill neither their children nor their women.”

(*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: Ruler appointing leaders of expeditions and advising them of the Manners of War*)

### *Explanatory Notes*

The attitude of the companions and of the succeeding generations of Muslims in their wars has been manifestly governed by this blessed observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Islam took up the sword in answer to the cruelties perpetrated by the disbelievers and to their acts of aggression. But in the subsequent stages, Muslims deported themselves towards their unjust enemies so nobly that history fails to furnish an example comparable to the ethical excellence of their conduct. Among Arabs, the slaughter of women and children was a very common practice; in fact, since the establishment of Mosaic Law, it had become widespread in large parts of the world. Besides this, it was customary among Arabs to exult, in a barbarous fashion, in the mutilation of the dead enemy by cutting off their noses and other limbs. This evil custom was known as *‘Muthlah’*. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) forcefully forbade all these barbarities, enjoining decent treatment of the enemy instead and, by declaring dishonesty, treachery, and breach of agreement, totally unlawful acts, he laid in the world the foundations of a lofty code of social behaviour.

Besides, as is clear from the Aḥādīth, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) commanded that the aged of the belligerent enemy, and such of them as having dedicated themselves to religious service, irrespective of their religion or race, should be left unmolested, and as the Holy Quran says in Sūrah Muḥammad, forbade the slaying of prisoners-of-war. On the contrary, he ordered that they be either set free as a gesture of generosity or on payment of ransom, and that in any case, after the cessation of hostilities, their period of captivity should not be prolonged. During the period of their captivity, Islam has been so emphatic about the decent treatment of prisoners-of-war that the non-Muslim prisoners-of-war testified that their Muslim captors gave them a good diet while they contented themselves with poor fare, and provided them with camel mounts but themselves walked on foot. Did any people in any period of world history treat the belligerent enemy any better? In so far as equitable and just treatment of the enemy is concerned, the Holy Quran lays down in this behalf:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰٓ اَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا اِنْعَدِلُوْا ۗ هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى

*“and let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness.”*<sup>22</sup>

It is a pity that the world has failed to value this glorious teaching.




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22 The Holy Quran, Ch: 5 (Al-Mā'idah), V: 9

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ:  
 اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُوبِقَاتِ، قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُنَّ؟  
 قَالَ: الشِّرْكَ بِاللَّهِ، وَالسِّحْرُ، وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ  
 اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ، وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا، وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ، وَالتَّوَلَّى  
 يَوْمَ الرِّحْفِ، وَقَذْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ -  
 (صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ الْحُدُودِ بِأَبْوَابِ رَفِي الْمُحْصَنَاتِ)

23—

SEVEN DESTRUCTIVE SINS:  
 HOMICIDE WITHOUT GOOD CAUSE,  
 USURY, SLANDER, ETC.

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 cautioned:

“Abstain ye from seven destructive evils.”

They (the companions) asked ‘And what are they, O  
 Prophet of Allah?’ He said:

“Shirk [i.e., an association of someone with God as a partner or an equal or ascription to Him of a spouse or a son or adviser], preoccupation with illusory objects and deceptive things, slaying any man, which is forbidden by Allah, without just and a good cause, usury, consuming the property of orphans, turning tail to the enemy in battle and falsely accusing innocent believing women.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Limits, Chapter: To falsely accuse the chaste women)

### *Explanatory Notes*

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has in this Hadith pointed out seven social evils which ultimately bring utter ruin both upon individuals and on nations. The foremost and the first in importance is Shirk which means an association of aught as a partner in person and attributes to God.

Shirk is offence number one in the field of faith. And indirectly, human morals are seriously affected as a consequence of Shirk. Shirk is of two kinds. One is manifest *Shirk*, and the other is hidden, *Shirk*. The manifest *Shirk* consists in the ascription of a man, an idol, or any other object, as a partner to God in His dominion or in His attributes, or setting up an equal to Him; as, for instance, the Hindus believe in many deities besides God as His partners. Or, as the Christians believe Jesus Christ to be the son of God and a partner in His attributes and in His dominion. The hidden Shirk consists of practically honouring someone other than God; God alone should be honoured. Shirk is associating partners with God and claiming to be believing in His unity, or relying on somebody [other than God] as reliance is worthy only of the honour of God, or loving someone [other than God] as



God alone deserves to be loved, or fearing someone as God alone deserves to be feared.

The hidden Shirk of this variety is, unfortunately, found in many Muslims in our times. But Islam teaches perfect unity and emphatically warns us of both the manifest as well as the hidden Shirk. Another tradition indicates that in the connotation of shunning Shirk, in other words, in the concept of unity, belief in God includes belief in the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), for it is through prophethood that real unity is established in the world. In short, there is extreme stress in the teachings of Islam against Shirk and it is the duty of every true Muslim to shun both its hidden as well as its manifest variety. In respect of hidden Shirk, the Promised Messiah (May peace be on him) says in a captivating style:

*“All that has abode in your heart besides God is an idol of thine, O ye of weak faith.*

*Be wary of these hidden idols and keep the apron of thy heart clear of them.”*

The second evil mentioned in this Hadith is *sihr*. It stands in Arabic for something illusory, an object which is projected in a different shape, its reality being covered up, and showing a lie as a truth. This type of *sihr* is the worst kind of falsehood, for in addition to a lie, it partakes of an element of cheating and cunning. Therefore, gilding is also called *sihr* in Arabic. As, for instance, if a silver article is gold-plated and offered as a gold article, it will be termed *sihr* in Arabic idiom. Anything underhand or surreptitious, having an element of secrecy with the object of deception, will be called *sihr* in the Arabic language. Islam declares all these things unlawful as they affect morals adversely and tend to breed an involved and crooked habit of mind,

giving rise to mutual suspicion, dissension and discord. The deceptiveness and fraudulence which characterises *sibr* in common parlance are too well known to need further exposition. Also, *sibr* means mischief and disruption and the evil of *sibr* in this shape is a manifest and clear feature, and in the following paragraph, the reference to murder bears a supporting testimony to it.

The third evil to which attention has been invited is murder without just cause. Islam lists murder among serious offences and prescribes death for murder with intent, which can be changed into blood money compensation only when the parties, as well as the concerned authority, agree. The wisdom underlying this concession is that if the affected families of the parties hope for a true reconciliation, they may be saved thereby from the continuing cycle of vendetta.

The stipulation of “*without just cause*” with “*murder*” has been appended as an exception to such killings as take place in war or as a result of due process of law. Murder without “*good and just cause*” also applies to murders committed by people who lose their heads and fanatics who kill someone in the belief that they are meting out a deserving punishment, without the sanction of a legal court, in defiance of the prescribed course of law. Islam strictly forbids such high-handedness and forbids taking the law into one’s own hands. For without such an injunction, peace of the land could not be maintained. In fact, Islam considers “*murder without just cause*” a most heinous crime, so much so that the Holy Quran observes:

وَمَنْ أَحْبَبَهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْبَبَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

*“it shall be as if he had killed all mankind.”*<sup>23</sup>

For murder without just cause not only leads to a long and offensive cycle of mutual vendetta but, at the same time, undermines feelings of respect for the law in the country. As a result of incidents of this kind, human conscience is frightened into a slow death. It was essential that murder should be listed among the most heinous crimes.

The fourth evil to which the Hadith under reference points is usury. No doubt because of a centuries-long period of a non-Islamic environment, usury has become an inalienable part of the economic system in vogue in almost the whole of the modern world, and a substantial number of Muslims are also indirectly involved in this filth. But there is little gainsaying the fact that usury is a great curse, destructive not only of the human impulses of sympathy and fellow-service, but also a great cause of fanning the fires of disputes and wars in the world. Usury leads to:

1. Destruction of the fine impulses of human nature,
2. Encouragement to contract debts far heavier than one can afford, and
3. Undue prolongation of conflicts and wars, for people in the heat of animosity rush into debts headlong, and thereby add fuel to the fire of war.

Islam has therefore declared usury unlawful, and confines lending and borrowing to the following three forms:

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23 The Holy Quran, Ch: 5 (Al Ma'idah), V: 33

1. Simple credit, in common parlance known as *Qardah Hasanah* (a debt of honour), which a relative or friend or neighbour lends to another relative, friend, or neighbour.
2. A mortgage loan, or loan raised against property, movable or immovable, which is pledged, and
3. A business loan, or lending money to someone, in a loss and profit partnership with him, in trade, industry or craft.

Islam does not permit any loan transaction outside the above three forms and declares usury, irrespective of whether the rate of interest is low or high, as unlawful. To think that it is hard to get along without raising a loan on interest is a mistaken idea which is the creation of the contemporary environment of misleading notions. During the glory days of Islam, the vast international commerce flourished without the help of interest. And so shall it flourish again when the wheels of fortune turn in favour of Islamic supremacy, and people wake up to its realities after blunders and falls.

The fifth evil to which attention has been invited is the eating up of the property of the orphans. This vice is also destructive of families and nations. For it leads, on the one hand, to the ruination of the youth of the community and, on the other, to an elimination of the feelings of human sympathy and to a spread of dishonesty. Thirdly, it opens the way to the oppression of the weak, and fourthly, the spirit of sacrifice wanes among the people. Members of a community [who are] used to the spectacle of orphans being robbed and ransacked can never boldly take to the path of self-sacrifice. For, in that case, there would naturally arise in their hearts the fear that in the event of their death, their orphans would meet a similar fate. Islam has therefore declared the care of the orphans as a gravest responsibility, and the Holy Quran has laid extreme stress on it.

The sixth vice which has been mentioned in the Hadith is turning tail to the enemy, in battle. This is a weakness that has largely contributed to the decline of nations. The truth is that cowardly people have no right to live as they fall easy prey to oppressive and aggressive nations. Islam, therefore, considers it a heinous offence to turn tail and show the white feather on the battlefield. The Holy Quran says, accordingly:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقَيْتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا رَحَقًا فَلَا تُلُوهُمُ الْأَدْبَارَ ﴿١٦﴾  
 وَمَنْ يُؤَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُ إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّجًا لِقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّرًا إِلَى فِتْنَةٍ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ  
 جَهَنَّمُ ۗ وَيُسَّسُ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٧﴾

*“O ye who believe! when you meet those who disbelieve, advancing in force, turn not your backs to them.*

*And whoso turns his back to them on such a day, unless manoeuvring for battle or turning to join another company, he indeed draws upon himself the wrath of Allah, and Hell shall be his abode. And an evil resort it is.”<sup>24</sup>*

This is the golden teaching which contributed to the victories of early Muslims, leading them to the conquest of the then-known world, with lightning speed.

The point is worth pondering. Even in our apparently highly advanced times, no experienced general could give a better order to his army.

The seventh and the last point mentioned in this Hadith is levelling a false accusation against innocent, believing women. This is a vice which in truth greatly undermines national character. But it is a

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24 The Holy Quran, Ch: 8 (Al-Anfāl), V: 16-17

matter of deep regret that many people indulge in this weakness; they hear libellous stories with great relish and give them wide currency, so much so, that they spread like a jungle blaze, destroying in their wake an innocent heart. A slight consideration will show that indulgence in the obscene, libellous, sinful talk is far more destructive of society than actual sinfulness. For it poisons the hearts of the weak-minded and undermines the awe of sinful indulgence. If an act of sinfulness is committed, and its knowledge is limited to two persons, its effect is likewise restricted. But when sin is talked of by many tongues, many a weak-minded youth becomes infected with its bad effect, and slowly the natural fear of sin which is inherent in human nature and is greatly instrumental in restraining evil, loses its grip. It is, therefore, that Islam has not only taken preventive measures against sinful tendencies, but has, at the same time, shut the door to libel and indulgence in stories of sinfulness, and this is the one way of wisdom that leads to national reformation.

A closer examination in light of the different aspects of moral conduct and social ethics reveals another great excellence of this Hadith and that it has kept in view in a very charming manner, basic points relating to faith, morals, public peace, economics, the security of the rights of the weak, national survival and manifest evil. For instance, the reference to abstention from Shirk has been listed for the preservation of faith; the unlawfulness of *sihr* for the elevation of character and cleanliness of habits; “murder without just cause” has been forbidden in the interest of public peace; unlawfulness of usury has been mentioned for economic reform; care of the orphan has been commended for the firm establishment of justice and equity in respect of the treatment of the weak; the warning against turning one’s back in the battlefield is in the interest of national survival, and slander has been made unlawful to bang shut the door on shamelessness. Thus, has our chief, (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) by this

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golden guidance, sealed up for us an ocean in a nutshell. Bless Muhammad, O Lord! and grant him peace and safety.



عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَا أَسْكَرَ كَثِيرُهُ فَقَلِيلُهُ حَرَامٌ۔  
(سُنَنُ أَبِي دَاوُدَ كِتَابُ الْأَشْرِبَةِ بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي الْأَسْكَرِ)

24—

## INTOXICANTS ARE UNLAWFUL EVEN IN SMALL QUANTITIES

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Jabir bin Abdullah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“If the larger dose of a thing causes intoxication, its small quantity is also unlawful.”

(Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book of Drinks, Chapter: what has been reported regarding alcohol)

### *Explanatory Notes*

While, on the one hand, this charming Hadith declares liquor and other intoxicants as unlawful, it also, on the other hand, lays down the wise postulate that until a vice is cut at its root, and unless all the possible avenues leading to it are sealed, there is no shutting it out. Therefore, it is a dangerous mistake to think that since liquor and



other intoxicants do not induce intoxication when taken in small quantities, thus there is no harm in their restricted consumption. Human nature is so constituted that once permission to use a thing is granted, one fails to observe a subtle distinction of this nature and cannot keep off a particular limit. This danger is especially pronounced in the case of intoxicants. Because when one betakes himself to this field, in most cases, there is nothing to prevent further progress in that direction and from a drachma to an ounce and from an ounce to a double dose and then to a pound, the momentum continues to grow. It is, therefore, that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has declared unlawful the consumption of intoxicants even in small doses so that dangerous vices of this nature are uprooted at the outset. Tens of thousands of persons meet their doom in this world simply because they tried to have a temporary excitement in their mind by taking a few drops of wine in the beginning, then slipped so fast that they fell into a state of stupor throughout the day and far into the night. The same is true of opium, morphia, *bhang*, *chars*, *hashish*, cocaine, and other intoxicants; their limited consumption leads in the end to heavy dosages, and the man who plays in ankle-deep water by the seashore, eventually gives up the ghost in its overflowing depths. The Glorious Quran has, therefore, notwithstanding its recognition of some merits of wine and gambling, given the finding that their danger far exceeds their benefits:

أَشْهَبَا أَكْبَرَ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا<sup>25</sup>

*“but their sin is greater than their advantage”*

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25 The Holy Quran, Ch: 2 (Al-Baqarah), V: 220

That is, even if they have, beyond doubt, some benefits, their injurious properties far exceed their advantages. The true Muslim should, therefore, abstain from them.

If the question is posed that since there are exceptional cases of men who can keep themselves within limits in respect of the use of wine, and that there is little danger of their exceeding the small dosage, will consumption of wine in limited quantities be considered permissible in their case? The answer is an emphatic “no.” Even so, the consumption of wine will not be permissible for any Muslim. For, primarily in the matter of such regulations, the majority aspect and mass angle will be kept in view, that is to say, that when something is definitely dangerous for the general population, in consideration for the collective aspect of the law, that particular thing is declared unlawful even for the minority, for the laws cannot otherwise hold their ground. Secondly, even if a man can keep himself in check today, where is the guarantee that he will not slip up and lose his grip on himself tomorrow? Thirdly, this Hadith does not list all the evils of drinking but has only by way of example, pointed out its intoxicating ill-effect. Wine, in fact, has many other injurious properties besides this one. Therefore, in the case of a person in whom the ill-effect of intoxication is absent, the wine will still be considered unlawful for him on the grounds of its other harmful properties. And it is therefore that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has declared it unlawful in every way.

In short through this Hadith, our master (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has invited our attention to three important things. Firstly, that every intoxicant is unlawful to Muslims, whether it is wine, *bhang*, *chars*, *opium*, *hashish*, cocaine, or any other thing. Secondly, whatever induces intoxication when used in a large quantity, even its small dosage is unlawful. Therefore, nobody can consume wine or *bhang*, opium or *hashish* on the pretext that he uses

it in such quantities as it fails to induce intoxication. Thirdly, the true remedy for eradicating evils of this kind is that they should be cut at the very root and all the possible avenues to them should be sealed. For if the door to them is kept open, the danger of their invasion will be there and Islam aims at providing complete shelter against any such possibility.



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ . . . .  
 قَالَ . . . مَنْ غَشَّ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي -

(صَحِيحُ مُسْلِمٍ كِتَابُ الْإِيمَانِ بَابُ قَوْلِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ غَشَّنَا فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا)

25—

## A CHEAT CANNOT BE CONSIDERED A TRUE MUSLIM

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 said:

“Whoso cheats (in business and in transactions and is not at heart  
 what he appears to be), is not of me.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Faith, Chapter: Sayings of the Holy  
 Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, “Who deceives us is  
 not one of us”)

### *Explanatory Notes*

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 made this observation when, on inserting his hand into a heap of grain  
 belonging to a grain merchant, he discovered that it was wet inside  
 while, with a thick covering of dry grains on top, an attempt had been  
 made to cover this defect. At that time his face was suffused with

anger and, in extreme displeasure, he told the grain merchant that cheating was not permissible in Islam, and the Muslim who practised deceit and wanted to sell rotten goods by making them appear like a good commodity, had no lot or part with him. He then commanded that if goods were defective in any way, their defect should be made public and then offered for sale so that the buyer may be able to evaluate them, keeping their defect in mind.

The effect of this extremely forceful exhortation was evidenced sometime in the very charming difference of opinion that occurred among his companions, when, for instance, the vendor would ask two hundred coins for his commodity, but the buyer would insist that it was worth three hundred coins. But it is painful to note that many so-called Muslims of today cheat in trade without the least scruples and back their lies with oaths and indulge in excessive adulteration, so much so that even Satan, perhaps, feels outdone. Some Muslims perform Hajj [pilgrimage] also for the sole consideration of promoting their trade with their newly-won epithet of '*Hājī*.' I do not say that all of them are of this type. But when a substantial number of the community is involved in the moral degradation of this kind, the entire mass of its people cannot get away from the stigma of a bad reputation. And, in any case, the true follower of our Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is one who obeys his command, and shuns every form of deceit and fraud, as he cannot otherwise escape the operation of the warning that: "whoso cheats and commits fraud in trade and other transactions has nothing to do with me."



عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ -

(سُنَنُ أَبِي دَاوُدَ كِتَابُ الْبَيَاسِ بَابُ فِي بُسِ الشُّهُرَةِ)

26—

## DO NOT IMITATE OTHER NATIONS

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“Whoso imitates another people (leaving the way and tradition of his own community and people) will be considered one of them.”

(Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book of Dress, Chapter: A garment of fame and vanity)

### *Explanatory Notes*

This brief Hadith carries a subtle psychological point: it means that one who abandons the way and the custom of his own people and its characteristics and seeks to look like another people, it will be understood in his case that his heart has been influenced by the way and custom and tradition of the other people, and has yielded to them

in mental slavery. For the desire to seek resemblance with others in this manner springs from a sense of inferiority complex. A person feels that the culture and civilisation and circumstances and outlook of a certain people are far superior and higher than the culture, civilisation and circumstances and outlook of his own community, and starts looking down upon himself in comparison with them, then, falling into mental slavery, he begins to imitate them blindly. No doubt, therefore, that such a person would be listed as a member of the community he seeks to imitate. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has, therefore, by means of this Hadith, warned the Muslims against imitating the ways and culture of other communities and commanded them to adopt the Islamic culture instead, believing it to be the best and highest of all other cultures and civilisations; otherwise, they will land themselves in the worst sort of mental slavery and thus lose their distinct identity and their excellent individuality. And there is little doubt about it that mental slavery is far worse than secular slavery. A man who is a slave temporarily is no doubt a subject of the other fellow, but in spite of it, his heart and his mind are free. But one who is mentally a captive, in spite of being a free man temporarily, loses the freedom of his soul and mind and his deeds are in no way better than those of the monkey who knows only aping and dancing to the tune of others. But it is a pity that notwithstanding these wise instructions of their chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), Muslims of today have taken to the worst form of slavery of Western countries. When the British came to India, a substantial section of Muslims surrendered abjectly before their culture and betook themselves to decking themselves up with its plumage. Their beards disappeared. Their dress beat a hasty retreat before the onslaught of ties and collars, goblets of wine overflowed in their feasts, and their womenfolk discarded their veils to display their alluring garments publicly. Does not all this add up to

the worst form of “*whoso imitated the ways of others became one of them.*” Reflect, O ye who have eyes!

It is no doubt true that there is no harm in adopting a good thing in a befitting manner. Even our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says in this connection:

“A wise saying is the lost property of the faithful, and wherever he finds it, he is most entitled to take it, for it is his property.”<sup>26</sup>

But it does not mean that every nonsense should be adopted blindly. On the contrary, in taking to a thing, there should be two determining factors taken into consideration:

1. Firstly, it should be, in fact, good and should not be contrary to the spirit of Islamic teaching and tradition.
2. Secondly, it should not be adopted blindly, in imitation, but should be thoroughly scrutinised and its pros and cons carefully weighed, and it should be adopted in a healthy way.




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26 Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Book of Knowledge, Chapter: What has been related about the superiority of *Fiqh* over worship. See Page: 164



عَنْ عَامِرٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ النُّعْمَانَ بْنَ بَشِيرٍ، يَقُولُ:  
 سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ... أَلَا وَإِنَّ  
 فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً: إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا  
 فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ -  
 (صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ الْإِيمَانِ بَابُ فَضْلِ مَنْ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ)

27—

IF THE HEART IS GOOD,  
 ALL THE OTHER LIMBS GET WELL

Ḥaḍrat Naumān bin Bashīr (May Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) say:

“Hearken! In the body is a piece of flesh, when it gets well, the whole body gets well, and when it becomes unhealthy, the whole body gets unhealthy and hark! That piece is the heart.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Faith, Chapter: Virtue of complying with religion)

### *Explanatory Notes*

In this Hadith, a charming philosophy aimed at reforming one's self has been enunciated. It says that the heart is the fountainhead of all the actions of man. If the heart of a man entertains good and pure thoughts, all his deeds will necessarily be directed towards the path of virtue. But if the heart has dirty and offensive ideas, then the deeds must necessarily follow the path of vice, for the feelings entertained by the heart are like seeds and action is the tree that grows out of the seed. Therefore, for the purpose of reformation, one must first worry about the heart. If leaders of a community and the press infuse in the minds of the masses the feelings of virtue, and the college and school teachers similarly touch the hearts of the students, as also the parents touch those of their children and instil in them the love of God, of the Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and of the faith, and feelings of welfare for the community, and the spirit of service and sacrifice and truthfulness, and sow in them the seeds of honesty, then there is little occasion to worry about good deeds on their part. Purity of mind will itself stimulate the growth of the tree of virtue. However, if the heart is sick, then the plant of good deeds will not grow and if it grew at all, it would wither away soon. The Holy Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (May peace of Allah be on him), has very aptly said in this connection:

*“Righteousness is the root of all virtue. If this root is firm all is safe.”*<sup>27</sup>

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27 al-Ḥakam, August 31, 1901; Malfūzāt, Vol. 1, P. 536, Ed. 1988

The truth is that the human heart is the central repository of righteousness, the fountainhead and source of all virtuous deeds. If the heart is in good shape, the activity of the hands and the feet and the tongue and the eyes also become healthy. But if the heart is filthy then all the deeds of man smell of stench and filth. Even the seemingly good deeds of such a person are but lifeless imitations or hypocritical advertisements devoid of any reality. It is thus the duty of every reformer to concentrate on the cure of the heart first, for the heart is like the root and no dirty root would grow into a holy tree.



عَنْ وَابِصَةَ بْنِ مَعْبُدٍ، قَالَ أَتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ... يَقُولُ: يَا وَابِصَةُ اسْتَفْتِ نَفْسَكَ، الْبِرُّ مَا  
 أَطْمَأَنَّ إِلَيْهِ الْقَلْبُ، وَالطَّمَأْنَتْ إِلَيْهِ النَّفْسُ، وَالْإِثْمُ مَا  
 حَاكَ فِي الْقَلْبِ، وَتَرَدَّدَ فِي الصَّدْرِ، وَإِنْ أَفْتَاكَ النَّاسُ-

(مسند أحمد، حديث وابصة بن معبد الاسدي، جلد 7 صفحه 423)

28—

## AVOID THAT WHICH RANKLES IN YOUR MIND

Ḥaḍrat Wābiṣṣ bin Ma'bad Asadī (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that (when) I came to The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him); he said:

“Seek the guidance of thy soul! The virtuous deed is one whereby thy heart is contented, and thy soul feels restful, and the sinful act is one which rankles in thy soul and which contracts thy heart even though the other people endorse it as lawful.”

(Musnad Aḥmad, Hadith of Wābiṣṣah bin Ma'bad, Vol 7, Page 423)

### *Explanatory Notes*

This observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is based on the eternal truth that God the Excellent, who is the Creator of nature, has endowed every man with pure nature. It is the later developments that mislead it in the wrong direction and cover-up this pure nature with impure superimpositions. Still, the basic goodness of nature and the light of conscience do not die out totally, but they serve man throughout his life like a torch of guidance. Even when persons deeply involved in worldly filth reflect calmly in moments of solitary retirement on their own condition, their nature, tearing through the meshes of worldliness, starts reproaching them. This blessed observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is based on the foundational guidance of this natural light. He says that in general matters of principle a sensible man needs to consult no outside judge, for his own heart is for him a jurist; he should consult his own heart in respect of evil and good and seek the light of his own conscience. For virtue produces a feeling of expansiveness and restfulness and contentment in the heart, while vice contracts the bosom and weighs down on the soul. In such a predicament, it is useless to seek the false support of guidance from others; instead, one should listen to the voice of one's conscience. If in respect of a certain matter, the conscience hesitates and the heart feels contracted, then one should desist from it, notwithstanding the favourable views of doctors of the law, and should accept the verdict of the light of conscience which is, in fact, the guidance given by the Creator of nature Himself.

But, as given in the words:

اسْتَفْتِ نَفْسَكَ

*“consult thy mind.”*

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has hinted it is necessary that in order to consult the mind, one should reflect in retirement, away from others, and should consult it in a spirit of righteousness, as, otherwise, the opinions of others could overpower the conscience and shut out the light of nature. However, if a person consults his mind in retirement, free from all external influences, the natural light of his heart will serve him as the torch of guidance which has been eternally gifted with the power to discriminate between virtue and vice. On reflection, one would discover that this natural sense of discriminating between virtue and vice is a weighty argument in support of the existence of God. For if there is no God (God Forbid that we entertain such a view), then whence comes this innate sense of discrimination between virtue and vice, which resides in the depths of the souls and provides means of guidance to man? Reflect and ponder well!



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ:  
 إِذَا قَالَ الرَّجُلُ: هَلَكَ النَّاسُ فَهُوَ أَهْلَكُهُمْ -  
 (صَحِيحُ مُسْلِمٍ كِتَابُ الْبِرِّ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالْأَدَابِ بَابُ النَّهْيِ عَنْ قَوْلِ هَلَكَ النَّاسُ)

## 29—INFERIORITY COMPLEX IS A HIGHLY FATAL FEELING

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)  
 said:

“When a man declares about certain people that they are  
 doomed, it is he who consigns them to the doom (or he is the one  
 who is most doomed among them).”

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book of Good Treatment, Mercy, and Respect,  
 Chapter: It is forbidden to say nations were destroyed)

### *Explanatory Notes*

This Hadith is based on a great psychological fact, which is described  
 in modern terminology as an ‘inferiority complex’ or the defeatist  
 mentality. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on

him) says that an attempt should be made to raise the morale of the people by creating hope, faith, self-reliance, and self-respect in them, instead of dragging them down the pit of degradation through despair, frustration, inferiority complex, and a defeatist mentality. Whoso wails loudly over minor errors and unimportant drawbacks of the people and moans that they are finished and doomed, he himself creates in them despair and an inferiority complex through such observations and thus opens the way to their doom. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, therefore, in profound wisdom, enjoined that while people may be suitably reprimanded for their errors as a reformative measure, crying over each little mistake and wailing that they have neared the brink of ruin is tantamount to consigning them with one's own hands to doom, and that every reformer should beware of this course.

In this respect, the attitude of our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came into evidence when, once upon a time, a party dispatched by him ran back from the battlefield to Medina. The thought that turning one's back to the enemy in battle is unlawful in Islam made them so deeply distraught with an overwhelming sense of shame that they would not come up before the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). When he saw them cowering in the corner of the mosque, hiding their faces, he went over to them in person and called out to enquire who they were. Shamefacedly, with eyes downcast, they said:

نَحْنُ الْفَرَّارُونَ

*"[O Prophet of Allah,] we are the runaway party."*

Sensing in them the feeling of self-defeatism, he told them that they were not runaways, rather, they had retreated only to attack the



enemy harder, and had but came over to him, and that he was about to lead them back to the battleground. When this soul-stirring call of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) reached the ears of this party, then suffering silently in the vortex of despondency and buffeted by the rising waves of inferiority complex, they sprang forward in one bound and fell to kissing his hands. This was the lesson that our chief gave his companions practically and which he imparted theoretically through the Hadith under reference. O Lord, shower peace and bliss and safety on Muhammad!

The word: **أَهْلَكْتُهُمْ** occurring in this Hadith (meaning ‘*he destroyed them*’) is susceptible to another meaning (‘*he is personally the most ruined*’): after a slight variation in vowel point, it becomes: **أَهْلَكَ**. It is evident that in terms of this other meaning also, this Hadith carries a very charming sense, for, in the latter case, it will mean that the person who declares others to be doomed, is, in reality, himself caught up deep in the extreme consciousness of self-defeatism. Whether, therefore, the other people are doomed or not by uttering these words, he, at any rate, seals his own doom without a trace of doubt.



عَنْ أَبِي عُبَيْدَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ  
 اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ، كَمَنْ لَا  
 ذَنْبَ لَهُ -

(سُنَنُ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ كِتَابُ الرُّهُدِ بَابُ ذِكْرِ التَّوْبَةِ)

### 30—TRUE REPENTANCE WASHES OFF SIN

Narrated by Abū Ubaidah bin Abdullah on the authority of his father: The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“The one who repents of sin is like one who has in fact never sinned.”

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book of Abstinence, Chapter: Repentance)

#### *Explanatory Notes*

The philosophy of repentance [*Taubah*] is deeply concerned with spirituality and also exerts a tremendous impact on the morals of men. Through repentance one is helped to remain full of hope from God and thus is enabled to elevate his moral standard. It is a pity, however, that, with the exception of Islam, most religions, having declared the

door of repentance closed to man, have instead opened the door promoting, on the one hand, distrust of God, and on the other, pessimism and moral degeneration. As for instance, the Christian Church, following its rejection of the repentance, sought refuge in the totally artificial and unnatural theory of vicarious atonement. And the Hindu religion has bogged down its followers in the quagmire of reincarnation. While the truth of the matter is that the postulate of repentance is clearly a natural remedy, in disregard of which man can neither attain to spiritual perfection nor to moral excellence.

It is a strange irony that the religious systems that bolt the door on repentance are not prepared to concede to God, Creator and Lord of this Universe, even the moral attributes which are considered praiseworthy endowments of a good man. A gentleman overlooks the faults of his children, of his friends, of his subordinates, and of his servants, day in and day out. It is considered praiseworthy on his part. But it is a pity that such generous treatment on the part of God has been considered improper. In fact, it has been considered imperative on His part to crush the sinner even though he was contrite and repented for his sin sincerely. Islam spurns this impure doctrine outright with contempt and opens wide the gate of God's forgiveness and mercy to every truthfully contrite sinner. And it is in this manner that it causes a two-way stream to flow between man and his Creator: of compassion and mercy on the part of God, and of dependence and gratitude on the part of man, as much worthy of the glory of God as it is becoming of the worshipfulness of man.

Clearly, man is weak and prone to stumble often under the pressure of momentary influences. It would be highly unjust to condemn him still to the gallows when he was truly repentant and sincerely contrite.

It is totally fallacious and unreasonable to argue that acceptance of repentance encourages sin.

Far from emboldening in sinfulness, true repentance serves as a means of purifying a man. Islam has laid down such hard conditions as to make true repentance a grave spiritual revolution and a basic mental change. As is clear from the Holy Quran and the Aḥādīth, these conditions are three:

1. That the repenting person should be contrite of his sin with a true heart and seek forgiveness and protection with heartfelt sincerity.
2. That he should take a vow that he will abstain from such transgression and sinful acts in future and should seek the help of God on this behalf.
3. That if it is possible to make practical amends for the wrong and sin he has committed, he should do so. If, for example, he has misappropriated somebody's property, he should recompense him, and if he has usurped the rights of someone, he should restore the same to the rightful party.

No sensible person can find fault with the repentance governed by such conditions. The truth is that sincere repentance is a death which grants man a new life, opening the way to the mercy, compassion and protecting love of God.

Islam alone opens the door to true repentance.



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: لَا يُلْدَغُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنْ جُحْرٍ وَاحِدٍ  
 مَرَّتَيْنِ -

(صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ كِتَابُ الْأَدَبِ بَابُ: لَا يُلْدَغُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنْ جُحْرٍ مَرَّتَيْنِ)

### 31— A BELIEVER IS NEVER BITTEN TWICE IN THE SAME HOLE

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
 said:

“A believer is never bitten twice in the same hole.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Manners, Chapter: A believer is not  
 bitten twice in the same hole)

#### *Explanatory Notes*

This charming Hadith holds a vast meaning. The plain and simple purport of this Hadith is that the true believer remains alert and on guard. If he puts his hand in a hole [i.e., if he comes in contact with an

inappropriate person, party or people], he sees to it that he is not 'bitten' the second time. In other words, he becomes alert after his very first experience and is saved from further injury, refusing to give the other party another chance to hurt him. By means of this observation, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has enjoined on Muslims to remain exceedingly alert and on guard, and described it as a characteristic of the true Muslim, that, because of his inherently trustful disposition, he may be deceived once but is never deceived twice by the same person or in the same affair, and that profiting by each bitter experience, he tends to further strengthen his position and thus goes on opening for himself further avenues of progress, one after the other.

This observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) applies with equal force to all the phases and opportunities of one's life. If, for instance, a Muslim has been cheated once by a dishonest businessman, this Hadith is there to warn him to beware of giving the crook another chance to swindle him. If a professional thug cheated a Muslim once, this Hadith warns him against being swindled a second time by the same crook. And if a person cheated a Muslim by posing as a friend, this Hadith alerts him to beware of playing into the hands of that cheat again. In short, this Hadith is of a very wide scope. Even in cases when a man does something believing it to be innocent, or, knowing it to be sinful but failing to realise its gravity and realising its harm only after the practical experience, this Hadith serves him as a torch of guidance, warning him against repeating his mistake. In fact, it will not be in keeping with the insight of a Muslim if he is bitten twice in the same hole.

In short, this beautiful Hadith cautions every Muslim to live with his eyes open in this world and to make every fall a means of further

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strengthening of his feet and to leap forward after every slip and continue to march on and onward.



عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَثْقَلُ فِي الْمِيزَانِ مِنْ حُسْنِ  
الْخُلُقِ -

(سُنَنُ أَبِي دَاوُدَ كِتَابُ الْأَدَبِ بَابُ فِي حُسْنِ الْخُلُقِ)

## 32—NO DEED IS BETTER THAN GOOD CONDUCT

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abū Dardā' (May Allah be pleased with him):  
The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)  
said:

“Nothing weighs heavier in the scale of God than the excellence  
of conduct.”

(Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book of Manners, Chapter: Good Morals)

### *Explanatory Notes*

Excellent social behaviour is half of [one's] faith. Islam has laid  
tremendous emphasis on it, so much so, that according to this Hadith,



the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) declared that there was nothing weightier in the Divine scale than excellent conduct. In another Hadith, he says that whoso was not grateful to man was not grateful to God. In fact, the excellence of social conduct constitutes the basis of every virtue; even spirituality is but an advanced state of good conduct. It is therefore for this reason that our chief has laid so much stress on the improvement of social conduct, and the Aḥādīth reported about this are far too many to be enumerated.

Besides, in so far as the expression of social ethics through individual conduct is concerned, Islam does not omit to satisfy the rights of any claimant. From God down to men and from among men, from the monarch down to the humble servant, good conduct has been enjoined on all. The rights of the officers, of the subordinates, of the father and of the son, of a friend and of a foe, of man and of the beast, in short, of each and every one, have been assigned. And, again, it has been enjoined to discharge these obligations in the best possible manner. Even minor and secondary virtues have not been left out. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) went so far as to say that if a person meets his acquaintances with a smiling countenance to please them, it will be considered an act of moral excellence on his part, making him worthy of merit in the eyes of God. On another occasion, he advised that thorny or slippery or stinking objects, or stumbling blocks, should be removed from the way lest another brother should suffer thereby.

In regard to the merciful treatment of others, he said,

“One who showed not compassion to others would not deserve it of God.”<sup>28</sup>

He was personally endowed with such excellence of social conduct that he never turned down the request of anyone for help, never first let go the hand of anybody once he grasped it; he took compassionate care of orphans and supported widows, won over his neighbours through kindly treatment, attended to the poorest of his companions in their sickness and gave them new heart by the charm of his comforting speech, so full of compassion and love.

A poor old woman, who lived in Medina, used to sweep the “*Masjid-i-Nabawi*” (the Prophet’s mosque). When the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) did not see her for a few days, he enquired of his companions whether she was in good health. The companions submitted that she had passed away after a short illness and considering that it would distress him, they did not inform him when her funeral was taken out. This grieved the Holy Prophet (saw) to no small extent, and he complained that they had not informed him of her death, he then left to visit her grave and prayed for her departed soul.

On one occasion, probably before the command for women to observe seclusion was revealed, he was with his honoured wife, Ḥaḍrat Aisha, when a person called on him. On receiving the intimation, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) remarked to Ḥaḍrat Aisha that the visitor was not a good man. But when he came to him, he [the Holy Prophet] talked to him in an affectionate and conciliatory tone. As he went away, Ḥaḍrat Aisha submitted: “*O Prophet of Allah, you do not hold a good opinion of him and yet you have*

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28 Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book of Manners, Chapter: Mercy. See Page 70

*been so engaging with him in your conversation.”* The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: “*Aisha! Is it not my duty to deport myself in excellent ways in my social contact with the people?*”<sup>29</sup>

Before embracing Islam, Abū Sufyān was a bitter enemy of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). But when the Caesar of Rome enquired of him about the teachings of the Holy Prophet to his people (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and asked if he had ever broken a promise or betrayed a trust, Abū Sufyān had nothing to say about the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) but that he prohibited the worship of idols, taught excellent manners and that he had never broken the pledge he made with them.

This excellence of his conduct was not confined to men only. He has included even animals within the fold of his compassion. He would constantly impress on his companions:

فِي كُلِّ كَبِدٍ رَطْبَةٌ أَجْرٌ

*“It is a good deed to show compassion to all living beings.”*

Once when a camel was moaning piteously under the weight of an excessive load, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was deeply moved and, walking over to the beast, compassionately patted its head and told his owner that the dumb animal was complaining of its cruel treatment and that he should treat it with consideration so that he may be shown compassion in the heavens.

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29 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, in “*Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*”, “Praising People”, Hadith No: 338

Such are the manners as have been taught us by our chief. It grieves one's heart to see many Muslims of today being so very unmindful of their social duties.



عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:  
 إِذَا أَتَاكُمْ كَرِيمٌ قَوْمٍ فَأَكْرِمُوهُ -  
 (سُنَنُ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ كِتَابُ الْأَدَبِ بَابُ إِذَا أَتَاكُمْ كَرِيمٌ قَوْمٍ فَأَكْرِمُوهُ)

### 33—RESPECT THE RESPECTABLE CHIEFS OF OTHER PEOPLE

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him):  
 The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon  
 him) said:

“When a respectable person of a people pays you a visit,  
 show him due respect.”

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book of Manners, Chapter: Treat honourably  
 the distinguished leaders of the various nations)

#### *Explanatory Notes*

The most effective means of promoting wholesome relations between countries and nations and parties lies in respecting and honouring leaders and dignitaries of one another. Our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has been very emphatic to the Muslims in this behalf. This Hadith is one of the many having a bearing on this

golden principle. Differences are bound to arise among nations and countries, as they do among individuals. In order to mitigate their bitterness, decent treatment of one another is the most effective remedy. A respectful attitude towards the leaders of one another exercises considerable influence in this behalf. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has accordingly commanded that whenever the leader or dignitary of another people or party visits Muslims, they should show him due respect, irrespective of his religion and race, and should not neglect the duties of hospitality towards him. This priceless injunction is the finest epitome of hospitality, good conduct, and true statesmanship.

His personal example in this respect was reflected in his laying by a special robe which he would don when receiving foreign embassies, as a mark of special welcome to them; though, as a rule, he had simple tastes and his dress and food had no trace of fastidiousness. He was so particular in the matter of duties of hospitality to foreign delegations that, while on his deathbed, he made a will directing respectful treatment of visiting embassies and missions. Once when an ambassador was extremely impertinent in his conduct towards him, he [the Holy Prophet] told him that he could not rebuff him as he was the envoy of a foreign people. On the conquest of Mecca, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) announced amnesty to those who would remain indoors within their own homes and would not visit the houses of others to hatch conspiracies against Muslims. Thereupon Abū Sufyān, the chief of Mecca, said that since he was the head of the Quraish tribe, he deserved special consideration. Granting his request, he said that his [Abū Sufyan's] house would be marked off for special treatment and that whoso sought asylum in it would be treated as if he took refuge in the Holy Prophet's own house.

In short, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) showed utmost respect to the leaders of other peoples and enjoined the same on his companions. This teaching alone can lead to world peace and cleansing of hearts.



عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ: أَعْطُوا الْأَجِيرَ أَجْرَهُ، قَبْلَ أَنْ يَجِفَّ عَرْقُهُ -

(سُنَنُ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ كِتَابُ الرَّهُونِ بَابُ أَجْرِ الْأَجْرَاءِ)

### 34—PAY WAGES TO THE WORKER BEFORE HIS SWEAT IS DRY

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:

“Pay wages to the worker before his sweat is dry.”

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book of pawning, Chapter: wages of the workers)

#### *Explanatory Notes*

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, on the one hand, enjoined a respectful attitude towards the leaders and dignitaries of people, and has, on the other, paid due attention to the rights of the poor and the weak. Since the labouring class is generally the poorest, he has invited special attention to their rights



and commanded the payment of the worker's wages before his sweat becomes dry. In making this wise observation, his aim was not simply a prompt payment of the labourer's earnings; in fact, what he aimed at was to draw attention to the rights of the poor and the working classes in general. Since payment of the wages to the worker, as and when it became due, is the minimum of the worker's rights, by stressing its importance as an example, he indirectly proposed a safeguard of the greater and more important rights of the worker. The reformer, who would not brook so much delay in payment of wages to the labourer as allows his sweat to become dry, is, by means of this command, without a doubt, also recommending the payment of full wages to the worker, a due regard for his comfort and abstention from putting him to exertion beyond his capacity. His teaching about the kindly treatment of domestic servants and his injunctions about Islamic brotherhood and equality [which have been dealt with in some detail by the author in his work, *Sirat Khātaman-Nabiyyin* [The Life and character of the Seal of the Prophets] Volume II & III] are illustrative of his solicitude for the welfare of the poor, and show how great a protector of their rights they had in him.

It is true that, in order to keep the individual's initiative alive and to ensure to him the fruit of his personal effort, he permitted possession of the private property. Simultaneously, he outlined the organisation of suitable machinery in the shape of Zakat (a prescribed rate), proscription of usury and division of property among heirs for the proper regulation and distribution of wealth. And, in order to remove the traces of bitterness due to disproportion, if any were still left, he comforted the poorer classes by saying that if they adhered to faith, they would be admitted to heaven 500 years ahead of the wealthy. It is evident that the short life of this world bears no comparison to the eternal life of the Hereafter. Again, he comforted the poor further by addressing the words to them:

الْفَقْرُ فَخْرِي

*“Indigence is my pride.”*

That is, they should realise that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had collected no worldly goods for himself. Furthermore, being himself poor, he was of them and with them, and that his pride lay in his poverty.

At the same time, in this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, by saying the words, “Before the sweat is dry,” given a subtle hint that the labourer who is honest in the eyes of God is the one who sweats in his work and does not work for show, nor neglect it in the absence of the employer, nor is dishonest. If therefore, on the one hand, it is the duty of the employer to make payment of his wages to the worker in full measure and without delay, whilst respecting his rights, it is at the same time, the duty of the worker to prove his honesty and sense of duty by sweating hard in his work. This is the middle course which alone can serve to establish true peace between the employer and the employee, the master and the servant, on a firm foundation.



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ: شَرُّ الطَّعَامِ  
طَعَامُ الْوَلِيْمَةِ، يُدْعَى لَهَا الْأَغْنِيَاءُ وَيُتْرَكُ الْفُقَرَاءُ، وَمَنْ  
تَرَكَ الدَّعْوَةَ فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ -

(صحيح البخاري كتاب النكاح باب من ترك الدعوة فقد عصى الله ورسوله)

### 35—The Worst Feast is the One to Which Only the Wealthy have been Invited

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)  
said:

“The worst food is that of a wedding feast to which the wealthy  
are invited and from which the poor are left out. And whoso  
declines an invitation [to a meal], verily he sins against God and is  
disobedient to His Prophet” (May peace and blessings of Allah be  
upon him).

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Marriage; Who declined an invitation  
disobeyed God and His Messenger)

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*Explanatory Notes*

The measures adopted by Islam to regulate the distribution of wealth, and to minimise the disproportion between high-income and low-income groups, is an open book. In this respect, the social distinctions that perpetuate mutual rivalry and class struggle by dividing the rich and the poor into two distinct camps, are the most objectionable and principal features of the episode. Islam has exerted in the extreme to remove this class struggle and to reconcile the emotional conflict. In this connection, the first step it takes is to put all Muslims on an equal level as brothers. Again, in respect of rights, it has not permitted the public posts of profit to become the monopoly of one class, but has commanded that they should be open to all and that appointments should be made on the basis of merit, irrespective of caste or tribe or poverty or wealth.

In order to promote social contact among the rich and the poor and to welding them into one family, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, besides this, commanded that when they arrange a feast, the wealthy must invite the poor also, and when asked to a meal by the poor, they should not decline to accept their invitation. The Hadith under reference emphasises the august words of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). He says in very emphatic language: the worst feast is the one to which the wealthy have been invited and from which the poor have been left out. At the same time, he warns the wealthy that it is not permissible for them to decline the invitation of a poor man on the ground of his poverty and the Muslim who did so “sinned against God and disobeyed His Prophet.” In another Hadith, he says:

لَوْ دُعِيتُ إِلَى كُرَاعِ كَلْبٍ

*“If a poor man invited me to a meal [of cooked goat’s feet], I would certainly accept his invitation.”*

Similarly, in the course of another Hadith, it is said that once Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) inadvertently hurt the feelings of Ḥaḍrat Bilāl (May Allah be pleased with him) and of some other poorer Muslims. When the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) learnt this, he told Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) to soothe the hearts of those who were aggrieved as “in the pacification of their hearts lay the pleasure of God.” Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) went straight to them and begged of his brethren to forgive him as he did not mean to hurt them. Can an unpleasant grouping emerge in a truly Muslim society in the face of this teaching? Never. It is our own fault that, through disregard of Islamic teachings, we have encouraged the growth of rival camps in our social structure.



عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ  
 قَالَ وَهُوَ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ، وَهُوَ يَذْكُرُ الصَّدَقَةَ، وَالتَّعَفُّفَ عَنِ  
 الْمَسْأَلَةِ: الْيَدُ الْعُلْيَا خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْيَدِ السُّفْلَى -

(مَوْطَأُ) (إِمَامُ مَالِكٍ) كِتَابُ الصَّدَقَةِ بَابُ مَا جَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ عَنِ الْمَسْأَلَةِ

## 36—THE UPPER HAND IS BETTER THAN THE LOWER HAND

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him):

“In a sermon from the pulpit, the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) once enjoined charity and at the same time advised against begging and observed that the upper hand [of the giving one] is better than the lower one [of the recipient].”

(Mu'aṭṭa' (Imam Malik) Book of Ṣadqah, Chapter: Refraining from asking)

### *Explanatory Notes*

Of all the possible ills arising out of poverty, destitution, mendicancy, low-spiritedness, and the habit of depending for livelihood on others are the worst which generally take hold of the poor. When a destitute person sees the rich living in affluence, he falls prey, on the one hand, to low-spiritedness and to an inferiority complex and, on the other, he falls into the habit of begging doles of the rich to improve his own circumstances. Our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), through his far-sightedness, apprehended this possible danger and his soul would not feel at rest until he had found a solution to this threat. His commands, accordingly, are replete with observations that show his abhorrence of begging, they bid the poor to work for their living and forbid them to beg. The Hadith under review is one of the many on the subject.

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says that while it is the duty of the rich to help their poor brethren, the poor should, however, refrain from begging and behave with dignity. In order to create among them a feeling of self-respect, he observes ‘the upper hand [i.e., the hand of the donor] is better than the lower hand [the hand of the receiver].’ In this brief sentence, he has in fact infused such a strong spirit of self-respect and dignity, which would take quite a few volumes to explain in detail.

The holy body of his companions accorded this observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) the utmost respect. In this connection, Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīm bin Ḥizām (May Allah be pleased with him) says that after this command of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), he never accepted help from anybody. He was assigned a fixed stipend by the *Khalīfah*, but he always turned it down on the grounds that he would not let down his hand that the Holy Prophet (May peace and

blessings of Allah be on him) had commanded to be kept up. Ḥaḍrat ‘Alī (May Allah be pleased with him), a cousin of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and also his son-in-law and fourth Khalifah of Islam after the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), came from a highly respectable family of the Quraish tribe. After migration to Medina, he would take an axe, go to the jungle, cut firewood and sell it in the market to make a living but would not ask help of anybody. Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) a well-known companion of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had to go without food, many times for days, but would never beg of anybody. Once when he was prostrate with hunger, he asked Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) and later also Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) the meaning of a Quranic verse which related to the command about feeding the hungry. But both Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr and Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) did not catch his hint and after explaining its usual meaning, went away. By chance, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) happened to hear this conversation. He called Abū Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) very affectionately, said that it seemed he was hungry and asked him to come over to him. Then he gave him some milk to drink. There is yet another incident of a still superior type; it relates to another prominent companion whose whip fell down while he was going on horseback. There went along with him some persons on foot. He did not request anyone for help but dismounting, he picked up the whip. When a companion asked him why he did not tell them to hand it back to him, adding that they could have readily obliged him, he replied back that the Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade them to seek charity and that if he had asked them to pick up his whip for him, it would have been very near to begging.



In short, the companions of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) set, by their conduct, such examples in self-reliance, contentedness and dignity, that history has no parallel to offer. And it is the distinct greatness of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that, on the one hand, he directed the wealthy not to turn down a request for help and, on the other, commanded the poor to seek an honourable living and abstain from begging.

The two commands are, apparently, contradictions in terms but the truth is that in their reconciliation with one another lies the basis of a true brotherhood of the rich and the poor.



عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ: جَاءَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَعُودُنِي وَأَنَا بِمَكَّةَ... قَالَ... إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَدَعَ وَرَثَتَكَ أَغْنِيَاءَ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ تَدْعَهُمْ عَالَةً يَتَكَفَّفُونَ النَّاسَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ -

(صحيح البخاري كتاب الوصايا باب أن يترك ورثته أغنياء خير من أن يتكففوا الناس)

### 37—LEAVE BEHIND YOUR HEIRS IN A COMFORTABLE CONDITION

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Sa'ad bin Abī Waqqāṣ (May Allah be pleased with him): When I fell sick in Mecca, and the Prophet of Allah (May peace of Allah and His blessings be on him) came to enquire about my health, he said,

“It is better that you leave your heirs in affluence than that you leave them in straits, seeking the help of others.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Book of Wills, Chapter: If you leave your heirs rich and wealthy, that is better for them than leaving them dependent and asking from people)

### *Explanatory Notes*

The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) made the foregoing observation when his close companion, Ḥaḍrat Saad bin Abī Waqqāṣ (May Allah be pleased with him) fell ill during the course of his journey to Mecca. Fearing that his end was near, he expressed to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) a desire to bequeath the whole of his property in the way of Allah. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that it was far too much and that he could not permit that. Thereupon Ḥaḍrat Saad proposed to bequeath away two-thirds of his property. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) did not permit that much either. Then, in the end, Ḥaḍrat Saad (May Allah be pleased with him) begged leave to give away one-third of his property. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) permitted him to do so and observed that it was better if he left behind his heirs in good circumstances rather than in straitened circumstances whereby, they were forced to beg for help from others.

This wise observation shows that Islam advises foresight and recognises the importance of material means in emergent conditions. It does not permit a well-to-do Muslim to donate the whole of his property to the Divine cause and to ignore the rights of His creatures by depriving his heirs of a share, forcing them to take to begging after his death.

It is a pity, however, that Muslims of today take an erroneous view of trust in God [*tawakkul*]; in their view, it amounts to leaving the matter in the hands of God, refraining from making any effort themselves in this behalf. The Islamic trust in God is in no way susceptible to this interpretation. True Islamic trust in God, on the contrary, consists of taking all the necessary steps within one's means

and simultaneously reposing one's trust in God in the firm belief that with all the apparent devices adopted by one, the real key to success and achievement is with God alone. This is a difficult position; in fact, at the face of it, it seems to be self-contradictory and hard to understand and harder still to maintain. However, the truth is that Islamic trust in God consists, on the one hand, in the adoption of all the necessary measures and, on the other, in believing that all the ropes are in the grip of God and that what He wills must inevitably come to pass. A little reflection will show that there is no contradiction in it. When God alone is the sole Maker, Disposer and Master of good and evil ordination and of the properties of things and causes, then there is no point in doubting that in spite of all the overt measures we take, the final determination of the result of our efforts rests in His hand. A tradition relevant to this point relates to a Bedouin chief who, happening to visit the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), left his camel untethered outside the Prophet's Mosque in his eagerness to have a meeting with the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). When he returned after his meeting, he found his she-camel had made off. In great consternation, he came back and related to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) how he had left his she-camel to the care of Allah and on his return after his meeting with him, discovered that she had run away. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) observed:

إِغْلُهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ

That is, "*Tether her first and then leave her to the care of God.*"

In short, in the Hadith under review, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, on the one hand, taught parents to have the foresight and wisdom to provide, so far as it lies in their

power, for the subsistence of their children, and not to leave their dependents unsupported, and to make provision for their honourable living; and on the other, incidentally, has hinted by means of this Hadith, that employment of overt means, in this behalf, does not in any way militate against the sense and spirit of trust in God. One should, therefore, first take all the necessary measures so far as it lies in one's power and is permitted by one's resources, and then leave the result to God. No doubt, as I have stated above, it is a very difficult stand, for man is prone to over-incline to one side on account of his weakness; he either becomes so much devoted to overt means as to make them his god or in utter defiance of these, he pins all his hope on God, so much so that he believes that, notwithstanding his complete rejection of the material means that God has made, He will nevertheless descend from the High Heavens to personally handle all his affairs. The truth, however, is that both these stands are untenable and contrary to the spirit of Islamic teaching. The true philosophy which the virtuous in every age have followed lies in the observance of the maxim:

*“Tether thy camel first and then leave her to the care of God.”*



عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ -

(صحيح البخاري كتاب النكاح باب المرأة راعية في بيت زوجها)

### 38—EVERY PERSON IS A RULER & WILL BE ANSWERABLE IN RESPECT OF HIS WARDS

Narrated by Ḥadrat Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

“Each one of you is a ruler and will be answerable in respect of your subjects.”

(Bukhārī, Book of Marriage, Chapter: The woman is a guardian in her husband's house)

#### *Explanatory Notes*

Every man has some rights and also owes some corresponding obligations. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, through this Hadith, drawn attention to both these

points. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has observed that each person, is, in spite of being a subject in some respects, a ruler in other respects. A man who is employed in an office, is, perhaps, subordinate to an officer. But the same person may be the ruler of his wife and children in his home. A wife is subject to the rule of her husband in the management of the household in spite of enjoying marital love. But she simultaneously holds authority over the children, the domestics and over the property of the husband which she holds in her charge. Similarly, from a king to a slave, from a general to a trooper and from a governor to a peon, all are, within their respective spheres, both rulers as well as subjects. The king is the ruler of all of his subjects, but he is, at the same time, a servant of God, or in other words, subject to the law of ordination and determination [*Qadā wa Qadr*]. The same is true for the rest of the officers and subordinates: they are rulers in one respect and subjects in the other. According to the observation of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) all of them will be required to answer with regard to the subjects in their respective spheres whether indeed they rendered unto them their rights. When, through this process, we come to the last person [who is the least among them] and apparently, we find none under him, on reflection we discover that he is, in reality, the ruler over one subject, his own self, over which he has full authority. He will, therefore, be required to answer in respect of his self and how far he discharged his duty to himself. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in short, has alerted everyone to the fact that whichever section of the society one may belong to, one is, in one respect or the other, a ruler, and shall, therefore, be required to answer about one's obligations in this behalf.

This Hadith is simultaneously a carrier of glad tidings to men, fortifying them with courage in that, whatever their station in life, each is, in a way, a ruler and has good cause to be grateful to God for

His having granted him a position in His eternal Kingdom and if one gave Him thanks, one could progress from one's existing sphere of the rule to a higher and better dominion. In short, this pleasant composite of obligations and rights is both glad tidings for men and a warning. It is glad tidings in the sense that sovereignty is a gift of God, and a warning because every sovereignty entails many good obligations. The true Muslim, therefore, is one who is grateful for the good tidings of future grace, and remains vigilant in respect of his present obligations, for within this attitude lies the eternal secret of human progress.





عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ: طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ -

(سُنَنُ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ كِتَابُ السُّنَّةِ بَابُ فَضْلِ الْعُلَمَاءِ وَالْحَثِّ عَلَى طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ)

## 39—SEEKING KNOWLEDGE IS A DUTY OF EVERY MUSLIM

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him):  
The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)  
said:

“It is the duty of every Muslim to seek knowledge.”

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, The Book of Sunnah, Chapter: The virtue of  
scholars and the urge to seek knowledge)

### *Explanatory Notes*

Since Islam is based on the certain knowledge revealed by God in the shape of the Final Law and advances its views with the supporting force of argument, it therefore very rightly lays extreme stress on the acquisition of knowledge. This is one of the many Aḥādīth by means of which the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has enjoined on Muslims, both men and women, to acquire

knowledge. He was so particular about it that, according to another Hadith, he is reported to have commanded:

“Seek knowledge even if you have to go to China for this purpose.”<sup>30</sup>

It should be borne in mind that, owing to the conditions obtaining at that time, China was not only the most distant country from Arabia but also the way to it was full of great hazards and travelling to it was beset with extreme dangers and great hardships besides entailment of extraordinary expenses. The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has, by singling China out by way of example, in fact, underlined the value of knowledge, to impress on the faithful the necessity of acquiring learning even in the face of extreme hardships and prohibitive distances. The early Muslims, as historical evidence shows, used to travel hundreds of miles and undergo heavy expenses to hear a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) from his companions. When a man after having traversed hundreds of miles, came to Damascus from Medina to hear from Ḥaḍrat Abū Dardā' (May Allah be pleased with him) a tradition of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him), Abū Dardā' related to him that particular Hadith and also told him that he had heard the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) say that whoso undertook a journey for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, Allah would open up for him the way to it and at the same time open his way to Paradise. In another Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has observed that

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30 Ma` rifa al-Tadhkirah, P. 101, Hadith No: 118

superiority of a scholar over a worshipper who lacks knowledge, is like the superiority of full moon over the rest of the celestial bodies.

Again, in another Hadith, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) says that a learned man far outweighs a thousand worshippers against Satan. Another Hadith of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) carries the statement:

“The learned who are also pious constitute the greatest good of my people.”

In yet another Hadith the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has observed that the learned Ulama are the heirs of the Prophets. As the Holy Quran says, true learning must be accompanied by righteousness, piety and proper deeds, otherwise, it is nothing better than a load on the back of a donkey.

In short, Islam has laid extreme emphasis on the pursuit of knowledge and true learning has been accorded the next place to faith. Besides, knowledge has been aptly declared limitless. Hence the instruction that the more one acquires it, the more one should seek to increase it. Even the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) the pride of creation and the chief of the universe and head of the messengers has been taught by Allah the Excellent the following prayer in the Holy Quran:

“Say: O my Lord, increase me in knowledge.”<sup>31</sup>

As already made clear in the Hadith under review, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has not restricted the

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31 The Holy Quran, Ch: 20 ( āhā), V: 115

pursuit of knowledge to men only. He has similarly commanded women to seek knowledge. It is a matter of deep regret that, notwithstanding these peremptory injunctions, the standard of educational advancement of Muslim men and women, far from being superior to that of other people, is in fact comparatively very poor and low. Before the partition of India, the percentage of literacy among the Muslims was the lowest of all the nations in comparison to the Hindus, the Sikhs, the foreign Christians, and the Parsees. This exhibition of illiteracy does little credit to a people who owe allegiance to the most learned of world Reformers (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him). It is high time Muslims realised their obligation and set about not only leading but out-distancing the rest of mankind in the field of both secular and religious learning.



عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الْكَلِمَةُ الْحِكْمَةُ ضَالَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ، فَحَيْثُ وَجَدَهَا فَهُوَ أَحَقُّ بِهَا -

(سُنَنُ التِّرْمِذِيِّ أَبْوَابُ الْعِلْمِ بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي فَضْلِ الْفِقْهِ عَلَى الْعِبَادَةِ)

## 40—EVERY WORD OF WISDOM IS THE LOST PROPERTY OF A MUSLIM

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him):  
The Prophet of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)  
said:

“The word of wisdom is the lost property of a believer; wherever  
he finds it, [he should take it], as he is the most entitled to it.”

(Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Book of Knowledge, Chapter: What has been  
related about the superiority of Fiqh over worship)

### *Explanatory Notes*

This charming Hadith, which is the last of this collection, discloses an  
excellent avenue of knowledge. Knowledge is not a limited thing that

can be acquired only in the four walls of a school, or through sermons in a mosque, or in the gatherings of the learned or can be gleaned from newspapers and through a study of books. On the contrary, it is something very vast, and a man going about in life with his ears and eyes open can acquire it from every page of the record of the universe. For the true seeker after knowledge, the earth and the heaven, the sun, the moon, the stars and the planets, the forests and the mountains, the rivers and the seas, the dwellings and desolations, the wise and the stupid, mankind and beasts, men and women, the children and the aged, the learned and the ignorant, the friend and the foe, all are an open book of learning whereby he can enrich the treasure-house of his own knowledge to the best of his capacity and effort. It is therefore that our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has observed that the word of wisdom is the lost property of a Muslim and that he should claim it whenever he finds it and that he should keep open the windows of his mind and heart so that no point of learning that comes to his notice misses its way to the repository of his mind and heart. It is to this expanse of knowledge that the Hadith directs. It is the simple truth that, with an open mind and keen eye, a man of knowledge can learn at times even from a child. It is narrated that once Imam Abū Ḥanīfah (may the Mercy of Allah be on him) on seeing a child playing in rain and mud warned him to watch his step lest he should tumble. The child, turning around retorted that the Imam had better mind his own step, for, if he tumbled, being a leading divine, a whole world must follow suit while in the case of the child, his fall would affect only his person.

Imam Abū Ḥanīfah had a highly intelligent mind that appreciated subtle points. He readily recognised the wisdom of the child's remarks.

In connection with this Hadith, it must be remembered that the use of the word *دَالَّة* [*Dāllah* i.e., lost property] in its text carries the

subtle hint that whatever word of wisdom a Muslim happens to know of, whether he had learnt it before or not, has, in fact, its seed in Islam; it is therefore that it has been so termed, the underlying point is that it was originally the property of the Faithful, but because of being hidden from his view, it had been out of his grip. It is, therefore, the right of the Faithful to annex it as and when he finds it. Not because he has got the chance to take the property of others but because his own lost property has been restored to him. For the same reason, the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has suffixed the word *Dāllah* with the observation *فَهُوَ أَحَقُّ بِهَا* “*And he is most entitled to it.*” In other words, the Faithful have far greater title to it even though it is with others. A little reflection will make it clear that, in truth, Islam is the original source of all verities and wisdom as the Holy Quran claims:

فِيهَا كُتِبَ قَيِّمَةٌ

*“Therein are lasting commandments.”*<sup>32</sup>

It is a pity, however, that few ponder and benefit thereby.

The truth is that whatever the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said is but a detailed version of the Quranic teaching. However, it is evident that what he discovered in it, no one else could and no one would. With Divine support and heaven’s help, he has displayed on the open pages of Aḥādīth what lay embedded in the hidden depths of the Holy Quran. As the material universe has been satisfying the physical needs of the man of every age from the days of Adam (May peace be on him), similarly, the treasure-house of the Holy Quran is unlimited in its bounties of spiritual

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32 The Holy Quran, Ch: 98 (Al-Bayyinah), V: 4

wealth, which are in no danger of being exhausted. It is precisely for this reason that Allah the Excellent says in respect of it:

وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ ۗ وَمَا نُنزِلُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ

*“And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures thereof,  
and We send it not down except in a known measure.”*<sup>33</sup>

That is to say, there are with Him [in the Quran] treasures of spiritual wisdom and knowledge of every kind and that He reveals them in a determined measure in answer to requirements. There is little denying the fact that every truth and point of wisdom is but the lost property of the Faithful, for its seed is already there in the Holy Quran, which is the exclusive property of the Muslim, irrespective of the fact whether he is alive to the worth of its treasure or not.

Would that the world appreciate the value of the Quran and would that it knew the value of the jewels embedded in the *Abādīth* which our chief (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has extracted from the Holy Book for our guidance and benefit. And our last word is that:

*“All praise is due to Allah, the Creator and Lord of the Worlds.”*




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33 The Holy Quran, Ch: 15 (Al-Hijr), V: 22



## THE CONCLUDING PRAYER

This address of mine to the world has come to a close. But man can at best, prepare a frame. It is the domain of God to infuse the soul into it. After concluding this address of mine to the world, therefore, I turn now to my Heavenly Lord, the Possessor of all beauties and of all powers, with this humble prayer:

“O my Lord! I have compiled these forty Aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet (May my soul be dedicated to his service) culling them together from different books, with a sincere motive and a truthful heart. But, without Thy Help and Mercy, my humble effort cannot be worthy of that bliss which descends by Thy command from the heights of Heaven, infusing life in dead bodies, and making of the particles of sand, brilliant stars. Therefore, O my Lord! By Thy Grace and Glory, make this brief work the recipient of Thy eternal and everlasting blessings and may this sacred word of Thy Holy Prophet enlighten the hearts and minds of its readers and be the means of blessing their limbs; may individuals and families alike find through it the way to emancipation and may nations and peoples be helped thereby to prosperity and ascendancy. For though in their appearance, they be plain words, but reflection reveals the numberless measures of reform and progress they embody. And O my Creator and Master, O my God, pray grant me, as well, shelter in the shadow of Thy Grace and Mercy and, by the love of Thy Holy Prophet that Thou hast planted in my poor heart, keep me steadfast in this world, in the teachings that he brought, and, favour me with the coolness of his feet in the Hereafter. Amen! O Most Compassionate of all the Merciful.”





## GLOSSARY

**Aḥādīth** أَحَادِيثُ: Plural of Hadith.

‘Alaihiṣṣalām عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: Peace be on him

**Allah** اللهُ: The one and only God.

‘Amal عَمَلٌ: Deed, Act, Action

A‘māl أَعْمَالٌ: Deeds, Acts, Actions

‘Aqūq عَقُوقٌ: Disobedience

‘Aqūqul-wālidain عَقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ: Disobedience to parents, not paying their due respect, or not treating them with the tenderness of heart and neglecting to look after them.

‘Aṣr عَصْرٌ: Late afternoon formal Islamic worship

**Athar** أَثَرٌ: Remains, relics, signs, traces, footprints

**Āthār** أَثَارٌ: Plural of *athar*.

A‘ẓam أَعْظَمُ: Greatest, the great

**Bhang** بَهَنَگ: Hemp, cannabis

**Chars** چَرَس: Hemp extract, cannabis resin, marijuana, pot

Drachma: A dram

**Fiqh** فِقْهٌ: Jurisprudence

**Firdaus** فِرْدَوْسٌ: Paradise

**Hadith** حَدِيثٌ: Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

**Hadith Da‘īf** حَدِيثٌ ضَعِيفٌ: The Hadith with an unreliable narrator, either in respect of memory or intelligence or integrity, so much so that even if one of the narrators is unreliable, in spite of the rest of them being reliable, the Hadith will be treated as weak (da‘īf).

**Hadith *Fi'li*** حَدِيثٌ فِي لِي: Does not quote any word or statement of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) but narrates some act of his.

**Hadith *Marfū'*** حَدِيثٌ مَرْفُوعٌ: Traces a statement directly to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) without any break in the chain of reporters.

**Hadith *Maudū'*** حَدِيثٌ مَوْضُوعٌ: A Hadith which is proved to have been invented by a lying narrator.

**Hadith *Mauqūf*** حَدِيثٌ مَوْقُوفٌ: Cannot be traced to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) but stops short and does not proceed beyond a particular reporter, but the nature of the Hadith and the tenor and tone of the testimony should warrant the conclusion that the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) must have been heard making the statement.

**Hadith *Munqāṭi'*** حَدِيثٌ مُنْقَطِعٌ: All narrators of this Hadith are reliable in point of (a) memory (b) intelligence and (c) integrity.

**Hadith *Muttaṣil*** حَدِيثٌ مُتَّصِلٌ: The reporters of this Hadith are known and mentioned and are known and placed in serial order, and none of them is found missing or left unidentified.

**Hadith *Qauli*** حَدِيثٌ قَوْلِي: Quotes the words of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) as actually uttered by him.

**Hadith *Qudsi*** حَدِيثٌ قُدْسِي: The Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) ascribes a word or act to God the Excellent,

saying that God had commanded him thus. Such a statement is other than the Quranic revelation.

**Hadith Taqrīri** حَدِيثُ تَقْرِيرِي: Relates neither a statement nor an act of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Instead, it records what a particular person did or said in the presence of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and that he did not forbid him to do or say it.

**Ḥaḍrat** حَضْرَت: A term of respect used to show honour and reverence for a person of established righteousness and piety. The literal meaning is: His/Her Holiness, Worship, Eminence, etc. It is also used for God in the superlative sense.

**Hajj** حَج: Formal pilgrimage to Mecca during appointed time of the year.

**Hājji** (Arabic, Persian), **Hājī** (Urdu) حَاجِي: a person who has performed Hajj, the prescribed pilgrimage to Mecca during its appointed days.

i.e.: That is (an abbreviation of Latin id est.)

**Imam** إِمَام: Leader, chief, guide

**Īmān** إِيْمَان: Faith, belief

**Islam** إِسْلَام: Submission

**inter se**: Among themselves

**'Ishā'** عِشَاء: Late-night formal Islamic worship.

**Jāmi'** جَامِع: Comprehensive, inclusive, universal, generic, general, mosque, compiler, author, writer, typesetter

**Khātaman-Nabiyyīn** خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ: Seal of the prophets. Best of the prophets. Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

**Khatm-e-Nubuwwat** خَتْمُ نُبُوَّتْ: Completion or finality of prophethood.

**Masjid** مَسْجِدْ: Mosque

**Mi'rāj** مِعْرَاجْ: Place or route of ascent, ascent, ladder, stairs. Muhammad's (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) ascent, spiritual journey. The acme of spiritual exaltation.

**Niṣāb** نِصَابْ: Minimum for Zakat levy, course, syllabus, curriculum

**Muḥaddath** مُحَدَّثْ: Recipient of Divine communion.

**Muḥaddith** مُحَدِّثْ: compiler-scholars or editors of Aḥādīth

**Muḥaddithīn** مُحَدِّثِيْنَ: plural of Muḥaddith

**Muhammadi Khātamiyyat** مُحَمَّدِي خَاتَمِيَّتْ: Excellence of the prophethood of Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

**Muthlah** مُثْلَهْ: Mutilation of the dead enemy by cutting off their noses and other limbs.

**Purdah** پُرْدَهْ: Hijab, Niqab, modesty, Purdah, veil, curtain, using a screen or wearing concealing garment used by some Muslim and Hindu women to shield them from the unwanted gaze of men or strangers.

**Qaḍā'** قَضَاْ: Judgement, injunction.

**Qadr** قَدْرْ: Fate, destiny, lot, predestination.

**Qadian** قَادِيَانْ: A town in northwest India where Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (May peace be on him), the Promised Messiah and Mahdi lived.

**Qalb** قَلْبْ: Turning, reversal, transformation, essence, the central point of an organism, heart, mind.

**Qarḍah ḥasanah** قَرْضَه حَسَنَهْ: Debt of honour, debt without interest.

**Qulūb**: Plural of "qalb."

**Rabwah** رَبْوَه: A town established by the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community as its headquarters in Pakistan, located in District Jhang in Punjab, next to River Chenab. Government of Pakistan renamed this town to “Chanab Nagar” on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1999.

**Raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu** رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ: May Allah be pleased with him.

**Raka‘āt** رَكَعَات: Plural of *rak‘at*

**Rak‘at, rak‘ah** رَكَعَة: A section of the prescribed Prayer. plural: raka‘āt

**Ramadan** رَمَضَان: (Ramadhān, Ramadān) Islamic lunar month ascribed for prescribed fasting.

**Ṣaḥīḥ** صَحِيح: Authentic, correct

**Ṣaḥīḥain** صَحِيحَيْن: The two most authentic works of Hadith, Bukhārī and Muslim.

**Sajdah** سَجْدَة: Prostration

**Salat** صَلَاة: Formal Prayer offered according to a prescribed procedure, thus, Ṣalātut-Taḥajjud, Ṣalātul-Fajr, Ṣalātuz-Zuḥr, Ṣalātul-‘Aṣr, Ṣalātul-Maḡhrib, Ṣalātul-‘Ishā.

**Ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam** صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

**Ṣaum** صَوْم: Fasting, fast

**Shafā‘at** شَفَاعَات: Intercession.

**Shariah** شَرِيْعَة: (Islamic) Jurisprudence, divine law, code, law.

**Sharī‘at** شَرِيْعَات: see Shariah.

**Shirk** شِرْك: Association of aught as partner in person and attributes to God.

**Siḥr** سِحْر: Illusion, magic, witchcraft, sorcery, spell, charm

**Ṣaḥābah** صَحَابَة: Companions. Used for the companions of the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and other prophets.

**Sunnah** سنَّه: Practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)

**Sūrah** سُورَة: a chapter of the Holy Quran. There are 114 Sūrahs (chapters)—of various lengths—in the Holy Quran.

**Tab‘a Tābi‘ī** تَبَع تَابِعِي: The generation following the *Tābi‘ī* generation.

**Tābi‘ī** تَابِعِي: The *Tābi‘īn* are the generation of Muslims who met or saw the blessed Companions<sup>ra</sup> of the Holy Prophet<sup>sas</sup> but not the Prophet<sup>sas</sup> himself.

**Tābi‘īn** تَابِعِينَ: Plural of Tābi‘ī.

**Taubah, tauba** تَوْبَة: Repentance

**Tawakkul** تَوَكَّل: Reliance, dependence, trust, confidence.

**Tayammum** تَيَمَّمَ: To wash with clean sand or earth where water is unavailable, dry ablution.

**Ulama/ulema** عُلَمَاء: Scholars (religious). Plural of ‘ālim, a religious scholar.

**‘Ulema**: see ulama

**vis-à-vis** (pronounced veezavee): In regard to, in relation to.

**Wuḍū’** وُضُوء: Ablution. Prescribed washing before Islamic worship.

**Zuhr** ظَهْر: Afternoon Prayer.

**Zakat** زَكَاة: Prescribed alms.



# INDEX

## A

A'ishah 83, 93, 138, 139  
Abdullāh bin Abī Aufā..... 87, 97  
Abraham ..... 26  
Abu 'Ubaidah bin 'Abdullah... 130  
Abu Bakr ..... 149, 152  
Abu Darda' ..... 162  
Abu Dawud ..... 4, 67, 112, 118, 136  
Abu Hurairah.. 33, 41, 45, 79, 103,  
116, 127, 133, 147, 152, 165  
Abu Sa'īd..... 49  
Abu Sufyan ..... 139, 142  
Adam 20, 31, 167  
Alī 152  
America..... 59  
Anas bin Malik ..... 54, 57, 76, 161  
Arabia xiii, 20, 59, 162

## B

Baihaqī 17  
Bilal 149  
Bukhārī 4

Bukhārī.. 3, 4, 7, 23, 30, 38, 45, 54,  
57, 61, 71, 79, 93, 104, 121,  
133, 147, 155, 158, 175  
Buraidah..... 100

## C

China 162  
Christian ..... 1, 72, 131

## D

Day of Resurrection..... xiv, 17, 82  
Dhul-Hajj..... 26

## E

Europe 59

## F

Faith  
six articles of ..... 19  
Fast (Saum) xiv, 23, 27, 28, 40, 45,  
47, 48, 175  
Fiqh 6, 7, 171

## G

Gabriel 93, 94

## H

Hadīth

categories of narrators ..... 3

definition of ..... 1

difference between Hadīth and  
Sunnah ..... 13

method of narration ..... 2

standard works of ..... 3

**Hajj** 173

Hakīm bin Hizam ..... 151

Hindu 72, 131

Husband. 39, 55, 80, 81, 83, 84, 87,  
88, 89, 159

## I

Ibn ‘Umar 22, 61, 67, 118, 141, 144,  
150, 158Ibn Majah 6, 76, 87, 130, 141, 144,  
161

Imam Abu Hanifah ..... 7, 166

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal ..... 7

Imam Malik ..... 6, 7, 150

Imām Shāfi‘ī ..... 7

Ishmael ..... 27

Islam

five pillars of ..... 22

## J

Jabir bin ‘Abdullah ..... 29, 83, 112

Jihad 50, 64, 65, 66, 97

## M

Marvah ..... 26

Mecca xiii, 26, 142, 154, 155

Medina xiii, 6, 30, 33, 34, 35, 128,  
138, 152, 162

Minā 26

Mu’atta 6, 7, 150

*Muslah* 101, 174Muslim 4, 19, 33, 41, 49, 97, 101,  
116

Musnad Aḥmad ..... 7, 125

Muzdalifah ..... 26

## N

Nasā‘ī 4, 5

Nisab 25, 174

Nu‘man bin Bashīr ..... 121

## P

- Pilgrimage (Hajj) .. xiv, 22, 26, 27,  
40, 47, 117, 173  
Prayer (Salat).....xiv, 13, 14, 22, 23,  
24, 25, 31, 39, 45, 47, 48,  
175, 176

## Q

- Qardah Hasanah**.....174  
**Quraish** ..... 82, 152

## R

- Ramadan ..... 45

## S

- Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas..... 154, 155  
Şafā 26  
Sahl bin Sa'd.....90  
Sajdah 88  
*Shafa'at*..... 31, 175  
Shirk 71, 72, 73, 74, 104, 105,  
110, 175  
*Sihr* 105, 106, 110, 175  
Sunnah 176

- difference between Hadith and  
Sunnah .....13

## T

- Tab'a Tabi'i* ..... 3, 14, 176  
*Tabi'i* 3, 14, 176  
Tariq bin Shihab ..... 64  
Taubah..... 130, 131, 132, 176  
Tawakkul.....156, 176  
Tirmidhi .....4  
Tirmidhi ..... 4, 83, 90, 165

## U

- Umar 19, 152

## W

- Wabişa bin Ma'bad ..... 124  
Wife 39, 55, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84,  
85, 88, 89, 138, 159  
Wuḍū 23, 176

## Z

- Zakat (obligatory almsgiving) xiv,  
22, 25, 26, 47, 145, 174,  
176

