

المنتقى من كتاب

رَوْضَةُ الْعُقَلَاءِ  
وَنَزْهَةُ الْفُضَّلَاءِ

SELECTIONS FROM  
THE GARDEN OF THE WISE  
AND  
THE MEADOW OF THE VIRTUOUS



A CLASSICAL WORK THAT CLARIFIES THE PRAISEWORTHY  
QUALITIES THAT THE BELIEVER SHOULD STRIVE TO POSSESS  
AND THE REPREHENSIBLE CHARACTERISTICS FROM  
WHICH THE BELIEVER SHOULD FLEE

ABŪ ḤĀTIM IBN ḤIBBĀN

(D. 354AH)

المنتقى من كتاب

رَوْضَةُ الْعُقَلَاءِ  
وَنَهْجَةُ الْفُضَّلَاءِ

SELECTIONS FROM  
THE GARDEN OF THE WISE  
AND  
THE MEADOW OF THE VIRTUOUS



A CLASSICAL WORK THAT CLARIFIES THE PRAISEWORTHY  
QUALITIES THAT THE BELIEVER SHOULD STRIVE TO POSSESS  
AND THE REPREHENSIBLE CHARACTERISTICS FROM  
WHICH THE BELIEVER SHOULD FLEE

ABŪ ḤĀTIM IBN ḤIBBĀN

(D. 354AH)

© Authentic Statements Publishing, USA

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any language, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, whether electronic, mechanic, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without express permission of the copyright owner.

**ISBN: 978-1-5323-4054-3**

**Second Edition:** Rajab 1438 AH / April 2017 CE

**Cover Design:** Usul Design  
Email: [info@usuldesign.com](mailto:info@usuldesign.com)

**Abridgement & Footnotes:**  
Abū Hammām Muḥammad bin ‘Alī aṣ-Ṣūma‘ī al-Bayḍānī

**Translation:** Ihsan Gonsalves

**Editing & Formatting:** Danielle Levenson al-Amrikiyyah  
[www.amrikiyyahdesign.com](http://www.amrikiyyahdesign.com)

**Publisher's Information:**  
**Authentic Statements Publishing**

P.O. Box 15536  
Philadelphia, PA 19131  
215.382.3382  
215.382.3782 – Fax

**Store:**  
5000 Locust St. (Side Entrance)  
Philadelphia, PA 19139

**Website:** [www.authenticstatements.com](http://www.authenticstatements.com)

**E-mail:** [info@authenticstatements.com](mailto:info@authenticstatements.com)

Please visit our website for upcoming publications, audio/DVD online catalog, and info on events and seminars, *inshāAllāh*.



## Transliteration Table

### Consonants

|   |    |   |    |   |    |   |   |
|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|---|
| ء | '  | د | d  | ض | ḍ  | ك | k |
| ب | b  | ذ | dh | ط | ṭ  | ل | l |
| ت | t  | ر | r  | ظ | ẓ  | م | m |
| ث | th | ز | z  | ع | '  | ن | n |
| ج | j  | س | s  | غ | gh | ه | h |
| ح | ḥ  | ش | sh | ف | f  | و | w |
| خ | kh | ص | ṣ  | ق | q  | ي | y |

### Vowels

|            |       |       |       |    |     |   |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|----|-----|---|
| Short      | ـَ    | a     | ـِ    | i  | ـُ  | u |
| Long       | ـَا   | ā     | ـِي   | ī  | ـُو | ū |
| Diphthongs | ـَايَ | ay/ai | ـَاوَ | āw |     |   |

### Glyphs

ﷺ *Ṣallāllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* (May Allāh's praise & salutations be upon him)

ﷺ *Radīyallāhu 'anhu* (May Allāh be pleased with him)

ﷺ *Radīyallāhu 'anhumā* (May Allāh be pleased with them both)

ﷻ *Raḥimabullāh* (May Allāh have mercy on him)





## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Brief Biography of Ibn H̄ibbān .....  | 9  |
| Introduction .....  | 11 |
| The Advocation of Adhering to Intelligence & the Characteristics of<br>the Wise Person .....    | 14 |
| Rectification of the Inner Self by <i>Taqwā</i> (God Consciousness) ....                        | 18 |
| The Importance of Knowledge & Persistence in Seeking It .....                                   | 21 |
| The Importance of Silence & Guarding the Tongue .....   | 26 |
| The Importance of Honesty & the Avoidance of Lying .....  | 29 |
| Encouragement of Modesty ( <i>Ḥayā'</i> ) & Departing from Impudence<br>( <i>Qubhah</i> ) ..... | 32 |
| The Importance of Humility & Abstaining from Arrogance .....                                    | 35 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| The Preference of Endearing Yourself to the People Without<br>Committing Sin .....                       | 38 |
| The Preference for Being Amiable with the People & Abstaining<br>from Flattery .....                     | 40 |
| The Preference for Spreading the <i>Salām</i> (Greetings of Peace) &<br>Appearing Joyful & Smiling ..... | 42 |
| The Types of Joking That are Permissible & the Types That are<br>Disliked .....                          | 45 |
| The Preference for Withdrawing from the General People .....   | 48 |
| The Preference of Brotherhood with Certain People .....  | 50 |
| The Dislike of Being Hostile to People .....   | 53 |
| Encouragement for Accompanying Good People & the Warning<br>from Accompanying Bad People .....           | 56 |
| The Dislike for a Lack of Reciprocation of Brotherly Love Between<br>Brothers .....                      | 59 |
| Encouragement for Visiting Brothers & Honoring Them .....  | 61 |
| The Description of the Foolish & Ignorant .....  | 64 |
| The Rebuke for Spying & Having Suspicious Thoughts .....   | 66 |
| Encouragement for the Wise Person to Avoid Desire .....  | 69 |
| The Rebuke of Jealousy & Hatred .....  | 71 |
| Encouragement to Avoid Anger & the Dislike for Hastiness .....   | 74 |
| A Warning From Expecting or Hoping for Something<br>from People .....                                    | 77 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Encouragement to Refrain from Begging & Its Dislike .....                                | 79  |
| Encouragement for Moderation .....   | 82  |
| The Importance of Having <i>Tawakkul</i> in the One Who Provides<br>Sustenance .....     | 85  |
| Encouragement to Remain Accepting & Patient in Times<br>of Adversity .....               | 88  |
| Encouragement to Pardon Those Who Harm You .....   | 91  |
| Description of the Noble & the Blameworthy .....   | 94  |
| A Warning from Accepting the Word of a Slanderer .....                                   | 97  |
| The Preference for Accepting a Person's Excuse & Apology .....                           | 100 |
| Encouragement for Keeping Secrets .....  | 103 |
| Encouragement to Consult Others During Difficult Times .....                             | 106 |
| Encouragement to Advise Muslims .....  | 109 |
| Reproach for Boycotting Muslims .....  | 112 |
| Encouragement to be Tolerant in the Face of Harm .....                                   | 115 |
| Encouragement for Forbearance & the Dislike for Being Hasty ..                           | 118 |
| Encouragement to Learn Etiquette & Eloquence .....                                       | 121 |
| The Permissibility of Gathering Wealth for Someone Who Performs<br>its Obligations ..... | 124 |
| Encouragement to Maintain <i>Marū'ah</i><br>(Manliness, Chivalry, etc.) .....            | 127 |



|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Encouragement of Generosity & Disparagement<br>of Miserliness .....   | 130 |
| A Warning to Not Refuse Gifts from Friends .....  | 133 |
| Encouragement to Make it Easy for People to Attain<br>Their Needs .....   | 136 |
| Encouragement to Give When Asked & to Seek Noble Stature ..   | 139 |
| Encouragement to Honor the Guest & to Feed Others .....   | 141 |
| Encouragement to Show Appreciation for Good Deeds .....   | 143 |
| Encouragement to Take on the Responsibility of Leadership & to<br>Look After Those Placed Under Your Care ..... | 146 |
| The <i>Dunyā</i> (Worldly Existence) & Leaving It to Its People .....   | 150 |
| Encouragement to Keep Death in Your Thoughts & to Send<br>Forth Good Deeds .....                                | 153 |
| Conclusion .....  | 156 |



## Brief Biography of Ibn Ḥibbān

He is Abū Ḥātim al-Imām al-Ḥāfiz al-‘Allāmah Muḥammad bin Ḥibbān bin Aḥmad bin Ḥibbān bin Mu‘ādh bin Ma’bad al-Ḥanzālī at-Tamīmī al-Bustī.

### **His Birth**

He was born in Bust<sup>1</sup> in the year 270 AH.

### **His Death**

He died in 354 AH.

### **His Teachers**

Ibn Ḥibbān studied under many scholars; from the most notable are:

- Abul-Ḥasan Muḥammad bin ‘Ubaydillāh bin al-Junayd al-Bustī

---

<sup>1</sup> Which is now a part of Afghanistan.

- Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin ‘Uthmān bin Sa’d ad-Dārimi
- Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin Ishāq bin Khuzaymah
- Abū ‘Abdir-Raḥmān Aḥmad bin Shu‘ayb an-Nasā’i

And others.

### **His Students**

Many students learned from him, the most notable of whom are:

- Al-Ḥākim Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Ḥāfīz
- Abū ‘Abdillāh bin Mundih al-Aṣbahāni
- Abū ‘Alī Manṣūr bin ‘Abdillāh al-Harwi

And others.

### **His Works**

Ibn Ḥibbān has a number of books, from them:

- *At-Taqāsīm wal-Anwā’*, also known as *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*.
- *Al-Majrūḥūn*
- *Ath-Thiqāt*
- *Rawḍah al-‘Uqalā’ wa Nuzḥah al-Fuḍalā’*, which is the original version of this book.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> See *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥuffāz* (3/89-90), *Siyār A’lām an-Nubalā’* (16892-104), and *An-Nujūm az-Zāhirah* (3/342-343).



## Introduction

All praise is due to Allāh, the One who is unique in the oneness of His divine power, the One who is mighty with the greatness of His lordship, the Guardian over all creation and their appointed time, the Knower of their changes and conditions, the Provider of perpetual blessings, the Giver of abundant benefit; He who brought the creation to life when He willed, without aid or advice, and created mankind as He willed, without an equal or a peer; His will regarding them is exercised through His power, His want regarding them is implemented through His might.

He inspired them to unlimited good and instilled in them manners, thus they proceed by the level of their abilities, circulate by the branches of their good manners, and are overjoyed by what is decreed and preordained, “each group rejoicing in its belief.”<sup>1</sup>

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh, Creator of the heavens, Originator of the earths and splendor. There is no limit to His wisdom and none can oppose His ordain: “He cannot

---

<sup>1</sup> Sūrah al-Mu'minūn 23:35

be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned.”<sup>2</sup>

I bear witness that Muḥammad is His chosen slave and His pleasing Messenger. He was sent with an extending light and gratifying order passed on by all the messengers, and lessons from their paths. He resisted oppression, completed *imān*, manifested it above all other religions, and suppressed the idol worshipers. May Allāh bless him and his family and grant them peace for as long as the stars orbit in the sky and Allāh is glorified in His kingdom.

As for what comes next, then it is clear and evident for the intelligent and sensible that the times are always changing and in flux, the teat becomes dry after it was full, branches wilt after they were flourishing, strength wastes away after it was virile, and taste becomes unpleasant after it was sweet! People emerged claiming mastery of intelligence and wisdom by using the opposite of what necessitates intelligence, such as their heart’s desires and departing from the requirements of intelligence for apprehensions in their chests. They believed the fundamentals of intelligence involved the problems of hypocrisy and sycophancy and its branches that show up with their deputies: beautiful clothing and eloquent speech. And they claim that whoever governs these four things is the one who possesses intelligence and deserves to be followed, and whoever does not possess these traits is an imbecile and should be avoided.

So when I witnessed the scum of the earth bedazzling and misguiding with their actions, and the uncivilized people following their example, it led me to write a small book containing an elegant meaning that the intellectuals and the wise need these days, such as knowing the condition of their times, so as to be like a ticket for those of discernment when they are present and like a water spring for the people of understanding when they are absent, by which the scholar and the one who is heedful surpasses his contemporaries and comrades. It will be an honest confidant for the wise person in private and an intimate protector in the open. By way of it, he will be favored by his support-

---

<sup>2</sup> Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ 21:23

## *Introduction*

ers and surpass his counterparts.

I clarify in this book that which will beautify for the wise person the practice of praiseworthy characteristics and make the practice of reprehensible characteristics seem ugly while intending to refrain and abstain from persistently increasing in these bad qualities, to lighten the load for the bearer and enlighten the ear of the listener. And because of the various narrations and verses of poetry that will be mentioned in this book, the one who strives to study each chapter in depth will wish that they would never end. And whoever refuses to reach completeness and success is, in reality, accepting inadequacy.

Allāh is the Granter of success and the Guider to integrity. And I ask Him for rectification of the soul and a pardon from punishment of sins. Indeed, He is the Most Generous, Noble, Compassionate, and Merciful.



## The Advocation of Adhering to Intelligence & the Characteristics of the Wise Person

On the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ وَيَكْرَهُ سَفْسَافَهَا.

**Indeed, Allāh loves the person of good character and dislikes the person of bad character.<sup>1</sup>**

The love of a person of good character and the dislike of a person of bad character is the essence of wisdom. Intelligence is a great treasure: it makes exile pleasant and it negates poverty; there is no wealth better than it, and a person's religion cannot be complete without intelligence.

Intelligence is of two types: natural and heard. The natural is like the earth; the heard is like seeds and water.

There is no way for the natural intelligence to arrive at a resultant

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Hākim (1/48) and others with the wording: "Allāh the Almighty, Venerable, and Noble loves noble-heartedness and good and noble manners and hates bad manners." Al-Albāni declared it authentic in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (3/366, #1378).

action without exposing it to heard intelligence in order to alert it from its sleep and free it from its place, just as the seed and water extract what is deep in the earth to abundantly flourish.

Therefore, natural intelligence within the depths of man is in the position of the roots of a tree under the earth, and heard intelligence is apparent like the fruits hanging from the tree's branches.

Muḥammad bin Ishāq bin Ḥabīb al-Wāsiṭi recited to me this poetry:

*I realized that intelligence is of two types:*

*Natural and learnt.*

*And learnt intelligence is of no avail*

*If not accompanied by the natural.*

*Just as the sun is of no benefit*

*When the rays are prevented from sight.*

Intelligence and desire are two opponents, so a person must aid and support his reasoning, and impede and obstruct his desires. Hence, if two affairs are ambiguous, he should refrain from that which is closest of the two to his desires, because by refraining from what he desires, intentions are purified, and through intelligence and reasoning consciences are rectified.

'Abdul-'Azīz bin Sulaymān al-Abrash recited to me:

*If a man perfects his intelligence, his affairs are perfected,*

*And his blessings are perfected and his appearance is perfected.*

*So if there is no intelligence, his deficiency becomes clear,*

*Even if he is given a lot of wealth.*

The wise person does not begin a conversation unless asked a question, he does not argue a lot unless permitted, and he is not quick to answer unless he is sure.



The wise person does not belittle anybody, for whoever belittles the leader ruins his life; whoever belittles the pious destroys their faith; whoever belittles their brothers ruins their reputation; and whoever belittles the layman removes their protection.

Al-Muntaşr bin Bilāl bin al-Muntaşr al-Anşāri told me this poetry:

*Do you not see that intelligence is a beautification for its possessor*

*And that the perfection of intelligence is from the length of experience?*

*And indeed, the past admonished the possessor of intelligence*

*And he increases every day with experience.*

The wise person applies analogy to the things he has seen to understand the things that he has not; he ascribes what he has not heard to what he has; he adjoins his mistakes to his achievements; [he applies] what remains of his life to what has passed, and what he never obtained to what he was provided. He does not rely on wealth even when in need, as wealth depletes and departs, while intelligence gains value and does not leave. If intelligence was a tree, it would be the best of trees, just like if patience was a fruit it would be the best of fruit. And that which increases intelligence is drawing close to all its forms and keeping away from what opposes it.

Social gatherings for the wise people are for one of two concerns:

1) To speak of the situation that the wise person needs to bring attention to.

2) Or informing of something significant that the ignorant need to know.

The wise person seeks to benefit from all forms of intelligence and draw lessons from its opposites in every situation. The person categorized by intelligence should not flatter someone unless a person can bear flattery and should not be attentive to someone unless they like his attention. If intelligence had parents, they would be patience and caution.

Allāh has created us to be from those who have within us the beautiful presence of intelligence, so by way of perfecting this blessing, he displays the characteristics that will lead to his Lord. Indeed, he obeys Allāh and does what He wills.



## Rectification of the Inner Self by *Taqwā* (God Consciousness)

On the authority of Usāmah bin Sharīk رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَا كَرِهَ اللَّهُ مِنْكَ شَيْئًا فَلَا تَفْعَلْهُ إِذَا خَلَوْتَ .

**If Allāh dislikes for you to do something, then do not do it (even) when you are alone.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise and prudent person must know that intelligence has branches of commands and prohibitions that he must know and use at their prescribed times as a demonstration to the laymen and riffraff.

The first of the branches of intelligence is *taqwā* and rectification of the inner self, because whoever purifies his inner self, Allāh will purify his outer self, and whoever spoils his inner self, Allāh will ruin his outer self. Indeed, the one who said the following was right:

*If you are alone for a time one day, don't say:*

---

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* is weak because it has Mu'mal bin Ismā'il in its chain of narration. Al-Haythami reported it in *Mawārid az-Zam'ān* (2498) and al-Albāni declared it to be good in *Ṣaḥīḥ Mawārid az-Zam'ān* (2116) due to its supporting narrations.

*“I am alone.” Instead say, “There is a Watchful Guardian over me.”*

*And don't think that Allāh is ever heedless*

*Or that what is hidden from Him is unseen.*

*Do you not see that the days pass quickly*

*And that tomorrow is close for those who are heedful?*

The wise person must give importance to the improvement of his inner self and guarding his heart when he draws close, when he moves away, when he is active, and when he is still, because his times only become difficult and his enjoyment ruined when the heart becomes diseased. Even if there was no other reason than the fact that Allāh exposes what is inside a person, whether good or bad, that would be sufficient for it to be incumbent upon the intelligent person to rectify and guard his inner self.

Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh bin Zinji al-Baghdādi told me these verses of poetry:

*If you display something good*

*Then make what you hide even better,*

*For the one who conceals good is characterized by it*

*And the one who conceals evil is characterized by evil.*

The wise person should rectify himself and keep away from sinful behavior by using his *taqwā* and righteous deeds. Therefore, if his body is not acting piously, he must reign it in and control it with his heart, because the actions of the limbs are purified by the purification of the heart.

Manṣūr bin Muḥammad al-Kurayzi recited the following verse of poetry to me:

*A man is nothing but his heart and his tongue*

*If his information and behavior are obtained.*

*And if a man's garments are not pure,  
Then you may not be able to purify it by washing it with water.  
And not everything you fear will harm you with evil  
And not everything you wish for will you obtain.*

The wise person must not forget to guard his heart from the things that cause the heart to harden, because if you rectify the king, you rectify the army, and if you corrupt him, you corrupt the army.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, if he is worried about two qualities, then he should refrain from the one that is closest to his desires and he should pursue the one most distant from ruin, and the one who said the following poetry was right:

*If your heart is ever conflicted  
Between two affairs, then choose the more decent and beautiful.  
And if you are worried about a bad affair, then hesitate;  
And if you are worried about a good affair, then just do it.*

Hearts are purified from their impurities once one's concerns become a single concern for Allāh, and everything becomes unimportant compared to the goal of pleasing the Creator by obedience to Allāh while in seclusion or in the company of others, and that is the best sustenance for this life and the next for those who are heedful.

Muḥammad bin Ishāq bin Ḥabīb al-Wāsiṭi told me this poetry:

*Fearing Allāh is obligatory upon you for every affair.  
You will see its consequence on the long Day of Judgment.  
Oh yes! Indeed, fearing Allāh is the best of outcomes  
And the greatest provision of the ephemeral traveler.*

---

<sup>2</sup> The proof is the narration reported from the Prophet ﷺ in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* from the *ḥadīth* of Nu'mān bin Bashīr: "Beware, in the body there is a piece of flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. Indeed, it is the heart."



## The Importance of Knowledge & Persistence in Seeking It

It was narrated that Zirr bin Ḥubaysh said:

أَتَيْتُ صَفْوَانَ بْنَ عَسَالِ الْمُرَادِي فَقَالَ مَا جَاءَ بِكَ قُلْتُ جِئْتُ أَنْبُطَ الْعِلْمِ  
قَالَ فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَا مِنْ خَارِجٍ  
يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ يَطْلُبُ الْعِلْمَ إِلَّا وَضَعَتْ لَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَجْنِحَتَهَا رِضًا بِمَا  
يَصْنَعُ.

I went to Ṣafwān bin ‘Asāl al-Murādi and he said, “What brought you here?” I said, “I am seeking knowledge.” He said, “I heard the Messenger of Allāh say, ‘There is no one who goes out of his house in order to seek knowledge except that the angels lower their wings in approval of his action.’”<sup>1</sup>

Once the wise person has rectified his inner self, he should couple that with seeking knowledge and persevering upon that, as there is no better way for a person to clarify the affairs of the *dunyā* than with

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* is graded “good” and was reported by Aḥmad (4/239-240) and others. See *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Musnad Mimmā Laysa fīṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn* by Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādī رحمته الله.

the purity of knowledge. A wise person would not be neglectful of something that would cause the angels to spread their wings for him in approval of what he has done. However, he should not hope for his efforts to bring him closer to the kings and leaders or to obtain material things. There is nothing worse than a scholar abasing himself for the people of the *dunyā*. Al-Fuḍayl bin 'Iyād<sup>2</sup> said, "There is nothing worse than the scholar to whose home people come and say, 'Where is the *shaykh*?' and they say, 'He is with the ruler,' or 'Where is the *shaykh*?' and they say, 'He is with the judge.' What is for the judge and what is for the scholar? What is for the ruler and what is for the scholar? The scholar should be in his *masjid* reading his Qur'ān."

Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin 'Abdillāh bin Zinji told me this poetry:

*In knowledge and Islām, a person has a protection,  
And abstaining from the heart's obedience is enslavement.  
Insights of guidance for the youth are apparent,  
And the knowledge of honest qualities is gained by learning.*

The wise person does not sell his portion of the Hereafter by seeking knowledge for what it may obtain for him of the vanities of this world, because the intention for seeking knowledge is not for the knowledge in and of itself. The purpose sought in all things is their benefit, not the thing itself, and knowledge and the benefit of knowledge are two separate things. Hence, anyone who overlooked its benefit never benefitted himself, and he becomes like someone who eats but never becomes full, so knowledge is a beginning and an end for him.

Sufyān<sup>3</sup> said, "Knowledge begins with silence, then listening, then memorizing, then acting upon it, and then spreading it."

---

<sup>2</sup> He is Fuḍayl bin 'Iyād al-Imām al-Qudwah, Shaykhul-Islām Abū 'Alī at-Tamīmi al-Yar-bū'ī al-Marūzi, Shaykh of the Ḥaram. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/18)

<sup>3</sup> He is Sufyān bin Sa'īd bin Masrūq, Shaykhul-Islām Abū 'Abdillāh ath-Thawri. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/152, and see *Al-Jāmi*' 1/292-293 by al-Khaṭīb)

Al-Abrash told me this poetry:

*Learn! For a person is not born knowledgeable  
And the possessor of knowledge is not the same as the ignorant.  
A tribe's elder has no knowledge with him  
If an assembly only pays heed to a youth.*

The wise person does not busy himself with seeking knowledge unless he intends to act on it, because whoever strives to gain knowledge for other than what we described will become increasingly vain and arrogant and will become increasingly complacent and neglectful of their actions. And his corruption is worse for those who look to emulate him than it is for himself. His example is like Allāh's saying:

﴿ لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۖ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ  
يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ أَلا سَاءَ مَا يَزُرُونَ ﴾

**They will bear their own burdens in full on the Day of Resurrection, and also of the burdens of those whom they misled without knowledge. Evil indeed is that which they shall bear!**

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:25]

Aḥmad bin Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣanʿāni and Muḥammad bin ʿAbdillāh told me these verses of poetry:

*Beware! They seek knowledge in every city,  
Youth, who when they find it and gather it,  
And its narration and foundation is authenticated for them,  
And they become scholars, neglecting and turning away,  
They favor the dunyā, so they milk it  
By its teats and its opening that is never bound.*



*O scholars of evil, where are your senses?*

*And where is the chosen and supported ḥadīth?<sup>4</sup>*

The wise person should only seek the best of knowledge, because increasing knowledge will affect a discerning person through its remembrance. Knowledge is beautifying in times of prosperity and a refuge in times of difficulty. And whoever studies is increased, just as whoever dreams can become a leader. An excess of knowledge of anything that is not good is destructive, just as an abundance of manners for other than Allāh's pleasure is a great sin. The wise person does not strive in his field of work unless it is advantageous for him in both this life and the next, and if he is blessed with something, he is not miserly in its use.

I have never seen someone miserly with their knowledge except that they did not benefit from it, just like how the underground water deposits are not utilized unless they gush out from the ground, or red gold until it is extracted from its mine, or a precious pearl until it is removed from its ocean. Likewise, knowledge is not of benefit as long as it is hidden away and not propagated or utilized.<sup>5</sup>

Abud-Dardā' رضي الله عنه said, "People are either teachers or students, and there is no good in other than that."

Al-Kurayzi recited the following poetry:

*Benefit from knowledge and don't be miserly with it;*

*Use your knowledge wisely.*

---

<sup>4</sup> May Allāh have mercy upon him, Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādi'i used to tell some of the students of knowledge to say these poetic verses with loud voices in front of the students of knowledge to warn them from the outcome of departing from knowledge to seek the *dunyā*. In fact, he made these verses one of the materials for memorization at Dār al-Ḥadīth in Dammāj.

<sup>5</sup> I heard Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādi'i رحمته الله often advise his students that had benefitted to spread the knowledge, and he was possibly angered by those who were able but would not do that. He would say, "The blessing of knowledge is in sharing it," or something similar to that.

*The Importance of Knowledge & Persistence in Seeking It*

*Utilize your knowledge to the best of your ability and be  
Someone who acts with knowledge and benefits the people.*

*Whoever benefits them, Allāh will reward him,  
And Allāh will make him free of those who don't benefit.*

*The one who strives for it is not weak;  
The weak is only the one who does not strive.*



## The Importance of Silence & Guarding the Tongue

It was narrated from Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ وَالْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَسْكُتْ.

**Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, let him say something good or else remain silent.**<sup>1</sup>

If the wise person uses the two previous tools that I mentioned (rectifying the self and seeking knowledge), then his efforts must turn to guarding the tongue until it becomes correct, as the tongue is a source of destruction for a person. Silence earns a person love and dignity, and whoever guards his tongue brings himself peace, as regret from silence is better than regret from speech. Silence is the sleep of intelligence and speech is its awakening.

Abud-Dardā' ؓ said, "There is no good in life other than one of two

---

<sup>1</sup> The *ḥadīth* with this wording was reported by Ibn Mājah (3971) with an authentic chain of narration, and its original is reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (6018) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (47).

men: a man who is silent and attentive or a man who speaks and is knowledgeable.”

The wise person must not try to talk over other people or interrupt them, because even though speech at the right time may be appreciated and important, silence at the right time is of a higher standard. A person is either a role model or lost and heedless, depending on the tongue. Allāh, the Venerable and Almighty, raised the tongue above the other parts of the body, as there is nothing greater than it in reward if it is obedient but nothing worse than it for sin if it is disobedient.

Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh bin Zinji al-Baghdādi recited the following verses of poetry:

*If blame may be earned by what you say*

*And if there is no benefit in it, then silence is easier.*

*Do not let a word appear from your tongue without taming*

*Its place by first thinking.*

The tongue has ten qualities that the wise person should know and he should use each quality at its rightful time. It is a tool for expression, a witness informing of the inner thoughts, a speaker responding to a question, a judge rendering a decision, a mediator by which you know his needs, a describer by which you may understand things, a gardener that removes hatred and enmity like weeds, a charmer that attracts love, a comforter that enlightens hearts, a consoler that repels sadness.

Al-Baghdādi Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh bin Zinji recited the following poetry:

*Your silence makes you safe from error;*

*Excessive speech causes apprehension.*

*Do not say something and then follow it with,*

*“If only I had never said what I said.”*

The tongue of the wise person is behind his heart, so if he wants to say something, he first refers to his heart, and if it is for it, then he says it; if not, he remains silent. The ignorant person’s heart is at the end of his tongue—whatever comes to his tongue, he says. The person who does not guard his tongue does not understand his religion, and the tongue, if it is correct, will be apparent in his actions, and if it is corrupt, likewise.

Al-Kurayzi recited the following poetry:

*Hide the stuttering as much as you can with silence;*

*Indeed, silence is a comfort for the quiet person.*

*Make silence a response if you are unsure;*

*Maybe his answer will be in your silence.*

The intelligent person guards his situations from disturbance at all times, and one of the greatest corrupting disturbances for the rectitude of the inner self and causes for the removal of piety of the heart is excessive speech. The only way for a person to cultivate quietness is to leave the things that lead him to talk.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, our Salaf were avid upon refraining from speech except what was of benefit to them. Ibn Abid-Dunyā reported in his book *Aṣ-Ṣamt wa Ādāb al-Lisān (Silence and the Etiquettes of the Tongue)* (7159-80) in *Mawsū‘ah Ibn Abid-Dunyā* by way of Khalaf bin Tamīm: “Abū Ishāq al-Farāzi told me, ‘Ibrāhīm bin Ad-ham رضي الله عنه used to be silent for long lengths of time, so when he spoke, we would be merry. One day, he was silent for a long time, so I said, ‘If only you would say something,’ so he said, ‘Speech is of four types: speech from which you do not expect a benefit and you fear its consequences; it is better to keep away from this type. Secondly, speech from which you do not expect a benefit but do not fear its consequences, so at the very least by abstaining from this type of speech you will spare yourself the effort. Thirdly, speech from which you do not expect a benefit and are not safe from its consequences; a person of intelligence would want to spare themselves the trouble of this type. And lastly, speech from which you expect a benefit and do not fear any consequences, so it is obligatory for you to spread this type of speech.’” Khalaf said, “So I said to Abū Ishāq, ‘I believe he just removed three-quarters of all speech!’ He said, ‘Yes!’”



## The Importance of Honesty & the Avoidance of Lying

'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَإِنَّ  
الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ صِدِّيقًا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْكَذِبَ فَإِنَّ الْكَذِبَ  
يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَكْذِبُ حَتَّى  
يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَذَّابًا.

**You must be truthful. Truthfulness leads to dutifulness and dutifulness leads to Jannah. A man continues to tell the truth until he is written as an honest person with Allāh. Beware of lying. Lying leads to deviance and deviance leads to the Fire. A man continues to lie until he is written as a liar with Allāh.<sup>1</sup>**

Indeed, Allāh—the Venerable and Almighty—favored the tongue over the rest of the body parts. Hence, he raised its status and made its superiority apparent by permitting it to speak of His *tawhīd*. Therefore, the intelligent person must not condition upon lies the

<sup>1</sup> Agreed upon by al-Bukhāri and Muslim.

tool created by Allāh to pronounce His *tawhīd*; instead, he must continuously cultivate his tongue to be honest and do whatever will benefit him in the two abodes (this life and the Hereafter), because the tongue dictates tendencies—if it is honest, then honesty, and if it lies, then lying.<sup>2</sup>

The poet who said the following was indeed correct:

*Condition your tongue to good speech and you will gain good favor.*

*The tongue is conditioned by what it is accustomed to.*

*It is a representative for seeking judgment of what you prescribe for it,*

*So choose for yourself and see how you fare.*

It is easy to beautify the different parts of the body, but not the tongue; the tongue can only be beautified by conditioning it, and honesty saves while lies destroy. Whoever controls their tongue can become a leader for their people. Whoever lies excessively never leaves anything for himself to be honest about. And a person only lies if he places no importance in himself.

Muḥammad bin Ka'b al-Qurzi<sup>3</sup> said, "The liar only lies due to the contempt he has for himself."

Al-Kurayzi recited the following poetry:

*You lied! And whoever lies, his recompense is*

*If he does not come with honesty, that he is not believed.*

*If the liar is known for lying, he will always be*

*Considered by the people a liar even when telling the truth.*

---

<sup>2</sup> I never saw anyone stricter in warning his students from lying than Shaykh Rabi' bin Hādi al-Madkhali (may Allāh preserve him). He would often warn them from lying during his lessons.

<sup>3</sup> He is Muḥammad bin Ka'b bin Sulaym bin Asad Abū Ḥamzah al-Qurazi al-Madani, and he resided in Kūfah for a time. He was trustworthy and a scholar. He was born in 40 AH. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, biography #6257, publisher: Dār al-Āshimah).

*The scourge of the liar is if his lies are forgotten*

*And believing him to possess understanding if he is skillful.*

It should be enough that lying degrades a person in the eyes of his companions, and that even if he tells the truth they will think he is lying, to make all mankind firm upon honesty. The worst affliction of lying is if the liar's companion is forgetful, as it invites him to be dishonest at every moment and opportunity.

Muḥammad bin 'Abdillāh al-Baghdādi told me the following poetry:

*If a man does not possess these three things,*

*Then trade him even if it is for a handful of dust:*

*Integrity and honesty,*

*And keeping secrets hidden in his heart.*

Honesty raises a person in this life and the next, just as lying degrades a person in both of these places. And if honesty had no praiseworthy quality other than the fact that if a man is known for honesty then his lies are accepted as truth by whoever hears him, then it would be obligatory for any intelligent person to push himself to train his tongue until it becomes steadfast upon honesty and distant from lying. And being unable to express yourself sometimes is better than speaking too much, because that is better than any speech said out of place.





## Encouragement of Modesty (Ḥayā') & Departing from Impudence (Qubḥah)

Abū Mas'ūd al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ مِمَّا أَدْرَكَ النَّاسُ مِنْ كَلَامِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُولَىٰ إِذَا لَمْ تَسْتَحْ فَاصْنَعْ مَا شِئْتَ .

**One of the admonitions of the previous prophets which has been conveyed to people is that if you have no modesty, then do whatever you like.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should be persistently modest, as it is the foundation of intelligence and the propagation of good, and departing from it is the foundation of ignorance and the propagation of wickedness. Modesty is evidence of intellect, just as its absence is evidence of ignorance. Muḥammad bin 'Abdillāh al-Baghdādi told me this poetry:

*If he is lacking water of the face (honor), his modesty is lacking.*

*There is no good in a face that lacks water (honor).*

*Preserve your modesty, as indeed only*

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (3483).

*His modesty is evidence of nobility.*

*Al-ḥayā'* is a word that incorporates the avoidance of disliked qualities. *Al-ḥayā'* is of two types:

1) The slave's shame and modesty in committing acts that Allāh—the Almighty, the Most Venerable—has warned him from.

2) Shame and modesty from performing acts and saying things that are disliked by the creation.

Both of these types are praiseworthy, except that one is obligatory while the other is of secondary importance. Hence, shyness (*ḥayā'*) from performing acts that Allāh has forbidden is obligatory and shyness from doing things that people dislike is extra.

If a person has *ḥayā'*, then the ingredients for goodness are present, but if a shameless person persists upon obscenity, then goodness is absent and the pervasiveness of wickedness is present, because *ḥayā'* acts as an obstacle between a person and every impermissible act. Therefore, a strong *ḥayā'* weakens the draw to commit sinful acts, but a weak *ḥayā'* strengthens those desires. The poet was right when he said:

*And maybe nothing would stand between a shameless deed*

*And my perpetration of it, except al-ḥayā'.*

*Because it is the cure for it, but*

*If the ḥayā' goes away, there is no cure.*

The wise person must condition himself to be persistent upon *ḥayā'* among the people. The greatest reward of this will be becoming accustomed to praiseworthy qualities and avoiding blameworthy acts. Likewise, the greatest reward for *ḥayā'* from Allāh is deliverance from the Fire by being persistent upon *ḥayā'* and abstaining from the things that Allāh has forbidden. The son of Ādam has been created with both honor and wickedness regarding his dealings between himself and Allāh and his relations with the rest of creation. If his

*ḥayā'* is strong, then his honor will be strong and his wickedness will be weakened, but if his *ḥayā'* is weak, his wickedness will be strengthened and his honor will be weak.

If a person's *ḥayā'* is firm, his dignity will be preserved and his goodness will be well known. But whoever's *ḥayā'* departs will lose his happiness. Whoever loses his happiness becomes insignificant and disliked by the people, and whoever becomes disliked is hurt, and whoever is hurt becomes depressed. Whoever becomes depressed loses their reasoning, and whoever's reasoning is affected then most of his speech will be against him rather than for him. There is no cure for someone who has no *ḥayā'*, and there is no *ḥayā'* for someone with no loyalty. There is no loyalty for someone with no brotherhood, and whoever has no *ḥayā'* does and says whatever he likes.



## The Importance of Humility & Abstaining from Arrogance

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَلَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلَّا عِزًّا وَلَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلَّا رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ.

**Wealth is not diminished by giving *sadaqah*, and Allāh increases the honor of one who forgives; and the one who is humble for Allāh's sake, Allāh exalts him in rank.<sup>1</sup>**

The intelligent person must be humble and avoid arrogance, and if the only good quality of humility was that with every increase in humility a person is increased in rank, then it would be obligatory to not adorn oneself with anything else.

There are two types of humility; one is praiseworthy while the other is not:

- 1) Praiseworthy humility: Abstaining from acting arrogantly

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Muslim (2588).

with Allāh's slaves or having disdain for them.

2) Blameworthy humility: Humbling yourself to someone who possesses a portion of the *dunyā*, desiring some of what they have.

The wise person should distance himself from every type of blame-worthy humility and not distance himself from the praiseworthy humility in any way.

Humility raises a person's rank and increases them in blessings and nobility. Humility for Allāh has two types:

1) The slave's humility for his Lord when he performs an obedient act without becoming amazed by his own actions. This type of humility protects one from becoming amazed by one's own good deeds.

2) When a person thinks little of himself and regards himself with disdain due to sins he committed, to the extent that he believes that there is no one in the world who performs less acts of obedience and no one who commits more sin than he.

The intelligent person avoids arrogance due to the despicable qualities it contains, such as:

- A person does not look down on others unless he is amazed by himself and believes he is better than others.

- His disdain for the world, because someone who does not have disdain for people would not look down on them.

- Contesting Allāh—the Venerable and Most High—regarding His characteristics, since grandeur and magnificence are from Allāh's (the Venerable and Most High) characteristics. Hence, whoever contends with Him in either of these will be thrown into the Hellfire unless He blesses him with forgiveness.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The author is referring to the *ḥadīth* reported by Muslim (2620): "Allāh the Exalted says: 'Pride is My cloak and greatness is My robe. Whoever vies with Me regarding one of them shall be punished.'"

The poet was correct when he said:

*Arrogance corrupts religion and reduces*

*Intelligence and besmears honor, so beware!*

*Do not be covetous! For verily, in evil there is humiliation.*

*And there is honor in forbearance, but not in arrogance and ignorance.*

Nobody is prevented from humility, and humility earns peace and harmony and removes resentment and repulsion. The fruit of humility is love and the fruit of contentment is comfort. Humility from a noble person increases his nobility, while arrogance from a lowly person increases him in lowliness. And how can someone who is created from a drop of sperm and ends up as a rotting corpse and, between these two stages, carries feces within himself, be arrogant?



## The Preference of Endearing Yourself to the People Without Committing Sin

Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

يَحْرُمُ عَلَى النَّارِ كُلُّ هَيِّئٍ لَيِّنٍ قَرِيبٍ سَهْلٍ.

**The Fire is forbidden for anyone who is close (to the people), amicable, and easygoing.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person must have love for the people by having good manners and abstaining from bad manners because: “Good manners remove sins like the sun melts ice and bad manners spoil good deeds like vinegar spoils honey.”<sup>2</sup> It is possible that a person has all good manners but one bad quality and it spoils all of the good manners.

Endearing yourself to the people involves displaying joy, being brief, being mild and forbearing, having good manners, being generous,

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Aḥmad (1/415) and others. In its chain of narrators, there is ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr al-Azdi and he is unknown; however, the *ḥadīth* has supporting chains of narration that strengthen it to the level of *ḥasan* (good). Al-Albāni mentioned the *ḥadīth* in *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* (938).

<sup>2</sup> This *ḥadīth* is unsubstantiated. See *Ad-Da‘īfah* by al-Albāni (440).

and protecting from harm. So if a person has this description, those who love him will not become sad and those who are jealous of him will not be happy, because whoever's happiness is connected to the happiness of others and they are close to the people, no matter how they are, deserves the best reward.

'Alī bin Muḥammad al-Bassāmi told me the following poetry:

*I am close to my community in every way  
By the best of what I have and have not seen.  
I refrain from ugly traits, whatever they may be,  
And I abstain from desires and lying.*

To need the help of others while they feel love for him is better than a person who does not need anyone but they hate him. The reason they don't love him is because of a lack of good manners, because when someone lacks manners, his family and neighbors lose hope in him and come to hate him, and his brothers will find him unbearable. At that point, they will want to be rid of him and may hope for his downfall.

There are reasons why the people may detest someone, but the main reason is that a person perpetrates sins forbidden by Allāh, because whoever exceeds the limits prescribed by Allāh angers Allāh and angers the angels and then that anger is placed on Earth,<sup>3</sup> so almost anyone who meets him will find him burdensome and detestable.

It is obligatory for the intelligent person to keep away from characteristics that will bring about the hatred of the people for him and to be persistent upon those characteristics that will lead to the people loving him. The best way to ingratiate one's self to the people and to gain their love is for a person to give freely of what he possesses of material worldly things and to bear what he experiences of harm from them.

---

<sup>3</sup> See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (640) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2637).





## The Preference for Being Amiable with the People & Abstaining from Flattery

Jābir رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

مُدَارَاةُ النَّاسِ صَدَقَةٌ.

**Being amiable with the people is a charity.<sup>1</sup>**

The intelligent person must be amiable with those he encounters without falling into flattery, since being amiable is charity for a person while flattery is harmful. The difference between the two is that a person spends his time being affable, improving the time spent, without breaking away from the religion in any way; so when a person does not force themselves to act with manners and they begin to display manners mixed with some things that Allāh dislikes, then this is flattery or deception, not affability, because the end result is

---

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* was reported in the original and in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (471) by way of Yūsuf bin Asbāt, reporting from Sufyān ath-Thawri, reporting from al-Munkadir, who reported it from Jābir as a narration from the Prophet.

Ibn Abī Ḥātim asked his father about this *ḥadīth*, as is mentioned in *Al-'Ulal* (1/416), and he said: "This *ḥadīth* is false and has no foundation, and Yūsuf bin Asbāt's books were buried."

insignificant or trivial. And a person must be persistent upon affability as it improves his affairs, and if a person is not amiable and nice with the people, they become tired of him.

Like 'Alī bin Muḥammad al-Bassāmi said in the poetry:

*Be nice to those of the people who have grown impatient;*


*If a person is not nice to the people, they become tired of him.*

*The one who honors the people is beloved to them;*

*Whoever is generous with the people will be loved by them.*

The wise person should be affable with the people like a man swimming in flowing water. Whoever keeps relations with the people will cause his life to be difficult and his love will never be clear, because you can only achieve love by assisting people as they are—unless it is sinful, in which case there is no listening or obeying.

Mankind possesses differing desires and natures, so just as it is difficult for you to leave the things you are naturally disposed to, it is likewise difficult for others to refrain from them also. Therefore, it is not possible to sincerely have love for the people except by living with them and accepting them as they are, and by sometimes overlooking their transgressions.

'Alī  said, "Do not be two-faced, as it is a blameworthy characteristic, and be sincere to your brother regarding advice, whether it is good or ugly. Assist him always and remain with him for as long as he remains."



## The Preference for Spreading the *Salām* (Greetings of Peace) & Appearing Joyful & Smiling

Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reported from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ:

إِنَّ السَّلَامَ اسْمٌ مِنْ أَسْمَاءِ اللَّهِ وَضَعَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَفْشُوهُ بَيْنَكُمْ فَإِنَّ  
الرَّجُلَ الْمُسْلِمَ إِذَا مَرَّ بِالْقَوْمِ فَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِمْ فَرَدُّوا عَلَيْهِ كَانَ لَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فَضْلٌ  
دَرَجَةٌ بِتَذْكِيرِهِ إِيَّاهُمْ بِالسَّلَامِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَرُدُّوا عَلَيْهِ رَدَّ عَلَيْهِ مَنْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِنْهُمْ  
وَأَطْيَبُ.

“As-Salām” is one of the names of Allāh that He placed on earth, so spread the *salām* amongst you. If a Muslim man passes by a group of people and greets them with *salām* and they return the greeting, then he has a degree of superiority over them due to his mentioning the *salām* first. If they do not return the *salām*, then someone better than them will respond.<sup>1</sup>

The intelligent person must spread the greetings of *salām* among the people, because whoever greets the community with *salām* receives

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by at-Ṭabarāni (10392) and others, and al-Albāni declared it to be *ḥasan* (good) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (1894).

the reward of freeing a slave.<sup>2</sup> The spreading of the *salām* is one of those things that removes hidden enmity, bad temper, and hatred, stops abandonment, and develops brotherhood.

‘Ammār bin Yāsir said, “If a person possesses three qualities, then he possesses *īmān*: charity from someone who does not possess much wealth, justice and equity from one’s self, and striving to spread the *salām*.”

When the intelligent person meets his brother in Islām, he must greet him with the *salām* and smile, as whoever does that removes a bad deed from them both, just as a tree loses its leaves<sup>3</sup> in the wintertime when it dries. A person earns love when they meet those around them with a happy face. Al-Abrash told me the following poetry:

*The brother of joyfulness is loved due to the beauty of his joy,*

*And hatred is never absent for the one who frowns.*

*And a person’s miserliness hastens his disgrace.*

*I never saw a man more vigilant in his generosity.*

Smiling is like sustenance for the scholars and heartrending for the wise because joyfulness puts out the fire of stubbornness and burns off the agitation of anger. In it is a protection from the oppressor and safety from the slanderer. Whoever displays a happy face for the people, without a generous benefactor, they will never possess what he possesses.

The intelligent person who is blessed with behavior in the area of obedience does not need to frown if he sees someone who is inadequate in terms of their intentional behavior. Instead, one should display happiness and joy, as perhaps Allāh will return him to correct behavior and that which is obligatory from praising and thanking

---

<sup>2</sup> I do not find any evidence to support this.

<sup>3</sup> There are *ahādith* that mention the *salām* with a handshake. See *Mu’jam at-Ṭabarāni* (6/256), *Muṣannaf* by Ibn Abī Shaybah (5/256), and *Sharḥ Ma’āni al-Āḥār* (3/281).

Allāh for what Allāh has blessed him to achieve that He prevented others from.

Ḥammād bin Ishāq recited the following poetry:

*A young man is like water: When you meet him  
It is delightful, and his promise is beautiful;  
His smile makes you happy, and his face is radiant;  
He is unable to perform blameworthy miserliness;  
Incapable of wickedness, his tongue is  
Steadfast, and his eye is weary.*

Ḥabīb bin Abī Thābit<sup>4</sup> said, “A form of good manners is for a man to smile while talking to his friend.”

---

<sup>4</sup> He is Ḥabīb bin Abī Thābit al-Kūfi, al-Faqīh, al-Ḥāfiẓ; he died in 119 AH, or it is said that he died in 122 AH. (*Tadbkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/116)



## The Types of Joking That are Permissible & the Types That are Disliked

Anas رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had a male servant called Anjashah who had a nice voice, so the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him:

يَا أَنْجَشَةَ لَا تَكْسِرِ الْقَوَارِيرَ.

**O Anjashah, don't break the glasses.<sup>1</sup>**

The intelligent person should cause the people's hearts to incline towards him with joking and fun, and abstain from frowning and looking stern.

Joking is of two types: praiseworthy and blameworthy.

As for the praiseworthy: It is the type that is not tarnished by what Allāh the Almighty dislikes and is not a sin or a cause for the cutting of family ties.

As for the blameworthy: It is the type that is marked by enmity, removes beauty, destroys friendships, causes a person to denigrate

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Muslim (2323).

himself, and embitters the noble person.

Ar-Rabī‘ah<sup>2</sup> said, “Beware of joking, as it can ruin friendships and pierce the chest (with hatred).”

‘Abdullāh bin Khabīq<sup>3</sup> used to say: “Do not make fun of an honorable person—he will harbor feelings of hatred against you. And do not make fun of a lowly person—he will become insolent with you.”

Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh told me the following poetry:

*Honor your companion; do not make harmful jokes.*

*Indeed, you see the hatred through the jesting.*

*How many jokes have cut the close ties?!*

*And thus, companions are cut off because of it.*

Joking for anything other than obedience to Allāh removes beauty, ruins friendships, and creates bitterness and rancor.

Joking is called *mazāḥ* in Arabic, which is derived from the word *zāḥ*, meaning “to depart,” because joking involves departing from the truth. And how many times have brothers differed and loved one’s abandoned one another due to something that started out as a joke?

Joking can cause arguments, so an intelligent person should refrain from it, because arguing is objectionable in any situation and you can only be one of two people in an argument:

1) The man who is more knowledgeable than the other; in which case, why would you debate with someone who is lesser in knowledge than yourself?

2) Or the man who is less knowledgeable than the other; in which case, how can you argue with someone more knowledgeable

<sup>2</sup> He is Rabī‘ah bin Farūkh, al-Imām Abū ‘Uthmān at-Timī al-Madani al-Faqīh, *mawla* of the Munkadir family; he died in 136 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/157)

<sup>3</sup> He is ‘Abdullāh bin Khabīq al-Anṭāki. (*Al-Jarḥ wat-Tādīl* 5/46)

than yourself?

Mis'ar bin Kidām said to his son Kidām:

*Verily, I sincerely offer you this advice, Kidām,*

*So listen to what your father has to say, son:*

*Abstain from joking and arguing;*

*They are two qualities not liked by a friend.*

*I have a long experience with both and I never recommend them*

*For a neighbor or for a close companion.*

*Ignorance belittles a youth in the eyes of his people*

*And [belittles] his stock amongst the people, irrespective of his lineage.*

Muḥammad bin al-Munkadir<sup>4</sup> said, "My mother told me when I was young, 'Do not joke with the young men so that you demean them or they take action against you.'"

'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb said, "Whoever laughs a lot lacks reverence, and whoever jokes a lot is not taken seriously. Whoever does something a lot becomes known for it."

---

<sup>4</sup> He is Muḥammad bin al-Munkadir bin 'Abdillāh bin al-Hadīr, al-Imām Shaykhul-Islām Abū 'Abdillāh al-Qurshī at-Tīmī; he died in 130 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/127; *Al-Wāfi bil-Wafiyāt* 5/78)





## The Preference for Withdrawing from the General People

It is reported that Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudri رضي الله عنه said:

أَيُّ الْأَعْمَالِ أَفْضَلُ قَالَ الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَاذَا قَالَ رَجُلٌ فِي  
شُعْبٍ مِنَ الشُّعَابِ يَتَّقِي اللَّهَ وَيَدَعُ النَّاسَ مِنْ شَرِّهِ.

It was said, “O Messenger of Allāh, which of the actions are the best?” He said, “*Jihād* for the sake of Allāh.” He said, “Then what?” He said, “A man who stays in a mountain valley worshipping Allāh and leaving the people secure from his mischief.”<sup>1</sup>

The wise person should generally withdraw himself from the people and be wary of mixing with them, because even if the only praiseworthy quality of seclusion was safety from perpetrating a sin, it would be befitting for a person to not disturb the peace by insisting on something that could lead to argument.

A number of the past scholars used seclusion from people in both

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (6464) and Muslim (1503), and there are a few small additions in his wording.

a general and specific sense. The reason for withdrawing from the world as a whole is what you already know of the ways of mankind, in terms of stifling good and spreading wickedness. They hide good and spread evil, so if a person is knowledgeable, they accuse him of innovation and heresy, and if he is ignorant, they insult him. If he is above them, they envy and begrudge him, and if he is below them, they look down on him with disdain. If he speaks, they say he talks too much, and if he is quiet, they say he is dumb. If he is measured, they say he is miserly, and if he is open-handed, they say he is a squanderer. Whoever desires to be amongst a people like this and is deceived by the people will be regretful in the end. Ibn Abī 'Alī said that Muḥammad bin Ya'qūb al-'Abdi told him this poetry:

*If I said: This is a companion whom I have pleased,  
And he gladdened me then replaced me with another.  
I have never accompanied a companion  
Except that they betrayed me and changed.*

Makḥūl<sup>2</sup> said, "Even if there is good in mixing amongst the people, seclusion is safer."

Ibrāhīm al-Bukhāri said, "I went into the Ḥaram after Maghrib and saw Fuḍayl<sup>3</sup> sitting, so I walked over and sat with him. He said, 'Who is this?' I said, 'Ibrāhīm.' He said, 'What brought you over here?' I said, 'I saw you alone, so I sat with you.' He said, 'Do you like to slander, sham, or act a hypocrite?' I said, 'No.' Then he said, 'Leave me.'"<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> He is Makḥūl, a scholar of the people of Shām, Abū 'Abdillāh bin Abi Muslim al-Hadhali al-Faqīh al-Ḥāfiẓ; he died in the year 113 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/107; *Siyār Alām an-Nubalā'* 5/155)

<sup>3</sup> Fuḍayl bin 'Iyād at-Tamīmi, scholar of the Ḥaram. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/180)

<sup>4</sup> See *Al-Ādāb ash-Sharī'ah* (2/114) by Ibn Muflīḥ to benefit further.



## The Preference of Brotherhood with Certain People

It is reported that Anas رضي الله عنه said:

آخَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَ سَلْمَانَ وَأَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ، وَآخَى بَيْنَ  
عَوْفِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ وَبَيْنَ الصَّعْبِ بْنِ جَثَامَةَ.

**The Messenger of Allāh joined in brotherhood between Salmān and Abud-Dardā', and between 'Awf bin Mālik and aṣ-Ṣa'b bin Jathāmah.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should be mindful not to neglect kinship with the brothers and be prepared to share with them the ups and downs of life, as whoever seeks solace with the comfort of his brother in times

---

<sup>1</sup> The chain of narration includes Qūṭun bin Nusayr, who is weak, but the joining between Salmān and Abud-Dardā' as brothers is established in a *ḥadīth* reported by al-Bukhāri (6139) from the *ḥadīth* of Abū Juḥayfah رضي الله عنه.

The joining of 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin 'Awf and Sa'īd bin ar-Rabī' as brothers is mentioned in the *ḥadīth* reported by Anas in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* (2293) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2529).

The joining between the Ṣaḥābah as brothers occurred during the start of *hijrah* and applied to inheritance. Then it was abrogated, but the brotherhood that applies to consolation, support, and aid remained.

of distress and sadness, then his mind will be better at removing and reducing depression. Muḥammad bin ‘Imrān aḍ-Dabbi recited the poetry:

*What is a man without his brothers?*

*Just as the hand is grasped by the wrist*

*And there is no use for a severed hand*

*Nor any use for a mutilated forearm.*

The wise person should not consider as a brother someone who does not assist you in difficult times and does not participate with you in the good times. A brother of companionship could be better than a brother from birth. The best way to preserve brotherhood is by being considerate to the affairs of those who love him. The real love between brothers is the one that is not based on benefit and is not damaged by refusal. Love is peace just as hatred is fear.

The wise person should know that the objective of brotherhood is not gathering, eating, and drinking. Even the donkey and the mule eat and drink together, and thieves gather to perpetrate crimes, without any increase in love between them. Instead, some of the things that create brotherhood are having a measured gait, lowering the voice, a lack of excessive admiration, humility, and refraining from dispute.

A man should not shower his brothers with gifts and provisions to the point that he becomes weary of them, because if the suckling child breastfeeds for too long, the mother can become irritated and set him aside.

It is not appropriate for someone to refuse his brother something that he needs, forcing him into adversity and being pleased by his distress.

An intelligent person must not join in brotherhood with a wicked person, because wicked people are like deadly snakes: they have nothing but bites and poison. When a wicked person joins in brotherhood and comradeship with someone, they bring resentment and fear. The generous and noble person, on the other hand, is loved upon

the first meeting, even if he is never seen again. Yūnus bin ‘Ubayd was afflicted by a great difficulty, so someone said to him, “Ibn ‘Awf did not visit you?” So he said, “When we have faith in the love of our brother, it does not hurt if he does not visit.”

The wise person should try to not be harsh with his brothers, and should strive to abolish it if it appears from him. He should not treat any kind of harshness lightly, even if it is only very slight, because when someone deems something to be small, it quickly gathers up until it becomes something big. Instead, he should strive his utmost to obliterate it, because there is no point in honesty without fulfillment; there is no point in understanding without piety. From among the most ignorant of people is the man who socializes with brothers without fulfilling their rights and who seeks reward with *riyā*.<sup>2</sup> There is nothing more wasteful than love bestowed upon someone who is undeserving, and a good deed done for someone who is unappreciative.

---

<sup>2</sup> Acts of worship performed for the praise of the people.



## The Dislike of Being Hostile to People

It is reported that Abud-Dardā' رضي الله عنه reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ نَهَانِي عَنْهُ رَبِّي بَعْدَ عِبَادَةِ الْأَوْثَانِ لَعْنُ الْحَمِيرِ وَمُلاحَاةِ الرِّجَالِ.

**The first thing that my Lord forbade me from—after the worship of idols—was cursing donkeys and arguing with men.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should know that those who love him would never be jealous of him, and those who are not jealous of him would never be an enemy, and to refrain from enmity in all its forms is better for an intelligent person than to traverse its path.

Mahdi bin Sābiq recited the following poetry:

*Increase in the number of your brothers, as they*

*Are pillars if you need help and are a purification.*

*One thousand close friends are not a lot for a companion,*

---

<sup>1</sup> This *hadith* is very weak.

*And yet, one single enemy is too much.*

The wise person should not respond to evil in kind or use cursing and vilification as a weapon against his enemy, because utilizing flaws and pointing out deficiencies only leaves a person open to the same. The intelligent person does not spare those who fear him and he takes note of his enemies' weaknesses and examines their shortcomings, while refraining from defaming them. The wise person does not weaken his enemy with subterfuge and tricks, as seeking to weaken the enemy this way is deception, and whoever deceives is not safe from deception. This is the case except if the enemy is a person of humble means and disposition. A person should show lenience and forbearance for a person such as this because a humble enemy deserves mercy, just as a person in fear, seeking protection, deserves to be given refuge. Having an intelligent person as an enemy is better than shaking hands with an ignorant one. Aḥmad bin Muḥammad al-Bakri told me this poetry:

*It is better to have an intelligent person as an enemy*

*Than to have a friend who is ignorant.*

*Hence, decline yourself from friendship with an ignorant person;*

*A friend is an attestation for his friend.*

The wise person considers each step before he takes it and then he draws close enough to his enemy to understand what he needs, but he does not come too close to him, so that he will not become too bold. The wise do not make enemies when there is a possibility of being allies, and they do not make enemies of those they cannot avoid, nor an enemy that cannot be defended against except by fleeing from him. The best strategy to overcome an enemy is to cause him to lower his guard—to show the enemy that you do not take him as an enemy and to befriend his friends.

However, enmity after friendship is a great abomination that is not becoming of a wise person, so if a person is driven to it, he should always leave space for rectification.

*The Dislike of Being Hostile to People*

The wise do not allow the defects and bad characteristics that his enemy attributes to him to change him, because those things are not true of him, no matter how much the enemy insists. The wise can never take delight as long as his enemy remains, just as a person afflicted by illness cannot enjoy the delight of sleep and food until he has recovered.





## Encouragement for Accompanying Good People & the Warning from Accompanying Bad People

On the authority of Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَثَلُ الْجَلِيسِ الصَّالِحِ مِثْلُ الْعَطَّارِ إِنْ لَمْ يَنْلِكَ مِنْهُ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ رِيحِهِ وَمِثْلُ  
جَلِيسِ الشُّوءِ مِثْلُ الْقَيْنِ إِنْ لَمْ تَصْبِكَ نَارُهُ أَصَابَكَ شَرُّهُ.

**The example of a good companion is like that of the musk seller: even if you do not receive his good scent, you at least can smell it. The example of a bad companion is like that of a blacksmith: even if you are not burnt by his fire, the sparks will get you.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person is persistent upon accompanying good people and keeping away from bad people, because good people are quick to form relationships and slow to sever relations. On the other hand, bad people are quick to sever relations and slow to form relationships. Accompanying bad people also causes good people to have bad thoughts of a person, and whoever befriends bad people is not safe from becoming one of them. Therefore, a wise person must keep

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* is reported by the author in *Al-Asl* by way of his own chain of narration. A version of this *ḥadīth* is also reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* of al-Bukhāri and Muslim.

away from suspicious people so that people will not have suspicions of him. Just as accompanying good people begets good, accompanying bad people begets bad.

Muḥammad bin 'Abdillāh bin Zinji al-Baghdādi told me the following poetry:

*It is upon you to be a brother to those who are firm, as they  
Are few, so join them instead of those whom you used to accompany,  
And honor and preserve yourself, because  
When you accompany the lowest of the people, you will become angered.*

Mālik bin Dīnār<sup>2</sup> said, "It's better to move rocks with good people than to eat dessert with wicked people."

A wise person doesn't stain his honor or accustom himself to the causes of evil by accompanying bad people, and he doesn't disregard the preservation of his honor and the spiritual betterment of his soul by accompanying good people.

It is better to spend time with a dog than to spend time with someone from whom a person cannot benefit. Whoever accompanies a bad person is not safe, in the same way that a person who enters a place known for wickedness is viewed suspiciously.

The poet Manṣūr bin Muḥammad al-Kurayzi said:

*And even if he displays good, his wickedness  
Is more forthcoming. I experienced the good with the bad once,  
And if there was no good or bad in him  
I would be happy with the reward on the scales.*

---

<sup>2</sup> He is Mālik bin Dīnār Abū Yaḥyā, scholar to the righteous scholars, numbered amongst the most reliable of the Tābi'in, and from the notables of the writers of the Qur'an. He died in 130 AH, although it is also said that he died in 127 AH. (*Siyār A'lām an-Nubalā'* vol. 5, p. 364; *Al-Jarḥ wat-Ta'dīl* vol. 8, p. 208)

*But he is wicked and possesses no good;*

*He is not wicked if he has patience.*

A wise person must seek refuge in Allāh from a companion who does not benefit if Allāh is mentioned, and if Allāh is forgotten, he does not remind you of Him. Whoever has bad companions, then he is likewise bad; just as good people will only accompany pious people, likewise bad people will only accompany the wicked.

‘Abdul-Wāḥid bin Zayd said, “Sit with the people of religion of this world, as they do not indulge in foul speech in gatherings.”



## The Dislike for a Lack of Reciprocation of Brotherly Love Between Brothers

Sahl bin Sa'd said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

لَا خَيْرَ فِي صُحْبَةِ مَنْ لَا يَرَى لَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ مِثْلَ مَا تَرَى لَهُ.

**There is no good in accompanying someone who doesn't recognize your right in the same way that he recognizes his own.<sup>1</sup>**

If Allāh blesses a person with the sincere friendship of a good Muslim, the wise person should protect and hold on to that. Then he should prepare himself to join with him if he cuts him off; to approach him if he turns away; to spend on him if he withholds from him; and to invite him if he distances himself, until it becomes like a pillar of his character. One of the worst character defects is to be fickle in terms of friendship.

Al-Muntaṣir bin Bilāl al-Anṣārī told me the following poetry:

---

<sup>1</sup> The author reported this *ḥadīth* via Bukār bin Shu'ayb. The author mentioned Bukār bin Shu'ayb in *Al-Majrūhūn* (1/226). He said: "He narrated *aḥādīth* from trustworthy scholars that were not from them. It is not permissible to use his *aḥādīth* for evidence."

*How many friends, their friendship is on their tongue,  
Betraying (his friend) behind his back without regret.*

A wise person doesn't befriend someone who is fickle or inconsistent, and he doesn't display affection unless he feels it in his heart, and what he feels is always greater than what he shows. He will act this way throughout periods of difficulty and success because brotherhood is not praiseworthy if it is fickle.

A man from Khuzā'ah wrote the following poetry:

*My brother is not someone who shows me his love by speech alone;  
Rather, my brother is someone who loves me through the difficult times,  
Whose wealth is my wealth if I become destitute,  
And whatever is mine is his if his fate changes.  
Brotherhood during good times is not praiseworthy  
If indeed, you deny the brothers when times become hard.  
And then he is just "Hi, how are you?" and "Marḥaba,"  
But with his money, he is sly like a fox.*

One of the best signs to know the sincerity of a person's love or affection or the lack of it are the eyes, because the eyes cannot hide what is felt in the heart. Therefore, the wise person judges a person's sincerity with his heart and by the eyes of his brother.



## Encouragement for Visiting Brothers & Honoring Them

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, the Prophet ﷺ said:

أن رجلاً زار أخا له في قرية أخرى، فأرصد الله تعالى على مدرجته ملكاً، فلما أتى عليه قال: أين تريد؟ قال: أريد أخاً لي في هذه القرية. قال: هل لك عليه من نعمة تربها عليه؟ قال: لا غير أني أحببت في الله تعالى، قال: فإني رسول الله إليك بأن الله قد أحبك كما أحبته فيه.

**A man set out to visit a brother (in faith) in another town and Allāh sent an angel on his way. When the man met the angel, the angel asked him, "Where do you want to go?" He said, "I intend to visit my brother in this town." The angel said, "Does he owe you a favor?" He said, "No, I just want to visit him because I love him for the sake of Allāh the Exalted." Then the angel said, "I am a messenger to you from Allāh (to inform you) that Allāh loves you as you love him (i.e., his brother) for His sake."<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should be persistent in visiting his brothers and

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Muslim (2567).

paying attention to how they are. The visitor should have two reasons for his visit:

- 1) Seeking rewards in the future.
- 2) Enjoyment from being with his brother.

Al-Faryābi said, “Wakī’ bin al-Jurrāh visited me from Bayt al-Maqdis, and he was in *iḥrām* for ‘Umrah. He said, ‘Abū Muḥammad, you were not on my way, but I wanted to visit you and stay with you.’ So he stayed with me for a night. Then Ibn al-Mubārak visited me and he also had entered *iḥrām* for ‘Umrah from Bayt al-Maqdis, and he stayed with me for 3 days. I said to him, ‘Abū ‘Abdir-Raḥmān, stay for 10 days,’ but he said, ‘No, hosting is for 3 days only.’”

Visitors are of two types:

1) There is the type who seeks to improve himself and his brother and strips away the shortcomings and deficiencies in him. If he is of this type, then it is liked that he visits often because visits from someone of this disposition don’t lead to boredom; rather, it leads to familiarity and friendliness.

2) The second type is someone with whom the love never becomes rooted between him and his brother, and his visits do not lead to the removal of the awkwardness between them. If he is of this disposition, it is preferred that he limits his visits, because frequent visits will just lead to boredom and resentment, since everything that is given freely is disagreeable and everything that is elusive is desirable. In fact, many *aḥādīth* have been attributed to the Prophet ﷺ clearly negating incessant visiting, such as: “Visiting sparingly increases the love.”<sup>2</sup>

Someone who has a good relationship with his brothers doesn’t need to visit often because the love is deeply rooted, and if the relationship

---

<sup>2</sup> Reported by al-Ḥākim (vol. 3, p. 347). In its chain of narrators, there is Azhar bin Zafar, who is unknown, and Sulaymān bin Abī Karīmah, who was declared weak by Abū Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wat-Tādīl* (vol. 4, p. 138).

is damaged by a lack of visiting, then the love was superficial. But as for someone who has not developed a relationship with his brothers, then it is better to hold off from frequent visits so as not to become a burden and wearisome.





## The Description of the Foolish & Ignorant

Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The example of a good companion is like that of the musk seller: even if he does not give you anything, you still receive the scent of his perfume. The example of a bad companion is like that of a blacksmith: even if he does not burn your clothes, you will be affected by the smoke.”<sup>1</sup>

The wise person should not spend time with foolish people, and should instead spend time and socialize only with other wise, intelligent people, because even if you do not receive a portion of the wise person’s intelligence, you will be held in similar esteem to him. As for the foolish person, even if you are not harmed by his ignorance, you will be denigrated for your association with him.

Some of the signs of ignorance that the wise person should recognize in people if he does not know them are: hastily responding to questions, not double-checking, excessive laughter, constantly looking around, backbiting good people, and mixing with bad people. The

---

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* is reported by the author in *Al-Aṣl* by way of his own chain of narration. A version of the *ḥadīth* is also reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* of al-Bukhāri and Muslim.

ignorant people become dejected when you shun them, but if you turn to them, they deceive you. If you show him kindness, he will be ignorant with you, but if you are ignorant with him, he will be kind to you. If you harm him, he will be good to you, but if you are good to him, he will harm you. If you oppress him, he will treat you fairly, but if you're fair with him, he will oppress you.

From amongst the ignorant people are those whose characteristics are not prevented by people remaining quiet and they don't stay concealed, or they are not benefitted by overlooking their faults.

The wise person should not associate with this type of person, as people like this become bold with those who associate with them. Don't you see how the people of Sudan are not especially brave, and yet they are bold with lions due to their familiarity with them?

Indeed, the character of a wise person includes gentleness, reticence, poise, quietness, trustfulness, generosity, wisdom, knowledge, piety, fairness, strength, determination, politeness, discernment, nice countenance, humility, forgiveness, and beneficence; so if a person is blessed enough to befriend someone who is wise, then he should tie his hand to his own and never leave him, come what may. And the wise person shouldn't associate with anyone from whom it is impossible to benefit.



## The Rebuke for Spying & Having Suspicious Thoughts

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالظَّنَّ فَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ أَكْذَبُ الْحَدِيثِ، وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا، وَلَا تَحَسَّسُوا، وَلَا  
تَبَاغَضُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا.

**Beware of suspicion, for it is the worst of false tales, and don't spy and don't look for other's faults and don't hate one another, and be slaves of Allāh and brothers to one another!**<sup>1</sup>

The wise person should hold on to their integrity by avoiding spying and looking for the faults of others, and he should busy himself with fixing his own faults. Whoever focuses on his own faults instead of others promotes calmness for his body and his heart and never becomes weary, because each time a person comes across a shortcoming in their own character, they care less when they see something similar to that from their brother. Those who concern themselves with their brother's faults cause their hearts to become blind; their bodies become weary and they make excuses for their faults. The

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (6064) and Muslim (2563).

weakest of people is the one who criticizes others due to their faults, and the person who is even weaker than him is the one who criticizes the people for faults that he himself possesses. And whoever criticizes the people is criticized by the people.

Al-Kurayzi told me the following poetry:

*Everyone sees the faults of others*

*But are blind to their own faults.*

*What good is a person whose faults are hidden from him,*

*But the faults of his brother are clear for him to see?*

Spying is from the branches of hypocrisy, just as thinking the best of people is a branch of faith. The wise person thinks the best of his brothers and considers his miseries and woes, just as the ignorant person is untrusting of his brothers and doesn't think about his crimes and grief.

Mistrust is of two types:

- 1) The first is forbidden by the Prophet's ruling ﷺ.
- 2) The second is recommended.

The type that is forbidden is a general mistrust of all Muslims, as we previously discussed. And the type that is recommended is mistrust of someone who has enmity or a grudge against you for reasons of religion or the worldly affairs, and you have reason to fear him deceiving or cheating you. In this case, it is important to have mistrust of his trickery and deception so that he cannot take advantage of your inattentiveness and overcome you. Al-Abrash told me these verses regarding this topic:

*Thinking the best of people is good in situations,*

*But regret may lie in wait to ambush you in the end.*

*Mistrust makes faces loathsome,*

*But its ugliness can sometimes be a protection.*

The wise person must differentiate himself from the riffraff in his manners and actions by keeping away from seeking out the faults of others, because those who search for other people's secrets will have their own secrets sought out, and maybe his secrets are greater than what he searches for in others. And how can it be deemed appropriate for a Muslim to criticize another Muslim for faults that he himself possesses?

The daughter of 'Abdullāh bin Muṭī' al-Aswad said to her husband Ṭalḥah bin 'Abdillāh bin 'Awf: "O Ṭalḥah, I don't know anyone worse than your companions." He said, "Show restraint, don't say that about them! What have you seen from them to say this?" She said, "When you are doing well, they are with you, but when you are in hardship, they leave you." He said, "You are describing their good manners." She said, "How is this good manners?!" He said, "They come to us in times of strength when we can afford them, and they leave us in times of weakness when we cannot afford them."



## Encouragement for the Wise Person to Avoid Desire

On the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

يَهْرَمُ ابْنُ آدَمَ وَيَشْبُ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَانِ: الْحِرْصُ وَالْحَسَدُ.

**The son of Ādam grows old but two things remain young in him: desire and jealousy.<sup>1</sup>**

Allāh—the Almighty and Venerable—created mankind with a desire and craving for this transient world so as not to ruin it, as it is the home of the righteous, a source of income for the pious, a place of sustenance for the believers, and provisions for the good. Therefore, if people were to divest themselves of the desire for the material world, it would fall into disuse and ruin. Then a person would not find any means of subsistence to help him perform Allāh's obligations upon him, let alone allow him to earn the extra blessings of the Hereafter through voluntary acts of worship. However, excessive desire is

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣḥ*, but this wording is considered an anomaly as other chains of narration are narrated with wording similar to the following *ḥadīth* found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (1047): “The son of Ādam grows old, but two things remain young in him: his craving for wealth and his craving for life.”

blameworthy.

Muḥammad bin Naṣr al-Madīni told me the following poetry:

*O you who possess much desire,  
Busy with the world that won't last:  
I never saw a lower desire  
Than the desire for fortune.  
No! But it is Allāh's decree  
To become weak and miserable.  
You know the truth but  
You don't see the truth to be incumbent.*

Desire does not increase wealth, and the worst thing that can befall a greedy person is that, due to his desire, he is unable to enjoy the fruits of his labor, so he tires himself seeking something that he may never attain before he is met by death. If the greedy person was to avoid being excessive in his desire and relied on the Creator of the heavens, the Lord, Protector, Almighty, and Venerable would surround him with attainment of that which he isn't pursuing and success in that which, if he were to pursue greedily, he would never have found.

Desire is a sign of need just as miserliness is the clothing of poverty; and miserliness is the seed of desire, just as pride is the seed of ignorance; and withholding is the brother of desire, just as haughtiness is the twin of impudence.

There is no share of comfort for someone who obeys the desires of the material world; he will be reprehensible in this life and the next. Instead, a person's intention should be to perform Allāh's obligations, and the objects of his desire should have a limit that it returns to, because if his goal has no limits or conclusion, he will harm himself and tire his body. Whoever has a desire that is limited, not excessive, and an achievable goal, then this is the type of desire that is praiseworthy.



## The Rebuke of Jealousy & Hatred

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

لا تباغضوا، ولا تحاسدوا ولا تدابروا، وكونوا عباد الله إخواناً.

**Do not hate one another, and do not be jealous of one another, and do not differ with one another; and be slaves of Allāh and brothers to one another!**<sup>1</sup>

The wise person must avoid jealousy at all times.

Indeed, the worst aspect of jealousy is being displeased with Allāh's decree and wanting the opposite of what Allāh ruled for His slaves; and in addition to that, they want the removal of the other Muslim's blessings. The jealous person's soul and body cannot rest until he sees the blessing removed from his brother.

If it occurs to the wise person that he has some feelings of jealousy towards his brother, he should strive his utmost to hide those feelings and not allow them to show.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (6064) and Muslim (2563).



Jealousy mostly occurs between peers or people of the same race or social status. A man doesn't attain any kind of position or status in this world except that he will encounter someone who hates him for it or is jealous of him because of it. The jealous person is a stubborn antagonist; therefore, the wise person should not appoint him as an arbiter in the occurrence of a calamity, because if the jealous person passes a judgment, it will be against him; if he is angry with anyone, he will be angry with him; if he takes anything, he will take it from his share; if he gives, it will be to someone else; if he withdraws from anyone, it will be from him; if he apprehends anyone, it will be him; and he will consider the blessings of the person he is jealous of to be a grave sin or crime. So a man should be cautious of those who are of the same race, his peers, his neighbors, and his cousins.

A man said to Shabīb bin Shayabbah<sup>2</sup>: "Indeed, I love you very much," so he replied: "You have spoken the truth." The man said: "How do you know?" He said, "Because you are not a neighbor and you are not a cousin."

The wise and prudent person should reconcile himself to bear the pain of jealousy from those who are jealous of him, and the people who will be most jealous of him will be his neighbors and brothers if they divest themselves from the religion,<sup>3</sup> and caring relations, and then the close relatives, because in reality, relatives are scorpions,<sup>4</sup> except those whom Allāh has protected and kept away from the examples of this amongst the people of affectation who choose not to traverse the path of the wise and don't desire the position of the people of understanding regarding following the religion and desiring the opposite of it.

Jealousy leads to misery—have you not seen Iblīs? He was jealous of Ādam, so his jealousy caused him misery; he became cursed after he

<sup>2</sup> He is Abū Ma'mar Shabīb al-Ahtam at-Tamīmi al-Khaṭīb. He was known for his great eloquence. See *Siyār A'lām an-Nubalā'* (vol. 3, p. 156).

<sup>3</sup> Because the religion prevents a person from this kind of action.

<sup>4</sup> The author made a joke here, as the word for relatives and scorpions are very similar in Arabic (أقارب = relatives/عقارب = scorpions).

*The Rebuke of Jealousy & Hatred*

was respected. It is easy to please every person in the world except the jealous person, because he will only be happy once the person loses the blessing that made him jealous.



## Encouragement to Avoid Anger & the Dislike for Hastiness

Abū Hurayrah or Jābir said that a man came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said:

عَلِّمْنِي شَيْئًا وَلَا تُكْثِرْ عَلَيَّ لَعَلِّي لَعَلِّي أَعْقِلُ . قَالَ : لَا تَعْصَبُ .

**“Teach me something that is not too much for me so that I may abide by it.”** He ﷺ said, **“Do not get angry.”**<sup>1</sup>

The wisest people are those who do not become angry. The people whose answers are most mindful are those who do not become angry. A quick temper is more damaging to a wise person than fire is to a dry thorny bush, because when a person becomes angry, he loses his intellect and common sense, so he says: “I allowed myself to be affected by the anger and I did something to dishonor myself and bring about my own ruin.”

Al-Kurayzi recited the following verses to me:

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Asl* (vol. 10, p. 120), and reported by al-Bukhāri with another wording (6116).

*I don't see any good except with good character,  
And I don't see intellect to be correct except with good manners,  
And I don't see any enemy, when I test them,  
To be more of an enemy to a man's intellect than anger.*

A quick temper is from the characteristics of the ignorant, whereas avoiding anger is from the garments of the wise, and anger sows the seed of regret. So a person is better at fixing what angered him before he becomes angry than he is after that.

Bukār bin Muḥammad said, "Ibn 'Awn never got angry. If a person tried to anger him, he would say: 'May Allāh bless you.'"

Muḥammad bin Ishāq bin Ḥabīb al-Wāsiṭi told me this poetry:

*People never ate any kind of food  
Sweeter and with a more praised outcome than anger.  
However, a man cannot wrap himself with a garment  
More radiant and beautiful than religion and manners.*

The wise person who encounters the opposite of what his soul desires should remind himself of the frequency of his sins and Allāh's continuous mercy; then his anger will subside.

If anger had no blameworthy characteristic other than the fact that all judges without exception agree that when a person is angry he doesn't possess good judgment, then this would be enough reason to avoid it at all costs. Additionally, nobody accepts anger as an excuse to renounce a pronouncement of divorce or emancipation, but some jurists do accept the excuse of someone who is intoxicated in these two situations; so consider that. Mankind is naturally predisposed to anger and patience together, so whoever is angry and patient at the same time, then this is not blameworthy as long as his anger does not lead him to say or do something disliked; however, it is better to leave it completely.

'Abdul-Mālik bin Marwān<sup>2</sup> said, "If a man does not get angry, then he is not patient, because a person only learns real patience at times of anger."

---

<sup>2</sup> He is 'Abdul-Mālik bin Marwān bin al-Ḥakam bin Umayyah al-Khalifah al-Faqih. He died in 86 AH. See *Siyār A'lām an-Nubalā'* (4/246).



## A Warning From Expecting or Hoping for Something from People

On the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd رضي الله عنه, a man said to the Prophet ﷺ:

يا رسول الله علمني شيئاً إذا أنا عملته أحبني الله و أحبني الناس . فقال :  
إزهد في الدنيا يُحبك الله وازهد فيما في أيدي الناس يحبك الناس .

**“O Messenger of Allāh, teach me something that I can do which will cause Allāh to love me and the people to love me.” He said, “Abstain from worldly pleasures and Allāh will love you. Abstain from the things that people possess and the people will love you.”<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should completely refrain, with total renunciation, from desiring the possessions of others, because having hope in something that you are sure of is neediness, so what about hope in

---

<sup>1</sup> The author reported this *ḥadīth* in his book *Al-Aṣl* by way of ‘Amr bin Khālid. Al-Bukhārī said “His *aḥādīth* are not recognized.” Abū Ḥātim said, “His *aḥādīth* are left—they are weak.” Ibn Ḥibbān said, “He used to singularly narrate fabricated *aḥādīth* from trustworthy narrators. It is not permissible to use his narrations as an evidence.”

However, al-Albāni declared him good in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (944), while our Shaykh al-Wādi‘i declared him weak. For further reading, see *Badhl al-Juhud fi Tahqīq Ḥadīthi as-Sūq waz-Zuhud*, with an introduction from our Shaykh al-Wādi‘i.

something in which you have doubt?

The one who said the following poetry was right:

*I will make ways for despair to reach me;  
As long as I rely on you, we shall resign ourselves to an abode of sorrow.  
And I make patience determination by which I attain  
Closeness with people and Allāh's pleasure.  
The soul is content and the world is large;  
A home is encompassing for a couple and for an individual.*

The noblest form of wealth is a person who has no need for others and their possessions, as there is no richness in need, and the person who refrains from that will achieve the pinnacle of wealth. Blessed is the person whose heart is reticent and whose gaze is never affected by desire.

If someone wants to be free, then he should never desire for what he does not have, because desire is neediness and renunciation of desire is wealth. Whoever desires wealth is humbled and subjugated, but whoever is satisfied with what he has is reticent and wealthy.

A wise person refrains from coveting his friends' possessions because it is humiliating, and he renounces his enemies as it is a safe haven and leaving it is destruction. Renouncing material possessions brings about peace and determination, while craving material possessions brings about weariness and humiliation. How many greedy people become tired and humbled and never achieve their goal, and how many content people have peaceful and productive lives and achieve their dreams and more.



## Encouragement to Refrain from Begging & Its Dislike

Zubayr bin al-‘Awwām رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

لَأَنْ يَأْخُذَ أَحَدُكُمْ حَبْلَهُ، فَيَأْتِي بِحُرْمَةِ الْحَطَبِ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ، فَيَبِيعَهَا،  
فَيَكُفَّ اللَّهُ بِهَا وَجْهَهُ، خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ النَّاسَ أَعْطَوْهُ أَوْ مَنَعُوهُ.

**It is better for you to take a rope and carry some wood and sell it than to ask for something from a person who may give to you or refuse.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should avoid begging at all times because resigning oneself to begging leads to degradation, but determination to not beg leads to strength, honor, and a raising of the ranks.

The wise don't ask people for things for them to reject him, and he doesn't demand anything for people to forbid him. He should maintain abstinence and honor and not seek something from behind while neglecting it from the front. It is better to miss out on a need than to seek it from the wrong person, because when you ask someone for help who is not worthy of that, you degrade yourself by two levels

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (1471).



and raise the one asked above the level he deserves.<sup>2</sup>

Sufyān bin ‘Uyaynah<sup>3</sup> said, “Whoever asks a lowly person for help, then you raise him above his level.”

From the worst of catastrophes is to have evil offspring and to beg from people. Feeling anxious about asking someone for help is half of decrepitude, so what about the person who rushes to ask people? Those people who are strong and determined do not place importance on the material world; they abstain from the people’s possessions and they pass over the things offered to them. Asking your brothers in Islām for charity causes restlessness, and receiving charity from others is the opposite of a gift.

The wise person should not even sacrifice his honor for someone who respects his stature and recognizes his importance, so what about someone who doesn’t care to respond to him and doesn’t respect him? The most distant meeting is death, but worse than that is being in need of help from the people but not asking them for anything; even worse than that is to be burdened by begging, because if begging succeeds in removing the need, the humiliation still remains, but if the begging is not successful, then he is subjected to two humiliations: the humiliation of asking and the humiliation of being rejected.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah said in *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā* (1/182): “The slave needs sustenance (*rizq*); if he seeks his sustenance from Allāh, he becomes a dependent slave of Allāh, but if he seeks his sustenance from the creation, then he becomes a slave to that creation and dependent on that creation.”

<sup>3</sup> He is Sufyān bin ‘Uyaynah bin Maymūn, al-‘Allāmah, al-Ḥāfiẓ, Shaykhul-Islām, Abū Muḥammad al-Hilālī al-Kūfī; he died in 198 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/262)

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah said in *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā* (1/182): “Because of this, asking the creation is forbidden and only permitted in times of necessity, and there are many *ahādīth* prohibiting this in the compendiums of *ḥadīth*.”

I say: Our Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādi’i رحمته الله compiled a number of these *ahādīth* to make a short treatise called *Dham al-Mas’alah* (*Dispraise of Begging*) and he taught it to his students in 1422 AH during his treatment in Makkah. He presented a copy of it as a gift to our Shaykh Rabī’ al-Madkhali (may Allāh preserve him), who, upon receiving it, said: “Indeed, for me, this treatise is equivalent to all your books (in benefit) because it represents our *manhaj* and our *dāwah*.” In 1430 AH, I asked Shaykh Rabī’ what he meant by

*Encouragement to Refrain from Begging & Its Dislike*

---

this, so he said: "Integrity, abstinence, and reticence, because wealth is a temptress."



## Encouragement for Moderation

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar: “The Messenger of Allāh took me by the shoulder and said:

كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ أَوْ عَابِرٌ سَبِيلٍ .

“Be in this world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ commanded Ibn ‘Umar in this *ḥadīth* to be like a stranger or a wayfarer, so it is as if he ordered him with moderation and frugality, because the stranger and wayfarer don’t expect to enjoy opulence and luxury during their absence; rather, frugality is more likely.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (6416), and in it Ibn ‘Umar used to say: “In the evening, do not expect to live until the morning, and in the morning, do not expect to live until the evening. Take advantage of your health before times of sickness, and take advantage of your life before your death.”

<sup>2</sup> The believer should be one of two ways: either a stranger living in a strange land—the most important thing to him is to prepare for his return to his own country; or he should be like a traveler who never settles anywhere—he spends night and day moving towards his destination. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ advised Ibn ‘Umar to act as if he is one of these two ways in the material world:

‘Alī bin Muḥammad al-Bassāmi told me this poetry:

*From the best types of sustenance is that which calms*

*The eyes of someone blessed, wealthy or poor.*

*To be happy with a small amount*

*Is better for you than wealth in a luxurious garden.*

One of the greatest and most important gifts that Allāh can give his slaves is contentment. There is nothing more peaceful for the body than being pleased with Allāh’s decree. If there was no other praise-worthy characteristic of contentment except peace and refraining from falling into bad situations, then it would be obligatory for a wise person to hold on to contentment in every situation. Muḥammad bin Munkadir<sup>3</sup> said, “Contentment is wealth that never runs out.”

Muḥammad bin Ishāq al-Wāsiṭi told me this poetry:

*Praise be to Allāh forever and for eternity.*

*The people of greed and shame have been beautified;*

*There is no beauty except in the one satisfied by a small amount.*

*Indeed! Contentment is the garment of strength and religion.*

---

1) The first: That the believer acts as if he is a stranger in this world. He settles in a country that is not his own and that his heart is not tied to; rather, his heart is bound to his own country that he seeks to return to. He is only living in this world while his vessel is prepared for the return journey to his home country.

Whoever is in this situation has no concern other than preparing to return to his country. Therefore, he does not compete with the people of this country in which he is a stranger, and he is not concerned about appearing insignificant and he does not compete to become powerful. He has his place and the people have their place.

2) The second is that the believer acts as if he is a traveler without any place of residence, and he will continue to travel from one place to another until he reaches the end of his journey, which is death. The person who is like this is only concerned with having what is needed for the journey without gathering the material pleasures of this world. (*Jāmi’ al-‘Ulūm wal-Ḥikam* 2/378-379 & 381)

<sup>3</sup> He is Muḥammad bin Munkadir bin ‘Abdillāh bin al-Hudayr al-Madani.

The wise person knows that a person is not degraded by mistakes, and that for someone without contentment, wealth will not remove his need for more; so a person who has self-control will be happier and more satisfied than someone with a lot of money. The wise person takes revenge on greed with contentment, just as he would seek protection from an enemy through punishment, because the thing that prevents the wise person from sustenance and wealth is the same thing that grants the ignorant person sustenance and wealth.

A man from Khuzā'ah said the following poetry:

*I saw the rich and poor dividing two portions,  
So the deceitful one was forbidden and the weak one benefitted.  
So the persistent, worn out one doesn't profit,  
And the comfortable, rested one profits.*

Contentment is in the heart, so whoever's heart is free from want and desire then his hands will also be free from want and desire; but whoever's heart is needy, then his wealth will not benefit him. When someone has contentment, he never becomes bitter and he lives a safe and peaceful life; but when someone does not have contentment, then there is no limit to his desire, effort, and frustration for the things that he feels he has missed out on.



## The Importance of Having *Tawakkul* in the One Who Provides Sustenance

‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr bin al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه said: “I heard the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم say:

قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ الْمَقَادِيرَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِخَمْسِمِائَةِ سَنَةٍ.

“Allāh wrote the pre-decree 500 years before he created the heavens and the Earth.”<sup>1</sup>

The wise person must have *tawakkul* (trust) in the One who is responsible for providing sustenance, as *tawakkul* is the structure of faith, the comrade of *tawhīd*, and it is the cause that leads to the negation of poverty and the presence of peace. One with a healthy heart does not have *tawakkul* in Allāh, the Almighty, the Venerable, until Allāh and that which He possesses of guardianship is more trusted to him than anything else, and when one has *tawakkul*, Allāh will make him independent from the people and bestow on him sustenance from countless sources.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣḥ*; however, “500 years” was a mistake—the correct wording is “fifty-thousand years” as reported by Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (6138), Imām Aḥmad (2/169), and Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (2653).

Abud-Dardā' said, "Rizq seeks the slave just as he seeks it."

'Abdul-'Azīz bin Sulaymān al-Abrash told me the following poetry:

*If there was inside a huge immovable rock  
Shaped by Allāh in the middle of the ocean  
A rizq for a slave, it would break open,  
And everything inside it would drift to him.  
Or if its route was below the seven earths,  
Allāh would make it easy for it to ascend  
Until he attains what is recorded for him in the Lawh.  
So either it will come to him or he will go to it.*

The wise person knows that the powerless attains what he needs through a combination of prudence and blessing, so the wise person does not feel upset about the things he cannot obtain nor for the things that he will certainly obtain, because the things of this world come to a person without any difficulty. Someone forbidden from something will not attain it even if he seeks it, and the one who is bestowed a thing will attain it even if sitting still.

*Tawakkul* is cutting the heart off from connections by rejecting the creation and connecting himself with neediness for the Changer of Situations. It is possible that a man could be rich and prosperous and still be sincere in his *tawakkul*, if he is the same whether he has or has not. When he is prosperous, he is grateful, and when he has little, he is satisfied. It is also possible that a person may not possess a thing and yet he does not have *tawakkul*, if it is more beloved to him to be rich than to be poor, and he is not satisfied when he is poor and he is not grateful when he is rich.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The reality of *tawakkul* is the reliance of the heart upon Allāh alone while still making use of the means. As for the one who does not make use of the means and yet claims he has *tawakkul*, then he is delusional. Like the one who has *tawakkul* that he will be blessed with a child but refrains from sexual relations, or the one who does not till the land or sow

Al-Kurayzi told me the following poetry:

*If the dunyā was obtained by intellect  
And excellent reasoning, I would have attained the highest level;  
However, rizq is a portion and a division  
Of the owner's wealth, and not obtained by tricks from the one who seeks  
it.*

---

seeds yet has *tawakkul* that there will be a harvest, or the one who doesn't eat or drink but has *tawakkul* that he will be nourished. For further reading see: *Al-Fawā'id* (p. 225) and *Ar-Rūḥ* (p. 254), both by Ibn al-Qayyim.





## Encouragement to Remain Accepting & Patient in Times of Adversity

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

أَوَّلُ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْقَلَمَ ثُمَّ أَمَرَهُ فَكَتَبَ مَا يَكُونُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.

**The first thing that Allāh created was the pen, then He ordered it to write everything that will happen until the Day of Resurrection.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should know with certainty that everything comes to an end. There are things that will inevitably happen and there are things that will not happen, and the creation has no means to change it. So if times become difficult, then you must wrap yourself with an *izār* (a lower garment) that has two ends: patience and acceptance, in order to receive the full blessing for that action. How often did it seem like the whole world had been afflicted with difficulty only to be followed by ease in less than a moment?

Al-Muntaṣr bin Bilāl al-Anṣāri told me the following poetry:

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim in *As-Sunnah* (108), Abū Ya’lā (2329), al-Bayhaqī in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā* (9/3), and others. Al-Albāni declared it *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) in *As-Ṣaḥīḥah* (133).

*It could be that Allāh will bring joy  
To him every day of his life,  
Or it could be that it does not prevail,  
Or you may see him happy with the difficulty that besets him.  
But if the difficulty worsens, then expect ease,  
Because Allāh has decreed that hardship will be followed by ease.*

The wise person should try to stay patient when a difficulty arises, because if he is able, then his patience will raise him to the level of acceptance and contentment, and if a man was not blessed with patience, he should strive to learn patience as it is the first step toward contentment and happiness. If patience was a person, he would be noble and generous, as patience is the source of goodness and the foundation of piety. Patience is a system of forbearance, a support for intellect, propagation of goodness, and a way for those who have lost their way.

The first level is concern, then caution, then certainty, then tolerance, then patience, and then contentment, which is the final level.

Maymūn bin Mahrān<sup>2</sup> said, "The slave will not obtain anything of the enormous amount of good from the Prophet or anyone else without patience."

Al-Ghalābi recited the following poetry:

*Indeed, I quickly saw the good in patience,  
And it is sufficient to say that with patience you attain rewards.  
You must obey Allāh in every situation,  
Because if you do, you will receive reward.*

---

<sup>2</sup> He is Maymūn bin Mahrān, the exemplary Imām, Abū Ayyūb ad-Diqqi, scholar of the people of Algeria; he died in 117 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Huffāz* 1/98)

Patience is of three types: patience to keep away from sins, patience upon obedience, and patience in the face of difficulties. The best of these is patience to keep away from sins.

The wise person conducts himself with surety in these three situations by being patient and traversing the levels that we mentioned previously until he raises himself to the level of contentment with Allāh—the Almighty and Venerable—in times of hardship and ease. I ask Allāh to deliver me to that level by His grace.



## Encouragement to Pardon Those Who Harm You

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reported that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said:

يا رسولَ الله إن لي قرابة أصلهم ويقطعونني، وأُحسن إليهم ويسيئون إليّ،  
وأحلم عنهم ويجهلون عليّ! فقال: لَئِن كَانَ كَمَا تَقُولُ فَكَأَنَّمَا تَسْفُهُمْ  
الْمَلَأَ وَلَا يَزَالُ مَعَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ظَهِيرٌ مَا زِلْتَ عَلَيَّ ذَلِكَ.

**“I have relatives with whom I try to maintain good relations, but they sever relations with me; whom I treat kindly, but they treat me badly; with whom I am forbearing, but they are ignorant with me.” He ﷺ replied, “If you are as you say, then it is as though you are feeding them hot ashes, and Allāh will not cease to support you against them for as long as you do so.”<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should mentally prepare themselves to forgive people and not seek requital against mistreatment and abuse, as there is nothing better for causing the cessation of mistreatment than benef-

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Muslim (2558).

icence, and there is nothing better for provoking more mistreatment than to react with similar behavior.

Maṣṣūr bin Muḥammad al-Kurayzi recited the following poetry to me:

*I will enjoin upon myself to forgive every wrongdoer,  
Even if they commit many crimes against me,  
Because people are only one of three types:  
Someone honorable, someone treated honorably, and someone vengeful.  
As for the one above me, I know his virtue,  
And so I follow him in the truth and the truth follows.  
As for the one beneath me, he says my honor is safe  
From his response, even if people criticize.  
As for the one like me, if he made a mistake,  
I would treat him kindly; forbearance dictates the actions of the noble.*

Whoever wants abundant reward and pure devotion and expects to be mentioned favorably, then they should tolerate the weight of destruction and swallow the bitterness of opposing one's desires by using the Sunnah that we mentioned of maintaining relations in response to their severance: generosity in response to miserliness; gentleness in response to roughness; and forgiveness in response to oppression, because these are the best manners of the people of heaven and earth.

The wise person should maintain forgiveness and pardon even when mistreatment occurs from all the world, hoping for Allāh's forgiveness for his own misdeeds that he perpetrated throughout his life, because those who are forgiving are rewarded and those who choose to punish, even if they achieve their revenge, end in regret.

ʿAlī bin Muḥammad al-Bassāmi told me the following poetry:

*If you never overlook your brother's mistakes,*

*Then tomorrow you will not overlook my mistakes;*

*And how can the stranger expect your help*

*If your goodness is too weak to help your friend?*

The people who are the freest from resentment and malice are those who are better than to resort to revenge. The best of the people are those who block ignorance with forbearance, and what is better than someone who meets mistreatment with beneficence? As for meeting good with good, then this is just equality of manners that even animals may sometimes do. If there was no benefit to forgiveness and restraint from treating people badly other than self-peace and mild-temperedness, the wise person would not waste his time with the manners of beasts by meeting mistreatment with mistreatment. Whoever responds to bad actions with bad actions is bad, even if he was not the first perpetrator.



## Description of the Noble & the Blameworthy

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, the Prophet ﷺ was asked:

أَيُّ النَّاسِ أَكْرَمُ قَالَ أَكْرَمُهُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاهُمْ. قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَن هَذَا نَسْأَلُكَ.  
قَالَ فَعَنْ مَعَادِنِ الْعَرَبِ تَسْأَلُونِي؟ قَالُوا نَعَمْ. قَالَ فَخِيَارُكُمْ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ  
خِيَارُكُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ إِذَا فَقَهُوا.

“Who is the most honorable amongst mankind?” He ﷺ said, “The most honorable of them is one who is the most pious of them.” They said, “We are not asking about this.” He said, “Are you then asking me about the Arab tribes?” They said, “Yes.” He said, “The best of them before Islām are the best of them in Islām, if they understand it.”<sup>1</sup>

The most honorable of people is the one who fears Allāh, and the honorable person is the pious person (someone who has *taqwā*).

*Taqwā* is determination to perform the obligations and keep away from the prohibitions. Hence, if someone perfects these two charac-

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (3383) and Muslim (2378).

teristics, then he is pious and deserves the description of honorable, and whoever declines to employ these two traits, or one of them, or one of their branches, then he has reduced his honor by the same amount.

Zayd bin Thābit رضي الله عنه said, “There are three traits only found in someone who is honorable: nice appearance, tolerance for mistakes, and patience.”

Ibn Zinji al-Baghdādi recited the following poetry:

*I saw the truth that the honorable knows  
For his friend and the despicable person denies  
That if a young man is good and honorable,  
Then all his actions are good and honorable.*

The honorable person is not malicious, envious, oppressive, negligent, heedless, insolent, arrogant, dishonest, or impatient, nor does he break off relationships, harm his brothers, or neglect his commitments. The honorable person is generous in his friendship: he gives even when not asked and protects others even if they are not in fear; he abstains from power and maintains the ties of kinship.

The honorable person is gentle if compassion is needed, while the lowly person is harsh even when treated with kindness. The honorable person venerates the honorable but does not denigrate the lowly, harm the wise, make fun of the foolish, or associate with the wicked. His brothers are important to him, and if he knows that they want something, he spends freely on them. If a person is known for friendship and love, then he never turns to the anxiety of enmity, and if he gives him brotherhood, he will never break that for anything.

The honorable person has a praiseworthy effect in this life and pleasing deeds in the afterlife. He is loved by everybody, near and far, by those who are embittered and those who are content. Enemies and critics distance themselves from him, and the wise and honorable



accompany him.

I did not see anything that diminishes honor more than poverty, whether it is poverty of the heart or of possessions.

Al-Muntaṣr bin Bilāl al-Anṣārī recited the following poetry:

*Upon your life! Wealth will indeed make a young man  
Forgetful, and poverty will degrade a man;  
And nothing raises a lowly person like wealth,  
And nothing can lower a noble soul like poverty.*



## A Warning from Accepting the Word of a Slanderer

Abū Wā'il reported on the authority of Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه that a man carried tales, so he said:

سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ نَمَّامٌ.

**I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: “The tale-carrier shall not enter Paradise.”**

All of mankind must keep away from the causes that lead to hatred and enmity between people and divide their groups and split their unity. The wise person does not plunge into thoughts of the things mentioned here and does not accept the slanderer's slander nor his tricks, due to his knowledge of the slanderer's punishment in the Hereafter.

Al-Kurayzi recited the following poetry:

*Whoever carries tales between the people, his scorpions are never safe*

*Upon a friend and his vipers are never safe,*

*Like a traveler traveling by night who nobody knows*

*Where he came from or where he is going.*

*Woe to the agreement from him, how he violates it;*

*Woe to the love from him, how it dwindles.*

The wise person must overlook the claims of a slanderer and refrain from that which is not befitting of the wise while also refraining from thoughts that betray intelligence. Whoever slanders a person says more about himself than he says of the person he slanders.

Ḥammād bin Salamah<sup>1</sup> said, “A man offered to sell his slave to another man; [the slave] said, ‘You will be safe from any tale-carrying from me.’ So he bought him based on that. So the slave went to his mistress and said to her, ‘Your husband does not love you—he buys female servants and he marries them; do you want him to love and appreciate you?’ She said, ‘Yes!’ So he said, ‘Take a razor and cut some hairs from underneath his beard and burn them like incense for him.’ Then he went to the man and said, ‘Your wife is cheating on you and plans to murder you. Do you want me to prove it to you?’ He said, ‘Yes!’ The slave then said, ‘Then tonight pretend to be asleep!’ So he pretended to sleep and she approached him with a razorblade to cut the hair from his beard, so he grabbed her and killed her. Then, her family seized him and killed him.”

This and other examples are the fruits of tale-carrying, because it tears away the veil, reveals secrets, breeds rancor and spite, removes love, renews enmities, divides communities, awakens resentment, and increases aversion. Therefore, anyone who hears defaming information about a brother should reprimand him if it is true, accept his excuse, and refrain from overly rebuking him, and he should also condition himself to be appreciative during times of plenty, patient

---

<sup>1</sup> He is Ḥammād bin Salamah bin Dīnār, the Imām and memorizer, scholar of Islām, Abū Salamah ad-Daba‘i al-Baṣri; he was a linguist and a scholar of *ḥadīth*. Imām Aḥmad said, “If you meet a man who learned from Ḥammād bin Salamah, then pay attention to him.” He died in 167 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, 1/202)

during times of loss, and censure when he is wronged.<sup>2</sup>

‘Alī bin Muḥammad al-Bassāmi recited the following verses:

*I censure my brothers and I stay with them  
After their reprimand. I don't cut them off,  
And I forgive a person when he makes mistakes  
If he approaches them willingly and obedient.  
Censure and blame from a tolerant person worries me,  
But the ignorance of the ignorant doesn't concern me.*

---

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ said in *Fath al-Bāri* (10/581): “Al-Ghazālī summarized it well when he said, ‘Whoever hears *namimah* (tale-carrying) must not believe it and must not accept anything the tale-carrier says, nor should he seek to verify what he was told. He should forbid the person from tale-carrying and denounce his act, and he should be angry if he does not desist from the tale-carrying. He should also not allow himself to respond to the tale-carrier by carrying tales of him.’”

“An-Nawawī said, ‘This is only if there is not a legitimate benefit from passing on this information; otherwise, it is preferred or could even be obligatory, such as if a person finds out that someone wants to harm someone else, so he warns him or the leader or someone in authority of that, then that is permitted.’”

“Al-Ghazālī also said, ‘The basis of *namimah* is to inform someone of what was said about them. Its guiding principle is that it involves the exposing of something the person would not want exposed, irrespective of whether what is said is disliked or to whom it is said; irrespective of whether it was speech or an action, and irrespective of whether it was a vice or defect; even if someone knows a person hides their money and they spread that information, then that is *namimah*.’”

“There is a difference of opinion whether *namimah* and *ghibah* (backbiting) are two separate concepts or the same. The stronger opinion is that they are different but they share certain general and specific aspects. That is because *namimah* is the action of sharing information concerning a person with someone else, with bad intent, that he would dislike, whether that is done with his knowledge or not. *Ghibah* is speaking about someone in their absence in a way that they would dislike. Hence, *namimah* differs from *ghibah* in respect to the bad intention of the tale-carrier, as that is not a requirement for *ghibah*, and *ghibah* differs from *namimah* in that it is done in the person's absence. The two concepts are the same in all other aspects other than the two mentioned. There are those from the scholars who stipulate the absence of the person being backbitten for something to be deemed *ghibah*.’”



## The Preference for Accepting a Person's Excuse & Apology

On the authority of Jawdān, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

مَنْ اعْتَذَرَ إِلَىٰ أَخِيهِ فَلَمْ يَقْبَلْ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِثْلُ خَطِيئَةِ صَاحِبِ مَكْسٍ.

**Whoever apologizes to his brother and he does not accept it, then he has made the same mistake as a tax collector.<sup>1</sup>**

If someone apologizes for a past offense or a shortcoming, the wise person should accept his apology and treat him as if he had never done anything wrong, because if someone apologizes and he does not accept, then I fear that he may not come to the Prophet ﷺ at the Ḥawḍ (pool or lake in Jannah).<sup>2</sup> And if a person falls short in his conduct towards his brother, he should apologize for his shortcomings to his brother.

Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh bin Zinji al-Baghdādi recited the following

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣḥ*, and the *ḥadīth* is weak.

<sup>2</sup> The author is referring to the *ḥadīth* reported by aṭ-Ṭabarāni in *Al-Awsaṭ* (1/406, #1033): “Whoever apologizes to another and he does not accept, then he will not come to me at the Ḥawḍ.” However, the *ḥadīth* is weak.

poetry to me:

*If one day a friend apologizes to you  
For a shortcoming, the excuse of a brother is accepted;  
So spare him from your harshness and forgive him,  
Because tolerance is a quality of every noble man.*

A person should not make up excuses for someone who does not want to accept an apology, and he should not repeatedly apologize to a brother, because this just leads to suspicion. In fact, I prefer that apologies are kept to a minimum in all situations, as I know that excuses often become lies. Rarely have I seen someone apologize without mixing his apology with lies.

When a person apologizes, he deserves forgiveness, because offering an apology for a mistake requires humility, which necessitates the calming of angry feelings. If a person is sincere in his apology, he will be humble in both his speech and actions.

Apologies remove sadness and depression, and prevent enmity and hatred. A small number of apologies encompass a great number of misdemeanors and bad deeds; however, a large number of apologies leads to suspicion. Even if there was no benefit to apologizing other than the fact that it minimizes arrogance, that should be enough for the wise person to dutifully apologize every time he makes a mistake.

'Abdur-Raḥmān bin 'Anbasah bin Sa'īd traveled to Ma'n bin Zā'idah in Yemen and the two disliked each other. When [Ma'n] saw him, he said, "O 'Abdur-Raḥmān, with which face have you come to me? And what good are you expecting from me?" He said, "May Allāh rectify the leader. Listen to me while I recite to you two verses of poetry told to me by 'Abdul-'Azīz bin Marwān." He said, "And what are they?" So he recited the following poetry:

*If there was any living thing upon this earth whose deeds  
Were like yours or for an action from you, "Draw close,"*

*I would have said to him, but others make excuses*

*For those that seek favor and depart.*

So he said, "Indeed, I will not hold you to account for the past and I will not rebuke you for what remains."



## Encouragement for Keeping Secrets

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

اسْتَعِينُوا عَلَى الْحَوَائِجِ بِكَيْتْمَانِ السِّرِّ فَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ نِعْمَةٍ حَاسِدًا.

**Seek protection for your possessions by keeping secrets, because for every blessing there is an envier.<sup>1</sup>**

Whoever seeks to traverse the way of the people of wisdom and intelligence should keep his inner thoughts secret; he should not declare that which he conceals to anyone, whether he deems them trustworthy or untrustworthy, because eventually at some point in time your relationship with one another may change and then he will reveal that which he used to keep secret to spite the other person.

‘Amr bin al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه said, “I am surprised by a man who tries to flee from destiny; and by a man who sees faults in his brother while ignoring his own faults; and by a man who mentions the spite of his brother while forgetting the spite within his own self and never

---

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* is rated *ḥasan* (good); see its supporting narrations in *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* (1453).



feeling remorse for anything. I never regret anything, because I never told my secrets to anyone so I would not have to be upset with him for spreading my secrets; and how could I blame him when I am the one who burdened him with it?”

‘Abdul-‘Azīz bin Salmān told me the following poetry:

*A person's chest becomes tight because of the secrets he keeps,  
So he casts them into my chest and my chest is tighter.  
So who will blame me for revealing his secret  
When he revealed it first, so the secret keeper is foolish.*

A person who guards his secrets will find that it improves how he handles his affairs, because it will hide his faults when he makes mistakes. The person who possesses self-control and determination keeps his secrets locked in his heart.

A secret is a trust and spreading it is treachery. The heart is the vault of secrets. Some hearts become tight and crowded when a secret is placed within it, and some widen to encompass any secret to be stored there.

Al-Kurayzi recited:

*Make a home in your heart for your secrets  
Where your tongue cannot enter.  
If the tongue is able to reach  
What affairs the heart hides,  
You will find your secret with your friend and  
Spread around everyone, including enemies.*

Being too relaxed with secrets is a weakness, and if someone hides something from his enemy, he does not necessarily need to reveal it to his friend. Those who have understanding and are observant are

sufficed by what they have learned from experience, and they know who will keep a secret hidden and not spread it, because a secret is only a secret if it is not spread.



## Encouragement to Consult Others During Difficult Times

On the authority of Abū Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

المُسْتَشَارُ مُؤْتَمَنٌ.

**The one who is consulted is entrusted.<sup>1</sup>**

The person who has a secret, as we previously described, should tighten his chest, but if he feels he must share his secret, he should do so by consulting someone who is religious, intelligent, and beloved, and he should never seek advice from someone who does not possess these three characteristics. If he is not religious, he will betray him; if he is not intelligent, then he will make a mistake regarding the correct course; and if he is not loved, then he may not give him sincere advice.

Az-Zinji told me this poetry:

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣl*. The chain of narration is weak due to one of its narrators, but it is rated *ḥasan* (good) due to its supporting narrations from Abū Hurayrah, and it is reported by Abū Dāwūd (5128) and Ibn Mājah (3745).

*O possessor of knowledge, ask about what you don't know;*

*Questions are a cure for stammering and babbling.*

*Don't consult those for whom you fear ruin,*

*Nor the foolish and those unaware.*

*Know that if you consult some of them,*

*You have made them an overseer for something important.*

*If you are seeking advice or are concerned about an affair,*

*Then be suspicious and cautious of the people you choose.*

*Look with your eyes that which can be seen,*

*And consider with your heart that which cannot be seen.*

The person consulted is entrusted, but his opinion is not guaranteed. He who consults guards himself from error and has the choice to accept the advisor's opinion or refuse it. The wise person who follows the path of the knowledgeable should know that consultation requires revealing a person's secrets, so he should never consult anyone other than one who is intelligent, sincere, beloved, and pious. The advisor's guidance that is sought is a blessing, and consultation itself is a blessing when it is with the type of person we described previously.

If a people are consulted, then the wise person should be the last person to offer his advice because he is the most able for intelligent thought, the furthest from mistakes, the closest to prudence, and the safest from lapse.

Whoever seeks consultation, then let him exhaust all effort to not do so from someone who is weak or feeble-minded, just like the determined person doesn't seek help from the lazy person. In consultation, there is guidance, and someone who seeks consultation doesn't lack intelligence, and whoever doesn't seek consultation isn't free from sin. And those who consult an advisor don't regret it.

Al-Wāsiṭi told me this poetry:

*Worry that doesn't incite a person to act  
Is a sickness of the heart and body.  
The reliability of a sensible man  
Is when confronting the difficulties of sadness.  
If his means of subsistence is blocked,  
Then clear-sightedness is the best of supporters;  
And if his plans become derailed,  
He seeks guidance by consulting his brothers.*

One of the traits of a wise person is that when the answer escapes them, they consult a sincere, wise person who possesses good judgment, then they follow him and acknowledge the truth and do not persist upon falsehood; rather, they accept the truth from whoever brings it and they do not look down on an intelligent opinion even if brought by a lowly person, because a valuable pearl is not marred by the lack of nobility of the pearl diver who finds it. Then let him perform *istikhārah* (seeking Allāh's guidance) and continue upon what he was advised.



## Encouragement to Advise Muslims

On the authority of Tamīm ad-Dāri رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ. قُلْنَا: لِمَنْ؟ قَالَ: لِلَّهِ، وَلِكِتَابِهِ، وَلِرَسُولِهِ، وَلِأَيِّمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ  
وَعَامَّتِهِمْ.

“The religion is *naṣīḥah* (advice, sincerity).” We said, “To whom?” He ﷺ said, “To Allāh, His Book, His Messenger, the Muslim leaders, and the Muslims in general.”<sup>1</sup>

The wise person should maintain his sincerity and advice for the Muslims, and desist from disloyalty towards them by concealing his thoughts, speech, and actions. Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ used to stipulate upon his Companions when they gave him the pledge of allegiance to advise all Muslims along with performing the prayer and paying *zakāh*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Muslim (55).

<sup>2</sup> As is reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (57) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (56) from the *ḥadīth* of Jābir bin ‘Abdillāh رضي الله عنه, he said: “I gave the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ the pledge of allegiance that I would perform the prayer, pay *zakāh*, and give advice to every Muslim.”

‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام said, “Do not be disloyal, as it is a lowly trait; and show your sincere affection for your brother by advising him, whether it be for something good or bad, and be with him wherever he goes.”

Al-Kurayzi told me this poetry:

*Say to the advisor who bestows the gift of his advice  
Secretly to us and places upon himself a heavy obligation:  
Advice has no delineation for you to know it;  
Good advice is both strange and familiar  
If the outcome is made clear for us  
For us is a sermon from him and a reprimand  
If the character of good advice was clear  
We would not experience sorrow  
But rather it has many ways.  
Some work for some, be they known or not.  
Mankind possesses guidance at different levels  
Advice is given, rejected, and discontinued.*

*Naṣīḥah* is obligatory upon every Muslim, as mentioned previously; however, it should only be done in private, because whoever counsels his brother publicly will disgrace him, and whoever counsels his brother in private will honor him. It is better for a Muslim to strive to beautify and honor his brother than to disgrace and embarrass him.

Sufyān<sup>3</sup> said, “I said to Mis’ar,<sup>4</sup> ‘Would you like a man to inform

---

<sup>3</sup> He is Sufyān bin ‘Uyaynah. His biography preceded (p. 80).

<sup>4</sup> He is Mis’ar bin Kidām bin Ṭuhār bin ‘Ubaydah bin al-Ḥārith, the steadfast Imām and scholar of Iraq, Abū Salamah al-Hilālī al-Kūfī. He died in 155 AH. (*Siyār A’lām an-Nubalā’* 7/163)

you of all your faults?’ He said, ‘As for a man who comes to me and rebukes me with them, then no; but if he comes advising me, then yes.’”

Ibn al-Mubārak<sup>5</sup> said, “It used to be that when a man saw something he disliked from his brother, he would advise him privately, and he would be rewarded for his advice and for doing it in private. As for today, if a man sees something he dislikes, he angers his brother and destroys his privacy.”

Ibn Zinji al-Baghdādi told me this poetry:

*How many enemies announce to you their advice  
Publicly, and cheating is under the ribs;  
How many friends and advisors did you betray  
By not following their guidance?  
Every affair is judged by its final outcome,  
And then the secrets and common knowledge will be apparent.*

---

<sup>5</sup> He is ‘Abdullāh bin Mubārak bin Wādiḥ, the Imām, memorizer, scholar of Islām, pride of the *mujāhidīn*, and example to the pious, Abū ‘Abdir-Raḥmān al-Ḥanzali al-Marūzi at-Turki; author of many beneficial works and distant travels. He died in 181 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/274)





## Reproach for Boycotting Muslims

On the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

لا تباغضوا، ولا تحاسدوا ولا تدابروا، ولا تقاطعوا، وكونوا عباد الله إخواناً، ولا يحل لمسلم أن يهجر أخاه فوق ثلاث.

**Do not harbor grudges against one another, nor jealousy; do not show your backs to one another, and do not have enmity for one another. O slaves of Allāh, be brothers. It is not lawful for a Muslim to avoid speaking with his brother beyond three days.<sup>1</sup>**

It is not permissible for Muslims to harbor grudges, nor to be jealous, nor to show their backs to each other, and it is obligatory upon them to be brothers as Allāh and His Messenger have ordered. If one of them is in pain, then the other feels his pain, and if he is happy, then the other is happy for him. Cheating and corruption is negated by submission to Allāh with satisfaction with all that Allāh has decreed to be law.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (6065) and Muslim (2559).

The Muslims should not boycott one another due to a mistake; rather, they should treat one another with kindness, sympathy, compassion, and by not boycotting.

‘Amr bin Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh an-Nasawi told me the following poetry:

*Being boycotted by those who possess dignity causes me great sorrow;*

*I consider turning away from my friend like death.*

*I can tolerate an old camel with sores*

*At times of misfortune, but not being abandoned.*

There are three things that lead to boycotting between the Muslims:

1) It is due to a mistake or shortcoming of his brother—and everyone has shortcomings—and he doesn't overlook it or look for other good characteristics.

2) Or it is due to lies from a slanderer that change his feelings towards his brother, and he doesn't question his lies nor does he seek an excuse from his brother.

3) Or it is due to one becoming bored of the other, because boredom can lead to a breaking off of relationships, and there is no friend for someone who is boring.

Ibn Shubramah had a brother who had been shunning him, so he wrote to him the following poetry:

*Neither of us needs his brother in his life,*

*But if we die, we will need each other even less.*

It is not permissible for a Muslim to boycott his brother for more than three days, so whoever does this has committed what the Prophet ﷺ forbade. The best of them is the one who greets the other first with, “*As-salāmu ‘alaykum,*” and the first to give *salām* will be the first to enter Jannah. Whoever shuns his brother for a whole year, then it is

like he shed his blood, and whoever dies while shunning their brother will enter the Hellfire unless Allāh blesses him with His forgiveness and mercy. The limit that a Muslim is allowed to boycott his brother is three days.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> This is if the boycotting is due to worldly affairs and personal reasons, but in terms of the people of *bid'ah* (innovation), then the boycotting lasts until they repent. Because of this, Imām an-Nawawi said in his explanation of *ḥadīth* #5026 in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (13/107): “This *ḥadīth* contains a proof for boycotting the people of innovation and sin and those who knowingly abandon the Sunnah, and that it is permissible to always boycott people such as this. The prohibition for boycotting someone more than three days is based on those who boycott someone for personal reasons and worldly affairs, but as for the people of innovation and their likes, then they should always be boycotted. This is one of the *ahādīth* that support this, as well as other *ahādīth*, such as the *ḥadīth* narrated by Ka'b bin Mālik and others.”

Boycotting has standards and principles that must be adhered to. For further benefit, see *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* by Ibn Taymiyyah (28/213 & 206) and *Zād al-Ma'ād* by Ibn al-Qayyim (3/20).



## Encouragement to be Tolerant in the Face of Harm

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudri رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

لا حليم إلا ذو عثرةٍ ولا حكيم إلا ذو تجربةٍ.

**Only those who have experienced failure can be tolerant and only those with experience can be wise.<sup>1</sup>**

This *ḥadīth* is an example of what is mentioned in the book *Fuṣūl as-Sunan*, that the Arabs connect a word to something due to it being close to complete and negate a word from something due to it lacking completeness. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ negated the word “tolerant” from anyone who has not experienced failure or disappointment due to a lack of completeness, because it is uncommon that a person who has never experienced disappointment is tolerant.

The tolerant person has a great nature, high stature, praiseworthy character, and satisfactory action.

Tolerance is a word used to describe the ability to keep oneself from

---

<sup>1</sup> The author reported this *ḥadīth* in *Al-Aṣl* and the *ḥadīth* is weak.

doing something that is prohibited when exposed to something he hates. Tolerance involves knowledge, patience, perseverance, and determination. There is nothing better than joining forgiveness with capability. And tolerance is the most beautiful form of revenge.

Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh bin Zinji al-Baghdādi told me this poetry:

*Do you not see that tolerance is beautifying and empowering  
For the one who possesses it, and ignorance is a disgrace for a person.  
So bury wickedness with goodness and calm  
The sadness, because goodness buries evil.*

An example of the importance of the word “tolerance” and its lofty status is that Allāh—the Venerable and Most High—named himself with this word and then only described Ibrāhīm and Ismā‘il in the Qur’ān with the quality of tolerance, when He said:

﴿ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴾

**Indeed Ibrāhīm was compassionate and tolerant.**

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:114]

And He said:

﴿ فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ ﴾

**So we gave him glad tidings of a patient boy.**

[Sūrah aṣ-Ṣāffāt 37:101]

If tolerance had no praiseworthy qualities other than that it keeps one from earning sins and falling into areas of fault, then it would be obligatory for a wise person to be tolerant and patient whenever he finds a reason to. Tolerance is either from a person’s natural temperament or it is learned from practice, or both.

Abud-Dardā' رضي الله عنه said, “Knowledge is only attained through learning and tolerance is only attained through forbearance. Whoever aspires

to attain good gives it, and whoever seeks to guard themselves from evil is protected.”

Al-Kurayzi told me this poetry:

*If I meet ignorance with similar action,  
Then I am no different from him if I debate him;  
But if the thoughtless one engages me with ignorance,  
Then with tolerance I will overcome him.*

The wise person is patient and tolerant with people, and if that becomes difficult, he pretends to be patient, because that will raise him to the level of tolerance.

Tolerance begins with understanding, then resolve, then determination, then restraint, then patience, then satisfaction, then silence and forbearance. What is better than doing good for someone who is offensive? As for doing good for someone who does good for you or being tolerant of someone who doesn't cause you any harm, then this is neither beneficence nor tolerance.

Tolerance is of two types:

1) The first is when Allāh tests his slave with an affliction and the wise person is patient and restrains himself with forbearance from doing something that does not befit a wise person.

2) The second is when a person is exposed to that which he dislikes from the creation, so whoever makes a habit of tolerance, then they don't need to force themselves to be patient.



## Encouragement for Forbearance & the Dislike for Being Hasty

On the authority of Abud-Dardā' رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

مَنْ أُعْطِيَ حَظَّهُ مِنَ الرَّفْقِ فَقَدْ أُعْطِيَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَنْ مُنِعَ حَظَّهُ مِنَ الرَّفْقِ  
مُنِعَ حَظَّهُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ.

**Whoever is given a portion of forbearance is given a portion of goodness, and whoever is prevented from his portion of forbearance is prevented from his portion of goodness.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should be kind and forbearing in every situation and not be hasty and impetuous, because Allāh loves forbearance in all things. Whoever is prevented from forbearance is prevented from goodness, and whoever is given forbearance is given goodness. A person can hardly achieve his goal without balancing forbearance and hastiness.

Manṣūr bin Muḥammad al-Kurayzi said the following poetry:

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Asl*.

*Forbearance is the most reliable thing you can follow;*

*Ignorance is the most ominous thing with which a man can proceed.*

*The one who has determination proceeds from praise to success;*

*Whoever has forbearance does not gather mistakes.*

The wise person should be forbearing at all times and fair in all situations, because desiring something too much is bad, just as falling short in what is required is weakness, and what can't be solved by forbearance and kindness cannot be solved by harshness. There is no better guide than forbearance and nothing more reliable than wisdom. From forbearance comes caution, and from caution you expect reliability; but from not being forbearing comes clumsiness, and from clumsiness arises the fear of mistakes.

Al-Abrash told me these verses of poetry:

*You must face moderation and traverse its path;*

*In injustice is destruction and in moderation is a way.*

*If you do not know for yourself its importance,*

*Bear its weight; that which you cannot bear will destroy you.*

Forbearance is not often preceded, just as hastiness is not often overtaken. Likewise, whoever is quiet doesn't often experience regret, and whoever speaks too much isn't often spared from making mistakes. The hasty person speaks before he knows, responds before he is asked, praises something before he tries it, disparages after he praises, is determined before he has considered, and advances before he is determined; and the hasty person is accompanied by regret and detached from peace. The Arabs used to call hastiness "the mother of regret."

Some of the people of knowledge told me this poetry:

*Weakness is a disadvantage, and what harm does caution contain.*



*The highest level of caution is not trusting people.*

*Do not neglect caution in affairs of which you are wary,*

*So if you are made safe, then where is the harm in caution?*

Hastiness comes from impetuosity, and you find that a hasty person still isn't praised when his impetuosity pays off, but he is dispraised when it fails. The hasty person doesn't move forward except that he strays from the objective and deviates from what is important, urgently searching for something tougher, rougher, a path harder to find, and he makes decisions like a fool.

Hastiness is the agent of regret. No one acts hastily except that they earn regret and ridicule, because mistakes come from hastiness. Proceeding to perform an action after deliberation is more prudent than stopping yourself after rushing into action. The hasty person is never the subject of praise, but the wise person knows that failing to act is weakness, so he avoids both extremes and makes his path in between the two.



## Encouragement to Learn Etiquette & Eloquence

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيَانِ لَسِحْرًا.

**Indeed, eloquence is a form of magic.**

He ﷺ compared eloquence to magic in this *ḥadīth* because the magician causes the hearts of those who watch his magic and tricks to be entranced by him, and similarly, a person who can speak eloquently can cause people to become amazed and entranced by the poetry of his words, and thus their souls crave to be near him and their eyes long to gaze upon him.

Al-Kurayzi told me the poetry:

*Honor the person of etiquette, honor the person of fine heritage;*

*Indeed, determination is only found in those of manners and heritage.*

*People are of two types: those who have intellect and those with etiquette,*

*Like white silver and gold.*

*Everyone else from mankind is lowly;  
They were supporters or they were Arab.*

Eloquence is the best garment a man can adorn, and etiquette is a companion during times of solitude, amiability during scarcity, status in gatherings, an increase of wisdom, and a sign of excellent manners. Whoever learns etiquette in his youth will benefit from it in his maturity, because a date tree is more likely to bear fruit if pollinated when young. A person who speaks with eloquence is not considered the same by the people of knowledge and wisdom as a person who speaks incorrectly.

Muḥammad bin ‘Abdillāh al-Baghdādi told me the poetry:

*O seeker of glory by way of his family:  
Everyone has a mother and a father;  
Do you think they are made of silver  
Or steel or copper or gold?  
Or do you think their superiority is in their creation;  
Are they more than meat, bones, and veins?  
Rather, superiority comes from kindness  
And good manners and etiquette.*

The best thing that a father can leave behind for his son is good praise and beneficial manners. However, in my opinion, the mute is better than someone who has eloquence but lies, just as the one who doesn't desire women is better than an adulterer. Thus, the wise person should enlighten their hearts with etiquette, like how a fire is kindled by wood, because whoever doesn't enlighten their heart, then it will become dark. Whoever learns good etiquette shouldn't do so to use it as a tool for practice or a refuge for competition; instead, his intention should be to benefit himself and use it to please his Creator.

Speech is like luminescent pearls, green gems, and red rubies; however, some are better than others, because some speech is more like clay, rock, dirt, and mud. The people who learn etiquette and eloquence the most are the scholars due to the amount of time they spend reading *ahādīth* and the extent to which they immerse themselves in the different branches of knowledge.



## The Permissibility of Gathering Wealth for Someone Who Performs its Obligations

On the authority of ‘Amr bin al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

يا عَمْرُو نِعْمًا الْمَالُ الصَّالِحُ لِلرَّجُلِ الصَّالِحِ.

**O ‘Amr, righteous wealth owned by a righteous person is a blessing.<sup>1</sup>**

This *ḥadīth* clearly shows that the Prophet ﷺ permitted the gathering of wealth for the one who performs its obligations, which can be seen in his description of both the wealth and the owner of that wealth in terms of “righteousness.” It also shows that the gathering of wealth is only permitted if that wealth is not forbidden, and for the one who gathers it and then spends it in a manner that fulfills his obligations to Allāh.

Manṣūr bin Muḥammad al-Kurayzi said the following poetry:

*If that which you have gathered is not beneficial,*

---

<sup>1</sup> This *ḥadīth* is authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) and is reported by Aḥmad (4/197), al-Hākim (2/236), al-Baghawi (2495), and others. Shaykh al-Albāni declared it authentic in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (p. 261).

*Then you are the furthest of the people from it,*

*Because this was a result of his sins.*

*You are the one who makes it rewarding or ruined.*

Indeed, the most important things that a person can benefit himself with during his lifetime and after his death are *taqwā* (piety, God-fearing, etc.) and righteous deeds.

Therefore, the wise person during his youth should work to correct his shortcomings and work to improve his level of worship. His wealth should be used to improve his life, protect himself, and to send forth good deeds for his Hereafter and to please his Creator. However, take heed that poverty is better than a fortune derived from forbidden means, and a rich man with no principles is more despicable than a dog, even if he is capable and effective.

The happiest of people are those who, when they are rich, are humble, and when they are poor, they are content, because no one ever found a way out of poverty by being arrogant. Poverty can cause a decline in intelligence and honor, knowledge and etiquette, and can even lead to disbelief.<sup>2</sup> When someone is known for poverty, they attract suspicion and accusation and are afflicted with difficulties and tribulations. However, by Allāh, this is not the case for the person whom Allāh has blessed with a pure and humble heart, who sees the rewards saved for him as recompense for the sorrow endured in this life. Hence, he is unconcerned by the difficulties of the creation and this life. Poverty leads to degradation and affluence leads to respect.

How right was the one who said:

*A person's wealth can hide his faults;*

*Everything he says is believed, even though he is a liar.*

*A poor person's intellect is ridiculed;*

*The people think he is stupid, even though he is intelligent.*

---

<sup>2</sup> There is a *ḥadīth* with the wording, "Poverty may sometimes lead to disbelief," but it is weak. See al-Albānī's book *Mushkilah al-Faqr* (p. 9).

Every characteristic that is praised when exhibited by a rich person is belittled and considered a vice when exhibited by a poor person, so if a poor person is patient and tolerant, it is said he is dimwitted; if he is wise, it is said he is conniving; if he is eloquent, it is said that he talks nonsense; if he is intelligent, it is said he is harsh; if he is quiet, then it is said that he is dumb; if he is careful, it is said he is cowardly; if he is determined, it is said he is impetuous; if he is generous, it is said he is wasteful; and if he is prudent, it is said that he is miserly.

The worst kind of wealth is that which is earned from prohibited sources and spent on things that do not benefit anyone. And wealth is not guaranteed, even if it is invested and reinvested; rather, it is a portion and a gift from the All-Knowing Creator.

Al-Abrash told me the following poetry:

*Men are unhappy and others are unhappy with them,*

*And Allāh makes people happy by other people.*

*A young man's provisions don't come from smart tricks,*

*But good fortune in provisions and wealth*

*Is like an experienced hunter missing his prey,*

*While someone who isn't a hunter could be blessed to catch it.*

The worst kind of wealth is that which a person does not use to satisfy his obligations, and worse than that is wealth obtained from impermissible sources, not used for one's obligations and spent on prohibited things. Investing wealth and using it sensibly supports a healthy livelihood, and a man must purify his wealth, because nobody is above needing to purify his wealth, whether he is pious or wicked.

The wise person shouldn't expect Allāh's blessings to continue forever, so he delays performing his obligations with it (such as Ḥajj), because whoever doesn't appreciate a blessing will see that blessing removed and given to someone else.



## Encouragement to Maintain *Marū'ah* (Manliness, Chivalry, etc.)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

كَرَمُ الرَّجُلِ دِينُهُ وَ مَرُوتُهُ عَقْلُهُ وَ حَسْبُهُ خُلُقُهُ.

**A man's nobility depends on his religion, *marū'ah*, intelligence, pedigree, and manners.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise man should maintain *marū'ah* by way of that which he possesses of good character and by suppressing his shortcomings.

Some men rely on the fame and nobility of their fathers and grandfathers without acting with the same level of character and performing similar deeds as they did. Maṣūūr bin Muḥammad told me some poetry dispraising people like this:

*A person doesn't attain marū'ah;*

*He inherits it from a father and then loses it.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣl*, at-Ṭabarāni in *Al-Awsaṭ* (6682), and by al-Bayhaqi (10/195), Aḥmad (2/365), ad-Dāraquṭni (3/303), al-Ḥākim (1/123), and others. The *ḥadīth* is rated good (*ḥasan*).



*His soul calls him to behave obscenely;  
It forbids him from seeking higher morals and he obeys,  
So if he is afflicted with a calamity,  
The honorable person bases his marū'ah upon it.*

I have never seen anyone with a worse deal, more obvious affliction, more unsuccessful goal, and more misguided self than someone who aligns themselves with their noble fathers with their prodigious manners while abandoning their ways and examples. Their likes intend presumptuously that their status is raised and they have a position of authority over others due to their predecessors. How preposterous! Indeed, a man only gains position and respect, in reality, by his own deeds, and he can only become noble in this life and the Hereafter by hard work.

Al-Bassāmi told me this poetry:

*How many times do you hear someone saying, "I am the son of  
such-and-such house,"  
And the house has been destroyed and their reputation,  
Its two pillars have fallen and he laments his support;  
He rectifies his beginning and ruins his end.*

People differ in their view of what constitutes "marū'ah," but in my opinion it is two characteristics: avoiding the actions that Allāh and the Muslims dislike, and displaying the character that Allāh and the Muslims love.

The wise person should improve upon his marū'ah as much as he is able, and that is difficult without wealth. So whoever is blessed with wealth but is too cheap to invest it in his own marū'ah, then he has lost this life and the next. And he is not safe from being surprised by death, separated from his wealth and placed in his grave alone, and then after he is gone, his wealth will be inherited by people who consume his wealth but don't praise him, and spend his wealth but

don't thank him. How regretful is this? What pain could be greater than this?

The wise person should avoid things that cause people to despise him, because this tarnishes his *marū'ah*. Indeed, despicable acts are the opposite of *marū'ah* and cause a person's reputation to be damaged and lead to degradation and humiliation.



## Encouragement of Generosity & Disparagement of Miserliness

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

السَّخِيُّ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، وَالْبَخِيلُ بَعِيدٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَبَعِيدٌ مِنَ  
النَّاسِ وَ لَسَخِيٍّ جَاهِلٌ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ بَخِيلٍ عَابِدٍ.

**A generous person is close to Allāh and close to the people, and the miserly person is far from Allāh and far from the people. A generous ignorant person is more beloved by Allāh than a cheap worshiper.<sup>1</sup>**

If Allāh can bestow upon you all the wealth of this temporal world and then take it all away and give it to someone else, and if it does not benefit you in the next life except that which you send forth of good deeds, then it is paramount that the wise person strives his utmost to use his money performing his monetary obligations, intending by that the reward of the afterlife and a positive remembrance in this world. Generosity is beloved and praised, while miserliness is hated and criticized. There is no good in money if not accompanied by generosity, like there is no good in speech without real meaning.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣl*. The *ḥadīth* is very weak.

Al-Muntaṣir bin Bilāl told me this poetry:

*Generosity is an honorable trait and miserliness is a deficiency.*

*Miserliness and generosity are not equal in the eyes of Allāh;*

*In poverty, there is character and in affluence, calm.*

*People in terms of wealth are either blessed or limited.*

The most generous are those who are generous with their money and careful with other people's money. When people are generous, they are raised in rank, and when they are miserly, they are lowered.

Generosity guards honor like forgiveness purifies intellect and wisdom. Complete generosity is giving without expecting anything back or having people beholden to him, because whoever gives without expectation is blessed with abundance. Reminding people of your generosity to them destroys your good deeds; and if you can, remove from your deed of generosity a cover that has two ends: one of which is reminding people of your generosity and the other is expecting a reward for your generosity. Then [if you remove this], this is the greatest form of generosity; in fact, this is the true generosity. One of the best characteristics a person can possess is generosity without reminding people of your favors and without expecting anything in return, and tolerance and forbearance without weakness or humiliation.

The basis of generosity is restraint from holding back peoples' rights, just as the basis of a healthy body is restraint in eating, drinking, and sex (i.e., restricting oneself to permissible sexual relations). Therefore, just as manliness and nobility have no benefit without humility, and saving has no benefit without sufficiency, likewise, life has no benefit without wealth and wealth has no benefit without generosity. Just as kinship follows from love, praise follows from giving.

Al-Kurayzi told me this poetry:

*Miserliness reveals a person's faults to the people,*

*And generosity hides all of them from them.*

*Cover yourself with the garment of generosity,*

*Because I think generosity can cover every fault.*

A person who is tight with his money at the lowest level is called cheap, but if a person is haughty and extreme in their tightfistedness, then they are said to be stingy; and if this person comes to praise people who are cheap and make excuses for their actions, then this person is said to be miserly. There is no characteristic more tarnishing to a person's honor and more damaging to a person's faith than miserliness.

I never saw a person from the east to the west who possessed the values of generosity and tolerance except that he was a person who took charge of his problems and overcame obstacles, and people who knew him and people who didn't humble themselves to him. Therefore, if you want a lofty status in the Hereafter and in this life, maintain generosity with your wealth and refrain from harming others. But whoever wants to tarnish their honor, damage their faith, tire their friends, and alienate their neighbors, then continue to be cheap and miserly.



## A Warning to Not Refuse Gifts from Friends

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh bin Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

أَجِيبُوا الدَّاعِيَ، وَلَا تَرُدُّوا الْهَدِيَّةَ، وَلَا تَضْرِبُوا الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

**Accept invitations. Do not reject gifts. Do not beat Muslims.<sup>1</sup>**

The Prophet ﷺ warned in this *ḥadīth* not to refuse gifts from Muslims. Therefore, if a person is given a gift, it is obligatory to accept that gift and then he will be rewarded if he is appreciative and thankful. Indeed, I love for Muslims to send gifts to one another, because gift-giving gives birth to love and removes grudges.

When Abū Ḥanīfah rose and left a meeting, Masāwir al-Warāq said to the people:

*Before today, we used to be in comfort in terms of the religion,*

*Until we were tested by the People of Analogy,*

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Aḥmad (1/404). This *ḥadīth* was declared authentic by our noble scholar Shaykh al-Wādi‘i رحمته الله in *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Musnad Mimmā Laysa fīṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (1/243, #833).

*A people who, if they gather, they howl like  
Foxes sniffing between coffins.*

When this reached Abū Ḥanīfah, he sent Masāwir a gift, so Masāwir said:

*And what of the people that judge us by way of analogy  
With momentous and curious fatāwā;  
They came with correct analogy,  
Correct due to the example of Abū Ḥanīfah.  
If the faqīh (jurist) hears it, he is attentive,  
And he affirms it with ink on paper.*

Hence, the wise person sends gifts to his contemporaries as much as he can, in order to earn their affections and avoid their enmity.

Al-Abrash told me the poetry:

*People giving gifts to one another  
Results in a joining of the hearts;  
It plants in the heart love and friendship,  
And clothes you with reverence and dignity;  
It traps the hearts without chasing them;  
It bestows love and beauty.*

The wise person should use things that are available to him at that time and that achieve the desired results. He should not hope for what he doesn't have, even if he does not have much.

Al-Mughīrah bin Shu'bah رضي الله عنه was asked, "What do you still enjoy?" He said, "Doing good deeds for brothers." He was asked, "Which people have the best livelihood?" He said, "Those who support others with their livelihood." And it was also said, "Which people have the

worst livelihood?” So he said, “Those who do not support others with their livelihood.”





## Encouragement to Make it Easy for People to Attain Their Needs

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh said:

مَنْ نَفَّسَ عَن أَخِيهِ كُرْبَةً مِّنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَّسَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِّنْ كُرْبِ  
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى  
مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ  
فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ.

**Whoever alleviates a burden for his brother, Allāh alleviates a burden on the Day of Judgment for him. And whoever covers (the faults) of a Muslim, Allāh covers him in the world and in the Hereafter. And whoever makes things easy for one in difficulty, Allāh makes things easy for him in the world and the Hereafter. Allāh helps His slave as long as His slave helps his brother.<sup>1</sup>**

It is obligatory for all Muslims to advise other Muslims and to help in removing their sadness and difficulties, because whoever alleviates someone's burden in this life will have their burden alleviated on the

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Muslim (2699).

Day of Judgment; and whoever strives to meet someone's need but is unable will be rewarded like he spared no pain or expense for it, and even the smallest amount of effort deserves praise. The reality of your friends becomes known during times of need, like how family is tested during times of poverty, because during times of ease and plenty, everyone is a friend. The worst people are those who abandon their brothers in times of difficulty and need, like how the worst countries are those without any fertile soil and no security.

Al-Kurayzi told me this poetry:

*The best days of a young man are the beneficial days;*

*Creating a culture is the most lasting production.*

*You don't achieve good by bad deeds;*

*The farmer only reaps what he sows.*

*Not every day is the same;*

*Some days a young man will be down and some days he will be up.*

Whoever knew the reward for helping others would not hold back from helping in any way, even before being asked for help, so that he could reap as much reward as possible, and he would regret any opportunities to help that he may have missed.

The wise person knows that anyone who possesses a blessing is not guaranteed against losing it, and that the best deeds are done before one is asked to do them. Abul-'Atāhiyah<sup>2</sup> met with ar-Rashīd<sup>3</sup> and said, "O Abul-'Atāhiyah, ask me for anything," so he said: "If attainment is achieved by sacrificing honor, then I am no closer to obtaining it."

---

<sup>2</sup> Abul-'Atāhiyah was one of the foremost poets of his time and a righteous eloquent man. His name was Abū Ishāq Ismā'il bin Qāsim bin Suwayd bin Kisān al-'Anzi. He died in the year 211 AH. (*Siyār A'lām an-Nubalā'* 10/195)

<sup>3</sup> Ar-Rashīd was the *khalīfah* Abū Ja'far Hārūn bin al-Mahdi Muḥammad bin Manṣūr Abī Ja'far Ibn 'Abbās al-Hāshams al-'Abbās. He became *khalīfah* in 170 AH after his father al-Mahdi. (*Siyār A'lām an-Nubalā'* 9/186)

A person shouldn't beg when asking for something, even in a time of need, because sometimes asking for something too persistently can be the cause for the person refusing to help. Seeking welfare is like gambling—sometimes you win and sometimes you lose—so if you are given what you need, then you must praise Allāh, and if you are refused, then you must be satisfied with that. You should only ask someone for help at their homes and not in gathering places, meetings, or *masājid*. 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb said, "Don't ask the people in their gatherings and the *masājid*, putting them on the spot. Instead, ask them in their homes, so whoever gives gives, and whoever refuses refuses."

'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allāh have mercy upon him and be pleased with him, said that if the person being asked is generous but unable to help, then asking him in front of others will cause him embarrassment and shame. However, if the person asked is miserly, then asking him in front of others at a gathering or in the *masjid* will more likely cause him to give to the person in need, because someone who is cheap won't give out of piety or dignity, but they will give to be mentioned and praised by people.

In my opinion, I prefer that a wise person is patient in their time of need, if possible, and refrains from asking someone who is miserly for anything, because if he gives, it will be a disgrace, and if he refuses, it will be death.



## Encouragement to Give When Asked & to Seek Noble Stature

On the authority of Jābir رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

ما سئِلَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم شَيْئًا قَطُّ فَقَالَ: لَا. وَلَا ضَرَبَ بِيَدِهِ شَيْئًا قَطُّ.

**I never asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم something before and he said no. And he never hit anything with his hand.<sup>1</sup>**

It is beloved to me that a man strives for excellency in his manners and that he refrains from refusing someone who asks for help or money, because a lack of money is better than a lack of good manners and regret for missing the opportunity to help someone. Indeed, the truly free man is the one who is freed by his beautiful manners, just as the worst slave is the one who is enslaved by his bad manners.

Al-Baghdādi told me this poetry:

*Control your desires if you are concerned with righteousness,*

*Fearing that obstacles will appear and overcome you;*

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Asl*, and by al-Bukhāri (6034) and Muslim (1805 and 2328).

*If you are concerned with evil, then count on it,*

*Avoiding the affair that is avoided.*

The more a person gives of his wealth, the nobler he becomes, and if it was not for the generosity of good people, many of the poor would have died. A person doesn't become deserving of the titles "noble" and "generous" by just preventing harm, unless it is paired with beneficence to others. When a person loves to do good and helping others is important to him, people will flock to him in hope. Whoever lives for himself and doesn't support anyone else with his livelihood, he will have a short life in terms of deeds even if he lives to an old age.

The wretched and miserable are those who live long lives without helping others and performing good deeds. Someone who doesn't help others is weak, and someone who finds faults in others but excuses themselves for the same bad character is a fraud who should be advised. Someone who doesn't have any aspirations or principles other than his stomach and private parts is no better than an animal. Aspirations are very important and hold a high status, because people are judged by their aspirations.

The wise person should start his good deeds and generosity with those most deserving, so he should begin with his household, then his brothers, then his neighbors, and so on. Study how the people of piety and knowledge give charity and perform good deeds; some of them completely refrain from the opposite of the order we stated.

The wise person gives before he is asked because preempting someone in need is better than fulfilling a request, and refraining yourself from refusing someone in need is better than degradation. A good deed is made good by its completion and continuing to care after the act, because by rectifying its end, you purify its beginning. Giving after refusing is better than refusing after giving. People are of two types in terms of good deeds for others: appreciative and unappreciative.



## Encouragement to Honor the Guest & to Feed Others

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ  
الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ ضَيْفَهُ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ  
الْآخِرِ فَلَا يُؤْذِ جَارَهُ.

**He who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should honor his guest, and he who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should not harm his neighbor.<sup>1</sup>**

I prefer that the wise person feeds people and entertains guests often, because feeding people is one of the most noble forms of generosity and one of the best characteristics of the people of knowledge and piety. Those who are known for feeding others gain a reputation for nobility and dignity amongst those who know him and those who don't. Honoring the guest raises a person's status beyond imagination, even if he comes from a humble background. He is blessed with lofty praise and abundance.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (6136) and Muslim (47).

Everyone who obtained a position of authority before Islām and after Islām—those who were known for their status and had earned the loyalty of their people, and those to whom people travel from near and far—they achieved this status by feeding others and honoring guests. The Arabs considered the pinnacle of generosity to be feeding others and honoring guests, and they didn't consider a person generous until he had walked a mile or two looking for a guest.

A wise person should invite guests often and feed poor people because Allāh's blessings are guarded and maintained by using those blessings for doing good, and if not, then they return from whence they came, and longing and regret will not cause them to return [back to the person]. However, if a person performs Allāh's rights and duties upon him in terms of those blessings, then they will grow and increase, and his deeds shall be accumulated and kept for him for the Day of Judgment. An important element of having guests is to appreciate what you have in the way of food, even if it is only a small amount, and to present it to your guest, because someone who doesn't appreciate what they have will not be inclined to share it with their guest.

One of the ways to honor your guest is to join them in good conversation, welcome them with a smiling face, and serve them yourself, because there is no shame in serving your guest, just as there is no honor in making them serve you or demanding a payment for feeding them.

Muḥammad bin Suhayl told me this poetry:

*Indeed, I smile for those who want to be entertained as a guest,*

*And my home is spacious for entertaining guests.*

*I make my guest laugh from the moment he removes his saddle,*

*So there is abundance even though the place is barren;*

*So there is not much for the guests to eat,*

*But with a generous face there is abundance.*



## Encouragement to Show Appreciation for Good Deeds

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh said:

مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرُ النَّاسَ لَا يَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ.

**Whoever is not grateful to the people, he is not grateful to Allāh.**

Anyone who is given a gift or shown kindness must show appreciation and give back better or the same as he received, because giving back better doesn't equal being the first to give, even if the gift was small. Those who are unable to give a gift in return should praise the person, because praise can stand in the place of appreciation for a good deed, and nobody is without need of praise and appreciation.

Muḥammad bin Zinji al-Baghdādi told me this poetry:

*If the noble person didn't need thanks*

*Because of his power and high status,*

*Allāh would not have ordered his slaves to show Him gratitude.*

*So He says, "O men and jinn, thank me."*



Sa'īd bin al-Āṣ<sup>1</sup> passed a man's house in Madīnah and the man asked him for water, so he gave him water; then he passed by a house that was being auctioned off, so he asked the auctioneer, "Why are you selling this house?" He said, "The owner is in debt." Sa'īd bin al-Āṣ said, "May I meet with the owner?" So he entered the house and found the owner sitting with his creditor. He said to the owner "Why are you selling your house?" He said, "I owe this man 4,000 *dīnār*." Sa'īd bin al-Āṣ sat with the two men and spoke with them for a while, then he sent his servant away and he returned with 10,000 *dīnār*. He gave 4,000 to the lender and gave the rest to the man. Sa'īd bin al-Āṣ then mounted his horse and continued on his way.

Al-Muntaṣr bin Bilāl told me the poetry:

*Whoever does good for you, then be thankful to him,*

*And his good deed will not be wasted.*

*Don't be miserly with your gratitude and repay the loan;*

*Be the best receiver and giver of good.*

A noble person doesn't deny a blessing and doesn't resent a tribulation; rather, when he is blessed, he is thankful, and when he is tried with a difficulty, he is patient. If a person isn't appreciative of little things, then it is likely that he will be unappreciative of large blessings. Blessings don't increase or protect one from hardship and trials unless a person is thankful to Allāh and the person who performed the good deed.

The wise person must be thankful for the blessing and praise the good deed as much as he is able, in the best way that he can, so if he is able then he will do twice the amount of the favor that was done for him, and if not, then the same amount. If he is unable to do either of those things, then he must recognize the blessing while striving to repay the

---

<sup>1</sup> He is Sa'īd bin al-Āṣ bin Umayyah bin 'Abd Shams bin 'Abd Manāf bin Quṣayy. He was an honorable and dignified leader, known for his generosity and patience. He possessed great determination and intellect. He was made the governor of Madīnah by Mu'āwiyah and the governor of Kūfah by 'Uthmān bin 'Affān. (*Siyār A'lām an-Nubalā'* 3/444)

favor with thankfulness and saying, “*Jazāk Allāhu khayr*” (may Allāh increase your goodness).

Some people don't recognize or appreciate blessings. These people are of two types:

1) The person does not understand the causes of blessings and the reasons for showing appreciation, due to a lack of understanding or experience with close family and friends. If this is the case, then one should overlook this and not argue with him for not showing appreciation and gratitude.

2) The other type of person is someone who is intelligent but refuses to show gratitude due to his disdain for others and to belittle the gift and the gift giver. If this is the case, the wise person should leave this sort of behavior and never return to it, and if it is something that he has developed a reputation for, then he should go out and make known his regret for acting in such a way.



## Encouragement to Take on the Responsibility of Leadership & to Look After Those Placed Under Your Care

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَالْأَمِيرُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ،  
وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ، وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ  
رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّجُلِ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ، وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُ، أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ  
رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ.

**All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock. The leader of a people is a shepherd and he is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of the people of his house and he is responsible for his flock. A man's slave is the shepherd of his master's property and he is responsible for it. Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock.<sup>1</sup>**

The Sunnah, as taught to us by al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ, makes it clear that everyone has responsibilities and everyone must take care of those responsibilities. It is therefore obligatory upon anyone who has a

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāri (2409) and Muslim (1829).

responsibility to someone else to stay true to their promise to them.

The shepherds of mankind are the scholars; the shepherds of kings are their intellects; the shepherds of the righteous are their piety; the shepherds of students are their teachers; and the shepherds of boys are their fathers, just as the protector of a woman is her husband and the protector of a slave is his master. And every shepherd is responsible for their flock.

It is of the utmost importance that the leaders keep their covenant to lead the people. The leaders are one of the most important types of shepherds guiding their flock, because their orders are usually implemented. Therefore, the people's affairs are either made better or worse depending on the leader's choices; so if a leader does not use his time wisely and is not careful, then he will be destroyed and he will destroy his people. One corrupt leader could bring destruction to the whole world.

A leader's reign is dependent on his supporters obeying him, and that is dependent on him having a good minister or advisor who is pious and intelligent. The livelihoods of these important workers cannot be paid without money, and there will not be any money without a thriving society, and a society cannot thrive without the establishment of justice. Therefore, the leader's position is dependent on the establishment of justice and security, and without this, his position will be precarious.

Hence, a leader must take the utmost care in supervising the actions of his employees to the extent that no action, good or bad, escapes his attention. If the leader does not know what his employees are doing, then he will not be able to establish justice.

Any leadership that is not based on fearing and obeying Allāh is, in fact, dictatorship and not leadership, and any leader who does not encompass obedience to Allāh in his leadership is like the guard of a rubbish dump.

As some poets have said:

*The leadership of men without religion*

*And no taqwā is contemptible;*

*Every leadership without taqwā*

*Is more humiliating than sitting on garbage.*

*The noblest home and most powerful strength*

*And the best leadership is to abstain from leadership.*

Az-Zuhri<sup>2</sup> left the company of Hishām bin ‘Abdil-Mālik and said, “I never witnessed a day such as this, and I never heard the likes of what was said to Hishām bin ‘Abdil-Mālik a few moments ago. A man said to him, ‘O Leader of the Believers, memorize these four sentences I’m about to tell you—they’ll preserve your reign and rectify your people: Do not consider that something you do not trust can be achieved. Do not be beguiled by the route up to the top, even if it was easy, if the decline will be rough and difficult. Remember that those under you will obtain their recompense, so beware of the consequences of your actions.”

Those who are close to the sultan should not withhold their advice from him, because by not advising him, doctors not informing him of an illness, or brothers not giving him bad news, then you have only betrayed yourself and let yourself down. The companions of the sultan are not free from harm, just as the one who rides a riding beast is not spared the dust. Those who are close to the sultan should not think themselves safe from his anger by telling him the truth, or safe from his punishment by telling him a lie. However, don’t be presumptuous and disrespectful, because an intelligent person doesn’t drink poison just because he has an antidote.

I would like that anyone who is tested by having to work with a sultan teaches the sultan the importance of fearing and obeying Allāh

---

<sup>2</sup> He is the great scholar Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin Muslim bin ‘Ubaydillāh bin ‘Abdillāh bin Shihāb bin al-Ḥārith bin Zuhrah bin Kilāb al-Qurshi az-Zuhri al-Madani. He died in the year 124 AH. (*Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* 1/108)

and [doing] righteous deeds in a way that it seems that he is the one learning from the sultan, and teaches him good manners as if he was the one being guided by him. In that way, he may protect himself from the sultan's anger. If anger is due to a reason, then it is possible to bring satisfaction, but if there is no reason for the anger, then there is no hope. Moreover, it is not necessary for the citizens to know everything that the leader does in regard to society because that will just lead to trial and tribulation. How preposterous to think that you could accompany leaders and not be tested with adversity! Who can follow their desires and not be harmed?

Sometimes a beautiful tree can be destroyed by its own delicious fruit. A peacock could be killed as a result of its own beautiful feathers, because due to the weight of its tail it is unable to escape its predator. And whoever works closely with the sultan will not be immune from his changing moods. Rivers contain fresh water, but when they join the sea they become salty. Likewise, the scholars who keep away from the doors of the kings increase in the light of their knowledge, whereas the scholars who frequently visit the kings cover their hearts from gaining more knowledge. Companions of kings are not safe from their changing moods, and those who keep away from them are not safe from their investigations.

It is obligatory for those who are responsible for the affairs of the Muslims to return to Allāh—the Venerable and Most High—every moment and opportunity, so that he does not become corrupted by power. In fact, the sultan should remember Allāh's greatness, power, and sovereignty and that He is the one who will punish those who oppress others and reward those who do good, so that he may behave in a way that will earn rewards in this life and the next. He should also contemplate those who were like him who came before him, for indeed, there is no doubt that he should be thankful for his situation and there is no doubt that he is responsible for his own reckoning.



## The *Dunyā* (Worldly Existence) & Leaving It to Its People

On the authority of Abud-Dardā' رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh said:

مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مُعَافَاً فِي بَدَنِهِ آمِنًا فِي سِرْبِهِ عِنْدَهُ قُوَّةٌ يَوْمَهُ فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ  
الدُّنْيَا.

**Whoever awakes in the morning in good health, a state of safety, and [with] his sustenance for that day, then it is as if the riches of the world have been gathered for him.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person should not allow himself to be beguiled by the *dunyā*—its radiance, its beauty, its magnificence. He should not allow himself to be distracted by it and forget about the Hereafter and its everlasting blessings. Instead, he should belittle it as Allāh belittles it, because it will inevitably perish—its cities will fall to waste, its populations will die, its magnificence will dwindle, and its civili-

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the author in *Al-Aṣḥ*, and reported via another chain of narration by al-Bukhārī in *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* (300), at-Tirmidhī (2346), Ibn Mājah (4141), at-Ṭabarānī in *Al-Awsaṭ* (1849), and others. Each chain of narration has some weakness in it, but due to the number of different sources for the same *ḥadīth*, al-Albānī rated the *ḥadīth* as good (*ḥasan*).

zations will pass away. From the arrogant leader to the lowly poor person, none can escape the march of death; then they will turn to dust and be tested until the time they are resurrected and the Knower of the unseen inherits the Earth and all that is on it. The wise person doesn't rely on a dwelling such as this and cannot find comfort in a *dunyā* with this description, especially when he knows what is waiting for him in the next life: the likes of which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart could ever imagine.<sup>2</sup> So he refrains from this little amount and looks forward to the abundant sustenance instead.

Al-Kurayzi told me this poetry:

*Time is just the succession of night and day;*

*Life is just being awake and being asleep.*

*People live and people die;*

*Time decides who will be rebuked.*

The *dunyā* is a choppy sea and mankind is floating in its waves waiting to drown; this is a metaphor for all of creation, and how befitting it is, because it describes just how everything is moving towards termination.

Whoever has three things in this life possesses all the *dunyā* has to offer: security, sustenance, and good health. Only the swindlers and cheats are beguiled by the things of the *dunyā* and only the miserly need it. The wise person knows that you don't give up eternity for something that is temporary. Therefore, for the wise person, the goal of focusing on things from this life that will benefit him in the Hereafter makes more sense than the goal of gathering as much of the *dunyā* as one can without sending forth any righteous deeds for his Hereafter. There is nothing more important and significant than your

---

<sup>2</sup> See the *ḥadīth* reported by al-Bukhāri (3244) and Muslim (2824): On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, "Allāh the Most High said, 'I have prepared for my righteous slaves that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart could ever imagine.'"



life and there is no greater scam than wasting it for anything other than eternal life.

If anyone wants to be free, then he should keep away from desires, even if they are pleasurable, and he should know that not everything that is pleasurable is necessarily beneficial, but everything that is beneficial is pleasurable, and all desires are vile except those that bring about a return or benefit, and there is no better return than Jannah, being sufficed by Allāh, and not needing the people.

‘Alī bin Muḥammad al-Bassāmi told me this poetry:

*Place importance on being patient upon time,  
Because bad situations don't last forever.  
The universe orbits around us with its wonders;  
If it continues, it is like a dreamer's dream;  
Happiness and sadness, recovery and remission  
Till the time of destruction comes near.  
So rely on Allāh and seek His help instead of the people  
When one of the great affairs descends upon you.*

The wise person relegates the *dunyā* to its proper place and refrains from becoming reliant on it and needing it, while sending forth what he can for his permanent life and eternal bliss. He achieves this by refraining from a sense of entitlement and by constantly remembering death. Entitlement is like a knife to the neck of men, so the wise person must keep away from it, while contemplating the previous nations and generations—how every trace of their existence was wiped away, so all that remains of them is remembrance and all that remains of the towns and cities are drawings. So glory be to the One who is able to resurrect them for the final recompense.



## Encouragement to Keep Death in Your Thoughts & to Send Forth Good Deeds

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

أَكْثَرُوا ذِكْرَ هَاذِمِ اللَّذَاتِ الْمَوْتِ .

**Remember death—the killer of pleasures—often.<sup>1</sup>**

The wise person must add remembrance of death and restraint from beguilement with the *dunyā* to what we have previously mentioned in our book of the different branches of wisdom and intellect. Death is a cup that is passed around from person to person, and every single soul must eventually drink from it and experience its taste. Death is the killer of all pleasures; the ruiner of desires; the remover of disabilities.

The wise person doesn't forget something that he is waiting for, something that he knows could be coming at any moment. How many great and noble men, loved and revered by their families, their neighbors, and their people, ceased to worry about the difficulties of

---

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Aḥmad (2/293) and others. The *ḥadīth* is rated *ḥasan* (good).

life and its hardships once the subduer of kings, the conqueror of tyrants, the crusher of oppressors, tears them screaming from their loved ones, separating them from their families and brothers, and they are all unable to help or protect them from the inevitable?! How many nations were struck by death and cities brought to their knees?! How many wives have been made widows, children made orphans, and companions left alone?!

Therefore, the wise person doesn't long for a situation that ends as we have mentioned, and they do not forget the situation that will inevitably occur; the day in which there can be no doubt is coming. Death is a speedy hunter that cannot be slowed or escaped.

Al-Kurayzi told me this poetry:

*Our wealth is gathered for our inheritors;  
We establish our roles in the destruction of time.  
The souls are burdened by the duniyā and they know  
That to be safe in it you must refrain from it.  
Standing your ground doesn't save you from destruction,  
And neither does fleeing from misfortune save you.*

Indeed! Allāh—the Most Venerable and Most High—created Ādam and his offspring from the earth, then made them walk upon it and eat from its fruits and drink from its rivers, then inevitably the fate of death begins to approach them and they become unable to walk and move and their bodies start to fail; then, they return to the earth from whence they were created, and it eats their flesh just as they used to eat its fruit, and it drinks their blood just as they used to drink from its rivers, and it dismembers their limbs just as they used to walk upon it. The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter and the last stage of the *duniyā*. Blessed is the one who prepared for themselves a comfortable grave throughout their life and sent forth good deeds for their Hereafter.

Ibrāhīm bin Yazīd said, "I saw a Bedouin standing over a grave and he was saying, 'Every person has a grave for their passing. They decrease in number and the graves increase. And you see a house of the living become deserted and a new grave for the deceased in the courtyard. So they are the neighbors of the living: their resting place is near and the meeting is far.'"



## Conclusion

*Abū Ḥātim*<sup>1</sup> رضي الله عنه said:

In this book, we have mentioned a few of the many narrations that we hope will lead the reader to learn the behaviors and ways of the people of knowledge and wisdom. Those who traverse the path of the people of knowledge will find success and affluence by simply contemplating and practicing their ways.

We did not include the chains of narration of the *ahādīth* or references for the quotes and verses of poetry because we did not feel the need for that, like when a person signals to something and indicates towards what is meant.

May Allāh make us from those given the glad tidings of success in performing the obligations in order to attain Allāh's mercy and reach the place of Allāh's close friends. Indeed, it is the ultimate goal for the believers and the greatest hope of those closest to Allāh.

May Allāh's blessings be upon Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets,

---

<sup>1</sup> Abū Ḥātim is the *kunya* of Ibn Ḥibbān.

*Conclusion*

and upon his pure and pious family. And all praise is for Allāh, Lord of creation.