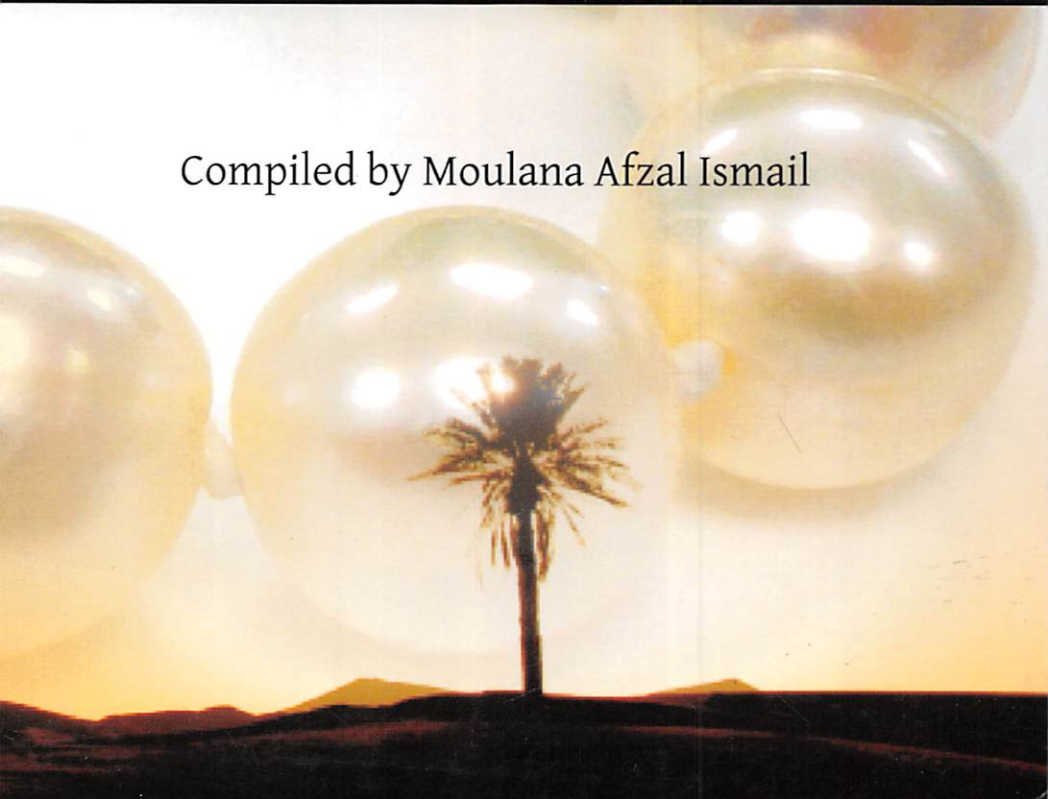


Volume 1

Pearls from the Path

Fascinating Anecdotes from Islamic History

Compiled by Moulana Afzal Ismail



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. And
peace, blessings and salutations be upon His Prophet,
Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ.*

Pearls from the Path

A Collection of Anecdotes and Stories from
Islamic History.

Volume One



Compiled by
MOULANA AFZAL ISMAIL



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لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

*Indeed, in their stories there is a lesson
for men of understanding.*

- Sūrah Yūsuf, verse 111

Transliteration Key

أ - 'a

آ - ā

ب - b

ت - t

ث - th

ج - j

ح - ḥ

خ - kh

د - d

ذ - dh

ر - r

ز - z

س - s

ش - sh

ص - ṣ

ض - ḍ

ط - ṭ

ظ - ṣ

ع - 'a, 'a, 'i, 'u

غ - gh

ف - f

ق - q

ك - k

ل - l

م - m

ن - n

و - ū

ه - h

ي - y, ī

ﷻ - Used after the name of Allāh, translated as, "Praise be to Allāh Who is pure and elevated."

ﷺ - Used after the name of Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ, translated as, "May Allāh's peace and blessing be upon him."

ﷺ - Used after the name of a prophet of Allāh, translated as, "May Allāh's peace be upon him."

رضي الله عنه - Used after the name of a Ṣaḥābī (companion) of Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ, translated as, "May Allāh be pleased with him / her."

رضي الله عنهم - Used after the names of more than one Ṣaḥābī (companion) of Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ, translated as, "May Allāh be pleased with them."

رحمته الله - Used after the name of a pious person, translated as, "May Allāh's mercy be upon him / her."

Contents

Transliteration Key	6
Foreword	12
<i>by Muftī Muhammed Saeed Motara حفظه الله</i>	12
Foreword	14
<i>by Muftī Ebrahim Desai حفظه الله</i>	14
Foreword	15
<i>by Maulāna Ebrahim Bham حفظه الله</i>	15
Foreword	16
<i>by Maulānā Hassen S Dockrat حفظه الله</i>	16
Foreword	17
<i>by Prof Ziyad Motala</i>	17
Preface	19
Preface to the First Printing	19
The Pearl Necklace	23
Graves of Ṣaḥābah ﷺ Opened	25
No Escape from Death	26
A Saint Deceived by the Devil	28
Juraij is tested	31
Power of Sūrah Yāsīn	32
<i>Migration to Madīnah</i>	32
<i>Imām Qurtubī's Escape</i>	33
Enthusiasm for Islamic Knowledge	34
A Valuable Du'ā' for Protection	36
<i>True Indeed</i>	36
<i>Uncompromising Faith</i>	36
A Pious Union Produces Pious Children	37
A Brave Muslim Mother	38
Muslim Scholar of Profound Knowledge	40
Scrupulous Muslim Rulers	41
Honour Through Islam	42
Unchallenged Beauty of the Qur'ān	44
Respect for Ḥadīth	46
<i>More Respect for Ḥadīth than for Kings</i>	46
<i>Stung Sixteen Times</i>	47

CONTENTS

Excellence of Qaṣīdah Burdah	48
Vain Attempt to Steal the Body of Nabī ﷺ	50
Concern for Fellow Muslims	51
<i>Pretending to be Deaf</i>	51
<i>A Word of Regret</i>	52
Greed for Wealth	53
Young Girl Inspires a Scholar	55
The Great Mufassir - 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ	57
<i>In-depth Knowledge</i>	57
<i>Sound Understanding</i>	58
<i>Blessed Link</i>	59
Morality versus Promiscuity	60
The Qur'ān - A Truly Remarkable Book	62
<i>Recite With Respect and Devotion</i>	62
<i>How Much of Qur'ān do the Pious Recite?</i>	62
<i>Effect of Excessive Qur'ānic Recitation</i>	63
<i>Upon Completing the Qur'ān</i>	63
Intense Trial of a Saint	63
Paying More than the Seller Asks	68
When the Fire did not Burn	69
<i>The story of Ibrāhīm ؑ</i>	69
<i>The story of Abū Muslim Khawlānī ؓ</i>	70
Imām Abū Yūsuf's ؓ Last Moments	72
A Woman Who Spoke from the Qur'ān for Forty Years	73
Wisdom Conquers	82
<i>Amazing Insight</i>	82
<i>Avoid the Shame</i>	82
<i>Kind Manners</i>	83
Acid Test of Wealth	83
Honesty Beyond Measure	86
Justice of Islam Wins Hearts	86
A Pious Couple	88
Islam Overcomes Pagan Culture	89
Compassion for Creation	90
<i>Return the Chicks</i>	90
<i>Fuṣṭāṭ - The Tent City</i>	90

CONTENTS

Sincere Man seeks Divine Reward	92
The Qur'ān is Divinely Protected	93
Tears of Ṣalāḥuddīn رضى الله عنه Overpower the Enemy	94
Islamic Justice Converts Enemy	95
Excellence of Durūd	96
Glimpses from the life of 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رضى الله عنه	97
<i>Amazing Integrity</i>	97
<i>Simplicity</i>	97
<i>Concern for Humanity</i>	98
<i>Devotion</i>	98
<i>Trustworthiness</i>	98
<i>Justice</i>	99
<i>Humility</i>	99
<i>Kindness</i>	99
Sincere Repentance is Rewarded	100
Sincerity Removes Obstacles	101
Love for the Master رضى الله عنه	103
A Fire-Worshipper Embraces Islam	105
'Umar رضى الله عنه Embraces Islam	108
Cure for Poverty	111
Muslims in the Court of Rustam	112
Truth Scores a Magnificent Victory	115
A Drunkard is Guided	116
Alarming Outcome of Disbelief	118
Optional Ḥaj or Charity?	120
<i>Assisting the Destitute</i>	120
<i>Angel Deputed to Perform Ḥaj</i>	121
Thirst for Islamic Knowledge	122
Allāh رضى الله عنه is the Best of Planners	124
Human Being is the Best of Creation	126
Sacrifice of 'Ulamā' in Pursuit of Knowledge	128
<i>Hunger</i>	128
<i>Seventeen Year Separation from Family</i>	128
Marriages with a Difference	130
<i>Belief in Taqdīr (Predestination)</i>	130
<i>A Wise Woman</i>	131

CONTENTS

Glimpses from the Life of Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله	132
<i>Mother's Du'ā'</i>	132
<i>Business Integrity</i>	132
<i>Humility</i>	132
<i>Kindness</i>	133
<i>A Handsome Investment</i>	133
<i>Amazing Memory</i>	133
<i>Astounding Intellect</i>	134
<i>Qur'ānic Recitation in Ramaḍān</i>	134
<i>Devotion in Ṣalāh</i>	135
<i>Simplicity in Food</i>	135
<i>Honesty and Generosity</i>	135
<i>Blessed Grave</i>	136
Enemy is Pardoned	136
A Female Muftī	138
Who is Dajjāl?	139
Effect of Ṣadaqah	142
A Contented Wife	143
A Wise Woman	144
Good Neighbours	145
<i>Amazing Asking Price for a House</i>	145
<i>Concern for a Sinful Neighbour</i>	145
A Deal Turns Sour	147
Transformed into an Ape	149
The Wisdom of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله	152
<i>Recovering Stolen Goods</i>	152
<i>Refreshing the Memory</i>	152
<i>Who Should Speak first: Husband or Wife?</i>	153
<i>Marital Relations in Ramaḍān</i>	154
<i>Six Mistakes</i>	154
<i>Continue to Seek Knowledge</i>	155
<i>A Wise Proposal</i>	156
<i>Solution to a Complex Matter</i>	156
<i>Respecting his Mother's Wishes</i>	157
The Curse of Wine	158
Better than a Servant	159

CONTENTS

Allāh's ﷻ Help Comes in Amazing Ways	161
Adventures of a Student of Ḥadīth	162
Proficient Muslim Women	164
<i>Muslim Woman Corrects Judge</i>	164
<i>Slave Girl Deciphers the Clue</i>	165
<i>Pious Woman Explains the Verses of Ḥijāb</i>	166
Ṣadaqah Rewarded before Death	167
Mu'adh-dhin Dies as a Disbeliever	169
Yūnus ibn 'Ubaid - The Honest Trader	170
<i>Generosity in Trade</i>	170
<i>Honesty</i>	170
<i>Business Integrity</i>	171
Patience is Rewarded	172
An Unfortunate End	174
The Daughter of Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab رضى الله عنه	176
Bibliography	180

Foreword

by Muftī Muhammed Saeed Motara حفظه الله
Dārul Iftā, Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville

Alḥamdulillāh, I had the good fortune of perusing and paging through the book, “Pearls from the Path”, compiled by Moulana Afzal Saheb (may Allāh Ta’āla protect him and accept him for the service of His Deen).

Due to time constraints, I could not read the entire book word for word. However, I have managed to peruse a substantial portion of the book randomly from various places and have found its contents to be beneficial and inspiring. The compiler has put a great deal of effort into the compilation of this book and has burnt the proverbial midnight oil in making this work reach completion and fruition.

The anecdotes mentioned throughout the book about our pious predecessors will, Insha-Allah, prove spiritually uplifting for its readers. Hadhrat Shaikhul-Hadeeth, Moulana Muhammed Zakariyya Saheb rahimahullah used to encourage those who were spiritually connected with him, and also all Muslims in general, to go into the annals of history and read the biographies of our pious predecessors. The reason for this advice was obvious; that incidents from the lives of these Islamic luminaries and beacons of *Hidāyat*¹ would serve as an incentive for us to better ourselves and correct our lifestyles, so that we too may realize the purpose of our short sojourn on earth and gain recognition of our Creator.

The compiler has, after relating the anecdotes, also provided the original sources of the anecdotes, thereby augmenting the value of the compilation. He has furthermore put the cherry on top by succinctly explaining the lessons and morals that may be derived from the relevant anecdotes.

I personally feel that this compilation is worthy of complementing the curriculum of our Madrasahs and Maktabas, as it would be an interesting and appealing way for children to learn Islamic values and morals.

1 Guidance from Allāh ﷻ.

May Allāh Ta'āla crown the compiler's efforts with acceptance and make it a means of *Hidāyat* and inspiration for the entire Ummat at large. Āmīn.

Muhammed Saeed Motara
Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville
4 Sha'baan 1430 / 27 July 2009

Foreword

by Muftī Ebrahim Desai حفظه الله

Dārul Iftā Madrasah In'āmiyyah – Camperdown

In this day and age, when due to the influx of western thought, philosophy and culture, hearts have become rusted, reading the stories and anecdotes contained in this book with sincerity, devotion and continuity will assist in reviving and rejuvenating one's spirituality. These chronicles will prove beneficial for one and all. Such narratives will rekindle the spiritual connection in both young and old, novice and expert, student and teacher, to our pious predecessors. It will prove extremely beneficial if families set aside a specific time during the night to collectively read some of these stories and reflect on the high standards of piety set in our devout tradition. Furthermore, it would also be advisable for the Imāms of the various Masājid to read from the collection of these anecdotes to their respective congregations on a regular basis in order to inspire their hearts towards a more spiritual and righteous life. May Allāh Ta'āla accept the efforts of Maulānā Afzal Ismail and reward him abundantly for his sacrifices and may Allāh Ta'āla also reward Muftī Muḥammad Minty Sāheb of Dārul Iftā Maẓāhir al-'Ulūm al-Islamiyyah – Johannesburg, for inspiring Maulānā Afzal Ismail Sāheb and being influential and instrumental in the compilation of this invaluable anthology. Āmīn.

(Muftī) Ebrahim Desai

Dārul Iftā Madrasah In'āmiyyah – Camperdown

Foreword

by Maulāna Ebrahim Bham حفظه الله

Secretary, Jamiatul 'Ulamā, Fordsburg

One of the ways the Qurān presents its message of truth, inspiration, reminders and lessons, is through the stories of great personalities like the Ambiyā ﷺ. The Qurān thus relates many stories and incidents from which profound lessons emerge to guide humanity.

One of the reasons for this is that a story can convey a message with greater impact than only the formal pronouncement of an edict or command. Stories also provide advice and direction regarding how we should lead our lives and warnings of what to avoid.

Stories and incidents of great people of the past are also part of history, and the Qur'ān instructs us to learn from history. Almighty Allāh says, "So relate the stories of the past, perhaps people may reflect." (Sūrah Aa'rāf, verse 176) and "Verily in the incidents of the past there is a lesson for men of understanding." (Sūrah Yūsuf, verse 111)

Stories and incidents also play an important role in stirring one's emotions, shaping one's thought-patterns, stimulating one's intellect and strengthening one's beliefs. Alluding to these benefits, the Qur'ān states, "And all that We relate to you of the incidents of the Messengers is in order to strengthen your heart upon the truth. (Sūrah Hūd, verse 120).

Keeping the above in mind, Maulānā Afzal Ismail, an extremely talented young scholar, who has previously written a very thought-provoking book, *Islam and Sport*, has done the Ummah a great service by presenting incidents and stories from Islamic history that will, Inshā-Allāh, encapsulate all of the benefits of inspirational stories. He has further enhanced the book by enumerating some of the lessons after every incident.

May the Almighty Allāh crown his endeavours with success and acceptance and allow the readers to draw valuable insights and lessons to apply in their day to day life. (Āmīn)

Maulānā Ebrahim Bham

Foreword

by Maulānā Hassen S Dockrat حفظه الله

Senior Ustādh of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth, Jāmi'ah al-'Ulūm al-Islamiyya, Fordsburg

All praise is due to Allāh alone and peace and salutations be on our Master, Nabī ﷺ.

The Holy Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are replete with anecdotes, stories and narratives. The primary objective of mentioning such narratives, etc., is to draw lessons from them in shaping our own lives. The Qur'ān tells us that those who believe do appreciate the intense meaning of these narratives. Hence, Allāh says:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ

Scholars sometimes spend a great amount of time just elaborating on a single anecdote. People's lives have been transformed on hearing sensible and thought-provoking anecdotes.

The compilation of anecdotes, tales, narratives, etc., is not a new phenomenon to Muslims. Indeed, it forms a large part of Islamic literature, both classical and modern. The names of 'Allāmah Ibn al-Jawzī, in Arabic, and Shaikh Jalāluddīn Ar-Rūmī, in Persian, come immediately to mind. The book in your hand is another addition to this vast treasure. The compiler, Maulānā Afzal Ismail, who is also a qualified pharmacist, has gathered narratives pertaining to various aspects of life. The language is clear and lucid and easy to understand. The anecdotes are not long and tiresome and they make enjoyable and thought-provoking reading at the same time. To further simplify matters, the compiler assists us in understanding the moral of each narrative.

May Allāh Almighty accept this presentation and make it a means of guidance for us. May He reward the compiler and inspire him to continue revealing to us the pearls strewn on the path of history.

Maulānā Hassen S Dockrat

21 Rabīul Ākhir 1429 / 17 April 2009

Foreword

by Prof Ziyad Motala

Professor of Law, Howard University School of Law

In this text, *Pearls from the Path, A Collection of Anecdotes and Stories from Islamic History*, the compiler, Afzal Ismail, offers enriching and uplifting anecdotes and lessons from some of the great luminaries of Islam. The examples offered cover a wide variety of subjects. It offers the reader concrete examples of what are appropriate actions, choices and behaviour (as exemplified by some of the greatest luminaries of Islam) when faced with challenges in a variety of different contexts, be it distractions which detract from the belief in Allah, persevering in the path of the Almighty, choices in business dealings, kindness to parents, morality, honesty, seeking of knowledge, respect for the prophets and the pious, and a variety of other activities and challenges which individuals encounter in their daily lives.

In this day and age, where society is bombarded with a host of stimuli aided and abetted by the media and modern telecommunications which extol questionable role models such as Hollywood/Bollywood actors and sports personalities, this easy to read compilation presents us with true role models whose examples exemplify the true meaning of the Quran and the Sunnah. The examples offered are very practical and illustrate that we cannot live by our own belief systems or the belief systems based on materialism, avarice or passion. The anecdotes ultimately demonstrate that there is an essential and important choice to be made between self-serving decisions versus a system of decision making directed towards the pleasing of Allah. One learns from the lessons of the pious luminaries when confronted by difficulty and hard decisions, following the path required of Allah and his Rasuls (as illustrated by the various anecdotes) ultimately results in the best resolution of what at the time appears as difficult or impossible choices. The compilation also reinforces the principle that learning from our pious predecessors is a key part of strengthening and protecting the practice of Islam.

It is a succinct compilation and makes for easy reading. However, the anecdotes are broad ranging and the lessons to be learned from these examples are thought provoking and of immense value to all those seeking to live and better understand the concept of abiding faith in Allah and His chosen path. This compilation will hopefully make a tangible impression in inspiring its readers to channel their behaviour in the direction of making appropriate choices, and achieving the positive results that the Almighty ultimately requires of humanity.

Prof Ziyad Motala

Preface

With the grace of Allāh ﷻ, many people have expressed their appreciation for the first volume of *Pearls from the Path*. In this, the second reprint, a few minor changes have been made to the text. May Allāh ﷻ accept our humble efforts and guide us towards true success in this world and the Hereafter.

Afzal Ismail

27 Jumādal Ula 1431 / 12 May 2010

Preface to the First Printing

All praise belongs to Allāh ﷻ, the Creator, Nourisher and Sustainer of the universe. Peace, blessings and salutations be upon the best of Allāh's ﷻ creation, our master and leader, Nabī¹ ﷺ.

Anecdotes, narratives, tales and experiences of the past play an important role in shaping the mind, disciplining the soul and reforming character. The soul of man derives motivation from anecdotes of the pious. Abstract concepts and ideas become understandable when illustrated by anecdotes.

The Qur'ān makes extensive use of anecdotes. Allāh ﷻ explains the value of anecdotes at several places in the Qur'ān.

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

“Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding.”

(Sūrah Yūsuf, verse 111)

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ

1 Nabī literally means prophet, however, when mentioned together with ﷺ it commonly refers to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.

قَبْلَهُ لِمَنِ الْغَافِلِينَ

“We relate to you (O Nabī ﷺ) the best of stories through Our revelations to you, of this Qur’ān. And before this (revelation), you were among those who did not know about it.”

(Sūrah Yūsuf, verse 3)

فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“So relate the stories so that they may reflect.”

(Sūrah Al-Aa’rāf, verse 176)

وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُنَبِّئُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ

“And all that We relate to you (O Nabī ﷺ) regarding the news of the prophets is to make your heart strong and firm thereby.”

(Sūrah Hūd, verse 120)

Abul Qāsim al-Junaid رحمه الله was asked regarding the anecdotes of the pious. He replied,

هِيَ جُنْدٌ مِنْ جُنُودِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى يَقُومُ بِهَا أَحْوَالُ الْمُرِيدِينَ وَيُحْيِي بِهَا مَعَالِمَ أَسْرَارِ
الْعَارِفِينَ وَيَسْجِي بِهَا خَوَاطِرَ الْمُحِبِّينَ وَيُجْرِي بِهَا دُمُوعَ الْمُشْتَاقِينَ

“Anecdotes are from amongst the armies of Allāh ﷻ. Through them the conditions of adherents are corrected, the secret features of those who recognise (Allāh ﷻ) are brought to life, the thoughts of the lovers (of Allāh ﷻ) are aroused and the tears of the desirous seekers flow.”¹

The books of Islamic history and biographies are replete with narratives. Man cannot move back in time, but he can certainly reflect and ponder over those glorious days of Muslim greatness. A poet aptly mentions,

1 Nuzhatul Majālis Wa Muntakhabun Nafā’is, p 2

فَاتَنِّي أَنْ أَرَى الدِّيَارَ بِطَرَفِي ... فَلَعَلِّي أَعْي الدِّيَارَ بِسَمْعِي

*"I have not had the opportunity to observe those cities with my eyes
Perhaps I can imagine those cities by listening to the tales."*

The title, *Pearls from the Path*, was chosen to combine two complimentary concepts. "Pearls" refers to the selection of anecdotes from the vast ocean that they have been extracted from, and "Path" refers to the passage of Islamic history.

The anecdotes mentioned have been gathered and penned for a number of key objectives: Firstly, the reader is invited to appreciate the extensive legacy that has been left by the great luminaries of Islam. Their moral fibre, enthusiasm, knowledge, focus, dynamism and sacrifice have made a remarkable contribution to the human race.

Secondly, it is hoped that these narratives will instil a sense of hope amongst the youth, so that they may realise the superiority of the Islamic spirit over western and other cultures.

Thirdly, each anecdote is intended to set a benchmark of moral greatness towards which people of understanding may aspire.

Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, these anecdotes should stimulate reflection towards the idea that the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah¹ were the fountains of knowledge that changed the course of humanity. The *Ṣaḥābah* (companions of Nabī) and pious Muslims who followed them, were successful because they practised upon the noble morals and values encouraged by Allāh and His Nabī. These sources of knowledge are still available, in their pristine purity, to humanity today.

As this is primarily a compilation of short stories, complex and technical definitions of Islamic terms have been avoided. Where necessary, a concise explanation is provided as part of the text. Where a more detailed explanation was required, it has been included in a footnote, to avoid a break in the flow of the story.

Regarding the sources of reference, an earnest attempt has been made to trace each of the narrations from authentic Arabic sources. This

1 Acts which Nabī did or sanctioned.

has been done in the overwhelming majority of cases. Exceptions to this, are a few extracts from Urdu and English and are accordingly referenced. Where an incident has been found in more than one Arabic source, the first reference has been mentioned in full.

I am sincerely grateful to all those who assisted in this project, especially my beloved teachers, Muftī Muhammed Saeed Motara, Maulānā Hasan Docrat, Muftī Muhammad Abubakr Minty, Maulānā Ebrahim Muhammad and Maulānā Ziyad Husain for their inspiration and guidance; Muftī Husain Kadodia for his invaluable assistance with the translation and verification; all the esteemed scholars who kindly penned forewords to the work; Muftī Muhammad Seedat, Maulānā Husain Nosarka, Brother Ismail Bhula, Sister Tahira Seedat and Sister Hafsa Amod for the proof-reading; Maulānā Abdur Rahman Mangera and Ebrahim Patel for their advice on the layout; Maulānā Aḥmad Data for his assistance in the bibliography; my wife for her encouragement and ideas and all those who assisted in other ways. May Allāh ﷻ reward them all abundantly in this world and the Hereafter for rendering their invaluable assistance towards the accomplishment of this project.

May Allāh ﷻ accept this truly humble effort and make it a source of salvation for me, my parents, family, teachers and well-wishers. And from Allāh ﷻ do we seek strength and assistance.

Afzal Ismail

21 Safar 1430 / 17 February 2009



The Pearl Necklace

Qāḍī Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdul Bāqī ibn Muḥammad al-Bazzāz al-Anṣārī gives an account of his life: “I was a student in Makkah. One day, I was very hungry and could not find anything to stave off my hunger. On my way home, I found a small velvet pouch neatly tied with a tassel. I picked it up and returned home with it. Upon opening it, I found a beautiful pearl necklace, the like of which I had never seen before.

I later went out and saw an old man with five hundred dīnārs in a cloth, crying out loudly, “This is the reward for the one who returns to me a pouch with a pearl necklace.”

I thought to myself, “I am in need and extremely hungry. I can benefit from this reward by returning the purse to the old man.”

I approached him and said, “Come with me!”

I led him to my house. He described to me the pouch and tassel, the pearls, the number of beads in the necklace and the cord it was strung with. I took out the pouch and gave it to him. He handed the five hundred dīnārs to me.

I refused to accept the reward, saying, “It was necessary for me to return the pouch to you without any reward.” He insisted that I take it, but I refused.

After a time, I left Makkah and travelled by sea. The vessel carrying us was wrecked and many passengers drowned. I managed to hold onto a piece of the floating vessel and continued to float on the ocean, not knowing where I was destined to end up. I finally drifted to an island inhabited by Muslims. I went to one of their masājīd¹ and began reciting the Qur’ān. When they heard me, a number of them requested that I teach them to recite the Qur’ān correctly. I commenced teaching them, and was remunerated well for my services.

1 Plural of masjid.

One day, I noticed a few pages of a Qur'ān in the masjid. I picked them up in order to peruse them. When the people saw me, they asked if I could write. I replied in the affirmative and they requested me to teach them. Soon many of them brought along their children to me, so that I could teach them as well. This occupation made me completely independent.

After some time, they requested that I marry an orphan girl from amongst them. I refused, but they insisted, and I finally agreed to their request. After the *nikāh* (marriage) had been performed, she was brought to me. I could not remove my gaze from her, because I saw the same pearl necklace, that I had found many years ago, around her neck.

The people said to me, "O Shaikh, you will break the heart of this girl by staring at her necklace instead of looking at her."

I narrated the story of the necklace to them and they shouted out the *takbīr*¹ loudly. I asked them what the matter was, and they replied, "The man who had taken the necklace from you, was the father of this girl and he used to say regarding you : 'I never met a more truthful Muslim. May Allāh ﷻ bring him to us so that I could marry him to my daughter!' This *du'ā'* (supplication) of his has now been fulfilled."

I lived with my wife and was blessed with two sons from her. She finally passed away and I, together with my two sons, inherited her necklace. Later, my two sons also passed away and I became the sole owner of the necklace. I eventually sold it for a hundred thousand *dīnārs*.²



Honesty must form the core of human interaction to create a sound society.



Allāh ﷻ provides from sources that man cannot comprehend.



1 A proclamation in Arabic which means that Allāh ﷻ is the Greatest.

2 Adh-Dhail 'Alā Ṭabaqātīl Ḥanābilah, vol 1, p 443; Ṣafhāt Min Ṣabril 'Ulamā' p 74



Graves of Ṣaḥābah ﷺ Opened

In 1929, King Faiṣal of 'Irāq saw a dream in which he was advised by two Ṣaḥābah (companions of Nabī ﷺ), Ḥudhaifah ibn Yamān ؓ and 'Abdullāh ibn Jābir ؓ, to move their graves, as water from the river Tigris was seeping into them. The king commanded that an area between the graves and the river be dug open to ascertain the truth of the matter. They, however, found no sign of water in the graves. The king, therefore, dismissed the dream.

But, the king saw the same dream a number of times again and it began to worry him. He gathered the 'Ulamā' (scholars) of 'Irāq and narrated his dream to them. One of the 'Ulamā' present mentioned that he too had seen the same dream. After deliberation and consultation, it was decided that the graves of these two great Ṣaḥābah be opened. If water was indeed seeping into their graves, then the bodies would have to be moved to a new location.

As it was the first time in the history of Islam that the graves of Ṣaḥābah were to be opened under such circumstances, the 'Irāqī Government made elaborate preparations for this momentous event. A date was decided upon, and it was publicised accordingly, so that people could attend. Incidentally, the date was close to the period of ḥaj. When the news reached Makkah and Madīnah, people who were on ḥaj requested that the date be reset for a later time so that they could attend as well. The event was then reset to a later date.

Many people from 'Irāq and other areas arrived on the stipulated date and the graves were opened. Amazingly, after thirteen centuries, their bodies were completely fresh and intact. A non-Muslim eye-specialist, who witnessed the proceedings, confirmed that the special glow, which normally disappears a few moments after a person dies, was still noticeable in the eyes of both Ṣaḥābah. On seeing this, he accepted Islam.

An area close to the grave of Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ was prepared. The bodies were raised from the graves and moved to their new abodes of rest. Many people present were fortunate enough to assist in carrying the blessed bodies to their respective graves.

Many non-Muslims, who witnessed this miracle, accepted Islam.¹



Occasionally, Allāh ﷻ shows man such miraculous signs. Allāh ﷻ mentions in the Qur'ān:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ

“We will show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves until it becomes manifest to them that this (religion) is the truth.”

(Sūrah Fuṣṣilat, verse 53)



Incidents of this nature strengthen the Īmān (faith) of a believer in the greatness of Allāh ﷻ and the truth of Islam.



No Escape from Death

There was once a woman who gave birth to a baby girl and, thereafter, instructed her caretaker to ignite a fire. As he was leaving to comply with the order, a person² suddenly appeared and asked him, “What has this woman given birth to?”

¹ Jahāne Dīdā, p 55-58

² Probably a pious person blessed with *ilhām* (spiritual insight) or an angel disguised as a human being.

The caretaker replied that she had given birth to a girl.

The person said to the caretaker, "This girl will commit *zinā* (illicit sexual relations) one hundred times and will finally be killed by a spider."

The caretaker immediately returned, and cut open the stomach of the baby girl. Thinking that she had died, he quickly left the place. The mother, however, stitched the stomach together and the girl survived. She grew up to be so beautiful, that no woman in the city could be compared to her. In the meantime, the caretaker who had fled, settled close to the sea to earn his livelihood. After sometime, he decided to return to the city to marry. On his way back, he met an old woman and mentioned to her that he wished to marry a woman who excelled all others in beauty. The old woman advised him to marry a specific woman who was very beautiful. He tried his best to win her hand, and eventually married her.

The young bride asked her husband, who he was and where he had come from. He replied that he was once an inhabitant of the city, but fled to the sea after cutting open the stomach of a young baby girl. After hearing his story, she exclaimed that she was the very same girl and showed him her stomach, which had the signs of the cut.

The man retorted, "If you are the very same girl, then I have two things to say to you. Firstly, you will commit *zinā* a hundred times."

The girl agreed, "I have committed *zinā* as you have said, but I cannot remember the number of times."

The man continued, "Secondly, you will be killed by a spider."

He then built her a splendid house, where there was no chance of finding even a spider web. One day, they were relaxing, and her sight fell upon a spider on a wall. She asked her husband, "Is this the spider you had warned me about?"

"Yes," he replied.

She jumped up, saying, "Let me kill it immediately." She managed to get it onto the floor and began trampling upon it. The spider was killed, but some of its poison was absorbed through her skin, leading to her death.¹

1 Tafsīr ibn Kathīr, *Sūrah Nisā'*, verse 78; Ma'āriful Qur'ān



Man cannot flee from death. The Qur'ān says:

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ

“Wherever you are, death will find you even though you may be in fortified palaces.” (Sūrah Nisā', verse 78)



A Saint Deceived by the Devil

Barṣīṣā was a very pious monk. He had devoted himself to the worship of Allāh ﷻ for seventy years, during which period he had completely kept himself aloof from sin. *Iblīs*¹, was not pleased with this and decided to gather his most wretched *Shayāṭīn*² and recruited the most deceitful from amongst them to mislead Barṣīṣā. The wicked *Shaiṭān* dressed up in the garb of a pious person and appeared before Barṣīṣā, while he was engaged in worship in his monastery. He first called out to Barṣīṣā but was ignored. Barṣīṣā used to raise his head from worship once every ten days and used to fast for many days at a time. *Shaiṭān* then went into the monastery and engaged himself in prayer with astounding devotion. Barṣīṣā began noticing his extreme sacrifice in worship and decided to get some clarification from him. *Shaiṭān* explained that he wanted to worship in the company of Barṣīṣā and learn from him.

Barṣīṣā continued with his worship, and so did *Shaiṭān*. Barṣīṣā continued to notice how *Shaiṭān* exerted himself in worship. *Shaiṭān* again requested that Barṣīṣā allow him to join him in worship. Barṣīṣā agreed,

1 The chief devil.

2 Plural of *Shaiṭān* (devil).

and they engaged themselves in prayer and fasting for many days at a time. Soon, *Shaiṭān* won over the confidence of Barṣīṣā and taught him a few words which could cure the sick and insane. *Shaiṭān* then went back to *Iblīs* and reported that he had succeeded in overpowering the pious monk.

Shaiṭān then went to another man, and began strangling him. Dressed as a common person, he approached the man's family and advised them to go to Barṣīṣā, who had a "cure" for the man's "insanity". When the man was brought to Barṣīṣā, he recited the words taught to him by *Shaiṭān* and the man was "cured".

Shaiṭān soon began inflicting other people with the same "illness" and directed them to Barṣīṣā, who would "cure" them. Then, he did the same to a young girl from the family of the king of that time. The girl had three brothers. Disguised as a physician, *Shaiṭān* instructed them to take her and leave her in the monastery of Barṣīṣā, but they refused, saying that he, being a pious person, would not allow her to stay with him. *Shaiṭān* proposed a second plan in case Barṣīṣā refused. He advised, that they build a monastery close to his monastery and leave her therein. They agreed. Barṣīṣā, as predicted, refused to keep the girl. So, they built another monastery in close proximity to his and left her there.

One day, as Barṣīṣā completed his prayers, he noticed the young girl and was taken aback by her beauty. *Shaiṭān* began strangling her, and Barṣīṣā immediately left his worship and commenced reciting the words of "cure" for her. She was "cured" and Barṣīṣā returned to his devotions. But, *Shaiṭān* again strangled her and made her expose her body to Barṣīṣā. Then, *Shaiṭān* came to Barṣīṣā and began whispering to him, "Fulfil your desires with the young girl! You will never find another like her. You can repent again thereafter."

He continued persuading Barṣīṣā, to such an extent, that he finally left his worship and fulfilled his desires with the girl. She became pregnant with his child. *Shaiṭān* again came to Barṣīṣā and said, "Your evil deed will be exposed. The only choice you have is to kill her. When her brothers return and ask about her, say to them that *Shaiṭān* inflicted her with 'insanity' and took her away."

Barṣīṣā accepted the idea, killed the young girl, and buried her during the darkness of night. *Shaiṭān* then appeared to the brothers in a dream and revealed to them that Barṣīṣā had fulfilled his desires with the young girl and killed her. They did not believe the dream, but asked Barṣīṣā for clarification. Barṣīṣā insisted that *Shaiṭān* had taken her. *Shaiṭān* again appeared to the brothers in a dream, and directed them to the spot where their sister had been buried.

When they dug open the grave, they found their sister and realised that Barṣīṣā had deceived them. They led him to the king and Barṣīṣā confessed to his evil deed. The command was given for Barṣīṣā to be killed.

As he was about to be killed, *Shaiṭān* appeared before him and asked, “Do you know who I am?”

“No”, replied Barṣīṣā.

“I am the person who taught you the words of “cure”. Do you not fear Allāh? Are you not ashamed? You were the most pious of men. You exposed your evil and have destroyed the reputation of all pious men.”

“What can I do?” asked Barṣīṣā.

Shaiṭān replied, “There is one thing you can do. If you do it now, I will save you by taking you away from here immediately.”

“What?” asked Barṣīṣā.

“Prostrate before me just once,” replied *Shaiṭān*.

Barṣīṣā agreed and prostrated himself before *Shaiṭān*.

Shaiṭān retorted, “This is what I desired from you all along. Your end result is that you have denied Allāh in the last moments of your life. I have nothing to do with you.”¹



Barṣīṣā, who had been the most pious of men, died as a disbeliever due to the evil promptings of *Shaiṭān*. He was misled to commit illicit sexual relations with a young girl and jeopardised his life-long spiritual endeavours. *Shaiṭān* is the avowed enemy of man and is devoted to leading

1 Tafsīr Qurṭubī, *Sūrah Ḥashr*, verse 16

man away from the obedience of Allāh ﷻ. Strong faith and fortitude are required to overcome his evil plots. Allāh ﷻ mentions in the Qur'ān :

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allāh). (Sūrah Nahl, verse 99)



Juraij is tested

Juraij was a pious monk, who had devoted himself to prayer in his monastery. One day, his mother came to see him and called out, “O Juraij! It is your mother. Talk to me.”

Juraij thought to himself, “O Allāh, my mother is addressing me and I am in prayer. What should I do?” He chose to continue with his prayer. His mother went away, but returned a second time and said, “O Juraij! I am your mother. Please talk to me.”

He again thought to himself, “O Allāh, my mother is calling out to me while I am in prayer.” He again opted to continue praying.

His mother said, “O Allāh, here is Juraij, my son. I desire to talk to him, but he refuses to talk to me. O Allāh, do not let him die until he sees the face of a shameless woman.”

Close to the monastery of Juraij, there lived a shepherd. One day, a woman of the village came there and the shepherd committed *zinā* (illicit sexual relations) with her. She became pregnant and gave birth to a child. When she was asked, whose child it was, she replied, “He is the child of the man who resides in this monastery.”

This angered the people of the village and, equipped with axes and spades, they called out to Juraij. He was absorbed in prayer and did not pay

any attention to them. But, when they began to demolish his monastery, he rebuked them. They explained, “Ask this woman about her story.”

With a smile, he touched the head of the child and asked, “Who is your father?”

The child replied, “The shepherd is my father.”

When the people heard this, they said, “We will rebuild the section of your monastery that we have demolished, with gold and silver.”

Juraij replied, “No! Rebuild it with clay as it had been before.” He then returned to his monastery to continue with his prayers.¹



Juraij was deeply committed to worship but ignored the call of his mother, resulting in severe consequences.



The talking of the baby reinforces the idea that Allāh ﷻ assists His pious servants at times of need.



Power of Sūrah Yāsīn

Migration to Madīnah

The migration of the Muslims to Madīnah instilled fear amongst the Quraish. They soon realised that Nabī ﷺ would establish a base with a large number of followers in an area beyond their reach and, if he were also to join them in Madīnah, they would be unable to stop the spread of Islam. All the chiefs of the Quraish assembled in council to

¹ Bukhārī and Muslim

discuss how to prevent him from leaving Makkah. They debated various suggestions, and ultimately decided that each clan should provide a young courageous warrior, so that all the warriors could jointly attack Nabī ﷺ and kill him. Thus, the guilt of shedding the blood of Nabī ﷺ would lie equally on all the clans and no single clan would be accountable.

Nabī ﷺ was forewarned of their wicked plan by divine revelation, and he asked ‘Alī ؑ to lie in his bed and wrap himself in his mantle. Nabī ﷺ assured him that no harm would befall him.

The murderers stood outside Nabī’s ﷺ house, with weapons in their hands, ready to strike. Nabī ﷺ emerged and threw a handful of dust at their faces reciting the first nine verses of *Sūrah Yāsīn*, ending with the verse:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ

“And We have set a bar before them and a bar behind them and have covered them so that they do not see.” (*Sūrah Yāsīn*, verse 9)

Allāh ﷻ blinded them and Nabī ﷺ slipped through their hands.¹

Imām Qurtubī’s Escape

A similar incident occurred to the great *mufasssir* (commentator) of the Qur’ān, Imām Qurtubī رحمه الله, in Spain. He mentions, “I was fleeing from the enemy in Qurṭubah, and hid on one side of a fort. I was there for only a short while, when two horsemen came out in search of me. I was sitting in the open, with no barrier between myself and them, and reciting the opening verses of *Sūrah Yāsīn* and other verses from the Qur’ān.

They passed by me and then returned as they had come, one saying to the other, “This must be *Shaitān*!” In reality, Allāh ﷻ had blinded them so that they could not see me. All praise belongs to Allāh ﷻ.”²

1 As-Sīratun Nabawīyyah Ibn Hishām, vol 1, p 427-429

2 Tafsīr Qurtubī, *Sūrah Isrā’*, verse 45



The Qur'ān is a powerful weapon in the hands of a Muslim who has faith in the greatness of Allāh ﷻ.



History bears testimony to the fact that the enemies of Islam often resort to assassination and brutal murder when they fail to stop the spread of the truthful message of Islam.



Sincere followers of a truthful cause will serve their leader to the extent of sacrificing their very lives in the service of his mission.



Enthusiasm for Islamic Knowledge

Yahyā ibn Yāhyā ibn Kathīr ibn Wislān ibn Shimplāl ibn Munghāya was a great *faqīh* (jurist) of Andalus. He was born in the year 152 *Hijrī*¹ and studied Ḥadīth under the great Imām Mālik رحمته الله, during the last days of the Imām's life. He was present when the Imām breathed his last and also attended his *janāzah* (funeral prayer). He then returned to Andalus, where many enthusiastic people flocked to sit at his feet and benefit from his vast knowledge.

One day, while he was in the lesson of Imām Mālik رحمته الله, an elephant passed by. All the students left to see the elephant, except Yahyā ibn Yahyā, who remained seated. Imām Mālik رحمته الله was surprised at his lack

1 The term *Hijrī* is derived from the word *Hijra* meaning, 'migration'. *Hijra* refers to the migration of Nabī ﷺ from Makkah to Madīnah. It was instituted by 'Umar رضي الله عنه as a point of reference for the Islamic Calendar.

of interest in the passing spectacle, and asked, “Who are you and where are you from?”

“I am from Andalus,” Yaḥyā replied.

Imām Mālik رحمته الله then asked, “Why did you not go out to see the elephant?”

Yaḥyā replied, “I came from my homeland to see you and learn from your guidance and knowledge. I did not come here to look at elephants.”

Imām Mālik رحمته الله was so impressed, that he called him, ‘The wise man of Andalus.’

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr رحمته الله, the renowned scholar of Ḥadīth, said, “Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā returned to Andalus with a great deal of knowledge. *Fatāwā* (verdicts) used to be requested from him after ‘Īsā ibn Dīnār had passed away. The leaders and general populace accepted his verdicts. He was indeed a great jurist.”¹



True Islamic knowledge is gained when the seeker makes a concerted effort to learn.



A true student shows due respect to his teacher.



To acquire the *nūr* (celestial light) of Islamic knowledge, it is imperative for a student to sit in the company of a pious teacher. Together with knowledge, spiritual reformation and character building are of paramount importance.



1 Wafayātul Aa‘yān, vol 6, p 143; Siyar Aa‘lām an-Nubalā’; Tartīb al-Madārik



A Valuable Du‘ā’ for Protection

True Indeed

Abbān ibn ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه narrates from his father that Nabī ﷺ said, “Nothing can harm a person who recites the following, three times every morning and evening:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ

“In the name of Allāh, nothing in the earth or heavens can be harmed when His name is taken. He is All-Hearing and All-Knowing.”

Abbān رضي الله عنه himself had been afflicted with a form of paralysis. Once, a man, realising that he was partially paralysed, began to stare at him. Abbān رضي الله عنه said to him, “Why do you stare at me? The Ḥadīth is as true as I have narrated it, except that I did not recite it one day, and Allāh passed His decree upon me.”¹

Uncompromising Faith

Khālīd ibn Walīd رضي الله عنه, the distinguished Muslim commander, laid siege to Hīra. Upon invitation, an old man, by the name of ‘Abdul Masīh ibn Ḥayyān ibn Baqīla, came out to speak to the Muslims. In his hand, was a poisonous substance.

Khālīd رضي الله عنه asked him, “What do you have in your hand?”

The old man replied, “This is a poisonous drink. If you agree to what I have to say, then all is well and good. If you do not, I will drink this poison so that I do not have to return to my people with such conditions which they dislike.”

¹ Tirmidhī; Abū Dāwūd

Khālid ؓ took the poison from the old man's hand and recited the following:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ

"In the name of Allāh, nothing in the earth or heavens can be harmed when His name is taken. He is All-Hearing and All-Knowing."

He then swallowed the poison. The old man returned to his people, saying, "I return to you from such people who are not harmed by poison."¹



The Ṣaḥābah ؓ had firm conviction that the du'ās taught by Allāh ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ were an inherent source of success and strength.



While these narrations reflect a lofty state of trust in Allāh ﷻ, they are not impossible to achieve. Great Muslims, throughout the centuries, have aspired towards these magnificent feats and achieved them.



A Pious Union Produces Pious Children

Mubārak used to maintain the orchards of his master. On one occasion, his master requested him to bring a sweet pomegranate. Upon tasting it, he found it to be bitter. He then instructed Mubārak for a second and third time, but each time the fruit turned out to be bitter.

¹ Kitābul Kharāj, p 143

This infuriated the master, who scolded Mubārak, saying, “Can you not differentiate between a sweet and bitter pomegranate?”

Mubārak replied, “No!”

“Why?” asked the master.

Mubārak replied, “I have never eaten a single fruit from this orchard ever since I have been in your employ.”

The master asked, “Why have you not eaten anything?”

Mubārak replied, “You have not granted me permission to do so.”

The master realised the piety and goodness of his servant and asked Mubārak to marry his daughter. Mubārak agreed and the union was blessed with a son known as ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak عبد المبارك, who later became a distinguished scholar and saint of his time.¹



Righteous children are normally born to righteous parents.



An employee should not utilise his employer's resources without permission.



A Brave Muslim Mother

In the battle of Qādisiyyah, Khansā, the famous poetess of Arabia accompanied her four sons into battle. She encouraged them to fight, with brave and eloquent words:

“O my sons, you accepted Islam willingly and left your homes voluntarily. By the promise of Allāh, you are the sons of one father and one mother.

¹ Wafayātul Aa’yān, vol 3, p 32

I have not been unfaithful to your father, nor have I brought disgrace to your paternal uncle. I have not spoilt and dishonoured your lineage. You are well aware of the immense rewards, which Allāh has prepared for those Muslims who fight the transgressors. Know this also that the everlasting abode is superior to the temporary abode. Allāh says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O you who believe, Be patient. Outdo all others in perseverance. Guard your territory. Fear Allāh so that you may be successful.”
(Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān, verse 200)

When you awake tomorrow safe and sound, by the Will of Allāh, proceed to fight your enemy in a rational state of mind. Seek help from Allāh over His enemies. When you see the battle has become severe and the fire begins to rage, then hasten towards the furnace and fight. You will return victorious with booty and honour in the everlasting abode.”

The sons proceeded to the battlefield and fought valiantly until all were martyred. When Khansā received the news, she exclaimed, “Praise be to Allāh who has honoured me with their martyrdom. I have hope in Allāh that He will unite me with them through His infinite mercy.”¹



Strong is the faith of a mother who fearlessly encourages her children to sacrifice their lives for a rightful cause.



Numerous anecdotes of brave Muslim women are found in the pages of Islamic history. In so many cases, the student of history will come across great Imāms, warriors, scholars, rulers and saints, who were produced through the nurturing, courage and steadfastness of a pious mother. May Allāh ﷻ reward them all with the highest of places in Jannah (paradise)

1 Al-Istī‘āb Fī Ma‘rifatil Aṣḥāb, vol 4, p 387

and, may He make their shining examples a source of inspiration for mothers of every age.



Muslim Scholar of Profound Knowledge

Ibn Jarīr at-Ṭabarī رحمته الله is regarded as one of the great scholars of the Muslim *Ummah*. His *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān is a truly amazing treatise. In the field of history, his work is regarded as one of the most authentic and comprehensive. He was a *hāfiẓ*¹ and *qārī*² of the Qur'ān. In the field of Islamic jurisprudence, he was a reputed scholar of the different *madhāhib* (juristic schools of thought). He was a scholar of Ḥadīth and an authority on the text and chain of narrators. He memorised the Qur'ān at the age of seven and began writing Aḥādīth at the age of nine. He was born in 224 *Hijrī* in Ṭabaristān and passed away in 310 *Hijrī* in Baghdād.

Once, he said to his students, “Are you ready for a *tafsīr* (commentary) of the Qur'ān?”

They asked, “How long will it be?”

He replied, “Thirty thousand pages.”

They exclaimed, “A *tafsīr* of this length will exhaust all the years of one's life to complete.”

Ibn Jarīr رحمته الله thereafter wrote a concise *tafsīr*, which amounted to three thousand pages.

He then asked his students, “Are you ready for a history of the world from the time of Ādam عليه السلام to the present?”

They asked, “How long will it be?”

He replied, “Thirty thousand pages.”

1 A person who has memorised the entire Qur'ān.

2 A person who is an expert in reciting the Qur'ān according to its rules of recitation.

When his students again displayed reluctance, he exclaimed in agony, "Enthusiasm has left this world." He then wrote a concise version of world history.¹

Ibn Balwhai narrates that Ibn Khuzaimah once said to him, "It has reached me that you have written the *tafsīr* of Muḥammad ibn Jarīr at-Ṭabarī."

"Yes, I wrote the entire *tafsīr* while Ibn Jarīr dictated it," I replied.

"In which year?" he asked.

"From the year 283 to 290 *Hijrī*," I replied.

He then borrowed the book from me. After a few years, he returned it, saying, "I have read it from start to finish. I do not know of any person on the face of the earth more knowledgeable than Ibn Jarīr."²



Islam produced numerous such illustrious scholars, who produced literary master-pieces in many fields of knowledge.



Scrupulous Muslim Rulers

Once, some musk came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ from Baḥrain. He asked for someone who would weigh it carefully, so that it may be equally distributed among the Muslims. His wife, 'Ātikah, volunteered, but 'Umar ؓ refused to give it to her.

When she inquired why, he replied, "I fear that, while weighing it, some of it may rub-off onto your hand and body. This will give me an unfair advantage over the other Muslims."³

1 Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 2, p163

2 Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 2, p164

3 Kanzul 'Ummāl, vol 2, chapter 345

A similar incident is related about ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. While he was Khalīfah¹, musk belonging to the Bait-ul-Māl (public treasury) was brought to him. He closed his own nostrils, saying, “The benefit derived from musk is its fragrance.”²



The standard of piety set by the great Muslim rulers was indeed lofty and rare. Due to the fear of Allāh ﷻ and accountability in the divine court, they displayed extreme caution. Public property was regarded as a trust in their hands and they took care of it prudently.



Mourning the absence and rarity of such great men, a poet appropriately mentions,

هَيْهَاتَ لَا يَأْتِي الزَّمَانُ بِمِثْلِهِ ... إِنَّ الزَّمَانَ بِمِثْلِهِ لَبَخِيلٌ

“In reality, time has not been able to produce the likes of him.

In reality, time is miserly in producing the likes of him.”



Honour Through Islam

Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was on his way to Syria. While walking, he came to a shallow stream. He was dressed in a shawl, a pair of leather socks and turban. He jumped off his camel, removed his leather socks and placed them on his shoulder. He proceeded to wade through the water by leading his camel by its reins.

1 Literally means ‘successor’, but in this context refers to the Islamic head of state.

2 Al Bidāyah Wan Nihāyah, vol 9, p 214

When Abū 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه, who had come out to meet him, saw this, he remarked, "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn¹, how can you do this? You have placed your leather socks on your shoulder and you wade through the water, leading your camel by its reins! It will displease me if the inhabitants of the city see you like this."

'Umar رضي الله عنه rebuked him saying, "If anybody other than you had made such a statement, I would have given him such a punishment, that would have served as a lesson for the rest of the Ummah (Muslim community). We were the most disgraced of nations and Allāh granted us honour through Islam. When we seek honour in any other way, Allāh will disgrace us."²

Allāh ﷻ mentions in the Qur'ān:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا

"One who desires honour then to Allāh belongs all honour."
(Sūrah Fāṭir, verse 10).

Allāh ﷻ also mentions in the Qur'ān:

لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ

"We revealed to you a book (the Qur'ān) in which is your remembrance." (Sūrah Ambiyā', verse 10)

Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه has interpreted this verse as follows: "We revealed to you a book (the Qur'ān) in which is your honour."³



History has repeatedly testified that Muslims were honoured and respected when they held firmly onto the laws of Islam. These laws are the dividing line between honour and disgrace and between progress

1 Literally means 'Commander of the Faithful.' It was a title used for Muslim rulers.

2 Al-Mustadrak Lil-Ḥākim, vol 1, p 160

3 Tafsīr ibn Kathīr, Sūrah Ambiyā', verse 10

and failure. Today, Muslims are unfortunately searching for respect by knocking at the door of the Western world, despite the glaring reality that the Western way of life has failed. This failure is no surprise, as systems, institutions and practices that are diametrically opposed to Allāh's immutable laws can never result in human progress.



Unchallenged Beauty of the Qur'ān

Abdullāh ibn al-Muqaffa was from Khurasān, Persia. He was born in 'Irāq and was a fire-worshipper. Later, he accepted Islam at the hands of 'Īsā ibn 'Alī. He is accepted as a scholar in the science of Arabic grammar and rhetoric and wrote a number of books on this subject. He has also translated works of Aristotle into Arabic. His words and poetry are quoted by a number of famous *mufasssīrīn* of the Qur'ān, such as Imām Qurṭubī رحمته اللہ علیہ, 'Allāmah Ālūsī رحمته اللہ علیہ, Zamakhsharī and others.

Ibn al-Muqaffa is particularly famous for his translation of '*Kalīlah Wa Dimnah*' from Persian into Arabic. This book was translated into Spanish, Latin, Hebrew, French, English, and other languages from Arabic and had an enormous impact on European literature. It is a book consisting of fables, wherein animals have been assigned human qualities, with the aim of teaching a moral lesson. Stories of this type have reached English literature with the likes of, "The hare and the tortoise", "The fox and the crow", "The lion and the mouse" and so on.

A famous saying of Ibn al-Muqaffa, showing his mastery in the Arabic language, is quoted in the books of tafsīr:

قَوْلٌ بِلَا عَمَلٍ كَثَرِيْدٌ بِلَا دَسَمٍ وَسَحَابٌ بِلَا مَطَرٍ وَفَوْسٌ بِلَا وَتَرٍ

"Words without action are like gravy without fat,

Or a cloud without rain, Or a bow without a string.”¹

This same Ibn al-Muqaffa, the most eloquent scholar of his time, decided to challenge the eloquence of the Qur’ān by compiling some beautiful verses in Arabic. While walking one day, he heard a young boy reciting this verse of the Qur’ān:

وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكِ وَيَا سَمَاءُ أَقْلِعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَاسْتَوَتْ
عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

“And it was said, ‘O earth! Swallow up your water and O sky! Withhold (your rain)!’ And the water was made to subside. And the Decree (of Allāh) was fulfilled. The Ark rested on Mount Jūdī and it was said, ‘Away with those who do wrong!’” (Sūrah Hūd, verse 44)

He returned and erased what he had compiled, saying, “I testify that this (Qur’ān) can never be challenged. It is not the words of man.”²



*Allāhu Akbar!*³ The Qur’ān is a book that is beyond the capability of any man to produce the like thereof. Many such incidents have been recorded in history where masters in the Arabic language were left speechless when they heard the Qur’ān being recited. The Arabs, during the time of Nabī ﷺ, were experts in Arabic poetry, but they too were compelled to acknowledge the superiority of the Qur’ān.



In addition to its beauty and eloquence, the Qur’ān is filled with wisdom and truth. Successful indeed are those who recite it, understand it and

1 Tafsīr Qurṭubī, vol 14, p 329

2 Tafsīr Ālūsī, Sūrah Hūd, verse 44

3 Allāh is the Greatest.

practise upon its golden teachings. Those who ignore the message of the Qur'an are truly deprived.



Respect for Ḥadīth

More Respect for Ḥadīth than for Kings

Faqīh Abū Ibrāhīm رحمته الله, a Muslim scholar of repute, was greatly respected by An-Nāṣir and his son Al-Ḥakam, two of the rulers of Muslim Spain. Ibn Mafrāj mentions an interesting incident regarding the Faqīh:

"I used to remain in the company of Faqīh Abū Ibrāhīm, to learn about Ḥadīth and Fiqh (jurisprudence) from him. One day, I was in his gathering in Masjid Abū 'Uthmān, which was close to the palace of Qurṭubah. The masjid was close to his house and he performed Ṣalāh there. The gathering was held between two Ṣalāhs and was packed with students, when a messenger arrived from Khalīfah Al-Ḥakam.

He greeted and said, 'Faqīh, come at once! The *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* calls you urgently regarding an important matter.'

The Faqīh replied, 'To hear is to obey the *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, but there is no haste. Return to him and say that you found me in the house of Allāh ﷻ and I have students around me to whom I am narrating the Ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ. I am prevented from leaving this gathering, until I have completed the lesson for the pleasure and obedience of Allāh. This is presently more important to me. When the purpose for which these dedicated students have gathered has been achieved, I will present myself, if Allāh wills.' The Faqīh then continued with his lesson.

The messenger left, annoyed, but conveyed the message and returned shortly thereafter. He said, 'I conveyed your message to the *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, word for word. He listened intently and said, "May

Allāh reward your sacrifices for the religion, the *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* and the Muslim *Ummah*. May they derive great benefit from you!" Once you have completed your lesson, you should proceed directly to him. I have been commanded to remain with you and accompany you once you have completed your lesson.'

'Fine,' replied the Faqīh, 'but I am too weak and old to walk to the door of Saddah or mount a conveyance. The door of Ṣanā'ah is closer to the doors of the sacred palace. It would be easier for me if the *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* would allow this door to be opened, so that I may enter through it. I would advise you to convey my message to him and inform me what he thinks of the idea. Then you may return and wait for me to complete my lesson. I regard you as a respectable young man, so hasten towards this good action.'

The messenger left, but returned after a while and said, 'O Faqīh, the *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* has acceded to your request. He has ordered that the door of Ṣanā'ah be opened for you. I have come to you through this door now. I have been instructed to remain here and direct you, as soon as you have completed the lesson.'

The messenger sat down close-by and the Faqīh completed his lesson with complete ease and comfort, in his usual manner. When the students had left, the Faqīh first went to his house to tend to something and then proceeded to Khalīfah Al-Ḥakam. He entered through the door of Ṣanā'ah, fulfilled the Khalīfah's request, and returned through the same door. It was again locked after the Faqīh had left."

Ibn Mafrāj explained further, "After we had left the gathering of the Faqīh that night, we decided to pass by the door that the Faqīh was supposed to enter through, so that we could see what the Khalīfah had prepared for him. The door was open and many servants were anxiously sweeping and laying down carpets for the Faqīh's arrival. We found this quite amazing and for long thereafter did we discuss the incident."¹

Stung Sixteen Times

Imām Mālīk رحمته الله was bitten sixteen times by a scorpion while narrating Aḥādīth to his students. His facial complexion changed, but he did not

1 Nafḥuṭ Ṭīb Min Ghuṣn Al-Andalus Ar-Raṭīb, vol 1, chapter 3, p 377

stop his discourse. Ibn al-Mubārak, his student, asked him why he had not stopped.

He replied, “I endured the pain patiently out of respect for the Aḥādīth of Nabī ﷺ.”¹



The pious scholars of Islam have tremendous respect for the blessed words of Nabī ﷺ.



Excellence of Qaṣīdah² Burdah

The Qaṣīdah Burdah or “poem of the shawl” was written by Imām Ṣālih Sharafuddīn Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Buṣairī رحمه الله. He had become paralysed and his doctors gave up all hope of recovery. In this state of complete helplessness, he composed a poem in praise of Nabī ﷺ. Using this as his sole means of seeking a cure from the divine court of Allāh ﷻ, he isolated himself in a quiet place on the night of *Jumu‘ah* (Friday). With total sincerity and concentration, he began reciting the poem, crying and begging Allāh ﷻ through the intercession of Nabī ﷺ. While reciting it, he was overcome by sleep and was blessed with the vision of Nabī ﷺ. He mentioned his illness to Nabī ﷺ, who then passed his blessed hand over Imām Buṣairī’s رحمه الله face and placed a shawl over him. Through the *barakah* (divine blessings) of Nabī ﷺ, Allāh ﷻ granted him complete cure from his paralysis.

The next morning, when due to some necessity, he went to the market, he was greeted by a pious saint, who requested him to recite the *qaṣīdah* which he had composed in praise of Nabī ﷺ. The Imām replied that he

1 Faidhul Qadīr, Sharḥ Jāmi‘uṣ-Ṣaghīr, vol 3, p 253

2 An Arabic poem.

had composed many poems in praise of Nabī ﷺ. The saint then said, “I am referring to the one which begins with,

أَمِنْ تَذَكُّرٍ جِرَانٍ

Hearing this, the Imām was amazed and exclaimed, “I take an oath that no one knows about this poem. Please tell me how you came to know about it?”

The saint replied, “I take an oath by Allāh that last night, in my dream, I heard you reciting it to Nabī ﷺ. Since Nabī ﷺ was very pleased with it, he threw a shawl over you, and by virtue of this blessing, Allāh ﷻ granted you complete cure from your ailment”.

The Imām recited the poem to the saint and his secret was exposed. The *barakah* of the poem too became widespread. News of this reached the ruler, Bahā’uddīn, who called for him. He had the poem written down and would listen to it respectfully.

Once, Sāduddīn Fārūqī, the viceroy of Bahā’uddīn, became blind. In a dream, he saw a person who advised him to take “the shawl” from Bahā’uddīn and place it over his eyes. The next morning, he informed Bahā’uddīn about this dream. Bahā’uddīn said that he did not have any of the blessed relics of Nabī ﷺ in his possession. Later he realised that “the shawl” could have referred to the *Qaṣīdah Burdah*. The poem was brought and Sāduddīn placed it over his eyes. Through its *barakah*, Allāh ﷻ granted him complete cure and restored his eyesight. From then onwards, the poem became known as the *Qaṣīdah Burdah* or the “poem of the shawl.”¹



Recitation of *durūd* (salutations upon Nabī ﷺ) has numerous spiritual, physical and psychological benefits.



1 Al-Wāfi Bil Wafayāt, vol 3, p 112



Vain Attempt to Steal the Body of Nabī ﷺ

In the year 557 *Hijrī* (1164CE), Sulṭān Nūruddīn Zangī, a pious and just Muslim leader, saw Nabī ﷺ three times in a dream. Nabī ﷺ pointed to two men, who were reddish in complexion, and said, “Save me from these two!”

After discussing the dream with his advisor, he immediately decided to leave for Madīnah with a group of twenty people. They took along with them a great quantity of wealth. After sixteen days, they arrived in Madīnah. After presenting his salutations to Nabī ﷺ, the Sulṭān ordered all the inhabitants of Madīnah to come to him. The Sulṭān presented a gift to each person that came forward, and carefully inspected his face to see if he could identify the two men whom he had seen in his dream.

When every person had been presented with a gift, he asked, “Is there anybody left?”

The people replied, “Everybody has come, except two pious men from Morocco. They are very generous and give a lot in charity.”

The Sulṭān requested that they too should come to him. They initially refused, saying that they did not require any wealth. But, the Sulṭān insisted on seeing them. When they came to him, he immediately recognised them to be the two men whom Nabī ﷺ had pointed to in the dream.

He asked them where they were staying. They informed him that they resided in a room close to the blessed grave of Nabī ﷺ. The Sulṭān accompanied them to their residence, but could find nothing, except two tents, books and an enormous quantity of wealth. The people of Madīnah again praised the two men. The Sulṭān continued searching their residence. Finally, he lifted the carpet that had been laid in the room and found a secret vault that had been dug out. It had a tunnel that led towards the blessed grave of Nabī ﷺ. When the people saw this, they were infuriated. The Sulṭān confronted the two men and insisted on the truth.

After being punished, they confessed that they were Christians from Morocco, disguised as *Hujjāj* (pilgrims). They had been sent by a Christian king, who had given them a vast amount of money to remove the body of Nabī ﷺ from its blessed abode. They had procured the closest residence to the blessed grave. At night, they would dig and place the sand in leather bags. They would then go to Jannat al-Baqī, pretending to visit the deceased, where they would empty the bags of sand. When they were quite close to the blessed grave, severe lightning and an earthquake occurred. That was the very night the Sulṭān had reached Madīnah. When he heard the story, he cried profusely, having realised that Allāh ﷻ had chosen him for the noble task of protecting the body of Nabī ﷺ. He ordered that the two men be beheaded and commanded that a ditch be dug around the grave and filled with molten lead, so that no such wretched attempts could be made again.¹



The blessed body of Nabī ﷺ is divinely protected and preserved.



Concern for Fellow Muslims

Pretending to be Deaf

Hātim ibn Alwān al-Aṣam رحمته الله was a great saint of Khurasān and a companion of another great saint, Shaqīq Balkhī رحمته الله. He was given the title of *al-Aṣam*, “the deaf one”, because of an interesting incident. A woman once came to ask him a question and, accidentally, passed wind. He heard the sound that had emanated, causing her to be quite embarrassed.

¹ Al-Wafā' Ul-Wafā' Bi Akhbāri Dāril Muṣṭafā, vol 2, p 648

But the saint said to her, “Please raise your voice.” In this way, he gave her the impression that he was partly deaf so that she would think that he had not heard her passing wind. This made her feel much better. Due to his kind consideration and respect for her, he was referred to as “the deaf one” for the rest of his life.¹

A Word of Regret

Sirrī Saqtī رحمه الله was an illustrious student of Ma'rūf Karkhī رحمه الله, the spiritual master of his time. Once a fire spread through Baghdād destroying many homes, but the house of Sirrī Saqtī رحمه الله was saved. When news of this reached him, he said, ‘Alḥamdulillāh²!’ in gratitude to Allāh ﷻ.

He later, realised his mistake, and said, “I have been seeking Allāh’s forgiveness for the past thirty years for saying ‘Alḥamdulillāh’ once. I regret what I had said on that day, when I desired goodness for myself above other people.”³



The lives of the pious resonate with the following Ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ:

المُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلَمُهُ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ ، وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبَاتٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“A Muslim is a brother to another Muslim. He does not oppress him nor does he hand him over (to the enemy). Whoever fulfils the needs of his brother, Allāh will fulfil his needs. Whoever removes discomfort from a Muslim, Allāh will remove his discomforts on

1 Al-Mustaṭraf Fī Kullī Fannim Mustazraf, p247

2 All praise belongs to Allāh.

3 Wafayātul Aa'yān, vol 2, p 357

the Day of Qiyāmah (Judgement). Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allāh will conceal his faults on the Day of Qiyāmah.”¹



Greed for Wealth

A person once came to Ṭsā عليه السلام and requested that he be allowed to stay in his company. Ṭsā عليه السلام agreed. One day, they went out on a journey. While travelling, they reached the bank of a river, where they sat down to have a meal, consisting of three pieces of bread. Each ate a piece and one was left over. Ṭsā عليه السلام left his companion and went to the river to have a drink of water. When he returned, he found the bread missing.

He asked his companion, “Who took the bread?”

The companion replied, “I do not know.” They continued on their journey.

A while later, they saw a gazelle with its two babies. Ṭsā عليه السلام called one of the babies and it, miraculously, came to him. He slaughtered it, cooked its meat and they both ate from it. Ṭsā عليه السلام then instructed the animal that they had just eaten, to rise with the permission of Allāh ﷻ. It came back to life and went away.

Ṭsā عليه السلام now addressed his companion, “In the Name of that Being Who has shown you this sign, please tell me who took the bread?”

Again the companion replied, “I do not know.”

They continued on their journey until they arrived at a river. Ṭsā عليه السلام took his companion’s hand and walked over the surface of the water, miraculously. When they had crossed the river, Ṭsā عليه السلام again asked, “In the Name of that Being Who has shown you this sign, please tell me who took the bread?”

¹ Bukhārī

But the companion again replied, “I do not know.”

They continued walking, until they arrived at an open piece of land, where they sat down. ʿĪsā ﷺ took some sand in his hand and instructed it, “Turn into gold, with the permission of Allāh!” Miraculously, it turned into pieces of gold.

He then split it into three portions, saying, “A third will be mine, a third yours and the remaining third will go to the person who took the bread.”

Quickly the companion replied, “I took the bread!”

ʿĪsā ﷺ gave all the gold to him and left. As the man sat with the gold, two robbers attacked him and attempted to steal the gold from him. He convinced them not to kill him, and they finally agreed to split the gold three ways. As they were all hungry, the companion suggested that one of them should enter the city and buy some food. One of the robbers agreed to do so.

On his way to the city, a thought struck him, “Why should I give any gold to the other two? I will add some poison to the food and kill both of them. All the gold will then be mine.”

Meanwhile, the other two were also conspiring, “Why should we give our shares to him? When he returns, we will kill him and split the gold between us.”

When the man returned, they killed him. The two then ate the food that had been mixed with the poison and died.

ʿĪsā ﷺ happened to pass by, and saw the gold and the three men lying dead around it. He said to his companions, “Be careful of the world! This is what it does to people.”¹



Love for wealth can drive a man to lie, steal, murder and flout the warning signs of Allāh ﷻ.



1 Ḥayātul Ḥayawān, vol 1, p 292



Young Girl Inspires a Scholar

The book, ‘*Dalā’ilul Khairāt*’, was written by the pious saint and scholar, Shaikh Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Jazūlī رحمته الله عليه. He grew up amongst the Berbers of North Africa in Soūs and later moved to Fez, where he studied Fiqh and memorised the Mudawwana of Imām Mālik رحمته الله عليه. More than twenty thousand students learnt *tafsīr* and Fiqh from him and many narrated Ḥadīth from him. He was initiated into the *Shādhilī* order of *tasawwuf*¹ and remained in solitary retreat for fourteen years. When he emerged, many people were attracted to him, and thousands repented from their lives of sin.

One day, while he was travelling with his students, he arrived at a village close to Fez. The time for *Zuhr Ṣalāh* was coming to an end and they had no water to perform *wuḍū*². They, finally, stumbled upon a well but there was no rope or bucket to draw the water. The Shaikh became worried that the *Ṣalāh* time would elapse and began circling the well anxiously. In the meanwhile, an eight year old girl was observing the proceedings from a nearby house.

She called out, “O Shaikh, why the anxiety?”

The Shaikh replied, “I am Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Jazūlī. The time of *Zuhr* is about to elapse and I have no water to perform *wuḍū*.”

Surprised, the girl answered, “You are such a great personality. How can it be that you cannot do such a simple thing as draw water from a well? Wait, I will come to help you!”

When the girl arrived, she spat into the well and the water began to gush forth on all four sides of the well. She then returned home. When the Shaikh had completed his *Ṣalāh*, he immediately went to the house of the little girl and knocked at the door.

The little girl asked, “Who is it?”

1 A system of reformation dealing with the purification of the soul.

2 To wash oneself before *Ṣalāh* (prayer).

The Shaikh replied, “O beloved girl, by the oath of Allāh, Who has created and guided you, and in the name of the prophets and Nabī ﷺ, whose intercession you are hopeful of, please inform me how you have reached this lofty stage of piety.”

The girl replied, “Had you not taken such a noble oath, I would never have informed you. I have reached this level by virtue of a certain *durūd*¹ which I recite regularly.”

The Shaikh learnt the *durūd* from her and immediately felt a strong urge to compose a beautiful book on *durūd*. The work authored by him is called “*Dalā’ilul Khairāt*”. It has been printed and recited in many parts of the Muslim world, especially in the blessed cities of Makkah and Madīnah.²

Shaikh Sulaimān al-Jazūlī رحمه الله passed away while in *sajdah* (prostration) during Fajr Ṣalāh and was buried in Soūs. Seventy years after his death, his body was transferred from Soūs to another location in Morocco. Amazingly, his body was completely intact.³ *Allāhu Akbar*! May Allāh reward him with the highest of stages in *Jannah*.



Regular recitation of *durūd* elevates the status of the reciter and assists in overcoming obstacles.



1 Salutation upon Nabī ﷺ.

2 *Dalā’ilul Khairāt*, Muqaddimah

3 *Sharḥ Dalā’ilul Khairāt Wa Mashāriqul Anwār*, p 1

4 Allāh is the Greatest.



The Great Mufasssir - 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ

In-depth Knowledge

Once the king of Rome sent a letter with a number of questions to Mu'āwiyah ؓ, who in turn asked 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ to respond. The answers provided by Ibn 'Abbās ؓ are a reflection of his in-depth knowledge of the Qur'ān and Aḥādith. The questions and answers are as follows:

Which are the five phrases most loved by Allāh ﷻ?

Firstly, *Lā'ilāhā illallāh*¹, since no action is accepted by Allāh ﷻ except if accompanied by the belief in *Lā'ilāhā illallāh*.

Secondly, *Subḥānallāh*², since this is the salutation of the creation to Allāh ﷻ.

Thirdly, *Alḥamdulillāh*³, which is a phrase of appreciation.

Fourthly, *Allāhu Akbar*, which is the beginning phrase of Ṣalāh, rukū and sajdah (prostration).

Fifthly, *Lāḥowla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*, which means that there is no power and might except in Allāh ﷻ. The king of Rome should understand the reason for this well!

Which man and woman were the most esteemed servants of Allāh ﷻ?

Ādam ؑ was the most esteemed male servant of Allāh ﷻ because Allāh ﷻ created him with His own Hands and taught him the names of things. The most esteemed female servant of Allāh ﷻ was Maryam, the daughter of 'Imrān, because she guarded her chastity.

What four things had a soul but were never in the womb of a mother?

1 There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh.

2 Allāh is pure from every blemish.

3 All praise is due to Allāh.

Ādam ﷺ, Ḥawwā, the staff of Mūsā ﷺ which turned into a serpent and the ram which was to be sacrificed in place of Ismā'īl ﷺ.

Which grave moved around with its inmate?

The fish that swallowed Yūnus ﷺ.

Which portion of the earth was exposed to the sun only once?

The portion of the sea which split open for the Banū Isrā'īl to pass through.

What is the status of the milky way?

The milky way is one of the doors of the sky.

What is the origin of the rainbow?

It is a sign showing that after the people of Nūḥ ﷺ, no other nation would be destroyed by drowning in a similar manner.¹

Sound Understanding

‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb ؓ used to permit ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ to sit in the discussions of the senior scholars amongst the Ṣaḥābah ؓ even when he was young. Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ narrates, “‘Umar ؓ used to make me sit with the elderly men who had fought in the battle of Badr. Some of them detested this, and said, ‘Why does this young boy sit with us, while our sons do not?’

‘Umar ؓ replied, ‘This is because of his rank (his link with the fountain of prophetic knowledge).’

One day, ‘Umar ؓ made me sit amongst them. In my opinion, he called me to show them a point.

‘Umar ؓ then asked them, ‘How do you interpret these words of Allāh ﷻ:

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ

“When the help of Allāh and the conquest comes...” (Sūrah Naṣr)

1 Al-Ma‘rifah Wat-Tārīkh, vol 1, p 530; ‘Uyūn al Akhbār

Some of them said, 'We are ordered to praise Allāh ﷻ and ask for His forgiveness when Allāh's help and the conquest comes to us.' Others kept quiet and did not comment.

'Umar ؓ then asked me, 'Do you say the same, O Ibn 'Abbās?'

I replied, 'No!'

He asked, 'What do you say then?'

I replied, 'It refers to the demise of Allāh's Nabī ﷺ. Allāh said, "When the help of Allāh ﷻ and the conquest comes," it is a sign of your demise. "You should celebrate the praises of your Lord and seek His forgiveness as He is the One Who forgives." '

'Umar ؓ then said, 'My understanding of it is precisely as you have mentioned.'"¹

Blessed Link

Once Nabī ﷺ pressed Ibn 'Abbās ؓ against his blessed chest and said,

اللَّهُمَّ عَلِّمَهُ الْكِتَابَ

"O Allāh, teach him the book (Qur'ān)."²

On another occasion, Ibn 'Abbās ؓ presented water to Nabī ﷺ after he had relieved himself. Nabī ﷺ was pleased with him and said,

اللَّهُمَّ فَتِّهِ فِي الدِّينِ

"O Allāh, grant him a thorough understanding of Islam."³

Due to the du'ā' of Nabī ﷺ, Ibn 'Abbās ؓ became the most knowledgeable *ṣahābī* in the interpretation of the Qur'ān. Other great *ṣahābah* ؓ, like Ibn 'Umar ؓ and Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ, often praised him.

1 Bukhārī

2 Bukhārī

3 Bukhārī



The enemies of Islam have studied the Qur'ān and ḥādīth thoroughly and are conversant with many of the finer points thereof. It is the responsibility of the Muslim *Ummah* to produce erudite scholars, who can provide adequate answers to the questions raised by critics.



Morality versus Promiscuity

A bū Umāmah ؓ narrates that a young man came to Nabī ﷺ and said, “O Prophet of Allāh, grant me permission to commit *zinā* (illicit sexual relations).”

The people who were close by rebuked him, saying, “Stop! Stop!” But Nabī ﷺ said, “Leave him alone. Allow him to come closer.”

The young man came forward and sat down close to Nabī ﷺ. Nabī ﷺ asked him, “Would you like this act (of *zinā*) for your mother?”

The young man replied, “No.”

Nabī ﷺ said to him, “Neither do other people like it for their mothers.”

Nabī ﷺ then asked him, “Would you like it for your daughter?”

“No,” he replied.

Nabī ﷺ said, “Neither do other people like it for their daughters.”

Nabī ﷺ asked, “Would you like it for your sister?”

“No,” he replied.

Nabī ﷺ said, “Neither do other people like it for their sisters.”

Nabī ﷺ asked, “Would you like it for your paternal aunt?”

“No,” he answered.

Nabī ﷺ said, “Neither do other people like it for their paternal aunts.”

Nabī ﷺ asked, “Would you like it for your maternal aunt?”

“No,” he replied.

Nabī ﷺ said, “Neither do other people like it for their maternal aunts.”

Then Nabī ﷺ placed his blessed hand on the young man’s chest and said, “O Allāh, forgive his sins, purify his heart and guard his chastity.”

The young man was positively affected by the blessed words of Nabī ﷺ, and transformed his life for the better.¹

This incident has been quoted by Ibn Kathīr رحمه الله in his commentary of the verse,

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَا إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

“Do not come close to zinā. It is a great evil and a bad way.”

(Sūrah Isrā’, verse 32)



When a man intends to commit zinā with a woman, he should restrain himself by realising that she is somebody’s mother, daughter, sister or aunt. Just as he desires honour, dignity and respect for women of his own family, he should similarly honour the dignity of other women.



Nabī ﷺ beautifully demonstrated how advice should be offered. The nature of the question was grave indeed : permission was sought to commit such a major sin for which nothing less than death by stoning was the penalty. Nabī ﷺ, however, read the situation perfectly well, responded with kindness and won the heart of the young man.



1 Mu’jamul Kabīr Liṭ-Ṭabrānī, vol 8, p 162; Shu’bul Īmān Lil-Baihaqī



The Qur'ān – A Truly Remarkable Book

Recite With Respect and Devotion

It is narrated that before reciting the Qur'ān, 'Ikrimah ibn Abū Jahal رضي الله عنه used to say,

هَذَا كَلَامُ رَبِّي

“This is the Word of my Lord!”

He would then fall down unconscious.¹

How Much of Qur'ān do the Pious Recite?

History has preserved the biographies of the great *Ulamā'* so that the *Ummah* could derive motivation from their great feats.

Imām Shāfi'ī رحمته الله used to complete a recitation of the entire Qur'ān every night. In Ramaḍān, he used to complete a recitation of the entire Qur'ān during the day and one during the night. In this way, he would complete sixty recitations of the Qur'ān. This was excluding the Qur'ān he would recite in Ṣalāh. Abū Bakr ibn Ḥaddād رحمته الله mentions that he too would try to exert himself in reciting the Qur'ān, but the most he could manage was fifty-nine completions of the Qur'ān.²

'Urwa ibn Zubair رضي الله عنه used to recite a quarter of the Qur'ān every day, while looking into it and he used to recite the same portion, while standing in Ṣalāh at night. He did this every single night, except one night when his leg had to be amputated. But the night thereafter, he resumed his normal habit.³

1 Faidhul Qadīr, vol 4, p 515

2 Ṭabaqāt Ash-Shāfi'īyyāh Al-Kubrā, vol 3, p 81

3 Tahdhīb al-Kamāl Fī Asmā'ir Rijāl, vol.13, p 12

Effect of Excessive Qur'ānic Recitation

The Qur'ān will intercede for its reciter in the grave and will be heavy on the scales on the day of *Qiyāmah*. For some of the pious, the *nūr* (celestial light) of the Qur'ān manifests itself in other ways. Nāfi ibn Abū Nu'aim mentions that after *ghusl* (ritual bath) had been given to the body of Abū Ja'far Yazīd ibn al-Qa'qā' رَجُلٌ عَالِمٌ، a *qārī* (expert recitor of Qur'ān) of Madīnah, a page similar to that of the Qur'ān could be seen between his neck and his chest. Those who witnessed this phenomenon had no doubt that this was due to the *nūr* (celestial light) of the Qur'ān.¹

Upon Completing the Qur'ān

When Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to complete the recitation of the entire Qur'ān, he would gather his family and children and make a collective *du'ā'*.²



Recitation of the Qur'ān is a noble deed, which draws the special mercy of Allāh ﷻ.



Intense Trial of a Saint

In Baghdād, the seat of the Islamic State, there was a well-known *muḥaddith*³ by the name of Abū 'Abdullāh al-Andalusī رَجُلٌ عَالِمٌ. He was a pious saint and twelve thousand disciples sat at his feet. He knew thirty thousand *Aḥādīth* by heart, and could recite the Qur'ān in all the various modes of *Qirā'ah* (recitation).

1 Wafayātul Aa'yān, vol 6, p 275

2 Mu'jamul Kabīr Liṭ Ṭabrānī, vol 1, p 242; Majma'uz Zawā'id

3 An expert in the science of ḥādīth.

On one occasion, he was travelling on a journey accompanied by a large crowd of attendants, among whom were such outstanding personalities as Junaid Baghdādī ر.ا.ع. and Shaikh Shiblī ر.ا.ع.

Shaikh Shiblī ر.ا.ع. continues the story, "Our caravan was travelling along safely and comfortably with the grace of Allāh, until we reached a village which appeared to be inhabited by Christians. Here, we stopped and searched for water, but could not find any. We went about the village and discovered that there were many churches, temples of sun-worship and synagogues. Some of the people worshipped idols and others prayed to the cross. We were amazed at their condition.

We passed all this and reached the outskirts of the village, where we found a well from which some young girls were drawing water for people to drink. Amongst these girls, was one who was exceedingly beautiful. She wore a gold necklace around her neck. When Shaikh Abū 'Abdullāh saw her, the colour of his face changed and he asked the other girls who she was.

They replied, 'She is the daughter of the ruler of this village.'

The Shaikh asked, 'But, why has her father dishonoured her, by ordering her to give people water to drink?'

The girls replied, 'Her father has done this, so that she will be able to honour and serve her husband when she marries. He does not want her to become proud of her status.'

The Shaikh sat down with his head bent forward and remained silent. For three days, he did not eat or drink. He would only perform his Ṣalāh. His disciples and companions did not know what to do or say."

Shaikh Shiblī ر.ا.ع. says, "I decided to speak to him. I approached him and said, 'O Shaikh, your disciples and companions are perplexed at your silence for the past three days. Please address us.'

The Shaikh replied, 'O people, know that my heart has been filled with love for the girl I saw the other day. It is not possible for me under any circumstances to leave from here.'

Shaikh Shiblī ر.ا.ع. replied, 'Our leader, you are the spiritual guide of 'Irāq! Your piety is known far and wide. Your disciples number over twelve thousand. By the sanctity of the noble Qur'ān, do not bring disgrace to us and them.'

The Shaikh replied, 'O people, my lot has already been sealed by fate. I am nothing. The cloak of sainthood has been removed from me and the signs of guidance have been taken away from me.' Saying this, the Shaikh began weeping bitterly.

'Proceed and leave me alone!' he instructed them.

We were astonished. We begged Allāh for His protection and cried until the land beneath our feet became wet with tears. We returned to Baghdād.

When the people heard of our return, they arrived in large numbers at the outskirts of the city to meet the Shaikh. They realised that he was not with us and asked where he was. We related to them the entire story. Many of his disciples died out of grief when they heard of his condition. Others cried out of sorrow and disbelief. Many begged Allāh to guide the Shaikh to the right path and return him to them. All his places of instruction and preaching were shut down.

We remained in this sad condition for an entire year. Finally, I, together with a few companions, decided to visit the village again and find out how our Shaikh was doing. When we reached the village, we inquired about him and were informed that he was in the woods looking after pigs.

We asked, 'What has happened?'

We were informed that he had proposed to marry the girl. But, the girl's father had refused, saying that her suitor had to meet certain conditions: he had to follow the Christian faith, become a servant in the church and look after pigs. The Shaikh had fulfilled all these conditions and was currently tending to the pigs.

With broken hearts and tears streaming down our eyes, we proceeded to the woods in search of him. He was standing amongst the pigs. Around his waist, was a string of beads and on his head was the traditional Christian hat. He stood leaning on the staff that he used to lean on when delivering the sermon in the *miḥrāb*¹!

¹ Refers to the semi-circular shaped area in front of a masjid, which is assigned to the Imām for leading Ṣalāh.

When he saw us, he bowed his head in shame. We drew closer and greeted, 'Assalāmu 'Alaikum!'

He replied, 'Wa 'Alaikumus Salām' ".

Shaikh Shiblī says, "I then asked, 'O Shaikh, what is all this? What has happened to you? What has become of all your knowledge and virtue?'

The Shaikh replied, 'My dear friend and brothers, I am no longer in control. Whatever Allāh has desired for me, has come to pass. I was once amongst His beloved ones. Now, He has cast me very far away from His door. O Beloved of Allāh, beware of rejection and being distanced from Allāh. O Beloved of Allāh, beware of Allāh's wrath and separation from Him.'

Then turning towards the heavens, he said, 'O my Lord, I never expected such treatment from You.' Then he began to cry out to Allāh."

Shaikh Shiblī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ says, "I also beseeched Allāh, 'Only from You do we seek help. Upon You only do we rely. By Your grace, remove this difficulty from us! We have been overcome. Only You can save us!'"

Shaikh Shiblī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ says, "I thought Qiyāmah had come. The Shaikh continued to cry uncontrollably.

We said to him, 'Shaikh, why do you not return with us to Baghdād?'

The Shaikh replied, 'How can I? I have to see to the pigs, although I once saw to the hearts of men!'

I asked the Shaikh, 'You were a ḥāfiẓ¹ of the Qur'ān and could recite the seven modes of Qirā'ah. Do you remember anything of the Qur'ān?'

The Shaikh answered, 'I have forgotten everything except two verses of the Qur'ān:

وَمَنْ يُبَيِّنِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ مُكْرِمٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ

"He Whom Allāh disgraces, none can grant him honour. Allāh does as He wishes." (Sūrah Ḥaj, verse 18)

1 Peace be upon you!

2 And peace be upon you too!

3 One who has memorised the entire Qur'ān.

And, secondly, the verse,

وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

“He who chooses kufr (disbelief) over Īmān (faith) has certainly gone astray.” (Sūrah Baqarah, verse 108)

I asked, ‘You knew thirty thousand Aḥādīth of Nabī ﷺ. Do you still remember any of them?’

He answered, ‘Only one,

مَنْ بَدَّلَ دِينَهُ فَاقْتُلُوهُ

“One who leaves his faith, kill him!”

Amazed at his condition, we left the Shaikh and headed for Baghdād. After we had walked for three days, we suddenly saw the Shaikh in front of us. He was emerging from a river, wherein he had just completed washing his entire body. In a loud voice, he proclaimed the *shahādah*: ‘I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh and I bear witness that Nabī ﷺ is His messenger.’

We could not control our joy and happiness when we saw him. He asked us for some pure clothing, which he then wore and performed Ṣalāh. We expressed our gratitude to Allāh for returning him to us and asked him what had happened.

He replied, ‘When you left me, I turned to Allāh with my former love and affection for Him and cried, “O my Protector, I am a sinner and a transgressor.” Allāh forgave me and showered His mercy upon me.’

We asked him, ‘But, why were you put through such an intense trial?’

The Shaikh replied, ‘When we arrived at the village and saw the temples, synagogues and churches, I thought to myself how insignificant those people were, compared to somebody like me, who believed in one Allāh and worshipped Him only. At that moment, I heard a voice from within me saying, “The Īmān you have, is not due to your own goodness in any way. If you so wish, we will make this manifest to you at this very

moment.” Immediately, I felt as if something left my heart. That was my *Īmān* leaving me.’ ”

Shaikh Shiblī says, “We were overjoyed. Our caravan arrived in Baghdād with great joy. The Shaikh’s places of teaching and preaching were reopened. In a short while, his students numbered over forty thousand. Allāh ﷻ granted him his former knowledge of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth and blessed him with further knowledge.”¹



Allāh ﷻ subjects his close servants to the most intense trials.



One should never consider oneself superior to others and despise them.



Īmān is the greatest gift that Allāh ﷻ bestows upon a person. One should value and protect it zealously at all times.



Allāh ﷻ forgives the one who repents, no matter how grave the sin.



Paying More than the Seller Asks

Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullāh ؓ narrates that he pledged allegiance to Nabī ﷺ regarding the establishing of Ṣalāh, discharging of zakāh² and giving good counsel to every Muslim. Just how perfectly he practised on this golden advice of Nabī ﷺ, can be understood from the following incident:

Jarīr ؓ instructed his servant to purchase a horse on his behalf. The servant purchased one for three hundred dirhams. He brought it,

1 Al-Mustaṭraf Fī Kullī Fannim Mustaṭraf, p 265

2 An obligatory charity of a fixed amount. It is one of the five pillars of Islam.

together with its owner, to Jarīr ؓ so that payment could be made. But, Jarīr ؓ said to the owner, “Your horse is worth more than three hundred dirhams. Would you not like to sell it to me for four hundred dirhams?”

The owner replied, “That is up to you.”

Jarīr ؓ again said, “But, your horse is worth more than four hundred dirhams. Would you not like to sell it to me for five hundred dirhams?”

The owner replied, “That is up to you.”

In this way, Jarīr ؓ continued increasing the price by a hundred dirhams and the owner expressed his approval to sell it at the revised price each time. Finally, Jarīr ؓ suggested eight hundred dirhams and bought it from the owner at that price.

When he was asked why he had done this, he replied, “I have sworn allegiance to Nabī ﷺ that I will give good counsel to every Muslim.”¹



Jarīr ؓ felt that the owner was selling the horse for less than it was worth. He had understood his pledge of allegiance to Nabī ﷺ to mean that he could not derive undue benefit from a fellow Muslim. In doing so, he happily paid more than double the original price of the horse.



When the Fire did not Burn

The story of Ibrāhīm ؑ

The Qur’ān mentions that Ibrāhīm ؑ invited Nimrūd and his followers to accept the truth of the Oneness of Allāh, but they refused. Instead they built a huge furnace with the intention of burning Ibrāhīm ؑ to death. Historical narrations mention that firewood

1 Mu’jamul Kabīr Liṭ-Ṭabrānī, vol 2, p 334; Sharḥ An-Nawawī ‘Alā Muslim

was collected for a period of one month and the fire was lit and kindled for seven days. The flames were so huge, that birds flying overhead would fall into the fire and perish due to its intensity. People could not even go in close proximity to it. They were about to abandon their plan, but *Shaiṭān* gave them the idea of catapulting Ibrāhīm عليه السلام into the fire. As he was about to be thrown in, Jibrā'īl عليه السلام came to him and asked whether he needed any help.

Ibrāhīm عليه السلام replied, "I need help, but not from you. Allāh is sufficient for me."

Allāh سبحانه mentions:

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

"We (Allāh) said: 'O fire! Be cool and peaceful for Ibrāhīm.'
(Sūrah Ambiyā', verse 69)

By the command of Allāh سبحانه, the strings that had been tied to Ibrāhīm عليه السلام were burnt, but he was not at all harmed. In fact, Ibrāhīm عليه السلام later remarked, "I never experienced such peace and comfort in my entire life, as those seven days which I spent in the fire."¹

The story of Abū Muslim Khawlānī رحمته الله

A similar amazing incident occurred to a righteous person by the name of Abū Muslim Khawlānī رحمته الله. It was during the time when Aswad 'Anasī, the false prophet, claimed prophethood in Yemen.

He called Abū Muslim Khawlānī رحمته الله and asked him, "Do you believe that Nabī ﷺ is a prophet of Allāh?"

Abū Muslim رحمته الله replied in the affirmative.

Aswad 'Anasī then asked, "Do you believe that I am a prophet of Allāh?"

Abū Muslim رحمته الله replied in the negative. Aswad 'Anasī then ordered that a huge fire be lit and that he be thrown therein. This was accordingly

1 Ma'āriful Qur'ān, vol 6, p 33-38

done, but by the mercy of Allāh ﷻ, the fire did not harm Abū Muslim Khawlānī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ.

People then advised Aswad 'Anasī, "If you leave Abū Muslim Khawlānī to live here, he will cause more trouble."

The pious man was forced to leave Yemen and he set off for Madīnah. It was during the period shortly after the demise of Nabī ﷺ, when Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was the Khalīfah. When Abū Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ reached Masjidun-Nabawī, he tied his conveyance and began performing Ṣalāh close to a pillar in the masjid.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ saw him in the masjid and asked Abū Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, "Where are you from?"

Abū Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ replied, "I am from Yemen."

'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ continued, "What is the story of the companion of ours who was thrown into a fire by the enemy of Allāh (Aswad 'Anasī) but was not harmed?"

Abū Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ replied, "That was a person by the name of 'Abdullāh ibn Thawb."

But 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ asked, "Is that not your name?"

"Yes," replied Abū Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ.

'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was so taken aback, that he kissed Abū Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ on his forehead and took him to meet Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then remarked, "All praise be to Allāh Who gave me the opportunity to see a person from the Ummah of Nabī ﷺ, who had an ordeal similar to that of Ibrāhīm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ."¹



Allāh ﷻ is in complete control of everything. He can remove the burning quality of fire, if He so wishes, and thereby protect those who obey Him.



1 Al-Istī'āb Fī Ma'rifatil Aṣḥāb, vol 4, p 320; Tahdhībūt Tahdhīb, vol 12, p 236; Ḥilyatul Awliyā'



Imām Abū Yūsuf's رحمته الله Last Moments

Ibrāhīm ibn Jarrāḥ says, “I came to visit Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله during his final illness. He was extremely weak, but managed to open his eyes and look at me. He then asked, ‘O Ibrāhīm, is it better for a person performing ḥaj to stone the *jamarāt*¹ while on foot or on a conveyance?’

I replied, ‘On foot.’

He answered, ‘That is incorrect.’

I then replied, ‘On a conveyance.’

Again he replied, ‘That is incorrect.’

He then explained the correct answer himself, ‘If after pelting one remains to make *du‘ā*, then it would be better to be on foot. But, if after pelting one does not remain to make *du‘ā*, then it would be better to be on a conveyance.’

I rose to leave, but I had not even reached the door of his home, when I heard the women of the household cry out that he had passed away. Had there been anything more beloved to him than discussing the knowledge of Islam, he would surely have engaged in it at this critical time of distress and sadness.”²



Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله was one of those illustrious scholars who sacrificed his entire life in the service of Islam. Together with his distinguished teacher, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله, and others like Imām Muḥammad رحمته الله and Imām Zufar رحمته الله, they meticulously applied their minds to the study of the Qur’ān and Sunnah in order to extract rules and regulations governing all aspects of life. They would spend hours, days, weeks and even months, debating and discussing intricate matters of Fiqh in order to codify the

1 The stone pillars which are stoned as part of ḥaj.

2 Al-Jawāhirul Muḍīyah vol 1, p 76; Al-Baḥrur Rā’iq, Faṭḥul Qadīr

Ḥanafī school of thought. The other Imāms of Fiqh, like Imām Shāfi'ī رحمته الله, Imām Mālik رحمته الله and Imām Aḥmad رحمته الله were, similarly, great men of piety, sincerity and knowledge. It is through their sacrifices and efforts that the Muslim *Ummah* has a simplified code of law with regard to Ṣalāh (prayer), zakāh (charity), ḥaj (pilgrimage), sawm (fasting), buyū' (transactions), and so on. May Allāh ﷻ reward all the Imāms of Fiqh for their endeavours and fill their graves with His special mercy!



A Woman Who Spoke from the Qur'ān for Forty Years

Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak رحمته الله mentions that he was on his way to perform ḥaj and ziyārah of Nabī ﷺ. While en route, he came across an old woman who was sitting all alone. She was dressed in a woollen cloak and veil. The following fascinating dialogue ensued between them:

'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: "Assalāmu 'alaikum waraḥmatullāhi wabarakātuh."

The woman:

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبِّ رَحِيمٍ

"Salām (peace) - a word from the Lord (Allāh), Most Merciful."

(Sūrah Yāsīn, Verse 58)

'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: "May Allāh have mercy on you. What are you doing here all alone?"

The woman:

مَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ

"Whosoever Allāh sends astray, none can guide him."

(Sūrah Aa'rāf, Verse 186)

'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (From this I understood that she was lost).
"Where do you intend going?"

The woman:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى

"Glorified be He Who took His slave for a journey by night from Masjid al-Ḥarām (in Makkah) to Masjid al-Aqṣā (in Palestine)."

(Sūrah Isrā, Verse 1)

'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I realised that she had completed her ḥaj and was now heading for Baitul Maqdis). "How long have you been in this place?"

The woman:

ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا

"Three full nights." (Sūrah Maryam, Verse 10)

'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: "I do not see any food with you. What have you been eating?"

The woman:

هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ

"And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink."

(Sūrah Shu'arā', Verse 79)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “With what have you been making wuḍū?”

The woman:

فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا

“And if you find no water, then perform tayammum with clean earth.” (Sūrah Nisā’, Verse 43)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “I have some food with me. Would you like to eat?”

The woman:

نُفِئَ أَتَمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ

“Then complete your fast till nightfall.” (Sūrah Baqarah, Verse 187)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “But this is not Ramaḍān!”

The woman:

فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ

“And whoever does good voluntarily, it is better for him.”
(Sūrah Baqarah, Verse 184)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “It is permissible for us to break the fast while on a journey.”

The woman:

وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“And that you fast is better for you if only you know.”
(Sūrah Baqarah, Verse 184)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “Why do you not speak like I do?”

The woman:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“Not a word does he utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it).” (Sūrah Qāf, Verse 18)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “Which tribe are you from?”

The woman:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ

كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُورًا

“And follow not that of which you have no knowledge. Verily, the hearing and the sight and the heart of each of those will be questioned (by Allāh).” (Sūrah Isrā’, Verse 36)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “I have made a mistake. Please forgive me!”

The woman:

لَا تَثْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَعْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

“No blame on you this day. May Allāh forgive you.”
(Sūrah Yūsuf, Verse 92)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “Would you like to mount my camel and meet up with your caravan?”

The woman:

وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ

“And whatever good you do Allāh knows it.”

(Sūrah Baqarah, Verse 197)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I made my camel kneel down).

The woman:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze.” (Sūrah Nūr, Verse 30)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I lowered my gaze from her). “Mount the camel.”

As she proceeded to mount, the camel jerked suddenly and her clothes were torn in the process.

The woman:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ

“And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned.” (Sūrah Shūrā, Verse 30)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “Wait until I tie the camel. Then you may mount it.”

The woman:

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ

“And we made Sulaimān understand.” (Sūrah Ambiyā’, Verse 79)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (So, I tied the camel). “Now, mount!”

The woman: (After mounting)

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ

وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ

“Glory be to Him Who has subjected this to us and we could never have accomplished it. And verily to our Lord we are to return.”

(Sūrah Zukhruf, Verse 13)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I took hold of the reins and began to lead the camel swiftly. I began shouting to make it go faster).

The woman:

وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ

“Be moderate in your walking and lower your voice.”

(Sūrah Luqmān, Verse 19)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I began to walk slowly and I sang some verses of poetry).

The woman:

فَأَقْرَأُوا مَا تَيْسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

“Recite as much of the Qur’ān as may be easy for you.”

(Sūrah Muzzammil, Verse 20)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “You have been granted great bounties (from Allāh).”

The woman:

وَمَا يَذْكُرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

*"But none remember except men of understanding."
(Sūrah Baqarah, Verse 269)*

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (After I had walked a short distance). "Do you have a husband?"

The woman:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءٍ إِنْ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ

"O you who believe, ask not of things, which if they were made known unto you, would give you trouble." (Sūrah Mā'idah, Verse 101)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I kept quiet and did not speak until we reached her caravan). "Here is the caravan. Do you know anybody in it?"

The woman:

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

*"Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world."
(Sūrah Kahf, Verse 46)*

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I realised that she had children). "What type of work do they do?"

The woman:

وَعَلَامَاتٍ وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ

*"And landmarks and by the stars they guide themselves."
(Sūrah Nahl, Verse 16)*

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I realised that they were guides for the caravan. I led her to the tents). “Here are the tents. Are your sons here?”

The woman:

وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا

يَا يَحْيَى خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ

“And Allāh took Ibrāhīm as a friend.” (Sūrah Nisā’, Verse 125)

“And Allāh spoke directly to Mūsā.” (Sūrah Nisā’, Verse 164)

“O Yahyā! Hold fast to the Scripture.” (Sūrah Maryam, Verse 12)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: (I called out) “O Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, Yahyā!”

Soon a group of young men, handsome as the moon, were standing before me.

The woman: (When everyone was seated).

فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا

أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ

“Now send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the city, and let him find which is the pure good food there and bring some of that to you.” (Sūrah Kahf, Verse 19)

One of them went out, bought food and placed it before me.

The woman:

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ

“Eat and drink at ease for that which you sent on before you in the past days.” (Sūrah al-Hāqqah, Verse 24)

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “Your food is not acceptable for me to consume until you tell me her story.”

The sons answered, “This is our mother. For the past forty years she has not spoken except from the Qur’ān, out of fear that she might utter something that is incorrect thereby drawing the anger of Allāh.”

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak:

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

“This is the grace of Allāh which He bestows to whom He pleases. And Allāh is the Owner of great bounty.” (Sūrah Jumu’ah, verse 4)¹



This pious woman was undoubtedly very knowledgeable regarding the Qur’ān. She knew the appropriate verses for every occasion and discussion that had occurred for forty years of her life. Her control over her tongue was astounding, considering that it takes immense patience and perseverance to reach a stage where one’s words consist of only Qur’ānic verses.



1 Al-Mustaṭraf FI Kulli Fannim Mustazraf, p 100



Wisdom Conquers

Amazing Insight

Once the grandsons of Nabī ﷺ, Ḥasan ؓ and Ḥusain ؓ, saw an elderly man performing wuḍū at the banks of the Euphrates River. The man hastened through the wuḍū and Ṣalāh, omitting the *sunnah*.¹ Ḥasan ؓ and Ḥusain ؓ wanted to teach the man the correct method, but they feared that he, being old, might feel embarrassed if his error was pointed out by them.

They approached him and said, “We are young while you are an elderly man with lots of experience. You know how to make wuḍū and Ṣalāh better than we do. We would like to perform wuḍū and Ṣalāh in your presence and would appreciate your feedback regarding our errors.”

Thereafter, they proceeded to perform wuḍū according to the *sunnah* method. When the elderly man observed this, he realised his error and rectified himself henceforth.²

Avoid the Shame

Maulānā Shāh ‘Abdul Qādir رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ was a scholar who used to teach Ḥadīth. On one occasion, a student in an impure state, came to his class without performing the obligatory *ghusl* (ritual bath).

Maulānā came to know that he was in need of *ghusl* and, accordingly, instructed, “Today we will not have any lessons as I have a desire to swim in the Jamna River.”

All the students joined their teacher and proceeded for a swim. In the process, all of them, including the student who was impure, performed *ghusl* in the river.

Thereafter, the teacher said, “Let us return to our lessons. Why should we allow any time to go to waste?”

1 The method practised and endorsed by Nabī ﷺ.

2 Tarāshe, p 115

Kind Manners

One day, a person attended a lecture delivered by Maulānā Shāh ‘Abdul Qādir رحمہ اللہ. Unfortunately, his trousers were beneath his ankles. After the talk, Maulānā asked him to remain behind. He was afraid that he would be taken to task, but Maulānā said to him, “I have a weakness. My trousers sometimes hang below my ankles. In a Ḥadīth, it is mentioned that a person whose trousers are beneath his ankles, will burn in the fire of *Jahannam* (hell). I fear that I would be punished in this way. Please check if my trousers are beneath my ankles.”

The person replied, “How can this be your weakness? Rather, it is my weakness. Today, I sincerely repent from this wrong.”¹



Kindness and wisdom are the cornerstones of encouraging good and forbidding evil.



Acid Test of Wealth

A bū Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that he heard Nabī ﷺ saying, “Allāh decided to test three people from the Banū Isrā’īl: a leper, a bald-headed man and a blind man. So, He sent an angel to them. The angel first came to the leper and asked, ‘What would you like most?’

The leper replied, ‘I would like to have a pleasant complexion and attractive skin and I would prefer that this ailment, because of which people dislike me, be removed from me.’

The angel touched him and his illness was cured. He was given a pleasant complexion and attractive skin.

¹ Haḍrat Thānwī ke Pasandīdah Wāqīāt, p 134

The angel then asked him, 'What type of wealth do you like best?'

He replied, 'Camels or cows.'

So he was given a pregnant she-camel and the angel said to him, 'May Allāh grant you blessings herein!'

The angel then went to the bald-headed man and asked, 'What would you like most?'

The bald-headed man answered, 'I would like beautiful hair and I would prefer that this baldness, because of which people dislike me, be removed from me.'

The angel touched him and his baldness was removed. He was granted beautiful hair.

The angel then asked him, 'What type of wealth do you like best?'

He replied, 'Cows.'

The angel gave him a pregnant cow and said, 'May Allāh grant you blessings herein!'

The angel then went to the blind man and asked, 'What would you like best?'

The blind man replied, 'I would like that Allāh restore my eyesight so that I may see people.'

The angel touched him and Allāh restored his eyesight.

The angel then asked him, 'What type of wealth do you like best?'

He replied, 'Sheep.' So, he was given a pregnant sheep.

After some time, all the three pregnant animals gave birth to young ones, and they in turn gave birth to others. Soon, each of the three men had a valley full of camels, cows and sheep respectively.

Now the angel, disguised as a human, but in the guise of a leper, went to the man who had been a leper and asked, 'I am a poor man and have lost my means of livelihood during the course of my journey. None can assist me except Allāh and then you. I ask you in the Name of that Being Who has given you such a beautiful complexion, skin and wealth to give me a camel so that I may reach my destination.'

The man replied, 'I have many obligations.'

The angel said, 'I think I know you. Were you not a leper whom people disliked? Were you not a poor man and Allāh granted you wealth?'

He replied, 'I inherited this wealth from my forefathers.'

The angel said, 'If you are telling a lie, may Allāh return you to your former condition!'

Then the angel, disguised as a human, but in the guise of a bald man, went to the man who was bald and made the same request. He too, answered in the same manner as the leper before him.

The angel said, 'If you are telling a lie, may Allāh return you to your former condition!'

Then the angel, disguised as a blind man, went to the man who was blind and said, 'I am a poor man and a traveller whose means of livelihood has been lost during my journey. Nobody can help me, except Allāh and then you. I ask you in the Name of that Being Who has given you back your eyesight, to give me a sheep, so that I may complete my journey.'

The man replied, 'Most certainly, I was blind and Allāh restored my eyesight. Take anything you wish from my wealth. By Allāh, I will not stop you from taking any of it, for the pleasure of Allāh.'

The angel replied, 'Keep your wealth! You three were tested. Allāh is pleased with you and angry with your two companions.' ”¹



Unfortunate are those who deny the bounties of Allāh ﷻ and glad tidings to those who are grateful and appreciative.



Spending on the poor, for Allāh's ﷻ pleasure, brings great rewards while miserliness drives a person to lie and deny the bounties of Allāh.



1 Bukhārī and Muslim



Honesty Beyond Measure

Umar ibn Khaṭṭab رضي الله عنه used to walk the streets of Madīnah at night to attend to the needs of his subjects. Once, he came across a woman, who was asking her daughter to mix water with milk so that they could increase their profits. The young girl refused, saying that the Khalīfah¹, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, had passed an order forbidding such a dishonest practice. When the mother replied that the Khalīfah would not come to know about it, the girl responded that Allāh was omnipresent, whether the Khalīfah was present or not. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was so pleased with the reply, that he asked his son, ‘Āsim, to marry the girl. ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رضي الله عنه, who later became the just ruler of the Muslim empire, was born from this union.²



Honesty and integrity are the backbones of a morally sound society.



Justice of Islam Wins Hearts

Samarqand was conquered by Sa‘īd ibn ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه during the Umayyad dynasty by means of a truce with the local inhabitants. Later, in 96 *Hijrī*, during the reign of Walīd ibn ‘Abdul Mālik, it was again conquered by Qutaiba ibn Muslim رضي الله عنه. This second conquest took

1 A successor or Muslim head of state.

2 Saviours of Islamic Spirit, vol. 1, p 18

place against the spirit of Islam, as the existing truce was broken and it was occupied without any warning of an attack. According to the Qur'ān, Muslims are prohibited from waging war against a nation with whom a peace treaty is in place.

The inhabitants accepted the conquest reluctantly, fearing retaliation from the Muslims. When 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رضى الله عنه became the Khalīfah in the year 99 *Hijrī*, his reputation for justice and dislike for oppression reached the non-Muslims of Samarqand. They sent a delegation to him complaining of the unjust conquest of their city. The Khalīfah wrote to Sulaimān ibn Abū Sarḥ, the governor of Samarqand, instructing him to appoint a judge to settle the case.

The judge called for witnesses from the army of Qutaibah ibn Muslim رضى الله عنه, who testified that the Muslim general had indeed broken the truce and attacked without warning. His judgement was that the Muslim army, under the command of Qutaiba رضى الله عنه, had to immediately leave Samarqand. He further instructed all the Muslims, who had entered Samarqand after the conquest, to also leave and commanded a return to the truce that had existed at the time of the first conquest.

The verdict shocked the inhabitants of Samarqand as they had never expected justice of this magnitude. The command of the judge, instructing the Muslims to leave Samarqand after they had established themselves in the area for seven years, displayed the overwhelming justice of Islam. They immediately convened amongst themselves and sent a delegation to the governor, informing him of their pleasant surprise at the verdict in their favour. They waived their right and asked the Muslims to remain in Samarqand, as they were convinced that the Muslims were not a threat to them. This event caused many of the non-Muslim inhabitants of Samarqand to accept Islam.¹

1 *Futūḥul Buldān*, p 593



Islam promotes equity and justice. Oppression and prejudice can never be condoned.



A Pious Couple

A pious man, by the name of Shāh ibn Shuja Kirmānī رحمہ اللہ, abandoned his kingship and adopted the path of self-reformation. He received a proposal for his daughter from another ruler, but rejected it. Upon seeing a poor, pious young man offering Ṣalāh in a beautiful manner, he married her to him instead. When she arrived at the home of her husband, she noticed a dry piece of bread which was hidden in a water-pot and asked, “What is this?”

The young man replied, “This is the left-over food from last night. I have kept it so that I may begin my fast with it.” Upon hearing this, she turned to leave.

The young man remarked, “I knew from the outset that a king’s daughter would not be happy with my poverty.”

The girl answered, “I am not displeased with your poverty, rather, that you do not have trust in Allāh. I am surprised, as my father informed me that you were a virtuous young man. How can a person, who does not place his trust in Allāh, be virtuous and pious?”

The young man apologised, but she said to him, “I do not want to hear apologies. Either I or the bread remains in this house.” He immediately gave the bread out in charity and she stayed with him.¹

1 Karāmāte Awliyā’, p 159



While the piety of the wife was of an exceedingly tall order, the moral of the anecdote is of key importance: marriage partners chosen for their piety and virtue, draw one closer to Allāh ﷻ, while those chosen only for wealth, beauty or status can easily lead one astray.



Islam Overcomes Pagan Culture

After the Muslims conquered Egypt in 20 *Hijrī*, a delegation of the local community approached the Muslim governor, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ, to discuss an important matter. According to custom the river Nile demanded a human sacrifice every year. On the 12th night of June, a virgin girl was dressed up as a bride and thrown into the river. It was believed that if this was not done, the river would dry up. ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ immediately answered that Islam opposed all superstitious rituals. Months passed and the river began drying. People began migrating due to the lack of water. ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ wrote to the Khalīfah ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ seeking his advice.

‘Umar ﷺ replied, “You have done the right thing because Islam opposes all rituals of ignorance. I am sending you a note, which you should drop into the river.”

The note was addressed to the river. It read, “From the servant of Allāh, *Amīr al-Mu’minīn*, to the Nile of Egypt. If you had been flowing on your own accord, you may stop flowing. But, if it is Allāh, the Almighty, who makes you flow, then we ask Him to make you flow.”

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ dropped the letter into the Nile and the next morning, the Nile started flowing again. It miraculously rose sixteen *zirahs* (arms-lengths) in a single night.¹



The conviction and faith of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ was such, that they would never give preference to an un-Islamic custom, no matter how strong the pressure against them was.



The entire universe is in the control of Allāh ﷻ and intelligent are those who turn to Allāh ﷻ for their needs.



Compassion for Creation

Return the Chicks

Ibn Mas‘ud ﷺ narrates, “We were once on a journey with Nabī ﷺ. He left us for a short while and a small bird with two chicks, drew our attention. We took away the chicks and when the mother bird returned she began to flutter her wings in uneasiness.

When Nabī ﷺ returned and noticed this, he asked, ‘Who has caused distress to this bird by removing her chicks? Return her chicks to her!’”²

Fuṣṭāṭ - The Tent City

During the conquest of Egypt, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ, a Muslim commander, received the go-ahead from ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ to conquer Alexandria.

¹ Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah Wan-Nihāyah, vol. 7, p 100

² Abū Dāwūd

As he issued the command for his tent be pulled down, he noticed that a pigeon had laid eggs in a corner of the tent.

He commanded, "Leave the tent standing until the eggs have hatched and the young birds can fly away on their own."

He appointed a person to guard the nest so that no harm would befall the pigeon and her eggs. 'Amr ﷺ himself proceeded to Alexandria and remained engaged there for six months. When Allāh granted the Muslims victory, he returned to his original tent and established the city of Al-Fuṣṭāt¹ close to it.²



Islam places great emphasis on kindness and respect for all of Allāh's ﷻ creation.



The *Ṣaḥābah* ﷺ reached the pinnacle of glory and greatness because they meticulously followed the teachings of Nabī ﷺ. By giving preference to a way of life that is diametrically opposed to this blessed Sunnah of Nabī ﷺ, the Muslims can never reach such heights. When they will once again adopt Makkah as their *qiblah*³, instead of Hollywood and Bollywood, will Muslims regain their former glory and earn the respect of the world.



1 *Fuṣṭāt* means tent in Arabic. Today the city is part of the 'Old Egypt' district in Cairo. It would be of interest to the reader to note that none of the English encyclopedias, consulted under the topic of Fostat or Fustat, recorded the incident of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ ﷺ and the pigeon. This is because Western scholars have not studied the Arabic sources of knowledge comprehensively and open-mindedly in the course of their research. It is for this reason that the majority of history books and documentaries compiled by Western authors are incomplete. Arabic and Islamic history has great depth for the seeker of true knowledge. Those who shut their eyes will forever remain blind.

2 Mu'jamul Buldān, vol 4, p 263

3 Direction of prayer.



Sincere Man seeks Divine Reward

The Muslims were collecting their booty, after their victory in the Battle of Madā'in. One of them brought something he had found and deposited it with the treasurer. It was so valuable, that those who saw it, were astounded. They had never seen such a priceless treasure before. They questioned him, "Are you sure you have not held back a part of it?"

"By Allāh," he replied, "had I wished, I could have seized it altogether and you would not have known."

This straightforward reply made a deep impression on them and they realised that this was no ordinary man. They begged him to disclose his identity, but he declined.

He said, "I cannot tell you my name because you will then praise me, whereas all praise belongs to Allāh. I am content with what He bestows as a reward."

When he had departed, they sent a man after him to find out who he was. They learnt that his name was 'Āmir and he was from the tribe of 'Abdī-Qais.¹



The great luminaries of Islam were honest in their dealings and sincere in their actions. They were motivated by Allāh's ﷻ pleasure and did not aspire for name and fame.



1 Tārīkh Aṭ-Ṭabarī, vol 4, p 16



The Qur'ān is Divinely Protected

Ma'mūn Ar-Rashīd, a Muslim Khalīfah, used to host religious gatherings, wherein Muslim scholars discussed various issues. On one such occasion, a Jew entered the discourse. He was notably well-dressed, respectable in appearance and eloquent in speech. At the end of the discussion, as the crowd began to disperse, Ma'mūn called him and asked, "Are you a Jew?"

"Yes", he replied.

Ma'mūn asked him to accept Islam, but he refused, saying, "I cannot leave my religion and the religion of my ancestors." Saying this, he left.

One year later, he returned, but this time he had converted to Islam. He delivered a scholarly lecture on Islamic jurisprudence. At the end of the gathering, Ma'mūn asked him, "Are you not the same person who attended last year?"

"Yes", he replied.

"Why did you accept Islam?" Ma'mūn enquired.

He answered, "After leaving your gathering last year, I decided to embark on a comparative study of religions. As I am a fine calligrapher, I wrote three copies of the Torāh in which I added and deleted a few words. With these copies of the Torāh, I entered a synagogue. These copies were bought from me. I then wrote three copies of the Injīl in which I also added and deleted a few words. I entered a church and sold these as well. Then I wrote out three copies of the Qur'ān, and likewise added and deleted a few words. When I presented these to the Muslim booksellers, they examined them before deciding to buy them. They discovered the additions and deletions in them and immediately dispensed with them. I then realised that this book was protected, and embraced Islam."¹

¹ Tafsīr Qurṭubī, *Ṣūrah Ḥajar*, verse 9



Allāh ﷻ has undertaken to protect the Qur'ān. It has been meticulously and miraculously preserved for over fourteen hundred years and will remain so till the end of time.



Tears of Ṣalāḥuddīn راجع عليه Overpower the Enemy

Ibn Shaddād, a trusted councillor of Sulṭān Ṣalāḥuddīn Ayyūbī راجع عليه، the esteemed Muslim commander during the Crusade wars, relates: “Once, Jerusalem lay mercilessly at the hands of the advancing Crusaders, but the Sulṭān had refused to leave the city. It was a cold wintry night and I was alone with the Sulṭān. We spent the night in prayer. Late after midnight, I requested him to rest a little.

He replied, “I think you need some sleep so take a nap.”

I retired to my chamber. At dawn, I returned to perform the Ṣalāh.

“I have not slept a single moment,” he remarked.

After the prayer was over, I advised, “Turn to Allāh and beseech Him for help.”

He asked, “Why do you say this?”

I replied, “Today is *Jumu‘ah* (Friday). You should take a bath before going to Masjid al-Aqṣā, and secretly give some charity on the way. When you reach the masjid, offer a special prayer of two *rakāts*¹ between the *adhān* and the congregational prayer at the place where Nabī ﷺ had performed Ṣalāh during the *Mī‘rāj*. A Ḥadīth states that prayers at this time are accepted. Thereafter, you should beseech Allāh.”

The Sulṭān did as I had advised him. I was by his side, when I observed him in prostration with the tears trickling down his beard onto the prayer

1 A *rakāt* refers to one unit of *salāh*. It includes standing, bowing and prostration.

mat. Before the day was over, I witnessed the acceptance of his prayer. By Monday morning, the enemy had departed due to discord amongst themselves.”¹



Good deeds avert evil and assist in overpowering the enemy because Allāh’s ﷻ help and mercy is with those who are righteous.



Islamic Justice Converts Enemy

Alī ﷻ was walking in the market place when he saw a shield, that had been stolen from him some time ago, in the possession of a Jew. He confronted the Jew and informed him that the shield belonged to him. The Jew refused to return it and claimed that it was his. ‘Alī ﷻ decided to take the matter to court and requested Qāḍī Shuraiḥ to settle the dispute between them. Qāḍī Shuraiḥ was the Muslim judge of Kūfa at the time and had been appointed by ‘Alī ﷻ himself. The following discussion took place in court:

Shuraiḥ: “O *Amīr al-Mu’minīn*, what is your claim?”

‘Alī ﷻ: “This shield belongs to me. It was stolen from me some time ago.”

Shuraiḥ: “What do you have to say, O Jew?”

Jew: “The *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* is a grave liar! The shield is mine.”

Shuraiḥ: “‘Alī, do you have any witnesses?”

‘Alī ﷻ: “Yes. Ḥasan, my son, and Qunbar, my slave, are my witnesses.”

Shuraiḥ: “The testimony of your slave is acceptable but your son cannot testify in your favour.”

¹ The Life of Saladin, p 350; An-Nawādirus Sultāniyyah

‘Alī ؑ lost the case. He turned to the Jew, saying, “You may keep the shield.”

Jew: “The *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* brought me to a Muslim judge and is pleased with the judgment passed against him! You have spoken the truth, O ‘Alī. The shield was yours all along. I picked it up one day, after you had dropped it. I declare that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad is his messenger.”

‘Alī ؑ gave the shield to him anyway. He, thereafter, remained faithful to ‘Alī ؑ until he was killed in the battle of Ṣiffīn.¹



Islamic justice applies equally to all men. No person is above the law.



Excellence of *Durūd*

Shaikh ibn Ḥajar Makkī رحمه الله relates that a saintly person made it compulsory upon himself to recite *durūd* (salutations) a fixed number of times before sleeping every night. One night, in a dream, he saw Nabī ﷺ entering his house, causing it to become brightly illuminated.

Nabī ﷺ said, “Bring forward that mouth which recites *durūd* on me so that I may kiss it.”

Out of shyness, the saint offered his cheek. Nabī ﷺ then kissed it. Thereafter, he awoke and found that the house was filled with the fragrance of musk.²

1 Ḥayatuṣ Ṣaḥābah, vol 1, p 193

2 Virtues of Salāt ‘Alan Nabī, p 152



Honoured is that person who recites *durūd* in abundance.



Glimpses from the life of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ

Amazing Integrity

The wife of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Fāṭimah bint ‘Abdul Malik, was given a rare and priceless jewel by her father. One day, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said to her, “Please make a choice. Either you return your jewel to the public treasury, or you grant me permission to separate from you, because I dislike having this jewel in our home.”

She replied, “I choose you over the jewel and I would have chosen you even if the jewel was worth twice its present value.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ then ordered that it be taken and placed in the public treasury. After ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ had passed away, Yazīd became the ruler, and he said to Fāṭimah, “If you desire I will have the jewel returned to you.”

She answered, “Never! By Allāh, I did not find pleasure in keeping it during my husbands lifetime, and I will not take it back after he has passed away.”¹

Simplicity

One day, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ came home and asked his wife if she had a dirham so that he could purchase some grapes.

She replied, “No. It is surprising that you are the *Amīr al-Mu’minīn*, yet you do not have even one dirham to purchase some grapes!”

1 Tārīkhul Khulafā’, p 263

He replied, "This is far lighter than being bound in chains in Jahannam."¹

Concern for Humanity

‘Aṭa ibn Abī Rabaḥ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ narrates that Fāṭimah رَحِمَهَا اللهُ said that she once saw her husband, while he was on his *muṣallāh* (place of prayer). Tears had drenched his beard. She asked, "O *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, has something happened?"

He answered, "O Fāṭimah, I have been entrusted with the affairs of the entire *Ummah* of Nabī ﷺ, which includes many races and tribes. My thoughts have been going to those who are hungry and poor, those who are terminally ill, those who have no clothing, those who are suffering in oppression, those who are prisoners in remote lands, those who are old and those who have many dependents and little provisions. People like these are spread throughout the land. I know that my Allāh will question me on the day of Qiyāmah regarding them and I fear that I will be unable to answer favourably. This has brought tears to my eyes."²

Devotion

Fāṭimah رَحِمَهَا اللهُ explains the condition of her husband, "He used to enter the home and proceed to his place of Ṣalāh. He would cry and make *du‘ā'* to Allāh, until sleep would overpower him. When he awoke he would resume his *du‘ā'* and cry until sleep would again overpower him. This would continue throughout the night."³

Trustworthiness

‘Umar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ would only light the state lamp when he dealt with the affairs of the Muslims. When he had seen to their needs and had some private matters to attend to, he would light his own lamp.⁴

1 Tārīkhul Khulafā', p265

2 Tārīkhul Khulafā', p 266

3 Tārīkhul Khulafā', p 266

4 Tārīkhul Khulafā', p 268

Justice

Al-Jarraḥ ibn ‘Abdullāh once wrote to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رحمته الله, “The inhabitants of Khurasān are an evil flock. Only the sword and whip can correct them. It would be appreciated if the *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* would grant me permission to take this route.”

‘Umar رحمته الله wrote back, saying, “I have received your letter explaining the evil nature of the people of Khurasān. You have suggested that only a sword and whip could correct them, but your assessment is incorrect. Justice and truth will correct them, so make these common amongst them.”¹

Humility

Maslamah ibn ‘Abdul Malik رحمته الله once came to visit ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رحمته الله while he was ill and noticed that he was wearing a soiled garment. When he asked Fāṭimah رحمها الله, why it had not been washed, she replied, “This is the only garment he has.”²

Kindness

Rajā ibn Ḥaywah رحمته الله narrates, “I spent a night in the company of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رحمته الله. The lamp which we were using unexpectedly switched off. I asked him, ‘Should I inform the servant to light it again?’

‘No,’ he replied.

I asked, ‘Can I then not see to it?’

‘It does not befit a man of honour to extract services from his guest,’ he replied.

He then stood up, relit the lamp and returned, saying, ‘When I left, I was ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رحمته الله. I have returned, and I am still ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz.’ ”³

1 Tārīkhul Khulafā’, p 273

2 Tārīkhul Khulafā’, p 265

3 Tārīkhul Khulafā’, p 269

Selflessness

It was suggested to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رضى الله عنه, “Why do you not go to Madīnah? If you pass away there, you can then be buried in the fourth grave alongside Nabī ﷺ.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رضى الله عنه replied, “By Allāh, I would prefer to be severely punished by Allāh, rather than give Allāh the impression that I consider myself worthy of being buried there.”



Sincere Repentance is Rewarded

A bū Sa‘īd Khudrī رضى الله عنه narrates that Nabī ﷺ said, “Among the people of the past, was a man who had killed ninety-nine people. He then asked about the most knowledgeable person in the land. He was directed to a monk, so he went to him and asked, ‘I have killed ninety-nine people. Can I repent?’

The monk replied, ‘No.’

So he killed the monk, bringing the number he had killed to one hundred. He again asked about the most knowledgeable person in the land, and was directed to a certain scholar. He approached the scholar and said, ‘I have killed one hundred people. Can I repent?’

The scholar replied, ‘Yes, who can stop you from repenting? Go to such and such a land, where there are people who worship Allāh. Join them in worship and do not return to your own land, for it is a land of evil.’

So he set out, and when he had travelled exactly half the distance, death overcame him. The angels of mercy and punishment began to argue over who would take his soul.

The angels of mercy said, “He was coming towards Allāh with a repentant heart.”

The angels of punishment said, “But, he did not perform a single good deed in his entire life.”

An angel came to them in human form and they appointed him as a mediator. He said, 'Measure the distance between the two lands, and whichever he is closer to, is where he belongs.' So they measured the distance and found that he was closer to the land to which he was headed, so the angels of mercy took his soul."¹



The mercy of Allāh ﷻ is boundless.



One who repents from a sin should flee from it just as Yūsuf ﷺ fled from Zulaikhā when she attempted to seduce him.



Sincerity Removes Obstacles

Abdullāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ narrates that he heard Nabī ﷺ saying, "Three men from among those who were before you, set out on a journey, until they reached a cave at nightfall and entered it. A huge rock rolled down the mountain and closed the mouth of the cave, trapping them within.

They said to each other, 'Nothing can save us from this rock except making du'ā' to Allāh by referring to our past righteous deeds.'

So, one of them said: 'O Allāh, I had elderly parents and never fed my family (wife and children) with milk before feeding them. One day, I was delayed in returning, due to my efforts in searching for pastures, and arrived home late at night, when they had already fallen asleep. I milked the goats and took the milk to them, but found them asleep. I disliked giving the milk to my family before them. I waited for them, with the

¹ Bukhārī, Muslim

bowl of milk in my hand, until dawn, when my hungry children began crying at my feet. My parents awoke and drank the milk. O Allāh, if I did that for Your pleasure only, then please relieve us from our critical situation caused by this rock.' The rock shifted slightly but they could still not emerge.

The second man said, 'O Allāh, I had a cousin, who was the dearest of all people to me and I wanted to have sexual relations with her, but she refused. A time arrived, when she was in difficulty due to a famine, and she came to me. I gave her one-hundred-and-twenty dīnārs on condition that she would not resist my desire, and she agreed. When I was about to fulfil my desire with her, she said, "Fear Allāh! It is unlawful for you to destroy my chastity, except through legitimate marriage."

So I left her, although I loved her dearly. I also left the gold that I had given to her. O Allāh, if I did that for Your pleasure only, please relieve us from this calamity that we find ourselves in.' So, the rock shifted a little more, but they could still not emerge.

Then the third man said, 'O Allāh, I employed a few labourers and paid them their wages, with the exception of one man, who did not take his wages and went away. I invested his wages and it increased substantially. After some time, he returned, and said to me, "O slave of Allāh, pay me my wages!"

I said to him, "All the camels, cows, sheep and slaves you see are yours."

He said, "O slave of Allāh, do not make fun of me."

I said, "I am not making fun of you."

So he left, driving the herd with him, without leaving a single animal behind. O Allāh, if I did that for Your pleasure only, please relieve us from our present suffering.' So, the rock shifted completely and they could finally walk out of the cave."¹

1 Bukhārī and Muslim



Actions done for name and fame bring disgrace, whereas sincerity draws the mercy of Allāh ﷻ.



Love for the Master ﷻ

Zaid ibn Ḥāritha ﷺ, one of the slaves of Nabī ﷺ, had a fascinating life story. He was purchased as a slave and given to Khadīja رضى الله عنها, the wife of Nabī ﷺ. She then gave him as a gift to Nabī ﷺ. He was only eight years of age at the time. Nabī ﷺ freed him and adopted him. He was so beloved to Nabī ﷺ, that people used to call him Zaid ibn Muḥammad rather than Zaid ibn Ḥārithā ﷺ, until Allāh ﷻ revealed the verse,

أَدْعُوهُمْ لِأَبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

“Call them by their father’s names. That is more just in the sight of Allāh.” (Ṣurah Aḥzāb, verse 4)

Zaid’s ﷺ father, Sharāhīl, was grieved by the absence of his son. He and Zaid’s ﷺ uncle arrived in Makkah to ask Nabī ﷺ to allow Zaid ﷺ to return home. They were told that Nabī ﷺ was in the masjid. They proceeded to the masjid where they met with Nabī ﷺ.

They asked, “O son of Ibn ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib, you free slaves and feed the poor. We have come to you regarding our son who is in your service. Would you be so kind as to return him to us and accept compensation on his behalf?”

Nabī ﷺ asked, “What is his name?”

They answered, “Zaid ibn Ḥārithā.”

Nabī ﷺ suggested an alternative solution, “Call him and allow him to choose. If he chooses you, you may take him without any payment. If he chooses me, then, by Allāh, I can never accept compensation over the one who has chosen me.”

They happily agreed to the proposal. Nabī ﷺ called for Zaid ؓ and asked him, “Do you recognise these people?”

Zaid ؓ answered, “Yes. This is my father and uncle.”

Nabī ﷺ then said to him, “You know me and my relationship with you. You now have the choice of my company or theirs.”

Zaid ؓ replied, “I choose you. I will never give preference to anyone over you. You are to me like a father and an uncle.”

His father and uncle reprimanded him sternly, “Shame on you, Zaid! How can you prefer slavery over freedom? How can you refuse the company of your father and family?”

Zaid ؓ explained, “I have noticed something extraordinary in this man. I will never give preference to anybody over him.”

When Nabī ﷺ heard this, he declared, “O people, bear witness that Zaid is my son. He will inherit from me and I from him.”¹

His father and uncle felt at ease and left.²



The young man preferred the company of his master to that of his own father and uncle because of the exemplary character and personality of Nabī ﷺ.



Islam contributed greatly towards the abolition of slavery and racial discrimination, a problem which modern society still has not dealt with adequately.



1 This was prior to the revelation of the verse, “Call them by their father’s names.” (Ṣurah Aḥzāb, verse 4). According to the Islamic law of inheritance, an adopted son does not inherit from his foster parents, nor does a foster parent inherit from an adopted son. The above statement was made prior to the promulgation of this law.

2 Al-Iṣābah, vol 3, p 25; Usdul Ghābah



A Fire-Worshipper Embraces Islam

Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ was a famous *Ṣahābī* of Nabī ﷺ. His conversion to Islam is a fascinating tale of Allāh's ﷻ guidance to the truth. He explains in his own words how he accepted Islam:

"I grew up in the village of Jay, in the town of Isfahān. My father was the leader of the village and owner of a vast estate. He loved me more than he loved anybody else and, like the girls that were kept at home, he prevented me from leaving the precincts of our home. I was a devoted fire-worshipper and my responsibility was to keep the sacred fire burning, so that it would never go out.

One day, he was busy attending to a property matter and said to me, 'My son, as you can see, I am preoccupied with this task. Go out to my estate and handle matters, but do not be distracted as this will cause me to lose concentration in my work.'

As I proceeded on my way, I passed a Christian church and the prayer that I heard, attracted my attention. I was impressed by their manner of praying and said, 'By God, this is better than our religion. I shall stay with these people until the sun sets. I will not go to the estate nor will I return home.'

As I was now attracted to their religion, I asked the people of the church, 'Where does this religion originate from?'

'Syria', they told me.

In the meantime, my father had sent people out in search of me. When I returned home, he asked me where I had been. I told him about my encounter with the Christians and how impressed I was by their religion.

He said in dismay, 'My son, your religion and that of your forefathers is better.'

'By God, no,' I insisted.

My father feared that I would flee, so he kept me locked up in our home. I managed to send a message to the Christians, asking them to

inform me of any caravan destined for Syria. As soon as I was informed of this, I removed the chains from my feet and accompanied the caravan to Syria. There, I inquired who the leader of the Christian faith was. The people directed me to the bishop of the church.

I went up to him and explained my case, 'I want to remain with you, to serve you and pray with you.'

The bishop agreed. I soon found out, however, that the man was corrupt. He would order his followers to give charity, but when the money was handed over to him, he would keep it for himself. In this way, he amassed seven vessels of gold and silver. When the bishop died, I informed the followers of his corrupt practices. They reprimanded me, but I then revealed to them his amassed wealth. They nailed him to a cross and stoned him. A new bishop was appointed in his place who was pious, upright and inclined to the hereafter. God instilled love for him in my heart and I remained with him until he passed away. Close to his death, he directed me to a pious man in Mūṣal, in whose service I remained.

In this way, I attached myself to various learned people in a number of areas. The last of these men told me, 'I do not know of anybody who is of the same faith and belief as us, but the time has arrived for a new prophet, who will revive the true religion of the Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ. He will appear in a land of date-palms and will have some distinct signs. He will have the seal of prophethood between his shoulders. He will accept gifts but not *ṣadaqah* (charity). If you have the means, you should go out in search of him.'

It so happened, that a group of Arab horsemen from the tribe of Kalb passed by my village. I asked them to take me with them, in lieu of whatever money and goats I had. They agreed, but when we reached Wādī al-Qurā (a place between Madīnah and Syria), they sold me to a Jew. When I saw the date palms, I thought that this was the place described to me. I worked as his servant, but he later sold me to a man from the tribe of Banū Quraizah, who took me with him to Madīnah. I immediately recognised the city of palm-groves described to me. I worked in the palm-groves of my master and was unaware that the Prophet I had been awaiting had already declared his prophethood. It was only when Nabī ﷺ

came to Madīnah and stayed at the house of ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf ؓ that I learnt of this.

I was in fact at the top of a palm tree belonging to my master when his nephew came up to him and said, “May God destroy the ‘Aws and Khazraj. I just passed by them now and they are gathered around a man from Makkah, who claims that he is a prophet.”

The moment I heard this, I began to shiver so much, that the tree I was on, began shaking and I almost fell to the ground. I quickly got down from the tree and asked my master’s nephew, ‘What did you say?’

My master was enraged and gave me a terrible blow. ‘What does this matter to you? Go back to what you were doing,’ he shouted.

I returned to my work. When it was evening, I took with me all that I had gathered and went to Qūba, where Nabī ؓ was with his companions. I went up to him and said, ‘I have heard that you are a righteous man and that you have companions who are in need. Here is something that I have gathered. You are most deserving of it. I wish to present it to you as charity.’

Nabī ؓ ordered his companions to eat thereof, but he refrained.

I returned, saying to myself, ‘This is the first sign of the true prophet.’

I continued saving some more and when Nabī ؓ arrived in Madīnah, I approached him and said, ‘I wish to give you a gift. This is not charity, but a gift.’

Nabī ؓ ate from it and so did his companions.

I returned, saying, ‘This is the second sign of the true prophet.’

I again went to him while he was following a *janāzah* (funeral procession) towards Baqī’ with his companions. I greeted him and turned to see the seal of prophethood on his back. He knew what I was looking for and removed the cloth covering it. I kissed it and began crying. He made me sit before him and I related my full story to him. He found it amazing and I then accepted Islam.”¹

1 Usdul Ghābah, vol 2, p 417



Allāh ﷻ guides to the truth whomsoever He wills. He chose Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ and made him travel all the way from Persia to Madīnah for guidance. On the other hand, people living in the very heart of Makkah and Madīnah died as disbelievers because they refused to accept the truth.



True knowledge cannot be gained without sacrifice. Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ had to renounce a comfortable and affluent life and become a slave in order to find the truth.



‘Umar ؓ Embraces Islam

Islam was greatly strengthened when ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ embraced the faith. He was a respected leader of the Quraish and a man of dauntless courage. Nabī ﷺ wanted him to accept Islam and often prayed to Allāh ﷻ to guide him. Initially, he was a bitter opponent of the new religion and tortured the early Muslims mercilessly. He, however, failed to convince even a single Muslim to forsake his faith. One day, in anger and desperation, he decided to murder Nabī ﷺ. He set out with a sword hanging from his neck in search of Nabī ﷺ. Nu‘aim ibn ‘Abdullāh happened to see him armed and asked, “‘Umar, where are you going?”

“I am in search of Muḥammad,” was ‘Umar’s ؓ reply, “and I wish to slay him. He has forsaken our religion, shattered the unity of the Quraish, ridiculed them and vilified their gods. Today I will settle the affair once and for all.”

Nu‘aim replied, “Anger has blinded you. Would it not be better for you to set your own family in order first?”

‘Umar ؓ was taken aback and asked, “And who should I bring to order in my family?”

Nu’aim replied, “Your brother-in-law and your sister Fāṭimah. They have brought faith on Nabī ﷺ. It would be better to deal with them first.”

‘Umar ؓ immediately hurried to the house of his sister. Khabbāb ؓ, a companion of Nabī ﷺ, was, at the time, teaching *Sūrah Ṭāhā* to the couple from a manuscript. When they heard ‘Umar ؓ approaching, Khabbāb ؓ hid himself in a small room and Fāṭimah رضى الله عنها concealed the manuscript hurriedly. But, as ‘Umar ؓ had already heard Khabbāb ؓ reciting the scripture, he demanded to enter the house and hear what was being recited.

In anger, ‘Umar ؓ screamed, “I have heard that both of you have joined Muḥammad.” In a fit of rage, he attacked his brother-in-law. Fāṭimah رضى الله عنها rushed forward to save her husband but ‘Umar ؓ struck her hard, wounding her.

Now, both husband and wife boldly asserted, “Yes, we are Muslims. Do as you please.”

‘Umar ؓ saw the blood flowing from his sister’s wound. His anger gave way to shame and admiration for her courage. He asked for the manuscript from which he had heard Khabbāb ؓ reciting, saying, “I want to know what Muḥammad has brought.”

Fāṭimah رضى الله عنها replied, “I fear what you might do with it.”

‘Umar ؓ promised not to destroy it.

She said to him politely, “Brother, you are unclean because of your polytheism and only the pure may touch it.”

‘Umar ؓ arose and took a bath. She then gave him the pages on which verses of *Sūrah Ṭāhā* were written. He had read only a few lines when he exclaimed in amazement, “How noble and sublime is this speech!”

On hearing this, Khabbāb ؓ came out of his hiding place and said, “O ‘Umar, by Allāh, I hope that He would bless you with His Prophet’s message for, last night, I heard him supplicating, ‘O Allāh, strengthen Islam by Abul Ḥakam or ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.’ ”

‘Umar asked Khabbāb ؓ to lead him to Nabī ﷺ. On being informed by Khabbāb ؓ that Nabī ﷺ was in a house at Mount Ṣafa with his Ṣahābah ؓ,

‘Umar ؓ immediately took his sword and headed that way. When he knocked at the door, one of the *Ṣaḥābah* proceeded to open but, seeing ‘Umar ؓ at the door with a sword in his hand, he hurried back to report, “O Prophet of Allāh, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb has come and he has a sword.”

Ḥamzah ؓ intervened, “Let him in. If he comes with peaceful intent, it is all right. If not, we will kill him with his own sword.”

Nabī ﷺ gave the word to let ‘Umar ؓ in and the companion opened the door. As ‘Umar ؓ entered, Nabī ﷺ stepped forward to meet him. He asked, “Why have you come, O Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb?”

‘Umar ؓ replied submissively, “O Prophet of Allāh, I have come to proclaim my faith in Allāh and His Prophet and what he has brought from Allāh.”

Nabī ﷺ raised the cry of *Allāhu Akbar* so loudly, that the *Ṣaḥābah* ؓ present in the house realised that ‘Umar ؓ had accepted Islam.

‘Umar’s ؓ conversion was a turning point, as it made the Muslims stronger and more confident. Now they proceeded to the Ka‘bah openly and worshipped without fear of persecution. Ḥamzah ؓ had already accepted Islam and ‘Umar’s ؓ conversion angered the Quraish even more. Unlike the other Muslims, ‘Umar ؓ proclaimed his faith publicly. As soon as the Quraish came to know about it, they drew the sword against him but found him prepared to defend himself.¹



The Qur’ān is a powerful book. Its words are so beautiful, sublime and captivating, that even the worst of enemies submit to it.



A Muslim home should be a hub of Qur’ān recitation, Ṣalāh, remembrance of Allāh, Islamic learning and teaching. Such a home would naturally resonate with peace, tranquility and contentment.



1 As-Sīratun Nabawiyyah, Ibn Hishām, vol 1, p 318



Cure for Poverty

Uthmān ؓ came to ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ while the latter was on his deathbed. ‘Uthmān ؓ asked him, “What illness do you have?”

Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ replied, “My sins!”

‘Uthmān ؓ asked, “And what do you desire?”

“The mercy of my Lord,” replied Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ.

‘Uthmān ؓ asked, “Can I get a doctor to attend to you?”

Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ replied, “The doctor has made me ill.”

“Should I send some money for you?” asked ‘Uthmān ؓ.

“No. I have no need for money,” said ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ.

“The money will assist your daughters after your demise,” replied ‘Uthmān ؓ.

Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ explained, “Do you fear that my daughters will become poor? I have commanded them to recite *Sūrah Wāqī‘ah* every night, for I have heard Nabī ﷺ saying, ‘Whoever reads *Sūrah Wāqī‘ah* every night will never be afflicted with poverty.’ ”¹



The *Ṣaḥābah* ؓ had complete faith in the fact that adhering to the teachings of Islam guaranteed success in this world and the Hereafter.



Muslim parents need to take particular care with regard to the spiritual and moral upbringing of their children by teaching them the Qur’ān and encouraging them to follow an Islamic lifestyle.



¹ Tafsīr ibn Kathīr, *Sūrah Wāqī‘ah*; Ibn Asākir



Muslims in the Court of Rustam

The Muslim army entered Persia under the command of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ ؓ. The two armies were set for battle when the Persian king, Rustam, sent a message to Sa'd ؓ, requesting for a representative intelligent enough to answer his questions. Mughīra ibn Sh'uba ؓ was sent. The following conversation then ensued:

Rustam: "You are our neighbours and we have a good relationship with you. We will not harm you or stop you from coming to our cities for trade purposes. Go back home."

Mughīra ؓ: "We do not seek this world. We seek the hereafter. Allāh has sent us a prophet with His message, saying: 'I have sent you to rule over these men. Those who do not accept My religion will be taken to task by Me and those who acknowledge the truth will be victorious. Those who turn away from this religion will be disgraced, whereas those who respect it will be honoured.' "

Rustam: "What is this religion of your prophet?"

Mughīra ؓ: "The most important pillar of this faith is to bear witness that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad is His messenger."

Rustam: "This is fine. Is there anything else?"

Mughīra ؓ: "The faith removes men from the slavery of men and leads them towards the worship of Allāh."

Rustam: "This is fine. Is there anything else?"

Mughīra ؓ: "Islam teaches that the children of Ādam are brothers to one another. They are the progeny of one pair of parents. In other words, the Arab and non-Arab, by virtue of being human, are equal."

Rustam: "This is fine as well. But tell me, if we accept your religion, will you leave our cities in peace?"

Mughīra ؓ: "By the oath of Allāh, we will leave. We will not come to you again except for trade and necessities."

Thereafter, Rustam discussed the issue with his courtiers. He encouraged them to accept Islam, but they adamantly refused. Then, on

the request of Rustam, Sa'd ﷺ sent Rabī' ibn 'Āmir ﷺ as a messenger to Rustam. Rabī' ﷺ entered his court which was decorated with embroidered cushions and rugs. Precious rubies, pearls and beautiful ornaments were on display. Rustam was wearing a crown, and sat on a golden throne. Rabī' ﷺ entered, riding a small horse, with tattered clothing, a sword and shield. He continued until it stepped onto a portion of the carpet. He then dismounted and tied it around one of the pillars. He stepped forward holding his sword and armour, his helmet still on his head.

The courtiers asked him to remove his sword but Rabī' ﷺ refused saying, "I did not come of my own accord. I only came because you called me. You either leave me as I am or I will return."

Rustam allowed him to come forward. He stepped onto the carpet, leaning on his sword and tearing most of it in the process. The courtiers began to question him, "What has brought you?"

Rabī' ﷺ replied, "Allāh has sent us to lead His chosen men from the servitude of mankind to the worship of Allāh, from the confines of the world to its vast expanses and from the oppression of other faiths to the justice of Islam. He sent us with His religion to His creation so that we may call them to Him. Whosoever accepts this call, we will accept him and withdraw from him. Whosoever refuses it, we will continue fighting him until we lead him to the promise of Allāh."

The courtiers asked, "What is the promise if Allāh?"

Rabī' ﷺ answered, "Paradise for those who die fighting the unfaithful and victory for those who survive."

Rustam responded, saying, "I have heard your message. Can you delay this matter long enough for us to ponder over it?"

Rabī' ﷺ agreed, "Yes. How long do you require, a day or two?"

Rustam answered, "No. We require sufficient time to correspond with the leaders and learned men amongst our people."

Rabī' ﷺ explained, "The Prophet did not command us to give respite to our enemies for more than three days. So, see to your and their interests and choose one of these three options within this time period."

Rustam asked, "Are you their leader?"

Rabī' ﷺ replied, "No. But all Muslims are like one body. The lowest amongst them can give asylum to the most honourable."

Rustam assembled the leaders of his nation and said, "Have you ever heard more respectable and superior words than this?"

They replied, "God forbid that you discard your religion in favour of this dog! Did you not see his clothes?"

Rustam replied, "Woe to you! Do not look at his clothes. Look at his message, words and conduct. Arabs pay no attention to clothing and food, but guard their honour."

The next day, the courtiers of Rustam requested another representative. Sa'd ﷺ sent Ḥudhaifah ibn Maḥaz ﷺ. He repeated what Rabī' ﷺ had said. On the third day, Mughīra ibn Sh'uba ﷺ was sent to them and he delivered the same message as those before him.

Thereafter, Rustam took an oath upon the sun, saying, "Tomorrow I will surely kill you."

Mughīra ﷺ replied, "That is left to be seen."

Rustam exclaimed, "I have commanded that each of you be given a pair of clothing and your leader a thousand dīnārs, a pair of clothing and a conveyance. Take these things and disperse!"

Mughīra ﷺ replied, "What! After we have tainted your status, can we leave you as you are? We will most certainly remain in your cities and we will extract from you the *jizya*¹, which you will pay in disgrace."

This angered Rustam even more. A fierce battle ensued. The Muslims numbered seven thousand, while the enemy was seventy thousand strong. Despite the odds, the Persians were humiliated and suffered a crushing defeat.²



The *Ṣaḥābah* ﷺ were not affected by wealth and remained dedicated to their mission of spreading the message of Islam.



1 A tax levied upon non-Muslim citizens within an Islamic state. Upon payment, they receive state protection.

2 Al-Bidāyah Wan-Nihāyah, vol 7, p 39

Islam is not dependent upon superiority of numbers and weapons.
Victory hinges upon *Īmān* (faith) and the Help of Allāh ﷻ.



Truth Scores a Magnificent Victory

Once during the days of the British rule of India, a dispute arose between the Hindus and Muslims in Muzaffarnagar District, Kāndhlā, over a piece of land which both of them claimed as their place of worship. They referred the matter to the English ruler of the district. He heard the case and evidence presented by both parties, but could not reach a verdict.

He asked the Hindus, "Is there a Muslim in the area whose word you trust?"

The Hindus replied, "Yes, we do," and they mentioned the name of a Muslim scholar. The ruler, thereupon, summoned the Muslim scholar to his court.

When the messenger came to summon the scholar, he replied, "I cannot come because I have taken an oath never to look at the face of an Englishman."

The ruler was informed of his response and he sent another message, saying, "He need not look at my face, but the gravity of the matter in dispute requires his testimony."

The scholar agreed and came to the court. He stood with his back turned towards the ruler and declared, "The Hindus are right. The land in dispute belongs to them."

The ruler decided accordingly. The Muslims lost the case, but truth scored a magnificent victory. A number of Hindus embraced Islam that very day.¹

1 Mādḥā Khasīrāl 'Ālam Bī Inḥīṭatīl Muslimīn, p 280; Islam and the World, p 168



Nabī ﷺ has encouraged speaking the truth no matter how unpalatable it might be to others.



Truth brings respectability and honour.



A Drunkard is Guided

Ma'rūf Karkhī رحمه الله narrates that Dhūnnūn Miṣrī رحمه الله was once walking on the bank of a river, when he saw a scorpion moving hastily towards the water. He knew that a scorpion could not swim and decided to watch what would happen. In the meantime, a tortoise emerged from the water and came close to the bank. The scorpion jumped onto the back of the tortoise, which began to swim. Very surprised, he decided to follow the tortoise and scorpion. Finally, the tortoise reached the other end of the river and the scorpion jumped onto the bank.

The scorpion then continued on its way and the saint followed it. After a while, he saw a young man sleeping beneath a tree and realised that the scorpion was moving towards him. Thinking that the scorpion would sting the sleeping man, he prepared himself to kill it. As he advanced, he saw a snake quickly moving towards the man. He was more surprised than ever. When the snake was close to the man, the scorpion headed towards it and bit it. The snake began to toss and turn and died on the spot. The scorpion then returned from the direction it had come.

When Dhūnnūn Miṣrī رحمه الله saw this, he was quite moved and uttered the following couplet:

يَا رَاقِدًا وَالْجَلِيلُ يُحْفَظُهُ ... مِنْ كُلِّ سُوءٍ يَكُونُ فِي الظُّلُمِ

كَيْفَ تَنَامُ الْعُيُونُ عَنْ مُلِكٍ ... تَأْتِيكَ مِنْهُ فَوَائِدُ النَّعَمِ

"O sleeping man, you sleep while Allāh is protecting you from every evil that may arise from the darkness.

How can sleep make the eyes oblivious of that king whose bounties come to you in abundance."

The saint explained, "I was amazed at this spectacle of fate and began to think, 'O Allāh, Your servant was sleeping here. A snake was about to bite him and You sent a scorpion from such a distance to save him!'

I went close to the man and awakened him, only to find the stench of liquor emanating from his mouth.

I said to him, 'O young man, you were asleep but Your Sustainer was protecting you all along.'

When he arose to see the snake and heard my story, he began to cry, saying, 'O Allāh, I was astray and did not fear You. O Helper of the helpless! O Listener to those who call out for help! O Remover of calamities! You are that Being Who is seventy times more loving than a mother! I had broken Your commands but You did not turn away from me. You showered me with so many bounties to protect me.'

The young man sincerely repented and changed his life."¹



Allāh ﷻ used a scorpion and a tortoise in the most amazing manner to guide a sinner. What man regards as a mere coincidence is a carefully worked-out plan from Allāh ﷻ to avert calamity, disease, accident and misfortune.



1 Ḥayātul Ḥayawān, vol 2, p 138



Alarming Outcome of Disbelief

Shaikh Dahhān رحمته الله, a prominent religious authority who resided in Makkah, mentioned that an ‘Ālim (scholar) once passed away and was accordingly buried. Shortly thereafter, another person passed away and his family wanted to bury him in the ‘Ālim’s grave. Such a practice of burying more than one person in a grave is common in Makkah. But, when his grave was dug open, the body of a beautiful young girl was found instead. Upon closer inspection, they realised that she was European.

People were amazed at the strange occurrence. A person from Europe was also present in the gathering. When he saw the face of the girl, he exclaimed, “I know her! She is from France. She is the daughter of a French Christian and used to come for Urdu lessons to me. She had secretly converted to Islam and I had also given her a number of lessons in Fiqh. She was ill and had recently passed away. I was quite taken aback with her death and left my work to come here.”

The people then remarked, “We now understand how she ended up here. She was a pious Muslim. We now need to find out what has happened to the body of the ‘Ālim who was buried here.”

Some people suggested that it might have been transferred to her grave in France. They requested the traveller, when he returned to France after completing his ḥaj, to dig open the girl’s grave to check if the Ālim’s body was perchance in her grave. They also sent another person with him who could recognise the ‘Ālim’s face. When the person returned to France, he met with the girl’s parents and explained to them what had happened.

They were astonished and could not understand how their daughter had ended up in Makkah. They decided to dig open her grave. The parents and a few others proceeded to the graveyard to investigate the strange phenomenon. When they dug open the grave, their prediction proved to

be correct. Instead of the girl's body in the coffin, they found the body of the 'Ālim who had been buried in Makkah.

Shaikh Dahhān explained that the French traveller managed to convey the message back to them in Makkah. After hearing the news, people in Makkah began to ponder over the matter. The fact that she had been moved to Makkah was a sign of her acceptance and the reason for her acceptance was clear enough. But, the question remained: why was the 'Ālim's body moved from Makkah to a place of disbelief in France? Why had he been rejected? They decided to approach the 'Ālim's wife, as a wife is normally the most conversant regarding her husband's affairs. They asked her whether she knew of anything that her husband had done, that was contrary to Islamic teachings.

She replied, "Nothing! My husband was a pious man. He used to perform Ṣalāh punctually, recite Qur'ān regularly and was constant with *Tahajjud*¹ Ṣalāh."

Again they requested, "Please think carefully. His body has been transferred from Makkah to France. There must have been something within him that was contrary to Islam."

She replied, "Yes. There was one thing which I found quite offensive about him. When he used to fulfil his desires and intended to perform *ghusl*, he would remark, 'How good is the way of the Christians! *Ghusl* is not compulsory upon them after marital relations.' "

Upon hearing this, they remarked, "This is it! Allāh ﷻ transferred his body to the land of those people, whose system he had preferred over the system of Islam."²



It is not a normal phenomenon for bodies to be transferred from graves. Occasionally, Allāh ﷻ allows such an occurrence to come to light so that people may take a lesson from it.



1 An optional prayer of great merit performed at night.

2 Haqrat Thānwī Ke Pasandīdā Wāqī'āt, p 177

To give preference to an aspect of *kufr* (disbelief) over Islam is a very serious sin.



Optional Haj or Charity?

Assisting the Destitute

Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak رحمته الله was a pious scholar, jurist and saint. He was born in Marw, present-day Turkmenistan in the year 118 Hijrī. Amongst his many good qualities was his generosity. He performed haj many times and would frequently pay for all the expenses of his fellow ḥujjāj (pilgrims). This included their transport costs, as well as any gifts they wished to purchase from the blessed lands of Makkah and Madīnah. On one occasion, he was on his way to perform haj, when a bird that they had been carrying, died. He ordered that it be disposed off at the dumps, as it could not be consumed because it was carrion. This was accordingly done. However, as he continued his journey, he noticed a little girl approaching from a nearby house. She picked up the dead bird, wrapped it in a piece of cloth and rushed home with it. He approached her and asked why she had done so.

She replied, “My brother and I have only one set of clothing. Our only source of food is that which we find thrown at the dumps. Due to our abject poverty, carrion has become permissible for us to consume for a number of days now. Our father was a rich man, but his wealth was oppressively taken away from him and he was killed.”

Ibn al-Mubārak رحمته الله ordered that from the thousand dīnārs he had with him for the journey, twenty dīnārs be kept aside for his return

journey to Marw. The remainder, he handed over to the girl, saying, “This is better than our optional ḥaj for this year.”¹

Angel Deputed to Perform Ḥaj

It is related about the saint, Rabī ibn Sulaimān ربيع بن سليمان that while travelling on ḥaj, he saw a poor woman cutting pieces of meat from a dead mule. He followed her to her home, where he found four young girls virtually starving to death. Upon enquiry, he learnt that they were from the family of Nabī نبي and had not eaten anything for four days. They were now forced to consume carrion due to fear of starvation. Rabī ربيع returned with tears in his eyes and informed his companions that he had changed his mind and would be returning home.

Despite their best efforts to convince him, he could not be persuaded otherwise. He purchased food and clothes and gave these, together with a sum of money, to the poor family. Rabī remained in Kūfa, while the rest of the ḥujjāj proceeded for ḥaj. When they returned, he went out to meet them and requested for their *du‘ās*. They were surprised and responded by saying that they had seen him in ‘Arafah, Mīna, Makkah and Madīnah.

One Ḥāji gave him a bag, saying, “You gave me this bag in Madīnah as a trust after visiting the *Rowḍa Mubārak*². On the bag was the following inscription: ‘Whoever deals with us, shall profit.’ ”

Rabī ربيع had never seen this bag before, but took it home. That night, he saw Nabī نبي in a dream. Nabī نبي informed him that he was pleased when he had assisted the family and had made *du‘ā* that Allāh grant him a greater reward than his kindness. Allāh had in turn ordered an angel to perform ḥaj in his place and gave him six hundred gold coins as a reward for the six hundred silver coins he had given to the family. When Rabī ربيع awoke from his sleep, he found the gold coins in the bag he had been given.³

1 Al-Bidāyah Wan Nihāyah, vol 10, p 178

2 The blessed grave of Nabī نبي.

3 Virtues of Ḥaj, Sheikh Zakariyya, p 324



An optional ḥaj carries great reward, however, there are times when assisting the poor and destitute is more pleasing to Allāh ﷻ.



Thirst for Islamic Knowledge

A bū ‘Abdur Raḥmān Baqī ibn Makhlad al-Andalūsī رحمته الله was born in Spain in the year 201 *Hijrī*. He travelled on foot from Spain to Baghdād with the sole purpose of meeting Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal رحمته الله and learning Ḥadīth from him.

As he approached Baghdād, he heard the news that the learned Imām had been banned from teaching. He was saddened by the news, but continued his journey until he arrived in Baghdād. Here he met Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn رحمته الله, another great scholar of Ḥadīth, and asked him a few questions regarding the status of a number of narrators of Ḥadīth. Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn رحمته الله provided answers to his questions. He then enquired about Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal رحمته الله.

Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn رحمته الله replied, “Can people like us be questioned about Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal? He is the Imām and most honourable of Muslims.”

Baqī ibn Makhlad رحمته الله continues his story, “I left in search of the home of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal رحمته الله. I was directed to a certain house and I knocked at the door. Imām Aḥmad رحمته الله came to enquire who it was and found me, a stranger, at the door.

I said to him, ‘O Abū ‘Abdullāh, I have come from far and this is my first visit to this city. I am a student of Ḥadīth and have travelled with the intention of learning from you.’

He said to me, ‘Come into the passage that leads into the house. But make sure nobody sees you.’

He then asked, ‘Where are you from?’

I replied, 'From Al-Maghrib al-Aqṣā (the West).'

He asked, 'From Africa?'

I replied, 'Further than that. I have crossed the sea to Africa. I am from Spain.'

He said, 'You have certainly travelled far. I would love nothing more than to assist somebody like you, but as you have probably heard, I have been prevented from teaching.'

I replied, 'Yes. I heard the news as I was approaching Baghdād. Abū 'Abdullāh, I am new to this city. Nobody knows me. If you grant me permission, I will come to you everyday in the guise of a beggar. I will call out to you like a beggar calls out and you can then come out to me like you have done now. If you narrate to me only one Ḥadīth a day, it will suffice.'

He agreed, saying, 'Fine, on condition that you do not attend any other gathering or lesson of those who study and teach Ḥadīth.'

I replied, 'I agree.'

So I would take a stick in my hand, wrap a cloth around my head and conceal my writing paper and ink pot in my sleeve. I would call out, like beggars do, at his door, 'Charity! May Allāh have mercy upon you!'

Imām Aḥmad رحمه الله would unlock his door, come out and narrate to me two or three Aḥādīth and sometimes even more. I continued in this way, until the ban on him was lifted and righteous rulers assumed authority. Imām Aḥmad رحمه الله, thereafter, regained his former status and became well-known amongst people as a great leader.

Whenever I attended his gatherings, he would make space for me and draw me close to him. He would tell those around him, 'This man can rightfully be called a student of knowledge.' He would then narrate my story to them.

Once, I was quite ill. Imām Aḥmad رحمه الله noticed that I was absent from his class and asked where I was. When he was informed of my illness, he immediately stood up from the gathering and came to visit me. I was lying down in bed in the apartment I had rented. But, I could hear the voices of people in the hotel announcing Imām Aḥmad's رحمه الله arrival. The owner came up to my room and informed me that Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal رحمه الله, the Imām of the Muslims, had come to visit me.

Imām Aḥmad رحمته الله entered and sat close to me. My room was too small to accommodate all those who had accompanied him, hence some of them had to stand. They had come with pens in their hands. Imām Aḥmad رحمته الله said, 'Glad tidings to you for the reward of Allāh! The days of good health had no sickness and the days of sickness are without good health. May Allāh raise you to the status of 'āfiya (ease and comfort)!' He placed his hand upon me and I saw the pens writing his words.

He then left. The people of the hotel crowded around me, serving and caring for me in response to what they had just observed. Some people brought a bed, others brought blankets, and yet others brought the best of food. They cared for me more than my own family would have cared for me, had I been in my own home. This was because a pious man had visited me."¹



Sincere love and thirst for Islamic knowledge will motivate a person to the most amazing levels of sacrifice.



Visiting the sick is a great sunnah of Nabī ﷺ.



Allāh ﷻ is the Best of Planners

The head of the service personnel of Masjidun-Nabawī was Shamsuddīn Ṣawāb Lamṭī رحمته الله. He was a pious man, who was kind and generous towards the poor. Ṣawāb رحمته الله had a close friend, who used to frequent the gatherings of the ruler of Madīnah and would keep him informed about any major developments.

¹ Ṣafḥāt Min Ṣabril 'Ulamā', p 26

One day, this friend approached him and said, "A very disconcerting event has occurred today."

Upon enquiry, he explained, "A number of people have come from Syria and have bribed the ruler of Madīnah with a huge amount of wealth to allow them to open the blessed graves and remove the bodies of Abū Bakr ؓ and 'Umar ؓ. The ruler has agreed to their request."

Şawāb explains, "I became extremely worried. Shortly thereafter, a messenger of the ruler of Madīnah arrived, saying that the ruler wanted to see me."

When I presented myself before him, he said to me, "Şawāb, a group of people will knock at the door of the masjid tonight. Open the door and allow them to do as they wish. Do not obstruct them in any way."

Şawāb replied that he would do so.

Şawāb explains further, "I returned and spent the day crying, without anybody knowing why I was so worried. At night, after we had performed 'Ishā Şalāh, we locked the doors of the masjid as usual. Shortly afterwards, somebody knocked at the door of Bābus Salām. The ruler of Madīnah used to live in a fort in front of Bābus Salām. I opened the door and forty people entered. I counted them as they walked past me, one by one. They were carrying equipment that is normally used for digging and excavation work. They also had candles with them. They were heading towards the sacred chamber. But, I take an oath on Allāh, that they had not even reached the pulpit, when the earth suddenly split beneath their feet and they were all buried together with their tools. No trace was left of them."

Şawāb continues, "The ruler became anxious, awaiting news regarding them, and finally sent for me."

He asked, "Şawāb, did a group of people not come to you?"

Şawāb replied, "Yes, indeed. But, the earth swallowed them."

The ruler warned, "Think before you speak."

Şawāb insisted that he was speaking the truth and then took the ruler to the spot where the incident had occurred.

He instructed, "This matter should remain here. If you mention this incident to anybody, you shall be beheaded!"

This incident, which occurred in the middle of the seventh century *Hijrī*, has also been recorded by Samhūdī and others, who say that there were fifteen or twenty people, and they were all swallowed by the earth when they had advanced only a few steps towards the sacred chamber.¹



The evil plots of the mischief-makers are easily crushed by Allah ﷻ.

وَمَكْرُؤٌ وَّمَكْرَ اللَّهِ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرُ ٱلْمَآكِرِينَ

“They plan and Allāh also plans. And Allāh is the best of planners.” (Sūrah ‘Āl-‘Imrān, verse 54)



Human Being is the Best of Creation

I sā ibn Mūsā Ḥāshimī was a close friend of the Khalīfah Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr. One moonlit night, he was sitting with his wife, whom he loved very dearly. Lovingly, he said to her, “You are divorced three times, if you are not more beautiful than the moon!”

She immediately stood up and separated herself from him by drawing her ḥijāb, saying, “You have divorced me!”

It was a statement that he had uttered lightly, but a divorce uttered jokingly remains valid. He spent the remainder of the night in worry and anxiety. The next morning, he proceeded to the court of Ja‘far al-Manṣūr and narrated to him what had happened the night before. Khalīfah Manṣūr gathered the religious scholars of the area and asked for their

1 Al-Wafā’ Ul-Wafā’, vol 2, p 653

verdict on the matter. All of them, except one, agreed that his wife was divorced from him since no person could possibly excel the moon in beauty. The scholar who remained silent was from amongst the students of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله.

Khalīfah Mansūr asked him, “Why have you not spoken?”

He replied,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ وَطُورِ سَيْنِينَ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ
لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

“In the name of Allāh, the most beneficent, the most merciful. By the fig and the olive. And by the Mount of Sinai and this city of security. We have indeed created man in the best of forms.” (Sūrah Tīn)

He continued, “O Khalīfah, man is the best of creation. Nothing can be better than him.”

All the scholars were speechless with the explanation.

The Khalīfah said to ʿĪsā ibn Mūsā, “The matter is as this man has explained. You may return to your wife.”

The Khalīfah also sent a message to his wife, saying, “Obey your husband, as he has not divorced you.”¹



Human beings are the best and most beautiful of Allāh's  creation.



1 Tafsīr Qurṭubī, Sūrah Tīn; Maʿāriful Qurʾān



Sacrifice of ‘Ulamā’ in Pursuit of Knowledge

Hunger

Ibn al-Muqrī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Isbahānī رحمته الله, Shaikh Ṭabrānī رحمته الله and Shaikh Abū as-Shaikh ibn Ḥayyān رحمته الله were three outstanding scholars of the third century *Hijrī*. On one particular occasion, all three of them were in Madīnah in search of knowledge.

Ibn al-Muqrī رحمته الله says, “Times were hard and we were forced to fast continuously for days at a time, due to lack of money and food. One day, after ‘Ishā Ṣalāh, I presented myself at the blessed grave of Nabī ﷺ and cried, ‘Hunger!’

Shaikh Ṭabrānī رحمته الله said to me, ‘I will remain seated here. Either sustenance will come to us or death!’ ”

Ibn al-Muqrī and Abū Shaikh proceeded to perform Ṣalāh. A short while later, a person from the family of Nabī ﷺ presented himself at the door. With him were two slaves, who were carrying two parcels with a large amount of provisions.

The man explained, “You complained to Nabī ﷺ, and I saw him in a dream commanding me to bring some provisions to you.”¹

Seventeen Year Separation from Family

‘Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Qāsim al-‘Utaqī al-Miṣrī was a scholar of the second century *Hijrī* and a student of Imām Mālik رحمته الله. He explains his story:

“I used to visit Imām Mālik رحمته الله everyday just before Fajr, as I found it most appropriate to ask him questions relating to Fiqh at that time. Sometimes, I would recline at his doorstep and sleep would overpower me. Imām Mālik رحمته الله used to proceed to the masjid and I would not even realise him passing by.

1 Tadhkiratul Ḥuffāz, vol 3, p 974

A slave girl would awaken me, saying, 'Your master has left. He is not negligent like you are! His age is forty-nine, and he regularly performs Fajr Ṣalāh with the *wuḍū* he makes for 'Ishā Ṣalāh.' "

Ibn al-Qāsim continues, "I spent seventeen years at the door of Imām Mālik. I did not indulge in any business transactions during this time. One day, I was in his company, when the *Hujjāj* of Egypt arrived. Amongst them was a young man who was veiled.

He greeted Imām Mālik رحمته الله and asked, 'Is there anyone amongst your students by the name of Ibn al-Qāsim?'

Imām Mālik رحمته الله pointed to me. The young man came and kissed me on the forehead. I perceived a sweet scent emanating from his body, the scent that is common with young boys. To my surprise, this was my son!"

Ibn al-Qāsim had left in pursuit of knowledge, while his wife was pregnant with this young man.¹



The illustrious '*Ulamā*' of Islam made great sacrifices in pursuit of knowledge. Poverty, hunger, separation from family and travelling over vast distances were some of the challenges they endured. But, in their quest for Islamic knowledge, these difficulties were insignificant. It is due to their determined efforts that Islamic knowledge has been extensively and meticulously transmitted in its pristine form for generations.



1 Tartīb al-Madārik, vol 1, p 253



Marriages with a Difference

Belief in Taqdīr (Predestination)

Abū Dardā' ؓ accompanied Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ to propose for the hand of a girl from the tribe of Banū Laith, whom Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ intended to marry. Abū Dardā' ؓ arrived at the house and highlighted the excellent qualities of Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ and his valuable contribution to Islam. He explained that Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ was interested in marrying their daughter.

They responded, "We will not marry Salmān to our daughter but we are happy to marry her to you!"

Abū Dardā' ؓ agreed and married the girl. When he met Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ he explained, "I am too embarrassed to tell you what has happened."

Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ insisted on being informed and Abū Dardā' ؓ explained to him what had transpired.

Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ responded, "I should be more ashamed than you because I had proposed for a girl whom Allāh ﷻ had predestined for you!"¹



The *Ṣaḥābah* ؓ accepted *taqdīr* almost as if it were second nature to them. They did not complain when things did not turn out as they had planned. They gladly accepted Allāh's ﷻ decree and lived their lives accordingly.



1 Mu'jamul Kabīr Liṭ-Ṭabrānī, p216

A Wise Woman

Nabī ﷺ once sent a proposal to a young woman from the Anṣār on behalf of Julaibīb ؓ. The woman's father said, "Allow me to first consult with her mother." Nabī ﷺ agreed.

He then left to discuss the issue with his wife.

"Never!" she remarked, "Did Nabī ﷺ not find anybody besides Julaibīb? We have declined the proposals of so and so."

In the meanwhile, the daughter was quietly listening to the discussion. Just as the father was about to go out and inform Nabī ﷺ of their decision, the daughter exclaimed, "Do you intend to reject the proposal made by Nabī ﷺ? If Nabī ﷺ is happy to marry him in your family then proceed with the marriage."

They replied, "You are correct."

The father went to Nabī ﷺ and said, "If you are pleased with him, so are we."

Nabī ﷺ responded, "I am pleased with him."

The marriage was performed. Julaibīb ؓ later participated in a battle. After the battle had ended, Nabī ﷺ noticed that he was missing and instructed the Ṣaḥābah ؓ to search for him. His body was found in the midst of a number of disbelievers whom he had killed.

Nabī ﷺ came to him and said, "He killed seven disbelievers and only then did they succeed in killing him. He is from me and I am from him."

Nabī ﷺ carried him in his arms and buried him. Nabī ﷺ also made du'ā' for his widow, "O Allāh, shower Your blessings upon her and let not her life be one of hardship."

A narrator of the incident mentions that no widow from the Anṣār¹ would spend as much as her. In other words, she became well-to-do.²



Following the guidance and advice of Nabī ﷺ is the path to true success.



1 The Muslims of Madīnah who assisted those who migrated from Makkah.

2 Musnad Aḥmad



Glimpses from the Life of Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله

The Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī is regarded by the Muslim world as the most authentic book after the Qur'ān. The author of this great book was Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī رحمه الله. He was born in 194 *Hijrī* in Bukhāra. His father passed away while he was a young boy. Below are a few inspiring incidents from his illustrious life.

Mother's Du'ā'

Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله became blind at a young age, but his pious mother continued making du'ā' for him. One night she saw Ibrāhīm عليه السلام saying to her in a dream, "Due to your continuous du'ās, Allāh ﷻ has restored the eyesight of your son."

When he awoke in the morning, his sight was indeed restored.¹

Business Integrity

On one occasion, a group of traders from Syria came to purchase some goods from Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله. They offered to purchase the goods from him at a price which would yield a profit of five thousand dirhams. Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله said to them, "Return to your homes for today."

The next day, another group of traders came to him and offered to purchase the goods at a price that would have enabled him to make a profit of ten thousand dirhams.

Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله refused, saying, "I had already made an intention last night to sell these goods to the first group of traders who had come. I do not wish to change my intention now."²

Humility

One day, Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله was in the process of constructing a building close to Bukhāra. Many people came to assist the Imām with the

1 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥul Bārī, p 478

2 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥul Bārī, p 479

construction. But, the Imām continued carrying the bricks with his own hands.

Somebody appealed to him, “There is no need for you to carry the bricks. We will do it.”

Imām Bukhārī رحمہ اللہ responded, “I am doing this for my own benefit.”¹

Kindness

Muḥammad ibn Abū Ḥātim al-Warrāq mentions, “When I used to travel with Imām Bukhārī رحمہ اللہ, out of the summer months, we used to sleep in the same room. He would rise between fifteen and twenty times during the night. Each time, he would light the lamp with his own hands, take out some Aḥādīth, mark them and then lie down again. I once said to him, ‘Why do you put yourself through all this trouble? Why do you not awaken me instead?’

He replied, ‘You are young and I do not wish to disrupt your sleep.’”²

A Handsome Investment

Imām Bukhārī رحمہ اللہ inherited a huge sum of wealth from his father. He invested it and earned around five hundred dirhams every month. He would utilise the profits in his search for knowledge, saying, “The reward which is with Allāh ﷻ is better and more fruitful.”³

Amazing Memory

Imām Bukhārī رحمہ اللہ memorised a hundred thousand authentic Aḥādīth and two hundred thousand unauthentic Aḥādīth. His contemporaries were astounded by his amazing memory from a tender age. They narrate that he would accompany them on their travels to Baṣrah in order to learn from the scholars of Ḥadīth. On one occasion, they noticed that Imām Bukhārī رحمہ اللہ had not written anything for a period of sixteen days.

They confronted the Imām regarding their concerns and he replied, “You people have rebuked me considerably. Show me the Aḥādīth that you have written!”

1 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faḥḥul Bārī, p 481

2 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faḥḥul Bārī, p 481

3 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faḥḥul Bārī, p 479

They had written over fifteen thousand Aḥādīth. Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله quoted every single Ḥadīth from memory and, in amazement, they began correcting the errors they had made in their respective writings.

Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله remarked, “Do you think that I have come here to waste my time?”¹

Astounding Intellect

When Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله arrived in Baghdād, the Ḥadīth scholars gathered to test his memory. They took a hundred Aḥādīth and mixed up the text and the chain of narrators. Ten people were assigned to quote ten Aḥādīth each to the Imām. Each person recited his ten Aḥādīth but upon each one, the Imām said, “I do not know this Ḥadīth.”

Those amongst the crowd, who were aware of the plan to test him began to realise that the Imām had understood their aim. Those who did not know about the plan, began to doubt the Imām’s capability and memory. When the ten had completed, Imām Bukhārī turned to the first person and quoted the Ḥadīth he had mentioned incorrectly and then recited the correct Ḥadīth with the correct text and chain. He did so with all hundred Aḥādīth.

Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar رحمته الله, the renowned scholar of Ḥadīth explained, “More amazing than his correction of their errors, was the fact that he had managed to memorise the sequence and order of the Aḥādīth quoted to him.”²

Qur’ānic Recitation in Ramaḍān

Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله used to complete the entire Qur’ān by reciting twenty verses in every rakāt of Tarāwīḥ³. During the last portion of the night he would again recite Qur’ān, completing a full recitation in three nights. During the day he would complete the Qur’ān close to the time of Iftār,⁴ saying, “Du‘ās are accepted at this time.”⁵

1 Hadiyatud Darārī, p 27

2 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥul Bārī, p 486

3 A special prayer performed during the month of Ramaḍān.

4 The time of breaking the fast, immediately after sunset.

5 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥul Bārī, p 481

Devotion in Ṣalāh

Once Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله prolonged his Ṣalāh for a substantial period of time. After he had completed, he asked his companions to check whether there was anything beneath his *kurta*¹.”

They found that a hornet had stung the Imām about seventeen times causing his body to swell. One of his companions asked, “Why did you not stop your Ṣalāh when you felt the first bite?”

He explained, “I had begun reciting a chapter of the Qur’ān and wanted to complete it.”²

Simplicity in Food

Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله used to eat very little. Once, when he was extremely ill, he admitted to the doctors who saw to him, that he had not eaten gravy for forty years. The doctors advised that his cure lay in him consuming gravy, but Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله refused to accept their advice. Only after much persuasion by his colleagues, did he agree to consume a little sugar with his bread.³

Honesty and Generosity

Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله often used to engage in archery while on horseback. Once he missed the target and his arrow struck the pillar of a bridge, causing it to be damaged. He jumped off his horse, removed the arrow from the pillar and said to his companion, “Go to the owner of this bridge and explain to him that we have caused some damage to the pillar of his bridge. Beg for forgiveness from him. In addition, ask him to allow us to rebuild the pillar or to accept the equivalent sum of money for damages caused.”

When the owner was informed of this, he said, “Tell Abū ‘Abdullāh (Imām Bukhārī رحمته الله) that he has done nothing wrong. In fact, may all my wealth be sacrificed for him!”

1 A garment worn by Muslim men.

2 Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 2, p 12

3 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥul Bārī, p 481

When Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله heard his reply, he was extremely happy and read five hundred Aḥādīth to those who had come from afar. He also gave out three hundred dirhams in ṣadaqah (charity).¹

Blessed Grave

After his body had been buried, the sweet smell of musk emanated from his grave. This lasted for a number of days. People began to carry away the soil from his grave, and a wooden structure was then built over it to prevent this. May Allāh ﷻ grant Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله the highest of stages in Jannah!



Enemy is Pardoned

Zainab رضي الله عنها was the daughter of Nabī ﷺ from his first wife, Khadīja رضي الله عنها. She was married to Abū al-‘Āṣ ibn Rabī’, who was a wealthy businessman of Makkah and a nephew of Khadīja رضي الله عنها. Zainab رضي الله عنها and Abū al-‘Āṣ had been married before the dawn of prophethood. She had then accepted Islam but he remained a disbeliever. In the battle of Badr, he fought on the side of the Quraish. He was taken captive by the Muslims and brought to Madīnah.

As it was decided that the captives would be released on payment of a ransom, Zainab رضي الله عنها sent some wealth which included a necklace given to her by her mother, Khadīja رضي الله عنها. When Nabī ﷺ saw the necklace, compassion overtook him and he asked the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم if they were willing to return the necklace to Zainab رضي الله عنها and return Abū al-‘Āṣ without payment of a ransom. They agreed. Nabī ﷺ instructed Abū al-‘Āṣ to allow Zainab رضي الله عنها to come to him in Madīnah in return for his freedom. He agreed.

When he reached Makkah, Abū al-‘Āṣ allowed Zainab رضي الله عنها to leave for Madīnah, but she was stopped by the Quraish. A spear was thrown at her by Habbār ibn Aswad and she fell from her conveyance, causing her to bleed severely. She was pregnant at the time, and this led to a miscarriage.

1 Hadyus Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥul Bārī, p 480

She never recovered from her wound and passed away during the 8th year of *Hijrī* in *Madīnah*. Nabī ﷺ entered her grave with great sadness and sorrow, but emerged pleased. He explained, “I remembered her weakness and I asked Allāh to make it easy for her in the grave. My request was granted.”

Habbār ibn Aswad came to Nabī ﷺ during the conquest of Makkah. He was from amongst those whom the Muslim army had been commanded to kill. As he entered the gathering of Nabī ﷺ, a *Ṣahābī* wanted to attack him but Nabī ﷺ commanded the *Ṣahābī* not to do so.

Habbār then addressed Nabī ﷺ, “Peace be upon you, O Prophet of Allāh. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allāh and I bear witness that Muḥammad ﷺ is the prophet of Allāh. I had fled from you, intending to join another tribe, but I remembered the kindness you displayed to your close family members and your forgiveness to those who were ignorant of you. O Prophet of Allāh, we were a nation steeped in disbelief, but Allāh guided us and saved us from destruction through you. Please pardon my ignorance and the harm I have inflicted upon you. I confess to my evil action and I acknowledge my sin.”

Nabī ﷺ replied, “I have forgiven you. Allāh has surely been kind to you by guiding you to Islam.”¹



To forgive an enemy, who has harmed one physically and emotionally, requires a great deal of courage and compassion. Numerous incidents of this nature show that Nabī ﷺ graciously overlooked the harm people caused to him. As the Qur’ān mentions, he was ‘*raḥmatul lil ‘ālamīn*’, a mercy to creation.



1 Al-Iṣābah, vol 8, p 91 and p 278; Al-Istī‘āb Fī Ma‘rifatil Aṣḥāb, p 409, vol 4; Ar-Rawḥul Unf; Usdul Ghābah; Al-Mu‘jamul Kabīr Liṭ Ṭabrānī



A Female Muftī

Fāṭimah As-Samarqandiyyah was the daughter of Shaikh ‘Alā’uddīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Aḥmad As-Samarqandī رحمته الله, the author of *Tuḥfat al-Fuqahā*. A commentary on this book, entitled “*Badā’i ‘uṣ-Ṣanā’i*”, was written by Imām Abū Bakr ibn Mas‘ūd al-Kāsānī رحمته الله, a student of Shaikh ‘Ala’uddīn. This commentary is one of the masterpieces of Ḥanafī fiqh.

When Imām Kāsānī presented his book before his mentor, he was so pleased with it that he accepted it as a mahr¹ for his daughter’s marriage to him. Fāṭimah had received proposals from the kings of the time, but these had been rejected by her father. Contemporary scholars would say,

شَرَحَ تَحْفَتَهُ وَزَوَّجَ ابْنَتَهُ

“He wrote a commentary on his *Tuḥfah* and married his daughter!”

To understand the scholarly greatness of this woman, there is a need to first understand the brilliance of her husband. Imām Kāsānī was an exceptional scholar of his time. He was known by the title ‘*Mālikul ‘Ulamā*’, the head of the scholars. His status can be gauged from his *magnum opus*, “*Badā’i ‘uṣ-Ṣanā’i*”, in ten volumes. According to a number of ‘*Ulamā*’, including ‘Allāmah ‘Ābidīn Shāmī رحمته الله and others, this book is without a parallel in its field. Imām Kāsānī رحمته الله was extremely knowledgeable in *uṣūl* and *furū* (the principles and derivatives of jurisprudence).

After completing his studies in Bukhāra, he travelled to Byzantium. From there, he took up the position of teaching Ḥadīth and Fiqh at Aleppo on the insistence of Nūr ud-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Zangī. Imām Kāsānī رحمته الله

1 A payment made by the husband to the bride upon marriage.

was known for his opposition to the Mu'tazila and innovators. He was a dedicated teacher who took special care in teaching.

Amazingly, historical sources mention, "When in doubt, he would consult his wife. She would advise him and he would then accept her opinion."

Fāṭimah's greatness as a scholar of Ḥadīth and Fiqh can further be gauged from the fact that she had memorised her father's compilation, *Tuḥfat al-Fuqahā*. She was so proficient, that when *fatāwā* (verdicts) were passed from this household, they would bear her signature, together with that of her father and husband.¹



Such women should serve as true role models for Muslim women of every age. Their biographies have far more to offer than the lifestyle of film actresses, pop-stars and fashion models who have unfortunately been transformed into icons on the grounds of superficial beauty.



An intelligent father sees to the religious upbringing of his daughter and marries her to a pious man.



Who is Dajjāl?

Fāṭimah bint Qais رضي الله عنها narrates that Nabī ﷺ completed the Ṣalāh and sat on the pulpit. He was smiling and said, "Each person should remain where he had performed Ṣalāh. Do you know why I have gathered you?"

The *Ṣaḥābah* رضي الله عنهم replied, "Allāh and His messenger know best."

¹ Raddul Mukhtār, vol 1, p 100 ; Tājūt-Tārājīm Fī Ṭabaqātīl Ḥanafīyyah, p 84; 'Iqd ul-Jumān Fī Tārīkh Ahluz-Zamān; Bughyatuṭ Ṭalab Fī Tārīkh Ḥalab

Nabī 𐤎𐤁𐤁 said, “By Allāh, I did not ask you to gather for any recommendation or warning, but to inform you that Tamīm Ad-Dārī, a former Christian, came to me, swore allegiance and became a Muslim. He then related to me certain matters about Dajjāl, which conformed with what I had informed you previously. He indicated to me that he had sailed in a ship with thirty men of Lakhm and Judhām and they were tossed around by the waves for a month. They then arrived at an island, just as the sun was setting. They boarded a small rowing-boat and reached the island, where they were met by a beast, the body of which was covered by so much of hair that they could not distinguish its front from its back.

They said, ‘Woe to you, what are you?’

It said, ‘I am al-Jassāsah.’

They asked, ‘What is al-Jassāsah?’

It said, ‘O people, go to this man in the monastery for he is keen to know about you.’

The narrator says, ‘When we heard it taking the name of a man, we were afraid that it might be a *Shaiṭān*, so we quickly left and entered the monastery, where we found the biggest man we had ever seen. He was bound strongly in chains. His hands were tied to his neck and his legs were bound from the knees to the ankles with iron chains.’

We said, ‘Woe to you, who are you?’

He said, ‘You will soon find out about me. First, tell me who you are.’

They replied, ‘We are Arabs who had embarked on a ship, but the sea became rough and the waves tossed us about for one month. Then they brought us to this island of yours. We used rowing-boats and landed on the island. We were met by a beast with a great deal of hair. It was so hairy that its front could not be made out from its back. We said, “Woe to you, what are you?” It said, “I am al-Jassāsah.” We said, “What is al-Jassāsah?” It said, “Go to this man in the monastery for he is keen to know about you.” So we came rushing to you and fled from it because we were not sure whether it was a devil or not.’

The chained person asked, ‘Tell me about the date-palms of Baysān.’

We asked, ‘What would you like to know about them?’

He said, ‘I am asking you whether these trees bear fruit or not.’

We replied, ‘Yes.’

He said, 'Soon they will not bear fruit.'

He then asked, 'Tell me about the lake of Ṭabarīyyah.'

We replied, 'What would you like to know about it?'

He asked, 'Is there water in it?'

We replied, 'There is a great deal of water in it.'

He said, 'Soon it will dry up.'

Then he said, 'Tell me about the spring of Zughar (which is in the south of Syria).'

We asked, 'What would you like to know about it?'

He said, 'Is there water in the spring and do the people use it to grow their crops?'

We said to him, 'Yes, there is plenty of water in it and the people grow crops with its water.'

He said, 'Tell me about the Prophet from the unlettered. What has he done?'

We said, 'He has left Makkah and has settled in Yathrib (Madīnah).'

He asked, 'Do the Arabs fight against him?'

'Yes,' we replied.

He asked, 'How did he deal with them?'

We told him that he had prevailed over the Arabs in his vicinity and they had become obedient to him.

He said to us, 'Has that really happened to them?'

'Yes,' we replied.

He explained, 'If this is so, then it is better for them to obey him. Now I will tell you about myself. I am the Dajjāl and soon I will be given permission to emerge. I will travel in the land and will not leave any town without staying for forty nights therein, except Makkah and Ṭayba (Madīnah). These are both forbidden to me. Each time I will try to enter, I will be prevented from doing so by an angel with a sword in his hand. Angels will guard every route to these cities.' "

Fāṭimah bint Qais رضي الله عنها says, "Then Nabī ﷺ struck the pulpit with his staff and said, 'This is Ṭayba, this is Ṭayba, this is Ṭayba,' meaning Madīnah.

He asked, 'Did I not tell you this before?'

The Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم answered, 'Yes.'

Nabī ﷺ said, 'I liked Tamīm's story because it conforms with what I had mentioned to you about Dajjāl, Makkah and Madīnah. Beware! He is in the Syrian Sea or the Yemeni Sea. No, rather he is in the east, he is in the east, he is in the east,' and he pointed with his hand towards the east.' ”¹



The conformity of the words of Nabī ﷺ with the real life experience of Tamīm al-Dārī, proves the truthfulness of Nabī ﷺ as a messenger of Allāh ﷻ.



Effect of Ṣadaqah

A bū Hurairah ؓ narrates that Nabī ﷺ said, "A person was walking through a barren land when he heard a (strange) voice from a cloud, instructing, 'Go and water the garden of a certain person.' Accordingly, the cloud moved in that direction and rained upon a rocky piece of land. All the water was gathered in a channel and began to flow along this pathway. The man followed the water, until he came upon a man standing in his orchard and redirecting the water with his spade.

The person asked the man of the orchard, 'O slave of Allāh, what is your name?'

He revealed his name and it was the very same name he had heard from the cloud.

The man of the orchard asked, 'O slave of Allāh, why do you ask my name?'

He replied, 'I heard a voice from the cloud from which this water has come, taking your name and saying, "Go and water the orchard of this

1 Muslim

person.” Please tell me what is it that you do with this orchard that is so meritorious.’

The man replied, ‘Now that you have asked, I will tell you. From the total produce, a third I give in *ṣadaqah*, a third I keep for myself and my family and a third I re-invest into the orchard.’ ”¹



Just as Allāh ﷻ directed the water from the cloud towards the orchard, He fulfils the needs of His obedient servants through unseen avenues, since all natural phenomena are in His control.



There is great merit in a person earning ḥalāl sustenance through hard work. When this sustenance is then distributed as *ṣadaqah* and spent on one’s family with the correct intention, it brings untold blessings.



A Contented Wife

A ṣma’ī says, “I arrived at an outlying desert area where I saw the most beautiful of women married to the ugliest of men. I asked her, ‘How can a woman like you be happy with a husband like this?’

She replied, ‘Remain silent! You have spoken out of turn. Perhaps, he is better than me in his relationship with his Creator and I am his reward for this. Conversely, I may not be on good terms with my Creator and He has made him my punishment. Should I not be content with that which pleases Allāh?’ ”

¹ Muslim

Aṣma'ī says, "Her reply silenced me."¹



Imām Ghazālī رحمه الله quotes this incident, saying, "A woman should not praise her beauty before her husband, neither should she ridicule him."



A Wise Woman

A man from the progeny of 'Alī ؑ once said to his wife, "I give you the choice of remaining in my marriage or separating from me." As soon as he uttered these words, he realised his mistake and was filled with regret.

His wife replied, "For the past twenty years, you had the choice of divorcing me, but you acted responsibly and did not break our marriage. For a single moment when this choice is in my hand, I would never abuse it. I once again place the matter in your hands."

The husband was amazed at her reply and happily kept her as his wife.²



Sound and stable marriages require responsible individuals, who carefully assess the repercussions of their words prior to speaking.



1 Iḥyā' 'Ulūmuddīn, vol 2, p 54

2 Al-Adhkiyā', p 226

Homes should not be broken due to trivial differences between spouses.



Good Neighbours

Amazing Asking Price for a House

Abū Ḥamzah Muḥammad ibn Maymūn Sukrī رحمته الله was a scholar of Ḥadīth. His excellent neighbourly conduct can be gauged from an incident narrated in the books of history. His neighbour intended to sell his house. When he was asked the price of the house, he replied, “Two thousand for the house and two thousand for becoming the neighbour of Abū Ḥamzah رحمته الله.”

When the news of this reached Abū Ḥamzah رحمته الله, he approached his neighbour with four thousand, saying, “Take this and do not sell your house.”¹

Concern for a Sinful Neighbour

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله had a neighbour in Kūfa who was a shoemaker. After completing his work for the day, he would come home with some meat or fish which he would prepare. He would then spend the night drinking wine. After becoming intoxicated, he would sing a couplet:

أَضَاعُونِي وَأَيُّ فِتْنَى أَضَاعُوا لِيَوْمَ كَرِيهَةٍ وَسَدَادٍ تَغِيرُ

“People have allowed me to go to waste.

And what a (brave) young man did they waste!

(One who could have been of benefit) at the time of battle and warfare.”

¹ Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 3, p 268

He would continue drinking and singing until sleep overpowered him. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله would hear his singing, as it was his habit to spend his nights in Ṣalāh. One night, the Imām did not hear his neighbour and asked what had happened. He was informed that he had been arrested by the police and imprisoned. After performing Fajr Ṣalāh, the Imām mounted his conveyance and proceeded to the house of the governor.

The governor gave instructions that the Imām should be given permission to enter and should not dismount until a carpet had been laid out for him. He proceeded to make further arrangements in his court for the Imām's arrival.

When the Imām arrived, he asked the reason for his visit. The Imām replied that his neighbour, who was a shoemaker, had been imprisoned and he would like the governor to order his release. The governor agreed to release him, together with all those who had been arrested from the night of the shoemaker's arrest. The Imām then left, with the shoemaker walking closely behind him.

When they arrived home, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله addressed him, saying, "O young man, did we allow you to go to waste?", referring to the couplet the young man used to sing.

The man replied, "No! You have saved me and seen to my needs. May Allāh reward you well for being an honourable and concerned neighbour!"

That very day, he repented from his life of drinking and sin and never returned to it, thereafter.¹



In a number of Aḥādīth, Nabī ﷺ stressed upon kindness to neighbours.

Nabī ﷺ said,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ

¹ Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 13, p 363

"A person who believes in Allāh and the last day should be kind to his neighbour."¹

In another Ḥadīth Nabī ﷺ said, "Jibrā'il kept advising me on the rights of neighbours to such an extent that I thought he would make them my heirs."²



A Deal Turns Sour

One night, Khalīfah Hārūn Ar-Rashīd was quite restless, and said to his vizier, J'āfar ibn Yaḥyā al-Barmakī, "I am quite depressed and cannot fall asleep. I do not know what to do."

His servant Masrūr, who happened to be standing nearby, burst out laughing, and the Khalīfah exclaimed, "What are you laughing at? Are you mocking at me?"

Masrūr replied, "I take an oath by your relationship to the leader of the Prophets, Nabī ﷺ, that I am not laughing at you. It was just that last night I was outside the castle, walking towards the bank of the river Tigris, when I saw many people gathered around a joker, by the name of Ibn al-Maghāzalī. I recalled some of his words, and this caused me to laugh. I beg your pardon, O Amīr al-Mu'minīn!"

Hārūn ar-Rashīd commanded, "Bring him to me immediately!"

Accordingly, Masrūr went out in search of the joker. When he had found him, Masrūr said to him, "The Amīr al-Mu'minīn wants to see you."

Ibn al-Maghāzalī replied, "To hear is to obey!"

1 Muslim

2 Bukhārī

But, Masrūr continued, "I will take you to him on condition that if he presents you with a gift, a quarter of it will belong to you, and the rest to me."

Ibn al-Maghāzalī replied, "No, half will be mine and half yours." But Masrūr would not agree.

Ibn al-Maghāzalī again proposed, "I will keep a third of it and you can have the remaining two-thirds."

After a great deal of haggling, they finally agreed to this.

When he was brought to the palace, he greeted and introduced himself in an impeccable manner. Hārūn Ar-Rashīd said to him, "If you make me laugh, I shall give you five hundred dīnārs, but if you fail, I shall give you three blows with this sock."

Now Ibn al-Maghāzalī thought to himself, "What are the odds of me getting three strokes with the sock?"

He thought that the sock was empty. Accordingly, he began to joke and play such tricks, which would have made even a rock laugh. But, Hārūn ar-Rashīd did not laugh. He did not even smile.

Ibn al-Maghāzalī was initially astonished, then grieved and finally frightened.

Hārūn ar-Rashīd said to him, "Now you deserve the blows." He then took up the sock and twisted it. In the sock there were four stones, each of which weighed two *ratals* (a unit of measurement). When he struck Ibn al-Maghāzalī once, the latter yelled out in pain.

He remembered the condition Masrūr had imposed upon him and exclaimed, "Pardon, O *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, listen to only two more words of mine."

Hārūn ar-Rashīd replied, "Say as you wish."

He continued, "Masrūr and I have an agreement to the effect that he will have two-thirds of the reward I receive, and one-third will be mine. He had agreed to this after much bargaining. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* has decided that the reward would consist of three blows, of which my share would be one, and Masrūr's two. I have received mine, and now it is his turn."

Hārūn ar-Rashīd laughed, called for Masrūr and struck him. Masrūr groaned from pain, and said, "I give him the remainder as a gift!"

The Khalīfah laughed again and ordered them to be given one thousand dīnārs. Each received five hundred, and Ibn al-Maghāzalī left expressing his gratitude.¹



Excessive haggling and negotiating for a better deal does not always guarantee the anticipated result. In a Ḥadīth, narrated by Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh ؓ, Nabī ﷺ said,

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا سَمَحًا إِذَا بَاعَ وَإِذَا اشْتَرَى وَإِذَا اقْتَضَى

“Allāh is merciful upon a person who is kind when he buys, sells and requests for his dues.”²



Transformed into an Ape

A pious man, known as ‘Umar ibn al-Zaghab رضى الله عنه, who lived in the neighbourhood of Madīnah, narrates his personal story: “On the day of ‘Āshūrā, I would go to the dome of ‘Abbās and recite some poetry. Here, the Imāmiyyah sect would also gather. Once, I stood at the door and asked for something for the love of Abū Bakr Ṣiddiq ؓ.

An elderly man from the gathering came to me and said, ‘Remain seated, for a while, until we are done. We will give you something.’

I sat down and waited. When they were done, the elderly man took my hand and led me to his house, where he locked the door and commanded

1 Al-Mustaṭraf Fī Kullī Fannim Mustāṭraf vol 1, p 473

2 Bukhārī

two of his slaves to pounce upon me. They tied me up, beat me severely and he finally ordered them to cut off my tongue.

They then released me, saying, 'Now go to the one in whose love you were asking for something, so that he could restore your tongue to its place.'

I left his house and proceeded to the blessed grave of Nabī ﷺ, where I cried, 'O Nabī of Allāh, you know what has happened to me due to my love for your companion, Abū Bakr ؓ. If your companion was on the truth, I would like that my tongue be restored.'

That night, I fell asleep in the blessed chamber, shaking with immense pain. In a dream, I saw that my tongue had been restored to its place. When I awoke, I found my tongue as it had been before, and I could speak once again. I exclaimed, 'All praise be to that Being who restored my tongue.'

This caused my love for Abū Bakr ؓ to increase. The next year, on the day of 'Āshūrā, I again went to the same place and asked for a dīnār for the love of Abū Bakr ؓ.

A young man from the gathering approached me and said, 'Be seated until we have completed.'

Once they were completed, the young man took my hand and led me to the very same house where my tongue had been cut, a year ago. He then entertained and fed me well. Once we had eaten, and the food had been cleared, the young man opened a door to a room in the house and began to weep. I went towards him to see what had made him cry, and saw a monkey that was tied up. I asked what was going on, and the young man cried even more. I managed to calm him down and pleaded, 'Please explain to me what is going on here.'

He explained, 'If you promise not to relate this incident to anybody in Madīnah, I will tell you.'

I made the promise and the young man continued, 'Last year, on the day of 'Āshūrā, a person came to the dome of 'Abbās, where we had gathered and asked for something for the love of Abū Bakr Siddiq ؓ. My father, who was a leading scholar and jurist of the Imāmiyyah and Shi'a sects, asked him to wait until we were done. He then led this person to our home, where he instructed two of his slaves to beat him severely and

cut off his tongue. The man left, but we do not know what has happened to him.

That very night, we were awakened by a fearful scream from my father. When we rushed to see what had happened, we realised that he had been transformed into an ape. We were terrified and locked him in this room. This ape, you see here, is my father! We then renewed our faith in Islam and abandoned our previous beliefs. We decided that the best thing we could do was to announce his death. I made an announcement to the effect that I had taken an oath that nobody would bathe my father's body, except myself and my mother, so that nobody would realise what had happened. We took a decayed piece of wood, that resembled the body of a man, placed a cloth around it and buried it. From then onwards, I have done nothing but cry night and day over him.'

After hearing this, I asked, 'If you see the man whose tongue your father had cut, would you recognise him?'

'No,' he replied.

I explained, 'It was I whose tongue your father had cut,' and I explained to him what had happened.

The young man hastened towards me and began kissing my face and hands. He then gave me a dīnār and some clothing and asked how my tongue had been restored. I explained and left."¹



Criticising the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ and harbouring malice for them is a serious sin.



¹ Az-Zawājir, p 382



The Wisdom of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله عليه

Recovering Stolen Goods

One night, a gang of thieves broke into a man's house and stole his household goods. They forced the owner to take an oath to the effect that if he identified the thieves, he would be irrevocably divorced from his wife. The next morning, the owner saw the thieves selling his goods, but could say nothing because of the oath he had taken. He went to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله عليه and related the incident to him. The Imām requested him to gather the Imām, Mu'adh-dhin¹ and other influential people.

When they had all arrived, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله عليه asked them, "Would you all like to see the goods of this man returned to him?"

They replied, "Yes, we do."

He then said, "Gather all the evil people of the city in a house or masjid. As each one of them walks out, the owner should be asked whether he is one of the thieves or not. If he is not a thief, he should say so. If he is a thief, he should remain silent. His silence will indicate to you that he should be arrested."

They did as Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله عليه had advised, and all the stolen goods were recovered.²

Refreshing the Memory

A man came to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله عليه and explained that he had buried some wealth in a place, but had forgotten where it was. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله عليه said to him, "This is not a question of Fiqh, but I advise you to return home and perform Ṣalāh the entire night. Inshā-Allāh³, you will soon remember where your wealth is buried."

1 A person who calls out the *adhān* (call to prayer).

2 'Uqūdul Jumān, p 269; Al-Adhkiyā'

3 If Allāh wills.

The man did as he was advised. A quarter of the night had not yet passed, when the man recalled where his wealth was.

He returned to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله and informed him what had happened. The Imām explained, “I knew that *Shaiṭān* would make you remember the place quickly, so that you would not perform Ṣalāh the entire night. Why did you not spend the remainder of the night in Ṣalāh in gratitude to Allāh?”¹

Who Should Speak first: Husband or Wife?

A man once came to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله and said, “I have taken an oath that I will not speak to my wife until she speaks to me. She in turn also took an oath that if she speaks to me before I speak to her, all her possessions would be given out in charity. What should I do? The jurists have been dumbfounded with the question. Sufyān Thaurī رحمته الله says that whoever of us speaks first will be breaking his or her oath.”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله replied, “Go and speak to your wife. None of you will be guilty of breaking your oath.”

The man then went and mentioned to Sufyān Thaurī رحمته الله what Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله had said.

In a fit of anger, Sufyān Thaurī رحمته الله came and confronted Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله, “Have you legalised a forbidden relationship?”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله asked what he meant. Sufyān Thaurī رحمته الله asked the man to repeat the incident.

After hearing the incident, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله replied, “My verdict remains the same.”

Sufyān Thaurī رحمته الله asked, “How can you say that?”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله explained, “By her taking an oath after his oath, she had spoken. In other words, by speaking, she had fulfilled his oath. If he speaks to her now, none of their oaths will be broken.”

When Sufyān Thaurī رحمته الله heard the explanation, he submitted, “Knowledge of which we were ignorant of, has certainly been exposed to you.”²

1 ‘Uqūdul Jumān, p 268; Al-Adhkiyā’

2 ‘Uqūdul Jumān, p 266; Tafsīr Ar-Rāzī; At-Ṭabaqātus Saniyyah Fī Tarājimil Ḥanafīyyah

Marital Relations in Ramaḍān

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله was asked about the dilemma of a certain man who had taken an oath that he would have marital relations with his wife during the day in Ramaḍān. Nobody could solve his problem.

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله replied, “The man should undertake a journey in Ramaḍān and become a *musāfir* (traveller). Having marital relations would then be permissible in Ramaḍān, during the day.”¹

Six Mistakes

Hasan ibn Ziyād al-Lu’lu’i says, “In the vicinity of my home, lived an insane woman by the name of Umm ‘Imrān. As she was sitting one day, a person passed a remark at her.

She replied by saying, ‘O son of two adulterers!’

Coincidentally, Qāḍī ibn Abī Lailā heard the remark and summoned her to the masjid. There she was lashed twice, eighty lashes each time, once for slandering the man’s father and another for slandering his mother.

When news of this reached Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, رحمته الله he said, ‘Qāḍī ibn Abī Lailā has made six mistakes in enforcing the punishment upon her: Firstly, he had her lashed in the masjid, whereas the penal code cannot be executed in a masjid. Secondly, she was lashed while standing, whereas women should be lashed while they are seated. Thirdly, she was lashed twice for slandering the father and mother. The two lashings should have been combined into one, since a person who slanders an entire group of people may only be given a single lashing. Fourthly, the two lashings were given together, whereas a second punishment may only be meted out once the effect of the first punishment has subsided. Fifthly, the insane are exempt from being punished. Sixthly, she was lashed due to slandering the person’s parents, but the parents were absent. They should have been called in first.’”²

1 Tafsīr Ar-Rāzī, vol 1, p 196, Ṣūrah Baqarah, verse 31

2 Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 13, p 351

Continue to Seek Knowledge

Once, Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله, a senior student of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله, was severely ill. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله visited him a number of times. On one occasion, he noticed that Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله was quite weak and remarked, “For the benefit of the Muslims, I hope that you will remain after me. If death overtakes you, a great amount of knowledge will leave with you!”

As it happened, Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله recovered completely, and was informed regarding the statement Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله had made. This gave him an air of confidence and also caused people to flock to him. Subsequently, he established his own circle of jurisprudence and stopped attending the gathering of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله.

When news of this reached Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله, he summoned a reliable person and instructed him to proceed to the gathering of Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله and ask him, “A man hands over his garment to a laundryman to wash for a fee of one dirham. After a few days, he returns and asks for his garment. The laundryman denies ever receiving anything from the man. After a while, the laundryman hands over the washed garment to the man. Now, the question arises: Does the laundryman have to be paid his fee? Ask Imām Abū Yūsuf this question. If he replies that the fee is due, then say to him that he is incorrect. If he says that no fee is due, again say to him that he is incorrect.”

The man went and did as he was instructed. Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله first answered that the fee was due. When he was informed that his answer was incorrect, he pondered a while and replied that no fee was due. When again he was informed that his answer was incorrect, he immediately stood up and proceeded to the gathering of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله.

When Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله saw him, he remarked, “It appears as if the matter of the laundryman has brought you to me.”

“Yes,” replied Imām Abū Yūsuf رحمته الله.

“*Subḥānallāh*,” exclaimed Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله, “A person who begins issuing *fatāwā* (verdicts), establishes his own circle of learning and begins to speak with authority regarding Islamic matters, is in such a condition that he cannot answer a question on *Ijārah* (rental contracts) with ease?”

Imām Abū Yūsuf submitted رحمته الله, “O Abū Ḥanīfah, please explain to me the correct answer.”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله explained, “If he had washed the garment after he had usurped it unlawfully, then he is not entitled to a fee, because he had washed it for himself. However, if he had washed it prior to usurping it, he is entitled to the fee, because he had washed it for the owner.”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله then explained, “A person who regards himself as independent of seeking knowledge should cry over his plight.”¹

A Wise Proposal

Daḥḥāk As-Sha‘rī came to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله, while the latter was in Kūfa, and said, “Repent!”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله asked, “From what should I repent?”

Daḥḥāk answered, “Repent from regarding arbitration as permissible.”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله asked, “Will you kill me or debate with me?” He replied, “I will debate with you.”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله then asked, “If we have any differences during the course of our debate, who will judge between us?”

Daḥḥāk replied, “You may choose whoever you wish to settle the dispute between us.”

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله then said to one of Daḥḥāk’s companions, “Please judge between us if we have any differences.”

Then, turning to Daḥḥāk, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله asked, “Are you satisfied with this person as an arbitrator between us?”

“Yes,” replied Daḥḥāk.

“Then you too regard arbitration as permissible,” remarked Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله. Daḥḥāk was left speechless.²

Solution to a Complex Matter

‘Alī ibn ‘Āṣim narrates, “I asked Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله to resolve the following question: A man has one dirham and another has two. After

1 Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 13, p 349

2 ‘Uqūdul Jumān p 265; Aṭ-Ṭabaqātus Saniyyah Fī Tarājimil Ḥanafīyyah

putting their dirhams together, two of the three dirhams are somehow lost. It is not known whose two dirhams are lost. What is to be done?"

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمہ اللہ replied, "The remaining dirham should be divided into three parts. Two thirds of it belong to the man who contributed two dirhams and one third belongs to the man who had contributed one."

‘Alī explained what happened next, "I met Ibn Shubrumah and posed the same question to him. He asked me whether I had posed the question to anybody else."

"Yes," I replied, "I have asked Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمہ اللہ and he said that the dirham should be split into three parts."

Ibn Shubrumah replied, "Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمہ اللہ has erred in his ruling. It can be said with certainty that at least one of the two lost dirhams belonged to the man who had two dirhams. On the other hand, the dirham which is present can belong to either of the two contributors. Therefore, this remaining dirham should be divided between the two men equally."

‘Alī ibn Aṣīm continues, "I found this answer more favourable and said to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, 'There appears to be a difference of opinion on this issue. I met Ibn Shubrumah and he answered the question differently.'"

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمہ اللہ explained, "When the three dirhams were put together, and they could not be distinguished from each other, a partnership emerged in the process. The man who had contributed one dirham had now become the owner of a third of every dirham in the partnership. The man who had contributed two dirhams owned two thirds of each dirham in the partnership. Therefore, if any of the dirhams are lost, the shares of each partner would remain the same."¹

Respecting his Mother's Wishes

Ḥajar ibn ‘Abdul Jabbār al-Ḥaḍramī says, "A story-teller by the name of Zur‘ah used to frequent our masjid, which then came to be associated with him. Once, the mother of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمہ اللہ asked for a *fatwā* on a certain issue. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمہ اللہ gave her the answer but she did not accept it, saying, 'I will only accept what Zur‘ah says.'

1 Aṭ-Ṭabaqātus Saniyyah Fī Tarājimil Ḥanafīyyah, vol 1, p 153

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله then went with her to Zur'ah and explained, 'This is my mother. She wants to ask you a question regarding a certain matter.'

Zur'ah replied, 'You are more knowledgeable and intelligent than I am. You should give her an answer.'

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله replied, 'I have answered her,' and he explained what he had said to her.

To this, Zur'ah replied, 'The answer is as Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمته الله has explained.'

Pleased with this, his mother returned home."¹



The Curse of Wine

Uthmān رضي الله عنه would say, "Abstain from wine as it is the mother of all evil. There was a man amongst the nations of the past who was engrossed in the worship of Allāh ﷻ, but a sinful woman was attracted to him. She sent her slave girl to him indicating that she required him as a witness in a certain matter. The pious man followed the slave girl until they reached her home. She knocked at the door and as they entered, she locked it so that he could not escape. He was then led to the evil woman, who had a young boy and a jug of wine at her side.

She addressed him, 'I did not call you as a witness. Rather, I invited you to do one of three things: you may fulfil your desires with me, drink a glass of wine or kill this boy.'

The man answered, 'I will drink a glass of wine,' thinking it to be the least of the evils.

When he had drunk the glass of wine, he asked for more and more until he became so intoxicated, that he fulfilled his desires with her and finally killed the boy as well."²

1 Tārīkh Baghdād, vol 13, p 366

2 Nasa'i



‘Uthmān ؓ aptly explained the moral of the incident, ‘Stay away from wine. I take an oath on Allāh, that *Īmān* and addiction to wine, when combined, will probably result in the wine removing the *Īmān*.’ ”



Better than a Servant

Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, the beloved daughter of Nabī ﷺ, had developed sores on her hands and neck, due to grinding flour with her hand-mill and carrying water. Sweeping her home had made her clothes dusty and baking bread had discoloured her face. Meanwhile, ‘Alī ؓ received news that Nabī ﷺ had received some slaves and advised her to approach him and ask for a servant to help with her household chores. When she arrived at the house of her father, she did not find him there. He was in the masjid engaged in discussion with his companions.

Later, when he was informed about the arrival of his daughter, he came to see them in their room. The cloth that was covering ‘Alī ؓ and Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها was so small that their feet were exposed when they covered their heads and their heads were exposed when they covered their feet. When he sought permission to enter, they wanted to dress appropriately but he asked them to remain lying down as they were. He informed them that he would prefer to sell the slaves that he had received and spend the money on the *Ahlus Suffa*¹, who had no food.

He, instead, taught them certain *adhkār*, saying, “Allow me to teach you something which is better than what you have asked for. When you go to bed, say,

1 Literally means ‘people of the platform’. They were a group of poor Muslims who had dedicated their lives to learning Islam from Nabī ﷺ.

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ thirty-four times
 سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ thirty-three times and
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ thirty-three times.

That is better for you than a servant.”¹

‘Alī ؑ later exclaimed, “I have not left practising on this ever since I heard it from Nabī ؑ.”

Somebody asked, “Not even on the night of Şiffin²?”

‘Alī ؑ replied, “Not even on the night of Şiffin.”³



Nabī ؑ always gave preference to the hereafter over the comforts of the world when it came to the affairs of his family. He encouraged his daughter and son-in-law towards patience and the remembrance of Allāh ؑ instead of acquiring a servant. It was a settled principle with Nabī ؑ, that he always placed his family members in the front line in facing a risk or hazard, but allotted them the last place when he distributed favours, rewards and spoils of war. When the three brave warriors of the Quraish, ‘Utba, Shaiba and Walīd ibn ‘Utba, challenged the Muslims to single combat at Badr, Nabī ؑ sent forward Ḥamzah, ‘Alī and ‘Ubaidah ؑ, who were his family and members of his clan, the Banū Ḥāshim.



Nabī ؑ approached his daughter and son-in-law with extreme love, asking them not to inconvenience themselves by moving from their bed. He then sat affectionately between them, as close as he could, and kindly

1 Bukhārī; Muslim; Tirmidhī; Abū Dāwūd; Nasa’ī

2 Şiffin is the name of a place close to the Euphrates where the famous battle took place between ‘Alī ؑ and the Syrians in the year 37 Hijrī.

3 Muslim

explained what he considered was better for them. His gentle approach melted their hearts.



‘Alī’s ﷺ obedience to Nabī ﷺ and his discipline in worship can be gauged from the fact that he remembered to practise on the advice of his master during the trying and strenuous battle of Şifḥīn.



Allāh’s ﷻ Help Comes in Amazing Ways

A pious woman from the Banū Isrā’īl was very particular about performing her Ṣalāh on time. Her husband was a non-believer and would prevent her from this, but, she would persist in her worship. One day, he gave her something to keep in trust. Then, without her knowledge, he took it and tossed it into the sea. A fish swallowed it and was, thereafter, caught by a fisherman, who sold it to the non-believer. While cleaning the fish, his wife found the item and put it back in its former place. When the husband asked for the item, she handed it over to him as if nothing had happened. He was dumb-struck.¹



Allāh ﷻ opens His doors of mercy for those who follow His commands.



1 Nuzhatul Majālis Wa Muntakhabun Nafā’is, p 133



Adventures of a Student of Ḥadīth

Abū Ḥātim Rāzī رحمته الله says, “I stayed in Baṣrah for eight months during the year 214 *Hijrī*. My intention was to stay there for an entire year, but I had no money left and ended up selling the clothes on my body. I had a friend with whom I would attend the lessons of the scholars of Ḥadīth, from morning till evening. At evening time, I would return to my empty home and drink some water to overcome my hunger. In the morning, my friend would come and we would again proceed to learn Aḥādīth. In this manner, I suffered from extreme hunger.

This continued until one day, he came to me and said, ‘Let us proceed and attend the gatherings of the scholars.’

I replied, ‘I cannot because I am too weak.’

He asked, ‘What has caused this weakness?’

I replied, ‘I cannot hide anything from you. Two days have passed and I have not eaten anything!’

He replied, ‘I have a *dīnār*. I will give half to you and the remaining half we will use for hiring a conveyance.’

We then left Baṣrah.”

Abū Ḥātim explains further, “We left the gathering of Dāwūd al-Jaʿfarī رحمته الله in Madīnah and proceeded to Biḥār. Here we set sail on the sea. We were three at the time: Abū Zuhair al-Marwarūzī, a student from Nishāpūr and myself.

While at sea, I had the need to perform *ghusl*. When I awoke, I informed my companions regarding this.

They said to me, ‘Immerse yourself into the sea.’

I replied, ‘But, I cannot swim!’

So, they tied me to a rope and immersed me into the water. I performed a full *wuḍū* and then asked them to lower me a bit deeper. They did so, and I submerged myself completely into the water. I then called out to

them and they pulled me out of the water. We continued sailing but the wind was against us.

We remained on the ocean for a duration of three difficult months. Finally, our provisions were exhausted and we landed ashore. We walked for three full days without eating or drinking anything. Everyday, at evening time, we would perform our Ṣalāh and lie down to sleep. Our bodies became weak out of hunger, thirst and fatigue. On the third day, we again walked with the little strength we had left, but, Abū Zuhair al-Marwarūzī collapsed into unconsciousness. We tried to revive him but he would not respond. We left him and continued. After walking for an hour or so, weakness overpowered me also and I collapsed to the ground unconscious.

My companion left me and continued walking until he saw a ship approaching the shore. The sailors came ashore and proceeded to a close-by well. My companion began waving a cloth to draw their attention. They saw him and brought some water for him to drink.

He said to them, 'My two companions are unconscious. Please go and find them.' "

Abū Hātim Rāzī رحمه الله says, "I can remember that I regained my senses when I saw a man pouring water on my face. I opened my eyes and said, "Give me water to drink!" He poured a little which I drank. It did not quench my thirst and I asked for some more. He poured a little more and I drank it.

I then said to him, 'My companion behind me is stranded.'

He replied, 'A group of people have already gone out in search of him.'

He then held my hand and I began walking, dragging my feet. He continued giving me water to drink. We finally reached their ship. The other sailors arrived with my companion. They were very kind to us and we remained with them for a number of days, until we regained our strength.

They then wrote a letter, addressed to the ruler of Ra'yah. They provided us with some cake, cereal and water and we continued on our journey. We walked until our food was exhausted and plodded along the coastline, hungry and thirsty. At last, we found a large tortoise, similar

to a shield, which had been washed out of the sea. With a large stone, we crushed the shell. Inside, we found a substance resembling the yolk of an egg. With the help of some sea shells lying on the shore, we began scooping the yellow substance and eating it until we had satiated our hunger and thirst.

Again, we proceeded and finally entered Ra'yah. We passed the letter onto the ruler, who hosted us in his own home and showed us much kindness. After a number of days, he provided us with some food and we left for Egypt.”¹



Muslim students displayed amazing zeal in their quest for Islamic knowledge.



Allāh ﷻ, in His divine wisdom, tests people with varying degrees of difficulty. Intelligent and successful are those who turn to Allāh ﷻ and remain steadfast during trying times.



Proficient Muslim Women

Muslim Woman Corrects Judge

Shaikh Abū al-Wafā' narrates that there was a Ḥanafī judge, who would separate witnesses when he was in doubt regarding their testimony, so that each witness was unable to hear the testimony of the others. One day, a man and two women came before him as witnesses in a matter wherein women had to give testimony. As was his procedure, he intended to separate the two women.

1 Muqaddimah Al-Jarḥ Wat Ta'dīl, vol 1, p 363

However, one of the women addressed him, saying, “You have made an error because Allāh ﷻ says in the Qur’ān,

فَتَذَكَّرْ أَحَدَهُمَا الْأُخْرَىٰ

“So that one could remind the other.” (Sūrah Baqarah, verse 282)

When you have separated one from the other, the *Shar‘ī* objective enshrined in this verse will not be met.”

The judge realised his mistake, and did not adopt his usual procedure.¹

Slave Girl Deciphers the Clue

One day, Ma’mūn became quite angry with Ṭāhir ibn ‘Abdullāh, his military commander, and decided to have him killed. Ṭāhir had a friend, who heard of this and secretly sent a letter to him. The letter was very brief. It contained the words,

السلام

As Salām,

and in the margin the words,

يَا مُوسَىٰ

O Mūsā.

When Ṭāhir read it, he began pondering over it, but could not unravel its meaning.

His intelligent slave girl, explained the meaning to him, “O Mūsā, the chiefs are consulting with a view to kill you.’ So, be wary of Ma’mūn.”

She had understood that the words, “O Mūsā”, were an abbreviation used to secretly convey the message referred to in Sūrah Qaṣaṣ, verse 20.

¹ Latā’ife ‘Ilmiyyah, p 346

يَا مُوسَى إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يُتْرَوْنَ بِكَ لَيَقْتُلُونَكَ

Ṭāhir then ensured that he did not go near Ma'mūn until the issue was resolved.¹

Pious Woman Explains the Verses of Ḥijāb

‘Aṣim al-Aḥwal narrates: “We went to the house of Ḥafṣa bint Sīrīn. As we entered, she drew her *jilbāb*² over her face as a *niqāb*.³

We said to her, ‘May Allāh have mercy on you! Allāh mentions in the Qur’ān,

الْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ ثِيَابَهُنَّ
غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ

“And as for those women who are past childbearing age who do not desire to marry, there is no sin on them if they discard their outer garment in such a way that they do not reveal their adornment.”

(Sūrah Nūr, verse 60)

This verse refers to the *jilbāb*.’

She responded by asking, ‘What is mentioned after this verse?’

We replied,

وَأَنْ يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَهُنَّ

“But to refrain (not to discard their outer garment) is better for them.”

She then explained, ‘This is proof of wearing the *jilbāb*.’ ”⁴

1 Al-Adhkiyā’, p 230

2 A garment worn by females, which covers the entire body.

3 A cloth which covers the face.

4 Şifatuş Şafwah, vol 4, p 24



Muslim women, from the dawn of Islamic history, have displayed a profound commitment towards studying and mastering the sciences of the Qur'ān.



Ṣadaqah Rewarded before Death

Fuḍail ibn 'Īyād رحمه الله says that a man once related to him regarding a person who went out and sold some yarn for a dirham, so that he could purchase some flour. As he was walking, he came across two men, who were arguing. Each of the men was holding the other by the head and quarrelling.

The man stopped and asked, "What is going on here?"

He was informed that they were arguing over a dirham. So, he gave the dirham to them and returned home empty-handed. He informed his wife what had transpired. She, in turn, gathered all the possessions of their home and advised him to go out and sell them. But, he did not succeed in selling any of them. On his way back home, he came across a man selling a fish that was emitting a bad odour.

He said to the man, "You have something that you cannot sell and I also have something that I cannot sell. Why do you not sell me your fish in return for my goods?" The man agreed and gave him the fish.

The man returned home, and said to his wife, "Clean and prepare this fish. We are dying of hunger!"

His wife began to clean it. When she cut open the stomach, she discovered a pearl!

She said to her husband, "O my husband, something smaller than a chicken egg has come out of the fish. It is similar to a pigeon egg."

The husband asked her to show it to him. He had never seen anything like it in his entire life, and was completely bewildered.

He said to his wife, "I think this is a pearl."

She asked, "Do you know the value of a pearl?"

He answered, "No, but I know somebody who does." He took it and went off to see a jeweller friend of his, who dealt in pearls.

They exchanged greetings and he sat down next to the jeweller. He took out the pearl and asked the jeweller, "Look! How much is this worth?"

The jeweller examined it for a long time and finally replied, "I will give you forty thousand for it. If you so desire, I can take it from you and pay you right now. However, if you want more for it, go to so and so person. He will be prepared to pay you even more for it than me."

The man took the pearl and went to the other jeweller as suggested. The second jeweller looked at it and really liked it.

He said, "I will pay you eighty thousand for it, but, if you desire more, go to this other person. I think he will offer you even more."

The man took the pearl and proceeded to the third jeweller.

The third jeweller offered him a hundred and twenty thousand for it and added, "I do not think anybody will offer you more than this."

The man agreed to sell the pearl to the jeweller and the money was counted out for him. He carried it away to his house in twelve heaps, each heap containing ten thousand dirhams. As he arrived home, he met a beggar at the door.

He addressed the beggar, saying, "This is my story and how I came to own so much money. Please enter."

The beggar entered and the man said to him, "Take half of the money."

The beggar took six heaps and left. But, he shortly returned, saying, "I am neither destitute, nor poor. Your Allāh sent me to you. Allāh gave you twenty *qīrāts* in lieu of one dirham. All that you have received from Allāh thus far, is in reality only one *qīrāt*. The remaining nineteen *qīrāts* have been kept for you as a reward in the hereafter."¹

1 Al-Faraj Ba'dash Shiddah, vol 3, p 238



Charity draws the mercy of Allāh ﷻ and brings returns in ways that the human mind cannot fathom.



Mu'adh-dhin Dies as a Disbeliever

Imām Qurṭubī رحمه الله mentions an eye-opening incident of a man in Egypt, who would frequent the masjid, give the *adhān* and perform Ṣalāh regularly. His life was illuminated with the beauty of worship and obedience to Allāh ﷻ. One day, he climbed the *minārat* of the masjid to give the *adhān* as was his habit. Just below the *minārat*, lived a Christian family. As the *mu'adh-dhin* cast his glance at the Christian home, his gaze fell upon the Christian man's daughter. He was overawed by her beauty and left the *adhān*. Instead, he descended and entered her home.

When she saw him, she asked, "What do you want?"

He replied, "I desire you!"

She asked, "Why?"

He replied, "You have stolen my heart and have taken control of me."

She said to him, "I cannot accept such a sinful invitation from you."

He asked, "Can I then not marry you?"

She replied, "You are a Muslim and I am a Christian! My father will never allow me to marry you."

He then asked, "Should I become a Christian?"

She answered, "If you so wish."

The man converted to Christianity and remained with her. Later that day, as he was climbing upon the roof of the house, he slipped and fell

to his death. He did not succeed in marrying her and lost his faith in the process. May Allāh ﷻ protect us from an evil death.¹



A single lustful gaze may produce devastating and catastrophic consequences.



Yūnus ibn 'Ubad - The Honest Trader

Generosity in Trade

A woman came to sell a silk robe to Yūnus ibn 'Ubad. He enquired, "How much would you like for it?" She replied, "Five hundred." Yūnus said, "I think it is worth more." She then suggested, "Six hundred." He again said that he thought it was worth more. This continued until the price was finally agreed at a thousand.²

Honesty

One day, a man from Syria came to the silk market and asked Yūnus ibn 'Ubad, "Do you have a shawl worth four hundred dirhams?"

Yūnus ibn 'Ubad answered, "We have a shawl worth two hundred."

Just then the *adhān* was called and Yūnus proceeded for Ṣalāh.

When he returned, his nephew had already sold the shawl to the Syrian man for four hundred dirhams.

Yūnus asked in astonishment, "What are these dirhams for?"

1 At Tadhkirah, vol 1, p 39

2 Siyar Aa'lām An-Nubalā', vol 6, p 289

The man replied, "It is payment for the shawl."

Yūnus exclaimed, "O servant of Allāh, the price of the shawl which I had presented to you was two hundred dirhams. If you so desire you may take it together with the extra two hundred dirhams that you have paid. If you are unhappy, you may leave it."

Amazed at his integrity, the man asked, "But, who are you?"

Yūnus replied, "A man from amongst the Muslims."

Again the man asked, "I ask you in the Name of Allāh, who are you? What is your name?"

Yūnus answered, "I am Yūnus ibn 'Ubaid."¹

Business Integrity

A woman came to Yūnus ibn 'Ubaid with a silk cloth which she wanted to sell.

He asked, "How much would you like for it?"

She replied, "Sixty dirhams."

Yūnus then asked his neighbour for his opinion regarding the value of the cloth.

His neighbour advised, "It is worth a hundred and twenty."

Yūnus agreed, saying, "I had also thought that its value was closer to a hundred and twenty."

Yūnus then addressed the woman, "I suggest you take the cloth back to your family and discuss the matter with them. We are comfortable to purchase it from you for a hundred and twenty five dirhams."

She replied, "They have instructed me to sell it for sixty."

Yūnus insisted, "Return to them and discuss the matter again with them."²



Yūnus ibn 'Ubaid was an honest and truthful Muslim trader, whose conduct is worthy of emulation. Once, he remarked, "Two things have the greatest honour: a dirham earned in a ḥalāl (permissible) manner

1 Siyar Aa'lām An-Nubalā', vol 6, p 289

2 Siyar Aa'lām An-Nubalā', vol 6, p 290

and a person who practises upon the sunnah.”



Patience is Rewarded

Ma‘mar ibn Ṭā‘ūs narrates from his father who said, “A man who had four sons, became quite ill. One of the sons said to the others, ‘Either you care for our father during his illness, and you will then not receive anything from his inheritance, or I will care for him, and I will not receive anything from his inheritance.’

They replied, ‘You may take care of him and you will then not receive anything from his estate.’

The son then saw to the father until the father passed away. He was not given anything from the inheritance as agreed.¹

One night, his father appeared to him in a dream, and he was directed to a certain place, where he would find a hundred dīnārs. He asked whether the money had *barakah* and was informed that it did not.

In the morning, he related the dream to his wife, who said, ‘Take the money. The *barakah* of the money would manifest in such a way that we would be able to use it to clothe ourselves and purchase other items of necessity.’ The husband did not accept her advice.

The next night, he had the same dream. He was directed to a certain place, where he would find ten dīnārs. Upon questioning, he was again informed that the money did not have *barakah*. In the morning, he related the dream to his wife, who again advised him to take the money. Once again he refused her advice.

On the third night, he was again advised to proceed to a place where he would find one dīnār. This time, he was assured that it had *barakah*.

¹ An agreement made by the heirs prior to the demise of a person, requiring one of them to forfeit his share of the inheritance, is invalid. The heir will still inherit after the demise of the deceased, despite such an agreement.

In the morning, he went to the place he had been directed to and found the dīnār. At the market, he met a man selling two fish for one dīnār. He purchased them and returned home. When he cut open the stomach of each fish, he found a pearl, the like of which nobody had seen before.

It so happened that the king of the time wanted to purchase a pearl. The type he was looking for could only be found with this man. He sold one of the pearls to the king for thirty mule-loads of gold.

When the king saw the pearl, he remarked, 'Search for another similar pearl, as this one does not look right on its own. Even if you have to pay double its price, find it!'

The king's men again approached the man and asked, 'Do you have another like it? We are prepared to pay you double the amount we had paid for the first one.'

The man asked in amazement, 'Will you really?'

'Yes,' they answered.

He handed them the pearl and they paid him the agreed sum."¹



Taking care of parents is a fundamental teaching of Islam and brings immense rewards.



Ḥalāl (permissible) wealth should be acquired with care and patience. The philosophy of 'making a quick buck' without any consideration of the Islamic validity, is ruinous in the long term.



Man needs to develop the trust in Allāh ﷻ that He is the sole provider of sustenance for every living thing in the universe. Nabī ﷺ beautifully summarised this in a Ḥadīth narrated by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ:

1 Ḥilyatul Awliyā', vol 4, p 8

لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَوَكَّلُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ حَقَّ تَوَكُّلِهِ لَرُزِقْتُمْ

كَمَا تُرْزَقُ الطَّيْرُ تَغْدُو خِمَاصًا وَتَرُوحُ بِطَانًا

“If you could only have trust in Allāh in a manner that is befitting Him, you would be provided with sustenance just as the birds are provided with sustenance. They leave in the morning with empty bellies and return at evening time with their bellies full.”¹



Wise is that person who realises that a little wealth that has barakah is superior to a large quantity devoid of barakah.



An Unfortunate End

A man was, one day, standing outside his house when a young woman, who was passing by, came to him and asked, “Where is the Minjāb public bath?”

The man answered, “This is the public bath,” and he pointed towards his own house.

The door of his house was similar in appearance to that of the public bath. So, she entered and he followed her in. She realised too late that he had deceived her, but displayed a sense of happiness and joy at being with him in seclusion.

She requested, “Please go out and bring something that will make our union more joyous and comfortable.”

He replied, “In a short while I will bring whatever you desire.”

¹ Tirmidhī

He left her and did not bother locking up to prevent her from escaping. He proceeded to acquire what she had requested. When he returned, he found that she had left. He searched, but could find no sign of her and became infatuated by her love. Anxiously, he would walk around reciting the following couplet :

يَا رَبَّ قَائِلَةٌ يَوْمًا قَدْ لَغَبْتُ ... أَتَيْنَ الطَّرِيقُ إِلَى حَمَامٍ مِنْجَابٍ

*“O Rabb, a woman who was lost said one day,
Where is the path to the Minjāb public bath?”*

One day, the young girl heard him lamenting over her and from a window added another couplet:

هَلَّا جَعَلْتَ لَهَا لَمَّا ظَفَرْتَ بِهَا ... حِرْزًا عَلَى الدَّارِ أَوْ قَفْلًا عَلَى الْبَابِ

*“When you had overpowered her,
Why did you not confine her in the house and lock the door?”*

This increased his infatuation and intensified his anxiety to such an extent, that at the time of his death, he could not recite the *kalimah*¹. Instead, he left this world reciting these very same verses of poetry. May Allāh save us from such a trial!²



A concerted effort should be made to focus on the life of the hereafter and abstain from temptations which cloud this focus.



1 The fundamental proclamation of belief in one Allāh and the prophethood of Nabī ﷺ.

2 At-Tadhkirah, p 38



The Daughter of Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab رحمه الله

Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab رحمه الله was one of the greatest scholars of his time. He was not a Ṣaḥābī, but met many Ṣaḥābah ؓ and narrated Ḥadīth from them. He was married to the daughter of Abū Hurairah ؓ, the close companion of Nabī ؑ. His knowledge and acceptance amongst his contemporaries can be gauged from the fact that he used to pass *fatāwā* (verdicts) while other Ṣaḥābah ؓ were still alive. Even 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رحمه الله, while he was *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, would not make a decision without prior consultation with Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab رحمه الله.

Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab رحمه الله himself says that he never missed *takbīr al-ūla'* for forty years. He never saw the backs of people in Ṣalāh for fifty years, because he always managed to perform Ṣalāh in the first row of the maṣjid.

He had a daughter of marriageable age, whose hand was sought by the ruler of the day, 'Abdul-Malik, for his son Walīd. But, he refused the offer. This caused his relationship with 'Abdul Malik to be soured and he was whipped a hundred lashes. Instead, Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab رحمه الله married his daughter to Abū Wadā'ah, one of his poor students.

Abū Wadā'ah explains, "I used to sit in the company of Sa'īd ibn Muṣayyab and happened to be absent for a few days. When I came to him, he asked where I had been. I replied that my wife had passed away and I was occupied with her funeral arrangements.

He asked, 'Why did you not inform us so that we could have attended her funeral?'

Then he asked, 'Have you married again?'

I replied, 'May Allāh have mercy upon you! Who would marry me when I have no more than two or three dirhams?'

He answered, 'I will marry my daughter to you.'

I asked in doubt, 'Will you?'

1 The first proclamation of *Allāhu Akbar* at the very beginning of congregational Ṣalāh.

He replied, 'Yes, I will.'

He then praised Allāh ﷻ and sent *durūd* upon Nabī ﷺ and married his daughter to me for a mahr of two dirhams. I left the gathering, stunned and overjoyed. I came home and began to reflect from whom I could borrow some money. I performed Maghrib Ṣalāh and returned home. I then broke my fast with some bread and olive oil. Suddenly, there was a knock at the door.

I asked, 'Who is it?'

The reply came, 'Sa'īd.'

I thought of everyone I knew whose name was Sa'īd, except Ibn Muṣayyab ر.ع.ه, because he had not been seen for forty years in any place, except his home and the masjid. When I went out, I was met by none other than Ibn Muṣayyab ر.ع.ه and thought that he had changed his mind.

I said to him, 'Abū Muḥammad, why did you not send for me? I would have come to you.'

He replied, 'No, you had a greater right that I should come to you. You were single, and have just married, and I disliked that you spend the night alone. Here is your wife.'

She was standing directly behind him. He took her hand and ushered her towards the door. He then left. She almost stumbled out of modesty and shyness but managed to hold onto the door.

I tried to hide the container of food in the shadows of the candle light, so that she would not see it. I then climbed up the roof and called out to my neighbours.

They arrived and asked, 'What is the matter?'

I explained to them what had just happened. Some of the women from the neighbourhood came to my house and my mother was also informed.

When my mother arrived, she said, 'I will not see your face again if you touch her before I have prepared her in three days.'

So, I waited for three days, after which I consummated the marriage with her. She was the most beautiful of women, the most knowledgeable regarding the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Nabī ﷺ and very well-acquainted with the rights of a husband.

I did not attend the gathering of Saʿīd ibn Muṣayyab رحمته الله for an entire month. When I finally went, I greeted and he replied. He did not say anything further, until the gathering had dispersed and I was left behind.

He then asked, 'How is she?'

I replied, 'She is excellent, O Abū Muḥammad. She is one whom friends will love but foes will envy.'

He advised, 'If the need arises you may discipline her.'

I returned home, where I found that he had sent me a gift of twenty thousand dirhams."

Another narration of this incident states that when the *nikāḥ* had been performed, Saʿīd ibn Muṣayyab رحمته الله said to his daughter, "Gather your clothing and follow me. Perform two *rakāts* of Ṣalāh." She complied, and Saʿīd ibn Muṣayyab رحمته الله also performed two *rakāts* of Ṣalāh. He then handed her over to her husband.¹



Both father and daughter did not object to the daughter marrying a poor man. Wealth and status meant little to them and rightly so. A good Muslim father is one who brings up his daughter with the knowledge of Qur'ān and Sunnah and marries her to a man who is religious.



Simplicity is the hallmark of an Islamic marriage. Alien customs, formalities, false pretences, lengthy proposals and delays, pompous wedding celebrations and squandering of vast amounts of money, are against Islamic teachings.



Nikāḥ should not be unnecessarily delayed. Imām Ghazālī رحمته الله, after quoting this incident, explains, "The haste of Saʿīd ibn Muṣayyab رحمته الله with the *nikāḥ* that very night, shows the importance Islam places upon making haste with *nikāḥ*, so that human passion is controlled."



1 Wafayātul Aa'yān, vol 2, p 376; Siyar Aa'lām An-Nubalā'; Tabaqāt ibn Sa'd; Iḥyā' 'Ulūmuddīn

Ḥayā (shame and modesty) is a great virtue.



Homes of happiness are built on the fabric of knowledge, etiquette, modesty, simplicity and compliance with religious teachings. True happiness and marital bliss can only be achieved through a pious spouse.



This compilation of short stories has been completed by the grace and mercy of Allāh ﷻ. All praise belongs to Allāh ﷻ and peace and salutations be upon our beloved Nabī ﷺ.



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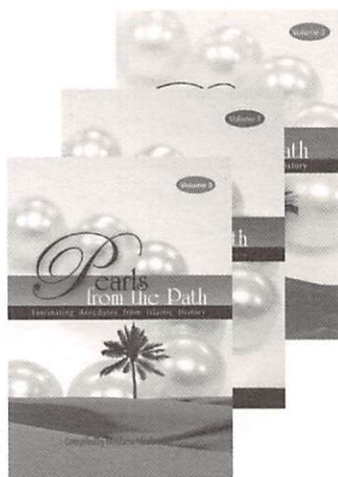
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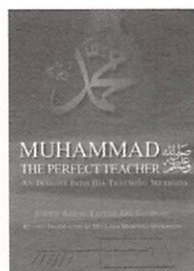
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