

Humility

&

Repentance

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Achieve Noble Character

Humility & Repentance

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Compiler's Notes

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com.

Introduction

The following short book discusses Two Aspects of Noble Character: Humility and Repentance.

Implementing the lessons discussed will aid a Muslim to Achieve Noble Character. According to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that the heaviest thing in the Scales of Judgment Day will be Noble Character. It is one of the qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which Allah, the Exalted, complimented in Chapter 68 Al Qalam, Verse 4 of the Holy Quran:

“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”

Therefore, it is a duty on all Muslims to gain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to Achieve Noble Character.

Humility & Repentance

Humility - 1

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a person will be raised in rank when they live with humility for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This occurs as humility is an important aspect of servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. The opposite of humility which is pride only belongs to the Master namely, Allah, the Exalted, as everything which people possess was created and granted by Him. Understanding this reality ensures one avoids pride and instead shows humility by obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This is true servanthood to Allah, the Exalted, and leads to true greatness in both worlds.

Humility - 2

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that a person who possesses even an atom's worth of pride in their spiritual heart will not enter Paradise. He clarified that pride is when a person rejects the truth and looks down on others.

No amount of good deeds will benefit someone who possesses pride. This is quite obvious when one observes the Devil and how his countless years of worship did not benefit him when he became proud. In fact, the following verse clearly connects pride with disbelief, so a muslim must avoid this evil characteristic at all costs. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 34:

"And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers."

The proud is the one who rejects the truth when it is presented to them simply because it did not come from them and as it challenges their desires and mentality. The proud person also believes they are superior to others even though they are unaware of their real status in the eyes of Allah, the Exalted. They may believe they are great because of the few insincere and imperfect good deeds they have done while they are disliked by Allah, the Exalted, because of their many sins. In addition,

looking down upon others is foolish as one is unaware of their own ultimate end and the ultimate end of others. Meaning, the person they look down upon may well die as a sincere Muslim whereas, they may die as a disbeliever.

In reality, it is foolish to be proud of anything seeing as Allah, the Exalted, created and granted everything a person owns. Even the righteous deeds one performs are only due to the inspiration, knowledge and strength granted by Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, being proud of something which does not innately belong to oneself is plain foolishness. This is just like a person who becomes proud over a mansion they do not even own or live in.

This is the reason why pride belongs to Allah, the Exalted, as He alone is the Creator and innate Owner of all things. The one who challenges Allah, the Exalted, in pride will be thrown into Hell. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4090.

A muslim should instead follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and adopt humility. The humble truly recognize that all the good they possess and all the evil they are protected from comes from no one except Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, humility is more fitting for a person than pride. A person should not be fooled into believing humility leads to disgrace, as no one has been more honored than the humble servants of Allah, the Exalted. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has guaranteed an increase in status for the one who adopts humility for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029. A humble person accepts the truth, irrespective of who it

comes from, as they know the source of truth is none other than Allah, the Exalted. Instead of looking down on others, they look at others with the eye of mercy and compassion and support this with sincere actions, all the while hoping Allah, the Exalted, will look upon them with mercy and compassion. They understand that one will be treated by Allah, the Exalted, according to how they treat others. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7376.

Humility - 3

This point is connected to chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 63:

“And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily...”

The servants of Allah, the Exalted, have understood that anything good they possess is solely because Allah, the Exalted, granted it to them. And any evil they are saved from is because Allah, the Exalted, protected them. Is it not foolish to be proud of something that does not belong to someone? Just like a person does not boast about a sports car which does not belong to them muslims must realize nothing in reality belongs to them. This attitude ensures one remains humble at all times. The humble servants of Allah, the Exalted, fully believe in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5673, which declares that the righteous deeds of a person will not take them to Paradise. Only the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, can cause this to occur. This is because every righteous deed is only possible when Allah, the Exalted, provides one with the knowledge, strength, opportunity and inspiration to perform it. Even the acceptance of the deed is dependent on the mercy of Allah, the Exalted. When one bares this in mind it saves them from pride and inspires them to adopt humility. One should always remember that being humble is not a sign of weakness as Islam has encouraged one to defend themselves if necessary. In other words, Islam teaches muslims to be humble without weakness. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, that whoever humbles themselves before

Allah, the Exalted, will be raised by Him. So in reality, humility leads to honor in both worlds. One only needs to reflect on the most humble of the creation to understand this fact namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Allah, the Exalted, has clearly ordered people by ordering the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to adopt this important quality. Chapter 26 Ash Shu'ara, verse 215:

“And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers.”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, led a humble life. For example, he happily carried out the domestic duties at home thereby proving these chores are gender-neutral. This is confirmed in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 538.

Humility is an inner characteristic that manifests outwards such as the way one walks. This is discussed in another verse chapter 31 Luqman, verse 18:

“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly...”

Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that Paradise is for the humble servants who possess no trace of pride. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 83:

“That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1998, that whoever possesses an atom’s worth of pride will not enter Paradise. Only Allah, the Exalted, has the right to be proud as He is the Creator, Sustainer and Owner of the entire universe.

It is important to note, pride is when one believes they are superior to others and rejects the truth when it is presented to them as they dislike accepting the truth when it comes from other than them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4092.

Humility - 4

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 2556, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings to the one who possesses the following characteristics.

The first characteristic is humility without a shortcoming meaning, weakness. The humble one submits, accepts and acts on the commands and prohibitions of Allah, the Exalted, thereby proving their servanthood to Him. They readily accept the truth when it is presented to them, even if it contradicts their desires and irrespective of who delivers it to them. Meaning, they do not reject the truth believing they know best. They do not look down at others, believing they are superior to them because of any worldly thing they possess or because of their obedience to Allah, the Exalted. They understand that all the worldly blessings they possess, belong to and were created and granted to them by none other than Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, they have nothing to be proud of. In addition, they understand that doing good deeds is only possible through the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, as the inspiration, opportunity, strength and ability to do a good deed all come from Allah, the Exalted. In addition, only a fool adopts pride as one does not know their final outcome or the final outcome of others. Meaning, they may die while Allah, the Exalted, is not pleased with them and even in a state of disbelief. Understanding these truths will prevent a person from the deadly sin of pride. An atom's worth of which is enough to take one to Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 265. Humility without weakness means that a muslim always demonstrates kindness to others but is not afraid to defend themselves if necessary and stand up for the truth nor does their humility cause them to appear disgraced and dishonored in the eyes of others.

Repentance - 1

A divine Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3540, advises the importance and vastness of the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted. The first part of the Hadith declares that as long as a muslim sincerely supplicates to Allah, the Exalted, and hope's in His mercy they will be forgiven by Him.

This response has in fact been guaranteed for all lawful supplications in the Holy Quran, not just for the supplication of forgiveness. Chapter 40 Ghafir, verse 60:

“And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.”...”

In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned this verse and declared that supplication is an act of worship meaning, a righteous deed. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1479. A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3604, advises that every supplication is accepted in different ways as long as it is a lawful one. The person is either granted what they requested or a reward will be reserved for them in the hereafter or they will be forgiven an equivalent sin. But it is important to note, that in order to receive a positive response a muslim must fulfil the conditions and the etiquettes of the supplication. In respect to supplicating for forgiveness, this includes actively striving to avoid sins and sincerely obeying Allah,

the Exalted, as it contradicts common sense to ask for forgiveness while persisting on sins.

One of the greatest supplications a muslim can make is for forgiveness, as it is a means for one obtaining blessings, avoiding difficulties in this world and a means to obtaining Paradise and escaping Hell in the next world. Chapter 71 Nuh, verses 10-12:

“And said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers. And give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers.’”

As indicated by the main Hadith under discussion having hope in the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted, when supplicating is a condition for forgiveness. In fact, Allah, the Exalted, acts according to His servant's opinion of Him, which has been confirmed in a divine Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 7405.

One of the greatest causes of forgiveness is when a muslim only hopes in Allah, the Exalted, to forgive them, full well knowing no one can forgive them or protect them from punishment except Allah, the Exalted.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that no matter how many sins a person commits the mercy and forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, is greater. In fact, it is unlimited, therefore a person's limited sins will never be able to overcome it. It is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised Muslims to magnify what they supplicate for, as nothing is too great for Allah, the Exalted, to grant. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6812. But it is important to note that using the fact that the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, is infinite as an excuse to persist in sins, is only mocking this important truth and the one who behaves in such a manner may be deprived of His forgiveness.

The next part of the main Hadith under discussion indicates the importance of sincerely seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, which has been mentioned in many verses and other Hadiths. This act of seeking forgiveness is a part of sincere repentance. It can be understood that seeking forgiveness is an act of the tongue while the rest of sincere repentance involves turning away from the sin through actions. Sincere repentance also includes feeling genuine remorse, making a firm promise not to commit the sin again and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people. It is important to note, that not persisting on the same sin is a condition for the repentance to be accepted. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 135:

“And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can forgive sins except Allah? - and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know.”

It is extremely important for a muslim to be persistent in seeking forgiveness as this leads to deliverance from every worry, a way out from every difficulty and support from places where one would not expect. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1518.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is the greatest cause of forgiveness namely, not associating anything with Allah, the Exalted. There are two types of associating things with Allah, the Exalted: major polytheism and minor polytheism. The major type is when one worships things other than Allah, the Exalted, or in addition to Him. The minor version is when one acts for other than to please Allah, the Exalted, such as showing off. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. In fact, the one who acts for the sake of people will be told by Allah, the Exalted, on Judgment Day to seek their reward from those they acted for, which will not be possible. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154. The one who acts in this way will find that they will eventually be exposed in this world and no matter how well they treat others, they will never gain their real love or respect because of their bad intention. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6705.

When one realizes the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, they only intend, think, act and speak for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, out of fear and love for Him. This behaviour minimises the chances of committing sins and whatever sins do occur will be forgiven by Allah, the Exalted. It is the reason why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3797, that the statement that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the Exalted, removes all wrong actions.

This is the behaviour all muslims must strive to adopt. The foundation of it is gaining and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will ensure one uses the blessings they have been granted in ways please to Allah, the Exalted. This will minimise one's sins and always encourage them towards sincere repentance whenever they happen to sin. This leads to forgiveness, peace and success in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

Repentance - 2

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1987, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave some important pieces of advice.

The second advice given in the main Hadith under discussion is that a muslim should follow up a sin with a righteous deed so that it wipes out the sin. This refers to minor sins only as major sins require sincere repentance. If one adds sincere repentance to their righteous deed then it will erase any sin, minor or major. But a part of acting rightly is to strive not to repeat the sin again, as sinning with the intention of following it up with a righteous deed is a dangerous misleading mentality. One should strive not to commit sins and when they do occur, they must sincerely repent. Sincere repentance involves feeling remorse, seeking forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, as long as this will not lead to further trouble, one must sincerely promise to avoid committing the same or similar sin again and make up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

Repentance - 3

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4251, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that people commit sins but the best person who commits sins is the one who sincerely repents.

As people are not Angels they are bound to commit sins. The thing that makes people special is when they sincerely repent from their sins. Sincere repentance includes feeling remorse, seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, making a firm promise not to commit the sin or a similar sin again and making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

It is important to note, minor sins can be erased through righteous deeds. This has been advised in many Hadiths, such as the one found in Sahih Muslim, number 550. It advises that the five daily obligatory prayers and two consecutive Friday congregational prayers erase the minor sins committed in between them, as long as major sins are avoided.

Major sins are only erased through sincere repentance. Therefore, a muslim should strive to avoid all sins, minor and major, by avoiding bad company and the places which sins occur more often. They should gain and act on Islamic knowledge so that they adopt the characteristics

which prevent sins, such as steadfastness, patience and the fear of Allah, the Exalted. They should learn how to use the blessings they have been granted correctly, so that they avoid using them in sinful ways. And whenever a sin happens to occur they must immediately sincerely repent, as the time of death is unknown. And they should continue obeying Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, without giving up.

Repentance - 4

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2406, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised how to achieve salvation.

The first thing is to control one's speech. A muslim should avoid evil speech, as only a single evil word is needed to cause them to plunge into Hell on Judgment Day. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2314. A muslim should avoid vain and useless speech as it is often the first step to evil speech and it wastes one's precious time, which will be a great regret for them on Judgment Day. A muslim should strive to either speak good or remain silent. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 176. When one behaves in this manner, even their silence is counted as a good deed.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that a person should not leave their home unnecessarily. Behaving in this manner leads to wasting time and both verbal and physical sins. If one truly and sincerely reflects, they will realize that the majority of their sins and the problems they encountered were due to unnecessarily socializing with others. This does not mean it was always the fault of others but it means if one avoids unnecessarily leaving their home, they would sin less and encounter less problems and difficulties. This would also free up their time to learn and act on useful knowledge, such as Islamic knowledge, which is beneficial in all aspects of one's life. Socializing unnecessarily wastes the

unique blessing of time, which never returns after it passes. Those who wasted their time on vain and sinful things will face stress in this world and a great regret on Judgement Day, especially when they witness the reward of those who utilized their time correctly. In addition, socializing unnecessarily also hinders a person from fulfilling their responsibilities and duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people. It also prevents one from the important task of self-reflection. This is needed in order to ensure one is heading in the right direction in life and whether or not they are completing their responsibilities and duties. A lack of self-reflection leads to an aimless life whereby a person has no firm direction in their worldly or religious life. Over socializing also encourages one to become dependent and clingy to people, and this always leads to emotional, mental and social problems, as one's whole life, their happiness and sadness, all revolves around people and their relationships. One can save themselves from all these negative effects by only socializing when it is necessary.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is to weep over one's sins. This behaviour shows genuine remorse over one's sins, which is a crucial aspect of sincere repentance. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4252. The other aspects include seeking forgiveness from Allah, the Exalted, and anyone else who has been wronged, unless this will lead to further trouble. Making a firm promise not to commit the same or similar sin again and where possible, make up for any rights which have been missed or violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people. Islam does not demand perfection, only a genuine and sincere effort to obey Allah, the Exalted, and when one sins to sincerely repent and strive hard to reform themselves.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds and may peace and blessings be upon His final Messenger, Muhammad, his noble Family and Companions.

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