

HADITH NUMBER # 01

TOPIC # ACTIONS ARE BY INTENTIONS

عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَبِي حَفْصٍ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ: إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالَ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا، أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ يَنْكِحُهَا، فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَا جَرَ إِلَيْهِ (صحیح البخاری)

TRANSLATION

It is narrated on the authority of Amir Al-Mu'minin (Leader of the Believers), Abu Hafs 'Umar bin al-Khattab (May ALLAH be pleased with him) who said: I heard the Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him), say:

"Actions are according to intentions, and everyone will get what he intended. Whoever migrates with an intention for ALLAH and His Messenger, the migration will be for the sake of ALLAH and his Messenger. And whoever migrates for worldly gain or to marry a woman, then his migration will be for the sake of whatever he migrated for."

[Sahih Bukhari]

COMMENTARY

This hadith is central to Islamic thought, culture, and understanding and shows the balance between the internal and external states of oneself. This hadith is great in its benefit and importance, and it has been said that Islam revolves around it. Scholars have commented that this hadith comprises one-third of knowledge because the actions of man involve his heart, his tongue and his limbs, and hence the intention in the heart is one-third of action. It is also deemed to be one-third of knowledge due to scholars commenting that this hadith along with two others comprises the religion of Islam. The other two hadith being "The Halal is clear and the Haram is clear and between them are doubtful matters" (Sahih Bukhari) and "Whoever innovates in this religion that which is not from it will have all his actions rejected (by ALLAH)." (Sahih Muslim)

ACTIONS ARE BASED ON INTENTIONS

The connection between action and intention highlights the connection between the physical and the spiritual components of any human. This hadith emphasizes on the importance of having an intention for every physical act that we do, and the importance of having a purpose for every action. It also brings to the forefront our conscious intention and the need to make the connection between our physical actions and their spiritual consequences. Intentions lead to results and when a change in intention occurs,

a change in the external conditions will follow. Intention is also enough for ALLAH Apostle to make a change in our reality, so we should not belittle the necessary change in intention that has to occur in order for our external condition to change. Specifically in regards to Islamic work and worship, the quality of intention is very important. Involvement in Islamic work should not be primarily intended for marriage or fame, but to worship ALLAH, help our community and spread love amongst our community.

BEING VISIONARY

The believers should be visionaries because they should always be checking their intentions and understanding the purpose of their actions. They should be persistently asking themselves about their intentions for their short term and their long goals. Overall, the believer should constantly ask himself; "Why am I doing what I am doing?" Using the words "shall have" in this hadith means that the person will be rewarded for only that which he intended. So, as mentioned in the hadith, if a person performed the Hijrah, but did it with a different intention then he would not be rewarded for that action of Hijrah.

SHOWING OFF

Riya, the showing off deeds publicly, is a major sin which ruins sincerity and can invalidate actions. In the wording of the hadith, the use of the word "by" in "actions are but by intention" refers to the fact that the acceptance and correctness of any action depends on the intention behind it. For example, giving money in charity will not be accepted as a good deed if it was for the sake of showing off to others. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) informed us that if you perform an act for the sake of someone else rather than for ALLAH'S sake, then ALLAH will reject that deed entirely and will leave the reward of it for the partner that the person has made. This highlights the implications of showing off as well as the graveness of associating another person in your actions which should have been for the sake of ALLAH Apostle. As mentioned in the hadith, 'Thus he whose migration was for ALLAH and His messenger, his migration was for ALLAH and His Messenger, and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his migration was for that for which he migrated.'

CONCLUSION

Everything we do has to be intended for the sake of ALLAH Apostle. A good action with the wrong intention will not get us any reward in the Hereafter.

HADITH NUMBER # 02

TOPIC # ISLAM, IMAAN, IHSAAN

عَنْ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَيْضًا قَالَ: بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ جُلُوسٌ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ إِذْ طَلَعَ عَلَيْنَا رَجُلٌ شَدِيدُ بَيَاضِ الثِّيَابِ شَدِيدُ سَوَادِ الشَّعْرِ لَا يُرَى عَلَيْهِ أَثْرُ السَّفَرِ وَلَا يَعْرِفُهُ مِنَ أَخْدُ حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَسْنَدَ رَكْبَتَيْهِ إِلَى رُكْبَتَيْهِ وَوَضَعَ كَفَيْهِ عَلَى فَخِذَيْهِ وَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: (الْإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَتَقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحْجُجَ الْبَيْتَ إِنْ إِسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَيِّلًا) قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ. فَعَجِبْنَا لَهُ يَسْأَلُهُ وَيُصَدِّقُهُ، قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ، قَالَ: أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ، وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ، وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِهِ قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ، قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِحْسَانِ، قَالَ: أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَائِنَكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ السَّاعَةِ، قَالَ: مَا الْمَسْؤُلُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمَ مِنَ السَّائِلِ قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنْ أَمَارَاتِهَا، قَالَ: أَنْ تَلِدَ الْأَمْمَةَ رَبَّتَهَا، وَأَنْ تَرَى الْحَفَّةَ الْعَرَاءَةَ الْعَالَةَ رَعَاءَ الشَّاءِ يَتَطَاؤُلُونَ فِي الْبَنِيَانِ ثُمَّ انْطَلَقَ فَلَبِثَ مَلِيًّا ثُمَّ قَالَ: يَا عُمَرُ أَتَدْرِي مَنِ السَّائِلُ؟ قُلْتُ: اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ، قَالَ: فَإِنَّهُ جِبْرِيلٌ أَتَأْكُمْ يُعْلَمُكُمْ دِينَكُمْ (صَحِيحُ مُسْلِمٍ)

TRANSLATION

It is narrated on the authority of Umar (May ALLAH be pleased with him) who said: While we were sitting one day with the Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with black hair. No traces of journey were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) rested his knees against his thighs, and said, "O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam." The Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "Islam is that you should testify that there is no deity except ALLAH and that Muhammad is His Messenger, that you should perform Salah, pay the Zakah, Fast during Ramadan and perform Hajj of the House, if you are able to do so." The man said, "You have spoken truly." We were astonished at his questioning him (The Messenger) and telling him that he was right, but he went on to say, "Inform me about iman." He (the Messenger of ALLAH) answered, "It is that you believe in ALLAH and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and in the Last Day, and in Qadar (fate), both in its good and in its evil aspects." He said, "You have spoken truly." Then he (the man) said, "Inform me about Ihsan." He (the Messenger of ALLAH) answered, "It is that you should serve ALLAH as though you could see Him, for though you cannot see Him yet (know that) He sees you."

He said, "Inform me about the Hour." He (the Messenger of ALLAH) said, "About that, the one questioned knows no more than the questioner." So he said, "Well, inform me about the signs thereof." He said, "They are that the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress, that you will see the barefooted, naked, destitute, the herdsmen of the sheep (competing with each other) in raising lofty buildings." Thereupon the man went off. I waited a while, and then he (the Messenger of ALLAH) said, "O Umar, do you know who that questioner was?" I replied, "ALLAH and His Messenger know better." He said, "That was Jibril (The Angel Gabriel). He came to teach you your religion." (Sahih Muslim)

COMMENTARY

SIGNIFICANCE

This hadith includes within it all outwardly actions and inwardly beliefs. Hence, some of the scholars have termed this hadith the Mother or Core of the Sunnah, just as Surah al-Fatiha has been termed the Mother or Core of the Quran, due to containing the entire Message of the Quran. This hadith is also known as Hadith Jibreel (Angel Gabriel) (AS). The hadith tells the story of Jibreel (AS) when he came to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) asking a set of questions. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) responded to those questions and then addressed his companions. There is a door called "Baab Jibreel" at Masjid An-Nabawi in Madina. It is known as the door that Jibreel (AS) came in to ask the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) these questions.

AWARENESS

It is very important for Islamic preachers to be aware of their surroundings, and to recognize what's going on around them so they can act appropriately. Umar (May ALLAH be pleased with him) noticed that a well-kept individual with clean clothes, whom he didn't know, entered the Masjid with no trace of travel on him. Umar (May ALLAH be pleased with him) was conscious; he could sense that this man was not an ordinary man, nor a man from "around town." The da'wah, the call to Islam, is very much predicated upon the building of relationships with people. The people who care about inviting others to Islam and spreading the religion of ALLAH Apostle, should notice what's going on around them. They should notice when someone new comes into the masjid. They should notice if someone is left out or if someone is sitting by him. Then they can proceed from there in terms of figuring out how to deal with that situation. The call towards the religion of ALLAH is predicated upon brotherhood, sisterhood, love for the sake of ALLAH and that requires paying attention to the situations of people around us.

ETIQUETTES

Jibreel (AS) came dressed in a very nice and clean way. He sat in front of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) in a very respectful and humble way. There are many things that the scholars took from this Hadith in terms of seeking knowledge. Among the etiquettes of seeking knowledge is students should have decent apparel, they should look clean as

much as possible. Moreover, they should show a high level of respect towards their teachers.

OUTWARD ACTIONS AND INWARD BELIEVES

Jibreel (AS) turns to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and says, "Tell me about Islam". The Prophet's answer was centered around outward actions. Then he asks him about Iman and the Prophet's answer focused on internal actions of belief and of thought. Islam and Iman are interchangeable concepts revolved around the five pillars of action and the six foundations of belief. When Islam and Iman are mentioned together in the same place, then Islam refers to the outward actions and Iman refers to the inward beliefs. Belief manifests itself. The scholars say that a belief lives in the heart and shows itself on the actions and on the tongue. For example, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said that the Muslim is the person who the people are safe from his hands and his tongue.

THE BIG THREE: ISLAM, IMAN, IHSAN

Scholars consider Islam, Iman and Ihsan the three stages in the path towards ALLAH Apostle. The first path is you force yourself and bring yourself to do those actions which you know that ALLAH wants you to do. The second level is Iman where you are not only doing those actions, but you are strengthening your relationship with ALLAH Apostle and you are beginning to taste the sweetness of your relationship with ALLAH. The third level is the level of Ihsan, which is to worship ALLAH as if you see Him, and even if you cannot see Him, to know that He sees you. So, you are moving in this path, this journey, towards the Divine. And in doing so your relation with ALLAH is getting more and more deep.

THE HOUR

When Jibreel (AS) asked the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) about the hour, He said, "The one who is being asked about it is not more knowledgeable about it than the one who is asking." Here, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) is saying, this is something that ALLAH Apostle has kept to Himself and it is part of the "Ghayb" (unseen). This is an important lesson because it doesn't matter when the Day of Judgment is, what really matters is what and how we are preparing for it. We should be continuously striving to please ALLAH and seek his forgiveness.

THE SIGNS

The next question was, "So, tell me about its signs, tell me about the things that will occur". These signs are considered as warnings. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) gave two signs of the end of time. One of them is, "the slave woman will give birth to her master," and the tense is feminine so it is referring to her female master. One of the interpretations that relates to modern time would be: The one who gives birth is supposed to be in power, or have some sort of level or authority over the one who she

gives birth to. But this here is a flipping of the scale. The one who gives birth becomes the servant of the one who is born. Whereas before, the child would respect, honor and listen to their parents. Now it's the complete opposite, and if you look around, you will see it. You see and feel as if the parents are slaves to the children. Parents desperately trying to please their children, and moms are trying to imitate their daughters. The second sign; is the person will see barefooted, lightly dressed, and poor people who are shepherds. They will see these people competing with one another in their buildings. The point here is you have these people who don't have anything, they are very poor. Then suddenly the situation changes for them, and they are competing with one another over who can build the tallest building. They are competing to see who has the nicest car, the latest gadgets etc.

BOUNTY OF ALLAH

In the end, all of this is from the blessings of ALLAH Apostle. ALLAH Apostle gives us so much and rather than being humble and grateful in front of ALLAH, we are arrogant and think that it is all from us. Righteousness, putting full effort and trying one's best will all eventually lead to success and wealth. But at the end of the day, we still have to acknowledge that no matter how much effort we put in, our wealth and success will always be in the hands and bounty of ALLAH Apostle. So being successful and having wealth should give us more reasons to increase our humility and increase our gratitude towards our Lord.

HADITH NUMBER # 03

TOPIC # RELIGION IS SINCERE ADVICE

عَنْ أَبِي رُقَيْةَ تَمِيمَ بْنِ أَوْسٍ الدَّارِيِّ رضيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: الَّذِينَ الصَّيْحَةُ فُلْنَا: لِمَنْ يَأْرِسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: اللَّهُ، وَلِكِتَابِهِ، وَلِرَسُولِهِ، وَلِأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَعَامِلَتِهِمْ (صَحِيفَ مُسْلِم)

TRANSLATION

On the authority of Tamim Al-Dari (May ALLAH be pleased with him): The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "The religion is naseehah (sincerity)."We said, "To whom?" He (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "To ALLAH, His Book, His Messenger, and to the Leaders of the Muslims and their common folk." [Sahih Muslim]

COMMENTARY

This Hadith focuses on Al-Nasihah, advice or sincerity. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said that the entire religion is encompassed in the concept of nasihah and that the main pillar of the religion and its soundness lies in this concept of nasihah. Nasihah is usually translated as advice, but this translation does not convey the true meaning of the word. The closer meaning of the term nasihah is sincerity. That means that the entire religion is encompassed by the concept of sincerity. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) stated in the hadith that nasihah should be given to five categories: to ALLAH, His Book, his Messenger, to the Leaders of the Muslims and to the common people.

1/ SINCERITY TO ALLAH APOSTLE:

Nasihah to ALLAH Apostle means that we should have correct belief in ALLAH and reject associating anything with him. It means that we constantly try to purify our relationship with Him and be as true to this relationship as much as possible. We also do what is required of us and sustain from what is prohibited. Nasihah to ALLAH also means that we must know how to implement the shariah of ALLAH in our lives.

2/ SINCERITY TO ALLAH'S BOOK:

Nasihah to his Book means believing that the Quran is the Speech of ALLAH Apostle, that it was sent down as Revelation, and that there is no similarity between the Speech of ALLAH and the speech of mankind. To be pure and sincere in our relationship with the Quran requires that we have the utmost respect to the Quran. We call the Quran with respectful names, such as the Noble Quran and the Glorious Quran. We have to act on and respect the content of the Book, by carrying out its commands and staying away from its prohibitions. Explaining the Quran to others, helping people understand the

beauty of the Quran and defending the Quran against attacks is part of giving nasihah to ALLAH's Book.

3/ SINCERITY TO ALLAH's MESSENGER (PEACE BE UPON HIM):

Part of giving Nasihah to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) is knowing him, understanding his life and the struggles he went through and relating his struggles to our daily life. Loving the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) more than anything else and loving him more than ourselves is part of giving nasihah to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). Obeying the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), rejecting those whom had enmity towards him, being loyal to those who gave allegiance to him, honoring him, and reviving his manners and sunnah are all important aspects of giving nasihah to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).

4/ SINCERITY TO THE LEADERS OF THE MUSLIMS:

Giving nasihah to the leaders of the Muslims involves making supplication for them that ALLAH guides them, protects them and makes them able to carry out their responsibilities. Another way is to correct them when they are wrong, as Abu-Bakr (May ALLAH be pleased with him) asked the believers when he was entrusted with leadership, "As long as I command you to do what ALLAH and His Messenger commanded you to do, then you should obey me, but if don't then you should set me straight." Another way of giving naseeha to the leaders of the Muslims is to know them, interact with them, get involved in their efforts in a constructive way and not to sit back and criticize what they are doing without trying to help them.

5/ SINCERITY TO THE MUSLIM PEOPLE:

Giving nasihah to the Muslims in general means giving them advice. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "The rights of a believer over a believer are six," and then he mentioned that among them is "if he asks you for an advice you have to give him advice." Giving nasihah involves guiding them towards that which will correct their affairs in both this life and the next. It involves protecting them from harm, helping them in times of need, providing what is beneficial for them, encouraging them to do good and forbidding them from evil with kindness and sincerity, and showing mercy towards them.

HADITH NUMBER # 04

RESTRICTING ONESELF TO THE PERMISSIBLE

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ فَقَالَ: (يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُّوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا) (المؤمنون: الآية 51)، وَقَالَ: (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُّوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ) (البقرة: الآية 172) ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلُ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ، يَمْدُدُ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ، يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ، وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرِبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ فَأَنَّ يُسْتَجَابُ لِذَلِكَ.

TRANSLATION

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (May ALLAH be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) said: "ALLAH the Almighty is good and accepts only that which is good. And verily ALLAH has commanded the believers to do that which He has commanded the Messengers. So the Almighty has said: "O (you) Messengers! Eat of the tayyibat (good things), and perform righteous deeds" [23:51] and the Almighty has said: "O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you" [2:172]. Then he (Peace Be Upon Him) mentioned a man who, having journeyed far, is disheveled and dusty, and who spreads out his hands to the sky saying, "O Lord! O Lord!" while his food is haram, his drink is haram, his clothing is haram, and he has been nourished with haram, so how can [his supplication] be answered?" [Muslim]

COMMENTARY

This hadith introduces the importance of Al-tayyeb, that which is good or pure. The concept of purity and goodness applies to numerous aspects in our lives. As Muslims, we must be careful to enjoy only food and clothing that are halal, use pure speech, and hold pure intentions. In popular cultures today, there are so many impure things around us. Indeed, such impurities have become so common and widespread that we may actually think they are beneficial. Nevertheless, if something is impure, then it cannot be good for us regardless of how many people like it or practice it. Our standards should not be set according to what most people say or do. Rather, they should be defined according to the revelation of ALLAH Apostle.

THE CONCEPT OF AL-TAYYEB

Another thing that we derive from this hadith is the importance of eating food that is tayyeb. This word does not simply mean that the food is halal or that it comes from a

pure source, but it also means that the food is good for you. This hadith can be applied to eating out at a fast food restaurant. Even if the food is “halal” or “zabiha,” it may not necessarily be tayyeb. The reason it may not be tayyeb is that many of these foods are unhealthy, full of added chemicals and preservatives that may be harmful to our health.

ALLAH'S ACCEPTENCE

The concept of acceptance is also discussed in this hadith. ALLAH only accepts from those who are good and pure. What is this acceptance referring to? What if a person's food and clothing are impure, will his or her actions be accepted? This person still has to do the action (i.e. praying, making supplication etc.) in order to fulfill his or her responsibility towards that action, but ALLAH will not reward the person for doing such tasks. Thus, even though the person will not be rewarded for such action, he or she still needs to do it to avoid punishment.

FIVE CONDITIONS

The scholars mention five conditions that must be fulfilled in order for actions to be accepted:

1. The belief that ALLAH Apostle is knowing of all things.
2. To know the truth and have a sense of what is right.
3. To have a pure intention in what you are doing.
4. To do the action in accordance with the Sunnah.
5. To eat that which is halal.

ACCEPTANCE OF SUPPLICATIONS

There are several conditions that help our supplications to be accepted by ALLAH Apostle:

1. To be traveling: The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said there are three supplications that are answered without doubt: the prayer of the oppressed, the prayer of a traveler, and the prayer of the parents for their child.
2. To be wearing clothes that are simple and humble: One should not be wearing arrogant or showy attire.
3. To raise one's hands towards the sky while making supplication: The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) says that ALLAH is shy and if someone raises his or her hands to Him with a prayer, He will be shy to not respond to that prayer.
4. To be consistent and persistent in the supplication: Do not expect a supplication to be answered immediately and be persistent in your asking to ALLAH. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) says that a person's supplication will be accepted

as long as they do not rush. Thus, supplication should be done with patience, consistency, and with the belief that ALLAH Apostle will accept.

SUPPLICATION THAT IS NOT ACCEPTED

Similarly, there are some circumstances that prevent our supplications from being answered:

1. Income that is not halal: In order to obtain halal income, one must be doing a type of work that is halal.
2. The person must be fulfilling responsibilities on the job: If a person is not completely fulfilling all their work duties and still gets paid a full salary, then part of that salary becomes questionable. Thus, food, clothing, and drink coming from that portion of the income becomes questionable.

HADITH NUMBER # 05

OBLIGATIONS ARE ACCORDING TO ABILITY

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ صَحْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: (مَا نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ وَمَا أَمْرَتُكُمْ بِهِ فَأَتُوْا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ؛ فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ الظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَثِيرًا مَسَائِلَهُمْ وَاحْتِلَافُهُمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ) (صَحِيحُ البَخْرَى)

TRANSLATION

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (May ALLAH be pleased with him) who said: I heard the Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) saying: What I have forbidden for you from, avoid it. What I have ordered you [to do], do as much of it as you can. For verily, it was only their excessive questioning and disagreeing with their Prophets that destroyed [the nations] who were before you. [Al-Bukhari]

COMMENTARY

There is another narration for this hadith that gives a deeper understanding of its meaning: The Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) addressed us and said: O people! Hajj has been made obligatory upon you, so perform the Hajj. A man asked, "Is that every year, O Messenger of ALLAH?" The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) remained silent while the man repeated his question three times. Then he said, "If I had said 'yes' then it would have become obligatory upon you [i.e. every year], and you would not have been able to do so. Do not ask me about that which I have left unspecified, for verily the nations before you were destroyed by their excessive questioning and argumentation with their Prophets. If I order you with something then do as much of it as you are able, and if I forbid you from something then keep away from it." In both of these narrations, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) commands us to avoid what he has forbidden and to follow what he has ordered us to do according to the best of our ability. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) also asks us to follow his guidance without asking too many questions, and to pay attention to the types of questions we ask.

STAY AWAY FROM WHAT IS PROHIBITED

"What I have forbidden for you, avoid." We have to follow this command all the time, and in all situations. This order has to be followed except under dire circumstances, such as when one is starving and there is no food available except for some meat that was not properly slaughtered. In conditions other than that of necessity, however, all Muslims have to avoid what is forbidden.

OBLIGATIONS ARE ACCORDING TO ABILITY

"What I have ordered you to do, do as much of it as you can" is an important principle of Islam. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) is indicating that we won't be able to do all what is required, but we have to do as much of it as we can. Based upon this principle are countless other rulings. Prayer, for example: the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, 'Pray standing; if you are not able to; pray sitting, if you are not able to; pray (while lying) on your side.' The scholars have differed over the meaning of a command by the Prophet to perform an action - does it imply repetition? That is, if we are ordered to do something then does that automatically imply that we must do it repeatedly? Or does it mean that doing it once is sufficient unless otherwise specified? For example, we are commanded with Hajj once in a lifetime, but we are also commanded with Salah five times every day. Most of the scholars decided that a command does not automatically imply repetition, while others said that we should rule on whether it implies repetition or not without further evidence.

ASKING TOO MANY QUESTIONS

Asking too many questions can be a problem in itself, particularly if we are talking about the kinds of questions that are excessive or that can clearly lead to something that you don't want to know an answer to. We also shouldn't ask questions that are accompanied with a degree of arrogance or are just a waste of time. The companions of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) rarely asked questions. In fact, there were only thirteen questions that were answered in the Quran. The answers to their few, numbered questions are in verses such as: "They ask you about the moon cycles," "They ask you about menstruation," "They ask you about the bounties of war." Anas (May ALLAH be please with him) said, "We were prohibited to ask the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) too many questions. So we would be very happy when an intelligent bedouin came to the Prophet and asked him questions, so we could listen." Asking too many questions and disagreeing with the Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) can cause our destruction. If it happened to the people before us, it can happen to us too.

WHAT TAKES PRECEDENCE: DOING OBLIGATORY ACTIONS OR STAYING AWAY FROM WHAT IS PROHIBITED

According to scholars, avoiding bad deeds takes precedence over doing good deeds when the bad deed is clearly prohibited and the good deed is a recommended act. When the good deed is obligatory, doing it is greater because it involves acting upon something that ALLAH wants from you. It is proactive obedience, as opposed to a somewhat passive avoidance of what is forbidden (although to say leaving the haram is passive is a bit of a generalization)

HADITH NUMBER # 06

LOVE FOR YOUR BROTHER WHAT YOU LOVE FOR YOURSELF

عَنْ أَبِي حَمْزَةَ أَنَّسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ حَادِمٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: (لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لَأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ) (صحيح البخاري)

TRANSLATION

On the authority of Abu Hamzah Anas bin Malik (May ALLAH be pleased with him) - the servant of the Messenger of ALLAH (Peace and Blessings of ALLAH Be Upon Him) - that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of ALLAH Be Upon Him) said:

"None of you will believe until you love for your brother what you love for yourself."

(Sahih Bukhari)

COMMENTARY

This hadith is strongly correlated with the Golden Rule which is "do as to others what you want to yourself" and that is to love for your brother what you love for yourself. In this society, we live where people are shy to give advice or get offended to accept advice. When in reality, we should be welcoming in accepting other's advice and give advice in the best way. This is essential for the fabric of the community and for your personal self.

ACCEPTING THE TRUTH

Is it possible to be better than someone else? There is an authentic narration mentioned in Al Hakim where a companion asks the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), "Oh Messenger of ALLAH, you have seen what is bestowed upon me from beauty, and because of that beauty that has been bestowed upon me, I don't like anyone else to look better than me. Is that arrogance? Is that transgression?" The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) responds saying, "No, that's not transgression, that's not arrogance. What is arrogance or transgression is to the reject the truth when faced with it and to look down on people." Based on this response, one of the characteristics of a believer is to accept the truth when they are confronted with it. So, when talking about loving for a brother what you love for yourself, that's shouldn't be an issue.

FLAWS IN OTHERS

Another part of loving your brother what you love for yourself is really pushing the person to seek to rectify the flaws of others. Sometimes when we see flaws for others, instead of hoping, striving, and working toward rectify their difficulties in flaws, we actually exploit them. We take advantage of them and make ourselves feel better. This is actually a disease in the heart that we need to see someone to do something bad in order for us to feel good. Rather, we should fix their problems and love for them to able to grow in their relationship with ALLAH.

Envy & Jealousy

Hassad (Envy) is where you see something good in someone, and not only do you want it, but you want them to lose it. Whereas Ghibta (Jealousy) is you see that good in someone else, and you want it, but you want it without them losing it. So, if we feel like we want someone else to lose the good that they have, then that's actually a problem in our belief, in the way that we look at our brother or our sister. It's a problem in our love for our brother or our sister, and it's contradictory to the meaning of this hadith.

TRUE BELIEVER

In the translation, it says “true belief” because we shouldn’t say that someone that does not attain this station is no longer a believer. They are a believer; they just haven’t reached that high level of faith. Another part of the hadith says “akhi” but some commentators say it’s not just “his brother”, it’s very general. This means it’s not just to Muslims, but all of humanity. Therefore for the person to receive true faith they have to love their brother in humanity, Muslim or non-Muslim, what they love for themselves. This is a very high level of spirituality and selflessness the true believer should seek. Another characteristic of this hadith is wanting the brother to have what you have and even better. This doesn’t let us feel this scarcity mindset, and part of that is that it is a manifestation of us realizing that ALLAH is endless in His bounty. Sometimes when you look at what others have, we have that disease that makes us think that if they have it, then we can’t. However, ALLAH Apostle is endless in His bounty and endless in His generosity, even infinite in these qualities. ALLAH Apostle can give and take as He pleases so it shouldn’t make a difference if someone else has something as well. Holding yourself accountable is also an essential characteristic. You hold yourself accountable and question yourself about your feelings towards your brother, sister, or humanity and why you feel that way. We should seek to attain this level, to have this love towards a cause. This cause is a principle that we love and we know that ALLAH can give and He is bountiful, and not by anything else. For example, Imam Shafi’i said that he would love for people to learn this knowledge and that none of it would be attributed to him; which shows how beautiful his character was.

HADITH NUMBER # 07

ISLAMIC MANNERS

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رضيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: (مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصُمُّ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ ضَيْفَهُ)

(صحيح بخاري)

TRANSLATION

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (May ALLAH be pleased with him), that the Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) said: "Let him who believes in ALLAH and the Last Day speak good, or keep silent; and let him who believes in ALLAH and the Last Day be generous to his neighbour; and let him who believes in ALLAH and the Last Day be generous to his guest." (Sahih Bukhari)

COMMENTARY

Some of the scholars have mentioned that all of the Good Manners can be derived from four Hadiths, and they mentioned amongst them this Hadith. The focus of this Hadith is actions; actions of controlling one's speech, actions of being good to your neighbour and actions of being generous to your guests. All these actions lead to the improvement of Muslims' behaviours and manners.

ACTIONS MANIFEST THE BELIEF

The Hadith starts off by the Prophet's statement "Whoever believes in ALLAH and the Day of Judgment," then He (Peace Be Upon Him) resumes his Hadith talking about the Muslims' action, which indicates that actions are part of our belief. It is not enough that we are Muslims or it is not enough that we say that we believe in ALLAH Apostle and in the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) but also this belief should manifest one's actions. That is why the scholars said, "Belief is what settles in the heart and manifest itself on one's limbs." It is part of Islam to act on what you believe in and act upon the teachings of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and the teachings of the Quran. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) put emphases on the importance of each action by repeating the statement "Whoever believes in ALLAH and the Day of Judgment," with every single action. It is a constant repetition and reminder that these actions should come out of one's belief.

SPEAK GOOD OR KEEP SILENT

To control our speech is a very important aspect in manifesting our belief also it is very important for our own spiritual development. If person wishes to say something, then if that speech is good, and will surely be rewarded for, then let him say it. And if not, then let him keep silent - whether it is apparent that the speech is Haram (forbidden) or Makrooh (disliked) or even Mubah (permissible). It is said that the permissible speech is

to be left and avoided, and rather it is preferred to keep silent in such situations, out of fear that it may turn into something which is Haram or Makrooh.

BE GENEROUS TO YOUR NEIGHBORS AND GUESTS

This is something that has been neglected a lot of times especially by the Muslims in the West. The Prophet's statement "let him be generous to his neighbour" and "let him be generous to his guest" contains instruction on the rights of the neighbours and on doing good to them and encouragement upon protecting the limbs from doing harm to them, and also ALLAH Apostle has advised us in His Noble Book with Ihsan (good behavior, kindness, good treatment) towards the neighbours. And the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) has said: "Jibreel (Alai Salam) did not cease to advise me regarding the rights of the neighbours, until I began to think that they would also receive a part of the inheritance". Hospitality is from Islam, and from the character of the Prophets and the Pious. Some of the scholars have made it obligatory, though the majority considers it to be from the noble. The recommended traits of character are:

- One should only speak what is good and true.
- One must not under any circumstances speak evil or use filthy language.
- One should be kind and generous to one's neighbour.
- One should treat one's guest well.

If one is a true Muslim then one would do the above, else one's [true] belief in ALLAH and the Last Day is in question.

HADITH NUMBER # 08

FOLLOW A BAD DEED WITH A GOOD ONE

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ جُنْدُبِ بْنِ جُنَادَةَ وَأَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ مُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: (اتَّقِ اللَّهَ حَيْثُمَا كُنْتَ، وَاتَّبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ تَمْحُهَا، وَخَالِقِ النَّاسَ بِخُلُقِ حَسَنٍ) (سنن الترمذى)

On the authority of Abu Dharr Jundub ibn Junadah, and Abu 'Abd-ir-Rahman Mu'adh bin Jabal (May ALLAH be pleased with them) that the Messenger of ALLAH (Peace and Blessing of ALLAH Be Upon Him) said: "Be conscious of ALLAH wherever you are. Follow the bad deed with a good one to erase it, and engage others with beautiful character." (Sunan Tirmidhi)

COMMENTARY

In this hadith, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) teaches us that we must have God-consciousness in every possible scenario: "wherever you may be." Whether you are alone, in public, in a position of leadership, weakness, or strength, you should be aware and fearful that ALLAH is watching. This consciousness, keen awareness, and fearfulness of God at every time and in every place is called Taqwa.

VISUALISING TAQWA

Some of the companions explained the concept of taqwa as the following: "If you were to walk through a thorny patch wearing long clothing, how would you walk through that patch?" Someone answered that they would gather their clothes together and step over the thorns to avoid tearing their clothing; such is Taqwa. This level of consciousness of ALLAH, knowing that He is watching us and having this awareness of Him in every moment is something that we should seek to in all aspects of our life. There is a story about a teacher who preferred a student over the rest. The students would ask why and he would answer, "You'll understand." He did an experiment where he gave all of his students food and told them to go somewhere where no one could see them and eat it. They all went to different places and ate the treat, except for the one student. He was asked why he did not eat, and he answered, "You told us to go eat somewhere where we cannot be seen, and there is no where I can go where ALLAH will not see me. So, I didn't eat." The Sheikh told the students, "This is why I prefer him over the rest of you." This awareness of ALLAH's presence is an example of taqwa. It may not be easy to build and deepen taqwa within ourselves, so we should actively call upon ALLAH Apostle for help. Imam Ash-Shafi said, "Three things are very difficult: To be generous when you have little, To be fearful of ALLAH when you are alone, and To say the truth in front of someone whom you fear or hope for their good opinion." The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) used to make supplication saying, "Oh ALLAH, I ask of You to bestow upon me taqwa." He also used to say, "I ask you that I fear You at times when I am seen and the times when I am not seen (by people)." We can learn from this sunnah of the

Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) to make supplication that ALLAH inspires us and blesses us with taqwa.

A FOLLOW-UP TO BAD DEEDS

This part of the hadith is proactive, an aspect that many Muslims don't practice. Too often, we respond to a sin by putting ourselves in a figurative corner and abusing ourselves psychologically until we get over that sin. This is not what ALLAH wants from us. Yes, we should feel guilty and have a level of regret, but it should not stop us from moving forward in good deeds. People use their sins as an excuse to stay behind, but do not stop yourself from all the other good that you could be involved in. The response to a sin should not be to wait, but rather to race to do something good so the sin can be erased. Our attitude should be proactive and positive. We should always have hope that ALLAH can, and will, have mercy on us as long as we keep struggling and pushing forward.

GOOD MANNERS

When you practice the hadith's first two components of God-consciousness and following the bad deed with a good one, you will end up with the third component of good character. Good character is a true test of religiosity. Many times, people are outwardly religious, but their manners are terrible. They engage in religious matters with enthusiasm, but when it comes to business, they mistreat their employees. It is not just about what is legal; that is not what our standard of goodness is. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was sent and confirmed by ALLAH to have a very high level of morals and to be very strict in his ethics. We have to hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards and be morally rigorous, because it is part of what it means to bear witness to the world around us and carry the message of Islam. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was asked, "What will enter the greatest amount of people into Paradise?" His response was, "Taqwa of ALLAH and dealing with people in a nice and beautiful way." In another hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said the one who has good manners may attain the same level of merit as those who fast and pray frequently. When you stand in the night and you fast during the long days, you're struggling with yourself against yourself. But when you strive to have good manners, you are struggling with yourself while amongst others. It is a higher level of interaction, and it can actually be more difficult than praying in the night and fasting during the day.

HADITH NUMBER # 09

HASTENING TO DO GOOD

عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْخَارِثِ بْنِ عَاصِمِ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الظُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمَلاً الْمِيزَانَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمَلاً - أَوْ تَمَلاً - مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ نُورٌ، وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ، وَالصَّبَرُ ضِيَاءٌ، وَالْقُرْآنُ حُجَّةٌ لَكَ أَوْ عَلَيْكَ، كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَغْدُو فَبَائِعُ نَفْسَهُ فَمُعْتَقُهَا أَوْ مُوبِقُهَا.

(صحيح مسلم)

TRANSLATION

On the authority of Abu Malik Al-Harith bin Asim al-Ashari (May ALLAH Be Pleased With Him) who said: The Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) said: "Purity is half of Iman. Alhamdulillah (Praise Be To ALLAH) fills the scales, and Subhan-ALLAH (How far from imperfection is ALLAH) and Alhamdulillah (Praise Be To ALLAH) fill that which is between heaven and earth. And the Salah (prayer) is a light, and Charity is a proof, and Patience is illumination, and the Quran is a proof either for you or against you. Every person starts his day as a Vendor of his soul, either freeing it or bringing about its ruin." [Sahih Muslim]

COMMENTARY

This Hadith encompasses fundamental principles of the religion. The Hadith shows the importance of performing good deeds in Islam, through which every Muslim can free himself from the punishment of ALLAH Apostle in the Hereafter. This includes freeing oneself from servitude to anything other than ALLAH Apostle.

PURIFICATION IS HALF OF FAITH

There are two ways to understand the meaning of "Purification is half of Iman." The first way to understand purification is in terms of physical cleanliness. Although Islam teaches cleanliness in all things, our homes and masajid are not always a reflection of this. We should strive for cleanliness in all things, whether it is keeping our homes clean or our masjids orderly. The word Iman is also used to mean prayer, which reflects the importance of prayer as the foundation for Iman (faith). Prayer is the distinguishing factor between belief and disbelief. When one goes to pray, they must first make wudu (Ablution). Therefore, the second way to understand the concept of purification is that it is half of the prayer. A physical act of purification enables us to prepare for prayer externally and internally.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DHIKR

Dhikr is the remembrance of ALLAH, often expressed through phrases such as "Al-Hamdulillah" (Praise to ALLAH) and "Subhan-ALLAH" (Glory to ALLAH). The hadith mentions that Al-Hamdulillah fills the mizan (scales), and the phrase "Subhan-ALLAH wa bihamdi" (Exalted be ALLAH and to Him belongs all Praise) fills the space between the heavens and the earth. The hadith shows the importance, greatness, and significance of Dhikr for every Muslim. For example, merely reciting one phrase such as Subhan-ALLAH gives a reward that fills the heavens. Al-Haithamy, one of the great Muslim scholars, stated that the full reward of reciting dhikr will be given to the person who recites these phrases while thinking of their meaning and submitting to their implication.

PRAYER IS LIGHT

The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said Prayer is a light by which we are guided spiritually. Knowing right and wrong is half the struggle, but the real struggle lies in the action of doing that which is right. Prayer is something that disciplines us spiritually so that we are able to correctly follow that which is pleasing to ALLAH. That is why prayer is the light that guides us through our journey towards ALLAH Apostle.

Charity IS PROOF

When one gives in charity, one is trusting in ALLAH's promise that He will return the wealth in multi-fold. In a material sense, one may be losing money, but in a spiritual sense one is gaining reward. ALLAH Apostle says many times in the Quran that charity doesn't diminish, but rather increases our wealth. Charity is a burhan (proof) for the Muslim. The term burhan literally means 'sunlight' in Arabic. This linguistic definition is adding a depth of meaning to the definition of burhan as a proof; it is not just a proof, it is a shining and clear proof of one's iman as a Muslim. Imam Ibn Rajab said that the reason why charity is an evidence of iman, is that people usually love wealth, and if they overcome this love of material things for the sake of ALLAH, this is a clear proof of their strong Iman.

PATIENCE A SHINING LIGHT

Patience is a shining, bright light that guides us in tough moments. It is always inspiring when we are around people who exercise patience in the face of adversity and difficulty. Being patient requires a lot of internal effort and struggle. Overcoming impatience develops our self-control and accountability. Patience leads to self-control, which is the goal of Al-Sabr (patience).

QURAN AN EVIDENCE FOR OR AGAINST YOU

Seeking knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim, and the core of all knowledge is the Quran. With knowledge comes responsibility. That is why the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said that "The Qur'an is either evidence for or against you." People who recite, learn and practice the Qur'an, become the people of Quran and the Quran will be a proof

for them. However, on the Day of Judgment, the Quran will stand against those who never read or practiced it in their lives.

EVERY DAY IS A NEW OPPORTUNITY

We go out every day and ALLAH Apostle gives us life, energy and new opportunities to come closer to Him. Imam Ibn Rajab, while commenting on this meaning, said the person who struggles to worship ALLAH and obeys Him is the one who frees himself, while the person who indulges in sins is the one who destroys himself. Every morning, when people go out of their homes, they are either gaining reward or suffering losses. If they work for ALLAH and obey Him, they are winners; but if they violate the rules of ALLAH and disobey Him, then they gain nothing but loss after loss.

CONCLUSION

This hadith guides us in how to gain great rewards in our lives and also how to save ourselves from ALLAH's punishment. Practicing the acts of purification, dhikr, prayer, charity, and many other deeds are important ways to free oneself from the punishment of ALLAH.

HADITH NUMBER # 10

OBLIGATION OF FOLLOWING SUNNAH

عَنْ أَبِي نَجِيحٍ الْعَرَبَاضِ بْنِ سَارِيَةَ رضيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: وَعَظَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مَوْعِظَةً وَجِلَتْ مِنْهَا الْقُلُوبُ وَذَرَفَتْ مِنْهَا الْعَيُونُ.
فَقُلْنَا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ كَانَهَا مَوْعِظَةً مُوَدِّعًا فَأَوْصَنَا، قَالَ: (أُوصِيكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَالسَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ وَإِنْ تَأْمَرُ عَلَيْكُمْ
عَبْدًا، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَعْشُ مِنْكُمْ فَسَيَرِي اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا؛ فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنْنِي وَسُنْنَةِ الْخَلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمُهَدِّدِينَ عَصُوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِزِ
وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحْدَثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ إِنَّ كُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بَدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالٌ). (سنن الترمذى)

TRANSLATION

It was narrated on the authority of Abu Najih Al-Irbad bin Sariyah (May ALLAH Be Pleased With Him) who said: "The Messenger of ALLAH (Peace Be Upon Him) delivered an admonition that made our hearts fearful and our eyes tearful. We said, "O Messenger of ALLAH, it is as if this were a farewell sermon, so advise us." He said, "I enjoin you to have Taqwa of ALLAH and that you listen and obey, even if a slave is made a ruler over you. He among you who lives long enough will see many differences. So for you is to observe my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-principled and rightly-guided successors, holding on to them with your molar teeth. Beware of newly-introduced matters, for every innovation (bid'ah) is an error." (Sunan Abu Dawud)

COMMENTARY

It was the practice of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) to give admonition to his companions from time to time, however, without burdening or boring them. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was very eloquent. Ibn Rajab points out the characteristics of the Prophet's speeches and admonitions: brief, concise, and conveyed in beautiful understandable manner. He (Peace Be Upon Him) had the ability to deliver a very powerful message in a very impactful manner. That is why his companions said that their hearts became fearful and their eyes became tearful. When the companions experienced that, their response was to ask him for advice because this sermon seemed like a farewell sermon.

HAVING TAQWA

The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) told his companions "I enjoin you to have Taqwa of ALLAH". Having Taqwa means is to have God consciousness and awareness of God in all affairs. Having Taqwa is a pinnacle issue. If someone is able to have God consciousness in all of their affairs then they will be able to live the life of righteousness, devotion and submission to the teachings of Islam.

OBEYING RULERS

The Prophet's second advice was "that you listen and obey, even if a slave is made a ruler over you." The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) emphasized on the importance and respect for order. Listening and obeying will lead to better management of the affairs of the community in respect to peace and unity. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) is informing us that the leadership will become corrupt and will be given to other than its rightful owners or might be given to a slave. So if this were to occur then still listen and obey, in order to secure the lesser of two evils, which are putting up with a Ruler who rules without right, or bringing about chaos and a great fitnah through revolt.

ADHERING TO SUNNAH

The Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) third advice was "observe my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-principled and rightly-guided successors." The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) informed his companions of that which was to occur after him of differences and the spreading of evil. Not only he warned them about these evils but he also gave them the advice on how to face them. Following the sunnah of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) is the key to facing all evils. When the prophet says follow my Sunnah he is saying follow my way, and his way is how the Quran should be applied in real life. An act is considered an Ibadah if there are authentic hadiths mentioning that the act is an Ibadah, or that it will be rewarded, or that the one who does it is praised, or that the one who does not perform it is blamed or cursed or will be punished. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) also ordered his companions to hold on to the Sunnah of the rightly-principled and rightly-guided that will come after him (Peace Be Upon Him). The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) asked us to follow them because he (Peace Be Upon Him) knows that there are new issues and situations that will arise. That is why we have to seek the guidance from people who are known to be righteous, people who are known to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet and People who are able to give sound Fatwas in light of the Quran and Sunnah.

BEWARE OF NEWLY-INTRODUCED MATTERS

The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) here is talking about the innovations that have to do with worship and the teachings of Islam. The innovations that are rejected are rejected because they are acts of worship that truly doesn't have any foundations in the teachings of Islam. These acts will lead one after another to distortion of the faith and will lead people to worshiping in ways that are not acceptable. Newly invented matters are of two types:

1. That matter which has no basis in the Sharee'ah, and this is baatil [rejected] and blameworthy.
2. That matter which has a parallel or similarity in the Sharee'ah, then this is not blameworthy.

This is because the words 'newly invented matter' and 'bid'ah' are not deemed blameworthy purely on the basis of the words themselves, but due to their indicating opposition to the Sunnah and calling towards misguidance. So sometimes they are not considered to be unrestrictedly wrong. For example, 'Umar (May ALLAH Be Pleased With Him) reinstated the Taraweh Prayer and said "What an excellent bid'ah is this." The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) had led the Taraaweeh Prayer in congregation for a few days, but then discontinued it due to his fear that the people would think it obligatory. This condition remained throughout the Khilaafah of Abu Bakr (May ALLAH Be Pleased With Him), until 'Umar (May ALLAH Be Pleased With Him) restarted what the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) had already laid a precedent for.

CONCLUSION

- Fear ALLAH.
- Obedience is due to the rulers, no matter who becomes so.
- There will be controversy and difference of opinion after the Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him).
- In all cases of difference it is obligatory to stick to the Sunnah, the way of the Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) and to the way of the Sunnah of the rightly-principled and rightly-guided.
- One must be extremely careful about new things in the religion.
- That one must ensure that everything that one does as part of his religion indeed has proof for it in the Quran and Sunnah.