

The book of **Miscellany**



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Chapter 1: Sincerity and Significance of Intentions

allah, the exalted, says:

“and they were commanded not, but that they should worship allah, and worship none but him alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to him), and perform as-salat (iqamat-as-salat) and give zakat, and that is the right religion.” (98:5)

“it is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches allah, but it is piety from you that reaches him.” (22:37)

“say (o muhammad (pbuh)): whether you hide what is in your breasts or reveal it, allah knows it”. (3:29)

1.narrated ‘umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him), reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the deeds are considered by the intentions, and a person will get the reward according to his intention. so whoever emigrated for allah and his messenger, his emigration will be for allah and his messenger; and whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration would be for what he emigrated for”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: according to some ahadith, the reason for this hadith is that a person sent a proposal of marriage to a woman named umm qais, which she turned down saying that he should have to emigrate to al-madinah for it. accordingly, he did it for this specific purpose, and the two were married there. on account of this event, the man came to be known among the companions as muhajir umm qais.

on the basis of this hadith, ‘ulama’ are of the unanimous opinion that the real basis of one’s actions is niyyah (intention) and everyone will be requited according to his niyyah. it is true that niyyah is founded in one’s heart, that is to say, one has first to make up one’s mind for what he intends to do and he should not express it verbally. in fact, the latter is a bid`ah (innovation in religion) because no proof of it is found in shariah.

the point which becomes evident from this hadith is that ikhlas (sincerity) is a must for every action. in other words, in every righteous deed, one should seek only the pleasure of allah; otherwise, it will not be accepted by allah.

2. narrated ‘a`ishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “an army will raid the ka`bah and when it reaches a desert land, all of them will be swallowed up by the earth.” she asked; “o messenger of allah! why all of them?” he answered, “all of them will be swallowed by the earth but they will be raised for judgement according to their intentions.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: everyone will be rewarded or punished according to his aim and intention. this hadith also proves that the company of depraved persons is extremely dangerous. whose army would it be, which has been referred to in the hadith, and when will it invade ka`bah, is a matter known to allah alone. such prophecies are a part of the unseen world. since they come in the category of the miracles of the prophet (pbuh), it is necessary to believe in their veracity and occurrence. believing in such prophecies is also essential because they were revealed by allah).

3. a`ishah (may allah be pleased with her) narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said, “**there is no emigration after the conquest (of makkah) but only jihad [(striving and fighting in the cause of allah) will continue] and good intention.* so if you are summoned to fight, go forth.**”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

*. intention according to an-nawawi: it means that goodness which ceased to continue by the cessation of emigration can still be obtained by jihad and by intending accomplishing good deeds.

commentary. when a country or a region is regarded as dar-ul-islam (land of islam), it is not necessary to migrate from it to some other place. it is, however, obligatory to emigrate from such regions which are dar-ul-kufr (land of infidels) and where it is difficult to adhere to islamic injunctions. it is also evident from this hadith that when it is not necessary to migrate from one islamic country to another then it is also not permitted by the shari`ah to leave an islamic country to settle permanently in dar-ul-kufr only for the reason that the latter has plenty of wealth and social welfare. unfortunately, muslims today are afflicted with this disease. the transfer of their capital and talent to dar-ul-kufr is indeed very disturbing because on one side these two factors are lending support to the economy of bilad-ul-kufr (countries of infidels) and on the other, obscenity and indecency that are common in such countries, are becoming increasingly common among the muslims too.

another highly important reason for the prohibition of migration of muslims to dar-ul-kufr is that it goes against the spirit as well as their readiness for jihad fi sabilillah (striving and fighting in the way of allah). this spirit and readiness must be kept always alive so that the muslims may respond at once to the call of jihad whenever the need for it arises anywhere.

4. jabir bin abdullah al-ansari (may allah be pleased with them) reported: we accompanied the prophet (pbuh) in an expedition when he said, “there are some men in al-madinah who are with you wherever you march and whichever valley you cross. they have not joined you in person because of their illness.” in another version he said: “they share the reward with you.”

[muslim].

it is narrated by bukhari from anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him): we were coming back from the battle of tabuk with the prophet (pbuh) when he remarked, “there are people whom we left behind in al-madinah who accompanied us in spirit in every pass and valley we crossed. they remained behind for a valid excuse.”

commentary: what we learn from this hadith is that if the intention and spirit of jihad are present in the heart of a muslim but physically he is unable to take part in it for valid reasons, he will get the reward of jihad without even his actual participation in it.

5. ma`n bin yazid bin akhnas (may allah be pleased with them) (he, his father and his grandfather, all were companions) reported: my father set aside some dinars for charity and gave them to a man in the mosque. i went to that man and took back those dinars. he said: “i had not intended you to be given.” so we went to messenger of allah (pbuh), and put forth the matter before him. he said to my father, “yazid, you have been rewarded for what you intended.” and he said to me, “ma`n, you are entitled to what you have taken.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. this hadith leads us to the conclusion that if sadaqah (charity), goes to a needy son of a muslim, there is no need to take it back from him for the reason that the father had intended to give it to a deserving person. the former gets the reward for it on account of his niyyah (intention).

this however, will be reckoned as nafli sadaqah (voluntary charity) because the obligatory zakat (sadaqah) cannot be given to the donor's own dependents.

2.it is permissible in shari`ah to make someone a wakil (attorney or agent) for sadaqah.

3.it does not amount to disobedience on the part of a son to take his father to a competent authority or scholar to know the legal position on any issue, in the same way, as mutual discussion and debate on matters of shari`ah does not amount to insolence. (fath al-bari, chapter on zakat).

6.abu ishaq sa`d bin abu waqqas (may allah be pleased with him) (one of the ten who had been given the glad tidings of entry into jannah) narrated: messenger of allah (pbuh) visited me in my illness which became severe in the year of hajjat-ul-wada` (farewell pilgrimage). i said, "o messenger of allah, you can see the pain which i am suffering and i am a man of means and there is none to inherit from me except one daughter. should i give two-thirds of my property in charity?" he (pbuh) said, "no". i asked him, "then half?" he said, "no". then i asked, "can i give away one-third". he said, "give away one-third, and that is still too much. it is better to leave your heirs well-off than to leave them poor, begging people. you will not expend a thing in charity for the sake of allah, but you will be rewarded for it; even the morsel of food which you feed your wife". i said, "o messenger of allah, would i survive my companions?" he said, "if you survive others and accomplish a thing for the sake of allah, you would gain higher ranking and standing. you will survive them ... your survival will be beneficial to people (the muslim) and harmful to others (the enemies of islam). you will survive others till the people will derive benefit from you, and others would be harmed by you." messenger of allah (pbuh) further said, "o allah, complete for my companions their emigration and do not cause them to retract." sa`d bin khaulah was unfortunate. messenger of allah (pbuh) lamented his death as he died in makkah.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in spite of all their love for it, the companions of the prophet (pbuh) did not like to die in a city from which they emigrated for the sake of allah. for this reason sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) was afraid of dying in makkah.

the prophet (pbuh) prayed for the accomplishment of sa`d's emigration and expressed regret over the misfortune of sa`d bin khaulah. the latter died in makkah.

conclusion:

1.the hadith lays down that in the course of a disease which seems to prove fatal, one cannot give more than one-third of the property in charity.

2.it is also emphasized that one gets reward even for what he spends on his wife and children.

3. one can report to others his ailment or to seek treatment and ask them to supplicate from him.

4.in the matter of sadaqah (charity), which one gives to seek the pleasure of allah, his closest relatives. should always have priority and preference over others.

7.abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) narrated: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah does not look at your figures, nor at your attire but he looks at your hearts and accomplishments".
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the importance of sincerity and good intention. it is, therefore, essential that every noble action should be based on these two virtues; and heart should be free from all such things that destroy noble deeds. hypocrisy, ostentation, greed for wealth, riches and other worldly things fall in the category of such evils. since the true condition of heart is known to allah alone, the true position of one's actions will be known on the day of resurrection when one will be requited for them by alah. in this world, one will be treated according to his apparent condition while his insight will be left to allah.

8.abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported that messenger of allah (pbuh) was asked about who fights in the battlefield out of valour, or out of zeal, or out of hypocrisy, which of this is considered as fighting in the cause of allah? he said: "he who fights in order that the word of allah remains the supreme, is considered as fighting in the cause of allah".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: since one's action will be evaluated in terms of intention, so he alone would be a mujahid (**warrior in the cause of deen**) who fights to glorify the name of allah.

9.abu bakrah ath-thaqafi (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said: **“when two muslims are engaged in a combat against each other with their sword's and one is killed, both are doomed to hell”**. i said, “o messenger of allah! as to the one who kills, it is understandable, but why the slain one?” he (pbuh) replied: **“he was eager to kill his opponent”**.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith leads to the conclusion that one would be punished for such sinful intention for which he has made a firm determination, and for the commitment of which he has adopted necessary measures, even if he does not succeed in committing it because of certain obstruction. thus determination is different from a suggestion of the devil. the latter is excusable while one is accountable for his determination. however, what is mentioned in the hadith will happen when muslims fight among themselves for worldly honour and prejudices, and no religious issue would be the cause of their conflict, because in the latter case, it is possible that both might be depending on their own ijthihad (exercise of opinion) for which they may be excused.

10.abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said: **“the reward for salat performed by a person in congregation is more than 20 times greater than that of the salat performed in one's house or shop. when one performs wudu' perfectly and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of performing salat, then for every step he takes towards the mosque, he is upgraded one degree in reward and one of his sins is eliminated until he enters the mosque, and when he enters the mosque, he is considered as performing salat as long as it is the salat which prevents him (from leaving the mosque); and the angels keep on supplicating allah for him as long as he remains in his place of prayer. they say: 'o allah! have mercy on him; o allah! forgive his sins; o allah! accept his repentance'. this will carry on as long as he does not pass wind”**.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith shows that although it is permissible to perform salat individually in market places and houses,

but its collective performance in the mosque is 25, 26, or 27 times more meritorious, as mentioned in other ahadith.

11. `abdullah bin `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said that allah, the glorious, said: “verily, allah (swt) has ordered that the good and the bad deeds be written down. then he explained it clearly how (to write): he who intends to do a good deed but he does not do it, then allah records it for him as a full good deed, but if he carries out his intention, then allah the exalted, writes it down for him as from ten to seven hundred folds, and even more. but if he intends to do an evil act and has not done it, then allah writes it down with him as a full good deed, but if he intends it and has done it, allah writes it down as one bad deed”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: what the prophet (pbuh) relates to allah is called hadith qudsi (sacred tradition). such hadith is revealed to the prophet (pbuh) by means of ilham (inspiration). this hadith mentions the magnitude of divine blessings which he bestows upon his faithful slaves on the day of resurrection.

12. `abdullah bin `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with them) narrated that: he heard messenger of allah (pbuh) as saying: “three men, amongst those who came before you, set out until night came and they reached a cave, so they entered it. a rock fell down from the mountain and blocked the entrance of the cave. they said: `nothing will save you from this unless you supplicate to allah by virtue of a righteous deed you have done.’ thereupon, one of them said: `o allah! i had parents who were old, and i used to offer them milk before any of my children or slaves. one day, i went far away in search of grazing and could not come back until they had slept. when i milked as usual and brought the drink i found them both asleep. i hated to disturb them and also disliked to give milk to my children before them. my children were crying out of hunger at my feet but i awaited with the bowl in my hand for them to wake up. when they awoke at dawn, they drank milk. o allah! if i did so to seek your pleasure, then deliver us from the distress caused by the rock’. the rock moved slightly but they were unable to escape. the next said: `o allah! i had a cousin whom i loved more than any one else (in another version he said: as a man can love a woman). i wanted to have sexual intercourse with her but she refused. hard pressed in a year of famine, she approached me.

i gave her one hundred and twenty dinars on condition that she would yield herself to me. she agreed and when we got together (for sexual intercourse), she said: fear allah and do not break the seal unlawfully. i moved away from her in spite of the fact that i loved her most passionately; and i let her keep the money i had given her. o allah! if i did that to seek your pleasure, then, remove the distress in which we are.' the rock moved aside a bit further but they were still unable to get out. the third one said: `o allah! i hired some labourers and paid them their wages except one of them departed without taking his due. i invested his money in business and the business prospered greatly. after a long time, he came to me and said: o slave of allah! pay me my dues. i said: all that you see is yours - camels, cattle, goats and slaves. he said: o slave of allah! do not mock at me. i assured him that i was not joking. so he took all the things and went away. he spared nothing. o allah! if i did so seeking your pleasure, then relieve us of our distress.' the rock slipped aside and they got out walking freely".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1.it is permissible to pray through our virtuous deeds. but to make someone a medium for it, is an innovation in deen which should be avoided for two major reasons. firstly, there is no evidence in shari`ah to support this. secondly, it is against the practice of khair-ul-qurun, the best of generations. (this term is used for the first three generations of muslims, the one in which the prophet (pbuh) lived and the two following).

2.preference should be given to the service of parents, even over the service of one's own wife and children.

3.to abstain from sins out of fear of allah is a highly meritorious act.

4.labourers should always be treated fairly. if someone has paid to a labourer less than his due, it should be paid to him in a decent manner.

5.any supplication which is made sincerely, and with real sense of humbleness is granted by allah.

6.allah sometimes helps his pious men even in an unusual manner, which is termed as karamat (**wonder or marvel**). thus, like the miracles of the prophets, wonders of the righteous people are also true. but miracles and wonders both appear with the will of allah.

Chapter 2: Repentance

scholars said: it is necessary to repent from every sin. if the offense involves the right of allah, not a human, then there are three conditions to be met in order that repentance be accepted by allah:

- 1- to desist from committing it.
- 2- to feel sorry for committing it.
- 3- to decide not to recommit it.

any repentance failing to meet any of these three conditions, would not be sound.

but if the sin involves a human's right, it requires a fourth condition, i.e., to absolve oneself from such right. if it is a property, he should return it to its rightful owner. if it is slandering or backbiting, one should ask the pardon of the offended.

one should also repent from all sins. if he repents from some, his repentance would still be sound according to the people of sound knowledge. he should, however, repent from the rest. scriptural proofs from the book and the sunnah and the consensus of the scholars support the incumbency of repentance.

allah, the, exalted says:

“and all of you beg allah to forgive you, o believers, that you may be successful”. (24:31)

“seek the forgiveness of your rubb, and turn to him in repentance”. (11:3)

“o you who believe! turn to allah with sincere repentance!”. (66:8)

13. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying: “by allah, i seek allah's forgiveness and repent to him more than seventy times a day.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. it is an inducement for seeking pardon and forgiveness. the prophet (pbuh), whose past and future sins were forgiven, asked allah's forgiveness - then how about us, who commit sins on regular basis,

not to seek pardon and forgiveness from allah?

2. sincere and ceaseless prayer for pardon is essential so that sins committed by us unintentionally are also forgiven. the above hadith lays great emphasis on seeking pardon.

14. al-agharr bin yasar al-muzani (may allah be pleased with him) narrated that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “turn you people in repentance to allah and beg pardon of him. i turn to him in repentance a hundred times a day”.
[muslim].

15 anas bin malik al-ansari (mayallah be pleased with him) the servant of the messenger of allah narrated: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “verily, allah is more delighted with the repentance of his slave than a person who lost his camel in a desert land and then finds it (unexpectedly)”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another version of muslim, he said: “verily, allah is more pleased with the repentance of his slave than a person who has his camel in a waterless desert carrying his provision of food and drink and it is lost. he, having lost all hopes (to get that back), lies down in shade and is disappointed about his camel; when all of a sudden he finds that camel standing before him. he takes hold of its reins and then out of boundless joy blurts out: ‘o allah, you are my slave and i am your rubb’.he commits this mistake out of extreme joy”.

commentary:

1. this hadith also deals with the inducement and merit of repentance and pardon for sins. allah is highly pleased with repentance.

2 one will not have to account for a mistake made without any purpose and intention.

3. it is permissible to take an oath to stress on one’s pardon.

4. one can quote an instance for the purpose of understanding and elaboration.

16. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said: “allah, the exalted, will continue to stretch out his hand in the night so that the sinners of the day may repent,

and continue to stretch his hand in the daytime so that the sinners of the night may repent, until the sun rises from the west”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith confirms an essential attribute of allah, i.e., the hand which he stretches out anytime he wishes without drawing similarity to it, nor interpretation. such was the attitude of the pious predecessors with regards to all of the essential attributes of allah. it is deduced from this hadith that if one commits a sin during any hour of day or night, he should immediately seek the forgiveness of allah as a result.

17. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) narrated: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who repents before the sun rises from the west, allah will forgive him”.

[muslim].

commentary: taubah means returning to allah from sins. when a person commits a sin, he goes away from allah. when he repents, he returns to allah and desires for being pardoned by him, and getting near him. this returning towards him is taubah. when it is said that ‘allah turns towards him’, it means that allah accepts his repentance.

18. `abdullah bin `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with them) reported that: the prophet (pbuh) said, “allah accepts a slave’s repentance as long as the latter is not on his death bed (that is, before the soul of the dying person reaches the throat)”.

[at-tirmidhi, who categorised it as hadith hasan].

commentary: the word ghargharah means the stage when soul is about to leave the body and reaches the throat. in other words, the time when one suffers the agony of death.

hadith hasan means that hadith the authenticity of which is connected without any technical defect. their narrators, however, are next to those of hadith sahih. in the opinion of muhaddithin (hadith scholars), hadith hasan is also reliable as hadith sahih.

19. zirr bin hubaish reported: i went to safwan bin `assal (may allah be pleased with him) to inquire about wiping with wet hands over light boots while performing wudu’. he asked me, “what brings you here,

zirr?" i answered: "search for knowledge". he said, "angels spread their wings for the seeker of knowledge out of joy for what he seeks". i told him, "i have some doubts in my mind regarding wiping of wet hands over light boots in the course of performing wudu' after defecation or urinating. now since you are one of the companions of the prophet (pbuh), i have come to ask you whether you heard any saying of the prophet (pbuh) concerning it?". he replied in the affirmative and said, "he (pbuh) instructed us that during a journey we need not take off our light boots for washing the feet up to three days and nights, except in case of major impurity (after sexual intercourse). in other cases such as sleeping, relieving oneself or urinating, the wiping of wet hands over light boots will suffice." i, then, questioned him, "did you hear him say anything about love and affection?" he replied, "we accompanied the messenger of allah (pbuh) in a journey when a bedouin called out in a loud voice, 'o muhammad.' the messenger of allah (pbuh) replied him in the same tone, 'here i am.' i said to him (the bedouin), 'woe to you, lower your voice in his presence, because you are not allowed to do so.' he said, 'by allah! i will not lower my voice,' and then addressing the prophet (pbuh) he said, 'what about a person who loves people but has not found himself in their company.' messenger of allah (pbuh) replied, 'on the day of resurrection, a person will be in the company of those whom he loves.' the messenger of allah then kept on talking to us and in the course of his talk, he mentioned a gateway in the heaven, the width of which could be crossed by a rider in forty or seventy years".

sufyan, one of the narrators of this tradition, said: "this gateway is in the direction of syria. allah created it on the day he created the heavens and the earth. it is open for repentance and will not be shut until the sun rises from that direction (i.e., the west) (on doomsday)". [at-tirmidhi, who categorised it as hadith hasan sahih]

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that in ablution, it is permissible to wipe over light boots rather than washing the feet. it is called mash. the period, in which mash is intact, in case of travellers it is three days and three nights; while for the residents, it is one day and one night only. a precondition for it is that light boots should be clean and worn after full wudu'. ankles should also be covered. in case of breach of ablution, the wiping over the socks is sufficient, and there is no need for washing the feet.

wudu' is invalidated by sleeping, call of nature and passing of wind. this is called hadath asghar. in the case of hadath akbar, which occurs because of coitus, menses and wet dream, washing of the whole body becomes obligatory. it means that the privilege of wiping over the light boots is also finished in this case, in the same way as it does after the expiry of period specified for it.

2. one should associate himself with the pious people so that he is counted among them. one also comes to know many other points from this hadith which every intelligent person can understand with a little effort.

20. abu sa'id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: prophet of allah (pbuh) said: "there was a man from among a nation before you who killed ninety-nine people and then made an inquiry about the most learned person on the earth. he was directed to a monk. he came to him and told him that he had killed ninety-nine people and asked him if there was any chance for his repentance to be accepted. he replied in the negative and the man killed him also completing one hundred. he then asked about the most learned man in the earth. he was directed to a scholar. he told him that he had killed one hundred people and asked him if there was any chance for his repentance to be accepted. he replied in the affirmative and asked, 'who stands between you and repentance? go to such and such land; there (you will find) people devoted to prayer and worship of allah, join them in worship, and do not come back to your land because it is an evil place.' so he went away and hardly had he covered half the distance when death overtook him; and there was a dispute between the angels of mercy and the angels of torment. the angels of mercy pleaded, 'this man has come with a repenting heart to allah,' and the angels of punishment argued, 'he never did a virtuous deed in his life.' then there appeared another angel in the form of a human being and the contending angels agreed to make him arbiter between them. he said, 'measure the distance between the two lands. he will be considered belonging to the land to which he is nearer.' they measured and found him closer to the land (land of piety) where he intended to go, and so the angels of mercy collected his soul". [al-bukhari and muslim].

in another version: "he was found to be nearer to the locality of the pious by a cubit and was thus included among them".

another version says: “allah commanded (the land which he wanted to leave) to move away and commanded the other land (his destination) to draw nearer and then he said: “now measure the distance between them.’ it was found that he was nearer to his goal by a hand’s span and was thus forgiven”. it is also narrated that he drew closer by a slight movement on his chest.

commentary:

1. one comes to know from this hadith that the gate of taubah is open even for the worst of the sinners; and allah forgives everyone provided he repents sincerely, the conditions for such repentance have already been discussed.

2. it is the duty of a religious scholar that while discussing a problem, he should keep in mind the psychological aspects of the questioner and adopt a policy which neither causes a change in the injunction of allah nor make the sinner reckless in his sins out of frustration.

3. when a situation warrants, angels appear in the form of men on orders of allah.

21. abdullah bin ka`b, who served as the guide of ka`b bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) when he became blind, narrated: i heard ka`b bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) narrating the story of his remaining behind instead of joining messenger of allah (pbuh) when he left for the battle of tabuk. ka`b said: “i accompanied messenger of allah (pbuh) in every expedition which he undertook excepting the battle of tabuk and the battle of badr. as for the battle of badr, nobody was blamed for remaining behind as messenger of allah (pbuh) and the muslims, when they set out, had in mind only to intercept the caravan of the quraish. allah made them confront their enemies unexpectedly. i had the honour of being with messenger of allah (pbuh) on the night of `aqabah when we pledged our allegiance to islam and it was dearer to me than participating in the battle of badr, although badr was more well-known among the people than that. and this is the account of my staying behind from the battle of tabuk. i never had better means and more favourable circumstances than at the time of this expedition. and by allah, i had never before possessed two riding-camels as i did during the time of this expedition. whenever messenger of allah (pbuh) decided to go on a campaign, he would not disclose his real destination till the last moment (of departure). but on this expedition,

he set out in extremely hot weather; the journey was long and the terrain was waterless desert; and he had to face a strong army, so he informed the muslims about the actual position so that they should make full preparation for the campaign. and the muslims who accompanied messenger of allah (pbuh) at that time were in large number but no proper record of them was maintained.” ka`b (further) said: “few were the persons who chose to remain absent believing that they could easily hide themselves (and thus remain undetected) unless revelation from allah, the exalted, and glorious (revealed relating to them). and messenger of allah (pbuh) set out on this expedition when the fruit were ripe and their shade was sought. i had a weakness for them and it was during this season that messenger of allah (pbuh) and the muslims made preparations. i also would set out in the morning to make preparations along with them but would come back having done nothing and said to myself: ‘i have means enough (to make preparations) as soon as i like’. and i went on doing this (postponing my preparations) till the time of departure came and it was in the morning that messenger of allah (pbuh) set out along with the muslims, but i had made no preparations. i would go early in the morning and come back, but with no decision. i went on doing so until they (the muslims) hastened and covered a good deal of distance. then i wished to march on and join them. would that i had done that! but perhaps it was not destined for me. after the departure of messenger of allah (pbuh) whenever i went out, i was grieved to find no good example to follow but confirmed hypocrites or weak people whom allah had exempted (from marching forth for jihad). messenger of allah (pbuh) made no mention of me until he reached tabuk. while he was sitting with the people in tabuk, he said, ‘[what happened to ka`b bin malik?](#)’ a person from banu salimah said: “o messenger of allah, the (beauty) of his cloak and an appreciation of his finery have detained him.’ upon this mu`adh bin jabal (matallah be pleased with him) admonished him and said to messenger of allah (pbuh): “by allah, we know nothing about him but good.’ messenger of allah (pbuh), however, kept quiet. at that time he (the prophet (pbuh)) saw a person dressed in white and said, ‘[be abu khaithamah.](#)’ and was abu khaithamah al-ansari was the person who had contributed a sa` of dates and was ridiculed by the hypocrites.” ka`b bin malik further said: “when the news reached me that messenger of allah (pbuh) was on his way back from tabuk, i was greatly distressed. i thought of fabricating an excuse and asked myself how i would save myself from his anger the next day. in this connection, i sought the counsels of every prudent member of my family. when i was told that messenger of allah (pbuh) was about to arrive,

all the wicked ideas vanished (from my mind) and i came to the conclusion that nothing but the truth could save me. so i decided to tell him the truth. it was in the morning that messenger of allah (pbuh) arrived in al-madinah. it was his habit that whenever he came back from a journey, he would first go to the mosque and perform two rak`ah (of optional prayer) and would then sit with the people. when he sat, those who had remained behind him began to put forward their excuses and take an oath before him. they were more than eighty in number. messenger of allah (pbuh) accepted their excuses on the very face of them and accepted their allegiance and sought forgiveness for them and left their insights to allah, until i appeared before him. i greeted him and he smiled and there was a tinge of anger in that. he then said to me, 'come forward'. i went forward and i sat in front of him. he said to me, 'what kept you back? could you not afford to go in for a ride?' i said, 'o messenger of allah, by allah, if i were to sit before anybody else, a man of the world, i would have definitely saved myself from his anger on one pretext or the other and i have a gifted skill in argumentation, but, by allah, i am fully aware that if i were to put forward before you a lame excuse to please you, allah would definitely provoke your wrath upon me. in case, i speak the truth, you may be angry with me, but i hope that allah would be pleased with me (and accept my repentance). by allah, there is no valid excuse for me. by allah, i never possessed so good means, and i never had such favourable conditions for me as i had when i stayed behind.' thereupon, messenger of allah (pbuh) said, 'this man spoke the truth, so get up (and wait) until allah gives a decision about you.' i left and some people of banu salimah followed me. they said to me, 'by allah, we do not know that you committed a sin before. you, however, showed inability to put forward an excuse before messenger of allah (pbuh) like those who stayed behind him. it would have been enough for the forgiveness of your sin that messenger of allah (pbuh) would have sought forgiveness for you.' by allah, they kept on reproaching me until i thought of going back to messenger of allah (pbuh) and retract my confession. then i said to them, 'has anyone else met the same fate?' they said, 'yes, two persons have met the same fate. they made the same statement as you did and the same verdict was delivered in their case.' i asked, 'who are they?' they said, 'murarah bin ar-rabi` al-`amri and hilal bin umaiyyah al-waqifi.' they mentioned these two pious men who had taken part in the battle of badr and there was an example for me in them. i was confirmed in my original resolve.

messenger of allah (pbuh) prohibited the muslims to talk to the three of us from amongst those who had stayed behind. the people began to avoid us and their attitude towards us changed and it seemed as if the whole atmosphere had turned against us, and it was in fact the same atmosphere of which i was fully aware and in which i had lived (for a fairly long time). we spent fifty nights in this very state and my two friends confined themselves within their houses and spent (most of their) time weeping. as i was the youngest and the strongest, i would leave my house, attend the congregational salat, move about in the bazaars, but none would speak to me. i would come to messenger of allah (pbuh) as he sat amongst (people) after the salat, greet him and would ask myself whether or not his lips moved in response to my greetings. then i would perform salat near him and look at him stealthily. when i finish my salat, he would look at me and when i would cast a glance at him he would turn away his eyes from me. when the harsh treatment of the muslims to me continued for a (considerable) length of time, i walked and i climbed upon the wall of the garden of abu qatadah, who was my cousin, and i had a great love for him. i greeted him but, by allah, he did not answer to my greeting. i said to him, `o abu qatadah, i adjure you in the name of allah, are you not aware that i love allah and his messenger (pbuh)?' i asked him the same question again but he remained silent. i again adjured him, whereupon he said, `allah and his messenger (pbuh) know better.' my eyes were filled with tears, and i came back climbing down the wall.

as i was walking in the bazaars of al-madinah, a man from the syrian peasants, who had come to sell food grains in al-madinah, asked people to direct him to ka`b bin malik. people pointed towards me. he came to me and delivered a letter from the king of ghassan, and as i was a scribe, i read that letter whose purport was: `it has been conveyed to us that your friend (the prophet (pbuh)) was treating you harshly. allah has not created you for a place where you are to be degraded and where you cannot find your right place; so come to us and we shall receive you graciously.' as i read that letter i said: 'this is too a trial,' so i put it to fire in an oven. when forty days had elapsed and messenger of allah (pbuh) received no revelation, there came to me a messenger of the messenger of allah and said, `verily, messenger of allah (pbuh) has commanded you to keep away from your wife.' i said, `should i divorce her or what else should i do?' he said, `no, but only keep away from her and don't have sexual contact with her.

‘ the same message was sent to my companions. so, i said to my wife: ‘you better go to your parents and stay there with them until allah gives the decision in my case.’ the wife of hilal bin umaiyyah came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said: ‘o messenger of allah, hilal bin umaiyyah is a senile person and has no servant. do you disapprove if i serve him?’ he said, ‘no, but don’t let him have any sexual contact with you.’ she said, ‘by allah, he has no such desire left in him. by allah, he has been in tears since (this calamity) struck him.’ members of my family said to me, ‘you should have sought permission from messenger of allah (pbuh) in regard to your wife. he has allowed the wife of hilal bin umaiyyah to serve him.’ i said, ‘i would not seek permission from messenger of allah (pbuh) for i do not know what messenger of allah might say in response to that, as i am a young man’. it was in this state that i spent ten more nights and thus fifty days had passed since people boycotted us and gave up talking to us. after i had offered my fajr prayer on the early morning of the fiftieth day of this boycott on the roof of one of our houses, and had sat in the very state which allah described as: ‘the earth seemed constrained for me despite its vastness’, i heard the voice of a proclaimer from the peak of the hill sal’ shouting at the top of his voice: ‘o ka`b bin malik, rejoice.’ i fell down in prostration and came to know that there was (a message of) relief for me. messenger of allah (pbuh) had informed the people about the acceptance of our repentance by allah after he had offered the fajr prayer. so the people went on to give us glad tidings and some of them went to my companions in order to give them the glad tidings. a man spurred his horse towards me (to give the good news), and another one from the tribe of aslam came running for the same purpose and, as he approached the mount, i received the good news which reached me before the rider did. when the one whose voice i had heard came to me to congratulate me, i took off my garments and gave them to him for the good news he brought to me. by allah, i possessed nothing else (in the form of clothes) except these garments, at that time. then i borrowed two garments, dressed myself and came to messenger of allah (pbuh) on my way, i met groups of people who greeted me for (the acceptance of) repentance and they said: ‘congratulations for acceptance of your repentance.’ i reached the mosque where messenger of allah (pbuh) was sitting amidst people. talhah bin `ubaidullah got up and rushed towards me, shook hands with me and greeted me. by allah, no person stood up (to greet me) from amongst the muhajirun besides him.” ka`b said that he never forgot (this good gesture of) talhah.

ka`b further said: “i greeted messenger of allah (pbuh) with `as-salamu `alaikum’ and his face was beaming with pleasure. he (pbuh) said, `re-
joice with the best day you have ever seen since your mother gave you
birth. ‘i said: `o messenger of allah! is this (good news) from you or from
allah?’ he said, `no, it is from allah.’ and it was common with messenger
of allah (pbuh) that when ever he was happy, his face would glow as if
it were a part of the moon and it was from this that we recognized it (his
delight). as i sat before him, i said, i have placed a condition upon myself
that if allah accepts my taubah, i would give up all of my property in chari-
ty for the sake of allah and his messenger (pbuh)!’ thereupon messenger
of allah (pbuh) said, `keep some property with you, as it is better for you.’
i said, ‘i shall keep with me that portion which is in khaibar’. i added: ‘o
messenger of allah! verily, allah has granted me salvation because of my
truthfulness, and therefore, repentance obliges me to speak nothing but
the truth as long as i am alive.” ka`b added: “by allah, i do not know any-
one among the muslims who has been granted truthfulness better than
me since i said this to the prophet (pbuh). by allah! since the time i made
a pledge of this to messenger of allah (pbuh), i have never intended to
tell a lie, and i hope that allah would protect me (against telling lies) for
the rest of my life. allah, the exalted, the glorious, revealed these verses:

‘allah has forgiven the prophet (pbuh), the muhajirun (muslim emigrants
who left their homes and came to al-madinah) and the ansar (muslims
of al-madinah) who followed him (muhammad (pbuh)) in the time of dis-
tress (tabuk expedition), after the hearts of a party of them had nearly
deviated (from the right path), but he accepted their repentance. cer-
tainly, he is unto them full of kindness, most merciful. and (he did forgive
also) the three who did not join [the tabuk expedition and whose case
was deferred (by the prophet (pbuh)) for allah’s decision] till for them the
earth, vast as it is, was straitened and their ownelves were straitened
to them, and they perceived that there is no fleeing from allah, and no
refuge but with him. then, he forgave them (accepted their repentance),
that they might beg for his pardon [repent (unto him)]. verily, allah is the
one who forgives and accepts repentance, most merciful. o you who
believe! be afraid of allah, and be with those who are true (in word and
deeds).” (9:117,118).

ka`b said: “by allah, since allah guided me to islam, there has been no
blessing more significant for me than this truth of mine which i spoke to
messenger of allah (pbuh), and if i were to tell a lie i would have been
ruined as were ruined those who had told lies,

for allah described those who told lies with the worst description he ever attributed to anybody else, as he sent down the revelation:

they will swear by allah to you (muslims) when you return to them, that you may turn away from them. so turn away from them. surely, they are rijusun [i.e., najasun (impure) because of their evil deeds], and hell is their dwelling place - a recompense for that which they used to earn. they (the hypocrites) swear to you (muslims) that you may be pleased with them, but if you are pleased with them, certainly allah is not pleased with the people who are al-fa'siqun (rebellious, disobedient to allah)". (9:95,96)

ka`b further added: "the matter of the three of us remained pending for decision apart from the case of those who had made excuses on oath before messenger of allah (pbuh) and he accepted those, took fresh oaths of allegiance from them and supplicated for their forgiveness. the prophet (pbuh) kept our matter pending till allah decided it. the three whose matter was deferred have been shown mercy. the reference here is not to our staying back from the expedition but to his delaying our matter and keeping it pending beyond the matter of those who made their excuses on oath which he accepted".

[al-bukhari and muslim]

another version adds: "messenger of allah (pbuh) set out for tabuk on thursday. he used to prefer to set out on journey on thursday." another version says: "messenger of allah (pbuh) used to come back from a journey in the early forenoon and went straight to the mosque where he would perform two rak`ah prayer. afterwards he would seat himself there".

commentary: this hadith contains many aspects of warnings and advices, some of which are given below:

1. a muslim should always speak the truth even if he has to face troubles and turmoil for it because the pleasure of allah lies in truth.
2. one must avoid at all costs the attitude of hypocrites because eventually one is ruined by it.
3. in spite of hardship and stringency, one must take part in jihad.

4. for the admonition and exhortation of others, it gives justification for the economic boycott of even sincere muslims who adopt wrong methods.

5. one must face with forbearance the difficulties which come in the way of deen.

6. it is not praiseworthy that one gives in charity all the property he has. one must keep what is needed for the lawful needs.

7. it is lawful to give something by way of gift and reward to a person who congratulates in the events of happiness.

8. the ability to seek pardon is a gift from allah for which one must express gratitude to him.

9. any promise that one makes must be kept, etc. etc.

22. imran bin al-husain al-khuzai (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a woman from the tribe juhainah came to messenger of allah (pbuh) while she was pregnant from (zina) adultery and said to him: "o messenger of allah! i have committed an offense liable to hadd (prescribed punishment), so exact the execution of the sentence." messenger of allah (pbuh) called her guardian and said to him, "treat her kindly. bring her to me after the delivery of the child." that man complied with the orders. at last the prophet (pbuh) commanded to carry out the sentence. her clothes were secured around her and she was stoned to death. the prophet (pbuh) led her funeral prayers. `umar submitted: "o messenger of allah! she committed zina and you have performed funeral prayer for her?" he replied, "verily, she made repentance which would suffice for seventy of the people of al-madinah if it is divided among them. can there be any higher degree of repentance than that she sacrificed her life voluntarily to win the pleasure of allah, the exalted?". [muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following five points:

1. it confirms the validity of the punishment of rajm for the adulterer, that is to say that he should be stoned to death.

2. the merit of sincere pardon.

3. the description of fear of allah as well as of accountability on the day of resurrection by the prophet's companions, and their preference for punishment of sins in this world rather than in the hereafter.

4. it is permissible to perform the funeral prayer of one who has been guilty of major sins, provided he has not been taking them as lawful because in that case there is danger of disbelief..

5. a pregnant woman cannot be punished with rajm until she gives birth to the child and the period specified for suckling the baby is completed.

23. ibn 'abbas and anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "if a son of adam were to own a valley full of gold, he would desire to have two. nothing can fill his mouth except the earth (of the grave). allah turns with mercy to him who turns to him in repentance".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith deals with man's greed and his lust for material wealth. only the person who has a perfect faith can save himself from it.

24. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah, the exalted, smiles at two men, one of them killed the other and both will enter jannah. the first is killed by the other while he is fighting in the cause of allah, and thereafter allah will turn in mercy to the second and guide him to accept islam and then he dies as a shaheed (martyr) fighting in the cause of allah."

[al-bukhari and muslim]

commentary: even the greatest sins, including those which one has committed before embracing islam, are forgiven by repentance.

smiling is also one of the attributes of allah, although we are unaware of the nature of it.

Chapter 3: Patience and Perseverance

allah, the exalted, says:

“o you who believe! endure and be more patient..”. (3:200)

“and certainly, we shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to as-sabirun (the patient)”. (2:155)

“only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning.” (39:10)

“and verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives, that would truly be from the things recommended by allah.” (42:43)

“seek help in patience and as-salat (the prayer). truly, allah is with as-sabirun (the patient).” (2:153)

“and surely, we shall try you till we test those who strive hard (for the cause of allah) and as-sabirun (the patient)” (47:31)

there are numerous verses of the noble qur’an inculcating patience and extolling it.

25. abu malik al-harith bin asim al-ash`ar (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “wudu’ is half of salah; the utterance of (al-hamdu lillah - all praise belongs to allah) fills the scales of good actions; the utterance of (subhan allah wa al-hamdu lillah) (allah is far removed from every imperfection and all praise belongs to allah) fills the space between the heavens and the earth, and salat (prayer) is light; and charity is the proof of faith; and endurance is light, and the qur’an is a plea in your favour or against you. every person departs; he either ransoms it or puts it into perdition”.

[muslim].

commentary:

1. piety in all forms is meritorious. and faith means faith in its perfect form. some people are of the opinion that here faith means salat. purification is essential for salat and this is the reason it is regarded as half of salat.

2. excellence of the remembrance of allah.

3. inducement for concentration on salat because it is a light which provides guidance to a muslim at every step and prevents him from obscenity and unlawful actions.

4. sadaqah signifies a muslim's sincerity and devotion.

5. the praiseworthiness of patience. it is a strong weapon of a muslim which provides him with steadfastness.

6. the qur'an is a means of salvation as well as destruction for a muslim. if one acts upon its orders, it becomes a means of his salvation; if he shuns them, it ruins him.

7. one should not leave oneself idle but keep it busy - busy in some noble work, otherwise it would tend to evil which will eventually ruin him.

8. one should spend this transitory earthly life in the obedience of allah.

26. abu sa'id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: certain people of the ansar asked the messenger of allah (pbuh) and he gave them; then they again asked him and he gave them until all what he possessed was exhausted. then the prophet (pbuh) said, "whatever wealth i have, i will not withhold from you. whosoever would be chaste and modest; allah will keep him chaste and modest and whosoever would seek self-sufficiency, allah will make him self-sufficient; and whosoever would be patient, allah will give him patience, and no one is granted a gift better and more comprehensive than patience".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: besides describing generosity, kindness, munificence and nobility of the prophet (pbuh), he has been ordained by allah to adopt patience, contentment and self-respect and to avoid anyone's favour.

27. abu yahya suhaib bin sinan (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "how wonderful is the case of a believer; there is good for him in everything and this applies only to a believer. if prosperity attends him, he expresses gratitude to allah and that is good for him; and if adversity befalls him, he endures it patiently and that is better for him".

[muslim].

commentary: a muslim is required to behave in poverty and prosperity, affluence and hardship, in the manner stated in this hadith. it means that to forget allah in prosperity, rather than being thankful to him for his favour is defiance of his orders. similarly, it is unbecoming of a muslim that in troubles and turmoil, rather being patient, he tends to weeping and crying, grousing and grieving against the will of allah.

28. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when the last illness of messenger of allah (pbuh) made him unconscious, fatimah (may allah be pleased with her) exclaimed: "ah, the distress of my dear father." he (pbuh) said, "there will be no distress for your father after today". when he died she said: "my father, allah has called you back and you have responded to his call. o father! garden of firdaus is your abode. o father! we announce to jibril your death." when he was buried, she said: "are you satisfied now that you put earth over (the grave of) messenger of allah (pbuh)?"

[al-bukhari]

commentary: this hadith shows that it is permissible to express the trouble and restlessness which one feels at the time of death. similarly, expression of pain and grief in a natural way in the event of someone's death is also permissible. to remember the virtues of the deceased is also permitted but it is to be free from wailing and moaning, lamentation and crying, and tearing off clothes, etc. the last words of fatimah (may allah be pleased with her) are also a way of expressing grief and sadness and not a criticism on the burial of the prophet (pbuh) because such criticism is prohibited by shari`ah and no one is exempted from it.

29. usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with them) narrated: the daughter of the prophet (pbuh) sent for him as her child was dying, but the prophet (pbuh) returned the messenger and sent her good wishes saying, "whatever allah takes away or gives, belongs to him, and everything with him has a limited fixed term (in this world), and so she should be patient and anticipate allah's reward." she again sent for him adjuring him for the sake of allah to come. the messenger of allah, accompanied with sa`d bin `ubadah, mu`adh bin jabal, ubayy bin ka`b, zaid bin thabit and some other men went to see her. the child was lifted up to the messenger of allah while his breath was disturbed in his chest. on seeing that, the eyes of the prophet (pbuh) streamed with tears. sa`d said, "o messenger of allah! what is this?" he replied, "it is compassion which allah has placed in the hearts of his slaves,

allah is compassionate only to those among his slaves who are compassionate (to others)".

another version says: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah shows compassion only to those among his slaves who are compassionate". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. gathering of all the relatives is not necessary at the time of someone's death. however, their participation in the funeral prayer is mustahab fard kifayah (a desirable collective duty upon all muslims; but which is sufficient or equivalent to all having performed it if it is performed by only some of them).

2. the desire of the relatives that at the time of someone's death some pious people should be present is quite genuine so that the agonizing process of death is made easy by their prayers.

3. it is lawful that a trustworthy person is made to take an oath and it is essential for the trustee to fulfill it as it increases the mutual trust and love.

4. to shed tears on someone's death, and to advise the relatives of the deceased for patience and accountability are permissible acts.

5. expression of kindness and love is a gift from allah and means to gain his compassion, while deprivation from it is callousness.

30. suhaib (may allah be pleased with him) reported that the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "there lived a king before you and he had a court magician. as he (the magician) grew old, he said to the king: 'i have grown old, so send me a young boy in order to teach him magic.' the king sent him a young boy to serve the purpose. and on his way (to the magician) the young boy met a monk to whom he listened to and liked it. it became his habit that on his way to the magician, he would meet the monk and sit there and would come to the magician (late). the magician used to beat him because of this delay. he complained about this to the monk who said to him: 'when you feel afraid of the magician, say: members of my family detained me. and when you fear your family, say: the magician detained me.' it so happened that there came a huge beast and it blocked the way of the people,

and the young boy said: 'i will know today whether the magician or the monk is better.' he picked up a stone and said: 'o allah, if the way of the monk is dearer to you than the way of the magician, bring about death to the animal so that the people be able to move about freely.' he threw that stone at it and killed it and the people began to move about freely. he then came to the monk and told him the story. the monk said: 'son, today you are superior to me. you have come to a stage where i feel that you would be soon put to a trial, and in case you are put to a trial, do not reveal me.' that young boy began to heal those born blind and the lepers and he, in fact, began to cure people from all kinds of illnesses. when a courtier of the king who had gone blind heard about him, he came to him with numerous gifts and said, 'if you cure me, all these things will be yours.' he said, 'i myself do not cure anyone. it is allah, the exalted, alone who cures; and if you affirm faith in allah, i shall also supplicate to allah to cure you.' this courtier affirmed his faith in allah and allah cured him. he came to the king and sat by his side as he used to sit before. the king said to him, 'who restored your eyesight?' he said, 'my rubb.' thereupon he said, 'do you have another lord besides me?' he said, 'my rubb and your rubb is allah.' so the king kept torturing him until he revealed the young boy. the young boy was thus summoned and the king said to him, 'o boy, it has been conveyed to me that you have become so much proficient in your magic that you cure the blind and the lepers and you do such and such.' thereupon he said, 'i do not cure anyone; it is allah alone who cures,' and the king took hold of him and began to torture him until he revealed of the monk. the monk was summoned and it was said to him: 'you should turn back from your religion.' but he refused. the king sent for a saw, placed it in the middle of his head and cut him into two parts that fell down. then the courtier of the king was brought forward and it was said to him: 'turn back from your religion.' he, too, refused, and the saw was placed in the midst of his head and he was torn into two parts. then the boy was sent for and it was said to him: 'turn back from your religion.' he refused. the king then handed him over to a group of his courtiers, and said to them: 'take him to such and such mountain; make him climb up that mountain and when you reach its peak ask him to renounce his faith. if he refuses to do so, push him to his death.' so they took him and made him climb up the mountain and he said: 'o allah, save me from them in any way you like,' and the mountain began to shake and they all fell down (dead) and that young boy came walking to the king. the king said to him, 'what happened to your companions?' he said, 'allah has saved me from them.'

' he again handed him to some of his courtiers and said: 'take him and carry him in a boat and when you reach the middle of the sea, ask him to renounce his religion. if he does not renounce his religion throw him (into the water).' so they took him and he said: 'o allah, save me from them.' the boat turned upside down and they all drowned except the young boy who came walking to the king. the king said to him, 'what happened to your companions?' he said, 'allah has saved me from them,' and he said to the king: 'you cannot kill me until you do what i command you to do.' the king asked, 'what is that?' he said, 'gather all people in one place and tie me up to the trunk of a tree, then take an arrow from my quiver and say: with the name of allah, the rubb of the boy; then shoot me. if you do that you will be able to kill me.' the king called the people in an open field and tied the young boy to the trunk of a tree. he took out an arrow from his quiver, fixed in the bow and said, 'with the name of allah, the rubb of the young boy,' he then shot the arrow and it hit the boy's temple. the young boy placed his hand upon the temple where the arrow had hit him and died. the people then said: 'we believe in the rubb of this young boy.' the king was told: 'do you see what you were afraid of, by allah it has taken place; all people have believed.' the king then commanded that trenches be dug and fire lit in them, and said: 'he who would not turn back from his (the young boy's) religion, throw him in the fire' or 'he would be ordered to jump into it.' they did so till a woman came with her child. she felt hesitant in jumping into the fire. the child said to her: 'o mother! endure (this ordeal) for you are on the right path". [muslim].

commentary:

1. the most important lesson of this hadith is that whatever difficulties one has to face on the path of deen, he should endure it with patience and determination; and if interest of the deen requires, one should sacrifice his life for it.
2. the wonders displayed by righteous people are true. when allah's will and wisdom requires, he manifests these wonders through his slaves.
3. it is a proof of the truth of the qur'an that it has retold the great historical event like ashab-ul-ukhdud which, buried in the dust of ages, had long been forgotten.
4. it is not possible to explain and interpret the qur'an without the help of ahadith.

the event of ashsh-ul-ukhdud mentioned in the qur'an is an instance in point. it is the hadith that has brought into light the details of the event and clarified its ambiguity.

5. such incidents are a source of strength for the faith of true believers.

31. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) passed by a woman who was crying over a grave and said, "fear allah and be patient." she said, "away from me! my calamity has not befallen you and you are not aware of it." the woman was later told that it was the prophet (pbuh) (who had advised her). she came to his door where she found no doorkeeper. she said, "(i am sorry) i did not know you." messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "patience is (becoming) only at the first (stroke) of grief".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration in muslim says: the woman was crying over her son.

commentary: this hadith indicates the excellence of the prophet's character. the woman whom he advised to have patience did not behave properly, but the prophet (pbuh) was neither annoyed nor did he reproach her. when she appeared before him for the second time, he again repeated his advice for patience. this hadith has a great lesson for those who call people to the right path. our scholars and preachers should follow this excellent example.

32. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah, the exalted, says: 'i have no reward other than jannah for a believing slave of mine who remains patient for my sake when i take away his beloved one from among the inhabitants of the world'".

[al-bukhari].

commentary: child, wife and parents, etc., are the dearest people to everyone. it is a great sign of faith to accept their death as the will of allah, to bear their loss with patience. wailing and saying nonsense things show weakness of faith. the reward of patience on such tragedies is jannah while the result of impatience is displeasure of allah.

33. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i asked the messenger of allah (pbuh) about pestilence and he said,

“it is a punishment which allah sends upon whomsoever he wills, but allah has made it as a mercy to the believers. anyone who remains in a town which is plagued with pestilence maintaining patience expecting the reward from allah, and knowing that nothing will befall him other than what allah has foreordained for him, he would receive a reward of shaheed”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: to endure patiently in a city where one resides when it is affected by plague or such other epidemics, and not to flee from it, elevates a muslim to the level of shahadah in the way of allah, as is the case in certain other circumstances, like death by drowning or in maternity, etc. this order is based on the consideration that the epidemic should not spread to other cities. on the other hand, residents of other cities are ordered to refrain from visiting the affected city. the hadith clearly shows that it does not go against faith in allah to take steps necessary for prevention and cure. similarly, patience in the event of sickness is a proof of one’s perfect faith in the will of allah.

34. anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: i heard the messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “allah, the glorious and exalted said: `when i afflict my slave in his two dear things (i.e., his eyes), and he endures patiently, i shall compensate him for them with jannah.”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: blindness is the greatest deprivation in the world and allah grants its reward according to his pleasure. for this reason patience in this case is highly meritorious. its reward is jannah provided the blind is enormously rich in faith.

35. `ata’ bin abu rabah reported: ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) asked him whether he would like that he should show him a woman who is from the people jannah. when he replied that he certainly would, he said, “this black woman, who came to the prophet (pbuh) and said, `i suffer from epilepsy and during fits my body is exposed, so make supplication to allah for me.’ he (pbuh) replied: ‘if you wish you endure it patiently and you be rewarded with jannah, or if you wish, i shall make supplication to allah to cure you?’ she said, ‘i shall endure it.’ then she added: `but my body is exposed, so pray to allah that it may not happen.’ he (prophet (pbuh)) then supplicated for her”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: while continuing medical treatment, one should not ignore his prayer to allah because both have importance and utility of their own.

36. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i can still recall as if i am seeing the messenger of allah (pbuh) resembling one of the prophets whose people scourged him and shed his blood, while he wiped blood from his face, he said: "o allah! forgive my people, because they certainly do not know".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: it mentions the refined character and compassion of the prophets which has an important lesson for those who preach righteousness. they should be always prepared to face hardships involved in inviting people to the right path and, instead of retaliation, forgive their audience and pray for their guidance. these noble qualities are extremely important for those who are devoted to preach religion.

37. abu sa`id and abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported that the prophet (pbuh) said: "never a believer is stricken with a discomfort, an illness, an anxiety, a grief or mental worry or even the pricking of a thorn but allah will expiate his sins on account of his patience".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the special grace and mercy of allah for the muslims. it relates how allah turns the hardships and troubles suffered by a muslim into a means of expiation for his sins. but this is only possible if the believer exercises patience. however, if he starts wailing instead of showing patience then beside suffering hardships, he would be deprived of the reward which lies in bearing them patiently. thus, he shall have to take the burden of additional sins also.

38. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i visited the prophet (pbuh) when he was suffering fever. i said, "you seem to be suffering greatly, o messenger of allah." the prophet (pbuh) replied, "yes, i suffer as much as two persons." i said, "is that because you have a double reward?" he replied that that was so and then said, "no muslim is afflicted by a harm, be it the pricking of a thorn or something more (painful than that), but allah thereby causes his sins to fall away just as a tree sheds its leaves".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: prophets have to face more than ordinary troubles and for that reason their reward to bear them is also increased. thus, the excess of hardships and grief is a sign of perfect faith and not a sign of allah's displeasure.

39.abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said: "he whom allah intends good, he makes him to suffer from some affliction".
[al-bukhari].

commentary: troubles of this world like grief, calamity, disease, poverty, loss of life and property, etc., have a benign aspect for a muslim in the sense that on account of them he turns towards allah and begs mercy and compassion from him because of which his sins are forgiven. thus, in these troubles there is a blessing for him in the hereafter.

40.anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "let not one of you wish for death because of a misfortune which befalls him. if he cannot help doing so, he should say: 'o allah, keep me alive as long as you know that life is better for me, and make me die when death is better for me'.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: since man has no knowledge of his future, whether it is good or bad, so one should never desire for one's own death in consequence of frustration created by troubles and turmoil for two reasons. firstly, desire for death is sheer impatience. secondly, it is quite possible that remaining part of his life may be good for his religious and worldly life. so, it is prohibited to desire death. it is, however, permissible to desire for shahadah or death in makkah or al-madinah but it is a subject quite different from the one under discussion. however, if one has to express wish for his own death, he should do so in the words quoted in the hadith concerned.

41.khabbab bin al-aratt (may allah be pleased with him) reported: we complained to the messenger of allah (pbuh) regarding the persecution inflicted upon us by the disbelievers while he was lying in the shade of the ka'bah, having made a pillow of his cloak. we submitted: "why do you not supplicate for our prevalence (over the opponents)?" he (pbuh) replied, "among those people before you, a man would be seized and held in a pit dug for him in the ground and he would be sawed into two halves from his head,

and his flesh torn away from his bones with an iron comb; but, in spite of this, he would not wean away from his faith. by allah, allah will bring this matter to its consummation until a rider will travel from san`a' to hadramout fearing none except allah, and except the wolf for his sheep, but you are in too much of a hurry".

[al-bukhari].

another narration is: he (pbuh) had placed his cloak under his head and we had been tortured by the polytheists.

commentary:

1. difficulties in the path of faith do not come in any particular period. people devoted to their deen have passed through trials and tribulations everywhere and in every age and have emerged purified as does the gold after passing through the furnace. so, it is unbecoming for a muslim to be disturbed by hardships.

2. the glad tidings about domination of religion and peace and security were given in the early period of islam which were subsequently witnessed by the people. even now wherever islam is practised in true sense, peace and security are distinctive features of the system of that country.

42. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: after the battle of hunain, messenger of allah (pbuh) favoured some people in the distribution of spoils (for consolation). he gave al-aqra` bin habis and `uyainah bin hisn a hundred camels each and showed favour also to some more honourable persons among the arabs. someone said: "this division is not based on justice and it was not intended to win the pleasure of allah." i said to myself: "by allah! i will inform messenger of allah (pbuh) of this." i went to him and informed him. his face became red and he said, "who will do justice if allah and his messenger do not?" then he said, "may allah have mercy on (prophet) musa (moses); he was caused more distress than this but he remained patient." having heard this i said to myself: "i shall never convey anything of this kind to him in future".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith leads to the conclusion that the leader of the people or the calipha has a right, if situation demands, to give to the new muslims and other influential and respectable people of the society more than others for their satisfaction and encouragement.

the man who raised objection on the distribution of booty by the prophet (pbuh) was a hypocrite. devout muslims could never think that the prophet (pbuh) could be unjust to anyone. this incident also goes to prove that the prophet (pbuh) also felt as much as others did, the things which infuriated or pleased others, because he was a man and not a superhuman being.

43. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when allah intends good for his slave, he punishes him in this world, but when he intends an evil for his slave, he does not hasten to take him to task but calls him to account on the day of resurrection.”
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith shows that, for a muslim, trials are also a blessing in this world because his sins are forgiven in proportion to the trials he has to face and his reward is increased with the will of allah. thus, a muslim should always be patient and contented in the event of trial because without these qualities he will not have the privilege associated with them. in fact, his impatience would increase his sins even further.

44. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: one of the sons of abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) was ailing. abu talhah went out and the boy died in his absence. when he came back, he inquired, “how is the boy?”. umm sulaim, the mother of the boy, replied, “better than before”. then she placed his evening meal before him and he ate it; and thereafter slept with her. at last, she said to him: “arrange for the burial of the boy”. in the morning, abu talhah went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and informed him of the event. he enquired, “did you sleep together last night?” abu talhah replied in the affirmative, on which the prophet (pbuh) supplicated, “o allah bless them.” thereafter, she gave birth to a boy. abu talhah said to me: “take up the boy and carry him to the prophet (pbuh)” and he sent some dates with him. the prophet (pbuh) enquired, “is there anything with him?” he said; “yes, some dates”. the prophet (pbuh) took a date, chewed it and put it in the mouth of the baby and rubbed the chewed date around the baby’s gum and named him `abdullah.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

the narration in bukhari adds: ibn `uyainah relates that a man from the ansar told him that he had seen nine sons of this `abdullah, every one of whom had committed the noble qur’an to memory.

the narration of muslim says: the son of abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) who was born of umm sulaim died. she (umm sulaim) said to the members of the family: "do not tell abu talhah about his son until i mention it to him myself." abu talhah came (home) and she gave him supper. he ate and drank. she then beautified herself the best way she ever did and he slept with her. when she saw that he was satisfied after sexual intercourse with her, she said, "o abu talhah! if some people borrow something from another family and then (the members of the family) ask for its return, would they refuse to give it back to them." he said, "no". she said, "then hope reward for your son". abu talhah got angry, and said; "you left me uninformed until i stained myself (with sexual intercourse) and then you told me about my son. "he went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and informed him about the matter. thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "**may allah bless the night you spent together!**" he (the narrator) said: she conceived. (one day) messenger of allah (pbuh) was in the course of a journey and she was along with him. when messenger of allah (pbuh) used to come back to al-madinah from a journey, he would not enter it (during the night). when the people came near al-madinah, she felt labour pains. he (abu talhah) remained with her and messenger of allah (pbuh) proceeded on. abu talhah said: "o rubb, you know that i love to go along with messenger of allah (pbuh) when he goes out and enter along with him when he enters, and i have been detained as you see." umm sulaim then said: "o abu talhah, i do not feel (so much pain) as i was feeling earlier, so we better proceed on. so we proceeded on and she felt the labour of delivery as they reached (al-madinah). she gave birth to a male child. my mother said to me: "o anas, none should suckle him until you go to messenger of allah (pbuh) tomorrow morning." the next morning i carried the baby with me to messenger of allah (pbuh), and narrated the rest of the story. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has many lessons for our social life. for instance:

1. the character of a woman of great patience and gratitude is mentioned here. in spite of the death of her child she neither wept and cried nor did she moan and mourn. she was patient to the extent that when her husband came home she looked after all his needs like a loving and obedient wife does and then broke the sad news of the death of their child in a noble manner. thus, this hadith holds the lesson that it is the foremost duty of a wife that she should serve her husband well and provide comfort and peace of mind to him.

2. it is meritorious for a wife to beautify herself at home for her husband.

3. one who in his trouble is contented with the will of allah, certainly gets a reward for it from him.

4. women can also take part with men in jihad and within the prescribed limits render to mujahidun (warriors in the cause of religion) the services such as dressing of the wounded, welfare of the patients, supply of food, etc.

45. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the strong man is not one who is good at wrestling, but the strong man is one who controls himself in a fit of rage.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith instructs oneself to keep in control in order to overcome his rage.

46. sulaiman bin surad (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i was sitting with the prophet (pbuh) when two men began to quarrel and curse each other and the face of one of them turned red and the veins of his neck were swollen (from rage). messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i know of a word, if he were to utter that, his rage would vanish and that is: a`udhu billahi minash-shaitan nir-rajim (i seek refuge with allah from satan, the accursed).” so they (companions) said to him: “the prophet (pbuh) tells you to utter: ‘i seek refuge with allah from satan, the accursed’”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in the event of rage if a person becomes conscious that what he is feeling is a suggestion from satan, he should prevent himself from it; this consciousness is the best remedy to overcome the rage. those who are easily infuriated could make use of this prescription.

47. mu`adh bin anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the one who suppresses anger and has the power to give effect to it, will be called out by allah, the exalted, to the fore-front of the creatures on the day of resurrection and he will be asked to choose any of the virgins (hur) of his liking”. [abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the word `hur' is the plural of `haura', an extremely beautiful woman of fair complexion. the word "ein" is the plural of "aina", woman with large eyes. both the words stand for the most beautiful women who will be awarded to muslims in jannah. this hadith mentions the distinction and reward of self-control of a man who, in spite of being powerful and having the means to avenge, suppresses his rage and does not exercise his power.

48. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man asked the prophet (pbuh) for an advice and he (pbuh) said, "do not get angry". the man repeated that several times and he replied, "do not get angry". [al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. rage which is declared objectionable is the one which concerns worldly affairs but that which is for allah and his religion, that is to say, which occurs on the violation of the injunctions of allah, is meritorious and essential.

2. anyone who gets furious quickly should be advised again and again to control his anger so that he becomes conscious of this weakness and tries to overcome it.

3. rage is a means of fulfillment of satanic aims; so it is a great evil and people are advised to make every effort to prevent themselves from this satanic device.

49. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "a muslim, male or female, continues to remain under trial in respect of his life, property and offspring until he faces allah, the exalted, with no sin record". [at-tirmidhi].

commentary: we come to know from this hadith that muslims are special targets of trials, but a redeeming feature of these trials is that muslims' sins are pardoned through them provided they remain firm in their faith and patience.

50. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: 'uyainah bin hisn came to al-madinah and stayed with his nephew hurr bin qais who was among those whom umar (may allah be pleased with him) showed favour to.

the knowledgeable people (qurra'), whether they were old or young, had the privilege of joining umar's council and he used to consult them. 'uyainah said to hurr: "my nephew, the leader of the believers shows favour to you. will you obtain permission for me to sit with him?" hurr asked `umar and he accorded permission. when `uyainah came into the presence of `umar, he addressed him thus: "o son of khattab, you neither bestow much on us nor deal with us justly." `umar (may allah be pleased with him) got angry and was about to beat him up when hurr said: ``o leader of the believers, allah said to his prophet (pbuh): ' **show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e., don't punish them).**' (7:199) this one is from the ignorants. when hurr recited this, `umar became quite motionless in his seat. he always adhered strictly to the book of allah. [al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. in this hadith, the word `qurra' does not stand for the kind of the `qurra' (reciters) of the present age who are only professional in the art of reciting the qur'an and have a melodious voice, but what it really meant was the class of scholars who were well-versed in its meanings and implications and who could thoroughly distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful, fair and foul. such men used to be the companions of the early noble caliphs. it leads to the conclusion that rulers should choose their advisors from religious scholars and not from those who are given to the world and whose sole aim in life is to amass wealth rather than care about the welfare of the people and whose advice is based on self-ish motives and vested interests.

2. since scholarship and piousness are the foremost qualifications for counsellors and advisors, there is no restriction of age for them.

3. the ruler should always be very considerate and tolerant.

4. the ruler should never hesitate from accepting truth and righteousness.

51. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "**you will see after me favouritism and things which you will disapprove of.**" they submitted: "what do you order us to do (under such circumstances)?" he replied, "**discharge your obligations and ask your rights from allah**".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells that if you have rulers who deny your rights and give themselves and their relatives preference over you then patience is a better recourse. rather than revolting against them, you should seek pardon and forgiveness from allah and pray for his protection against the mischief and tyranny of the rulers provided they do not show outright disbelief.

52. usaid bin hudhair (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: a person from among the ansar said, “o messenger of allah! you appointed such and such person and why do you not appoint me?” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “after me you will see others given preference to you, but you should remain patient till you meet me at the haud (al-kauthar in jannah)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. the prophecy of the prophet (pbuh) came true, which is a miracle as well as an evidence of his truthfulness.

2. the haud (pond) mentioned here is haud al-kauthar which is granted to the prophet (pbuh) in jannah or in the field where people will be assembled on the day of resurrection. there he will offer his followers cups of pure drink with his own hands. it will be such that one who would take it will never feel thirst again.

3. demand for an office is not a pleasant quality. it is, therefore, prohibited to give office to a person who demands it. it is, however, permissible only in case a person feels that he is more competent than others and there is no one else in view who is more intelligent, capable and pious.

53. `abdullah bin abu aufa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) at one time when he confronted the enemy, and was waiting for the sun to set, stood up and said, “o people! do not long for encountering the enemy and supplicate to allah to grant you security. but when you face the enemy, show patience and steadfastness; and keep it in mind that jannah lies under the shade of the swords.” then he invoked allah, saying, “o allah, revealer of the book, disperser of the clouds, defeater of the confederates, put our enemy to rout and help us in over-powering them”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. although great stress has been laid on full preparation and readiness for jihad, it is prohibited to wish for war with enemy.

2. patience is a great weapon of a muslim. in the context of jihad, it means steadfastness, fortitude and fearlessness of death in the battlefield.

3. muslims are ordained not to rely entirely on weapons, material resources and their military prowess. they are advised to pray to allah for victory over their enemy.

Chapter 4: Truthfulness

allah, the exalted, says:

“o you who believe! be afraid of allah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds)”. (9:119)

“...the men and women who are truthful (in their speech and deeds)..”. (33:35)

“...then if they had been true to allah, it would have been better for them”. (47:21)

54. abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “truth leads to piety and piety leads to jannah. a man persists in speaking the truth till he is enrolled with allah as a truthful. falsehood leads to vice and vice leads to the fire (hell), and a person persists on telling lies until he is enrolled as a liar”.’ [agreed upon].

commentary: siddiq (veracious) and kadhdhab (liar) both are adjectives of intensive degree. that is to say, the words stand respectively for someone whose truth has become his second nature; and in the opposite case, one is a liar who is in the habit of telling lies. as one acquires a reputation in this world for his good or bad deeds similar is his position before allah. one who is ranked among the truthful with him is entitled to reward, and if one is a liar, he has to suffer retribution for it. this hadith provides incentive for truthfulness because it is a source of every good deed and contains a warning against lying as it gives rise to all kinds of mischief.

55. hasan bin `ali (may allah be pleased with them) said: i remember (these words) from messenger of allah (pbuh): “give up what is doubtful to you for that which is not doubtful; for truth is peace of mind and falsehood is doubt”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith leads us to the conclusion that one must always avoid doubtful things so that he does not do anything unlawful. this message is repeated in another hadith which says that he who has saved himself from doubts has in fact saved his faith and honour.

56. abu sufyan (may allah be pleased with him) reported, in course of his detailed narration about heraclius when the latter questioned him about the teachings of the prophet (pbuh) he said that: he (pbuh) told (us): “**worship allah alone and do not associate a thing with him; and give up all that your ancestors said.**” he also commands us to perform salat (prayers), to speak the truth, to observe modesty and to strengthen the ties of kinship.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in this hadith an enemy of the prophet (pbuh) acknowledges the veracity of the prophet’s teaching, because abu sufyan (may allah be pleased with him) made this admission when he was a pagan. this hadith is mentioned in detail in sahih al-bukhari.

57. abu thabit from sahl bin hunaif (may allah be pleased with him) said: the prophet (pbuh) said: “**he who asks allah for martyrdom, allah will raise him to the high status of the martyrs, even if he dies on his bed**”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the merit and importance of sincere intention which in fact is so great that by virtue of it allah raises a person’s status to that of a martyr. on the contrary, persons of foul intention will be consigned to hell by allah even if they die in jihad.

58. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported that the messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “**one of the earlier prophets who was out on an expedition proclaimed among his people that no man should follow him who had married a woman with whom he wished to cohabit but had not yet done so, or who had built houses on which he had not yet put the roofs, or who had bought sheep or pregnant she-camels and was expecting them to produce young. he, then, went on the expedition and approached the town at the time of the ‘asr prayer or little before it. he then told the sun that both it and he were under command and prayed allah to hold it back for them, so it was held back till allah gave him victory. he collected the spoils and it (meaning fire) came to devour these, but did not. he said that among the people there was a man who stole from the booty. he told them that a man from every tribe must swear allegiance to him, and when a man’s hand stuck to his,**

he said: “there is thief among you and every individual of your tribe must swear allegiance to me”. (in course of swearing of allegiance,) hands of two or three persons stuck to his hand. he said: “the thief is among you”. they brought him a head of gold like a cow’s head and when he laid it down, the fire came and devoured the spoils. spoils were not allowed to anyone before us, then allah allowed spoils to us as he saw our weakness and incapacity and allowed them to us”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. in the opinion of imam as-suyuti, the prophet (pbuh) referred to in this hadith was prophet yusha` bin nun (joshua). his conduct shows that it is necessary to make suitable arrangements for the worldly needs of those who are engaged in the cause of allah so that they can concentrate on their struggle without any distraction.

2. the lawfulness of the booty of war fought in the way of allah is a specialty of the muslim ummah. before the advent of islam (the shar`iah of prophet muhammad (pbuh)), the booty of war which was free from dishonesty used to be consumed by fire. this hadith also confirms the miracle of the prophet yusha` (joshua) in which the movement of the sun was stopped until he had conquered the village.

59. hakim bin hizam (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “both parties in a business transaction have a right to annul it so long as they have not separated; and if they tell the truth and make everything clear to each other (i.e., the seller and the buyer speak the truth, the seller with regard to what is purchased, and the buyer with regard to the money) they will be blessed in their transaction, but if they conceal anything and lie, the blessing on their transaction will be eliminated.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here, the two persons engaged in business are seller and buyer. the word ‘right’ here means that so far both of them are present at the spot where business is being transacted they have a right to cancel their bargain. in other words, even after the mutual acceptance of the terms of the bargain so long as they are present at the spot they are entitled to cancel the deal until the time they separate from each other. generally, people do not think it permissible to cancel the bargain after it has been settled even though both parties are present there, but this is not correct. their view is contradicted by the hadith. truthfulness is a means of blessings in the business while falsehood and hiding of any defect of the merchandise detract from its blessings.

Chapter 5: Watchfulness

allah, the exalted, says:

“who sees you (o muhammad (pbuh)) when you stand up (alone at night for tahajjud prayers). and your movements among those who fall prostrate (to allah in the five compulsory congregational prayers)”. (26:218,219)

“and he is with you (by his knowledge) wheresoever you may be”. (57:4)

“truly, nothing is hidden from allah, in the earth or in the heaven”. (3:5)

“verily, your rubb is ever watchful (over them)”. (89:14)

“allah knows the fraud of the eyes, and all that the breasts conceal”. (40:19)

60. ‘umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with them) said: once we were sitting in the company of messenger of allah (pbuh) when there appeared a man dressed in very white clothes and having extraordinary black hair. no signs of fatigue of journey appeared on him and he was known to none of us. he sat down facing the prophet (pbuh) leaning his knees against the knees of the prophet (pbuh) and placing both of his palms over his two thighs and said, “o muhammad (pbuh)! tell me about islam”. he (pbuh)replied, “islam is to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but allah, and that muhammad (pbuh) is the messenger of allah; that you observe salat (prayers), pay zakat, observe saum (fasting) of ramadan and perform hajj (pilgrimage) of the house, provided you have resources of making journey to it.” he replied: “you have spoken the truth”. we were surprised to see that he had asked him and confirmed the correctness of the answers. he then enquired: “tell me about iman”. he (pbuh) said. “it is to believe in allah, and his books, and his messengers and the last day and that you believe in foreordainment, its bad and good consequences.” he said, “you have spoken the truth.” he then enquired: “tell me about ihsan.” he (pbuh) said, “it is to worship allah as if you are seeing him; and although you do not see him, he sees you”. he enquired: “inform me about the hour (i.e., the day of resurrection)”. he (pbuh) replied, “i have no more knowledge thereof than you”. he said, “inform me about some of its signs”. he (pbuh) said, “they are - that a bondswoman gives birth to her own master, and that you will find the barefooted, naked, poor shepherds competing one another in the construction of higher buildings”. then he departed. the messenger of allah kept silent for a while then he said to me, “o `umar! do you know who the questioner was?” i replied, “allah and his messenger know better”. the prophet (pbuh) said, “he was jibril (gabriel); he came to you to teach you your religion”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith is known as 'hadith jibril'. it mentions the basics of islam the details of which are known to every muslim. al-qadr (divine foreordainment) means that allah already knows and had recorded everything that will happen until the day of resurrection. now whatever happens is in accordance with that knowledge and writing. what is meant by its good and bad consequences can be illustrated by saying that tranquillity, prosperity and abundance of crops come in the category of good consequences. famine, calamities and troubles, etc., fall in the list as evil consequences. but we regard them good or bad according to our own understanding; otherwise, every action of allah has some wisdom and expedience which are known to him alone.

61. abu dharr and mu`adh bin jabal (may allah be pleased with them) reported that: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "fear allah wherever you are, do good deeds after doing bad ones, the former will wipe out the latter, and behave decently towards people".
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: virtue obliterates vice means that virtue becomes an atonement for sin. but this applies to minor sins only because major ones will not be forgiven without sincere repentance. similar is the case of encroachment on public rights which will not be forgiven without their compensation.

62 ibn abbas (may allah be pleased with them) said: one day, i was riding behind the prophet (pbuh) when he said, "o boy! i will instruct you in some matters. be watchful of allah (commandments of allah), he will preserve you. safeguard his rights, he will be ever with you. if you beg, beg of him alone; and if you need assistance, supplicate to allah alone for help. and remember that if all the people gather to benefit you, they will not be able to benefit you except that which allah had foreordained (for you); and if all of them gather to do harm to you, they will not be able to afflict you with anything other than that which allah had pre-destined against you. the pens had been lifted and the ink had dried up".
[at-tirmidhi].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "safeguard the commandments of allah, you will find him before you. remember him in prosperity and he will remember you in adversity. be sure that which you miss, was not to hit you; and what hits you, was never to miss you. remember that the help of allah is obtained with patience,

and relief emerges after distress, prosperity follows adversity, and hardship is followed by ease”.

commentary:

1. no one has the power to change the decision of allah.
2. whatever trouble one has to suffer in this world, it does not last for ever. every trouble is followed by prosperity, pleasure and happiness.
3. one should never ask other than allah anyone’s help in supernatural way because it amounts to ascribing partnership with allah. if a person is mindful of the rights of allah, then allah, in return takes care of his needs and helps him.

63. anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: you indulge in (bad) actions which are more insignificant to you than a hair while we considered them at the time of messenger of allah (pbuh) to be great destroying sins”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the less fear of allah, one has the more disobedient he becomes to him. as the fear of allah decreases, one becomes more bold in committing sins. as the companions of the prophet (pbuh) were intensely fearful of allah, they were afraid of committing even very minor sins.

64. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, ‘verily, ‘allah, the exalted, becomes angry, and his anger is provoked when a person does what allah has declared unlawful”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: commitment of unlawful acts calls for the displeasure and wrath of allah.

65. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) said that: he heard the prophet (pbuh) said: “there were three men among the banu israel, one leper, one bald and one blind. allah wanted to test them. he therefore, sent to them an angel who came to the leper and asked him what he would like best. he replied: “a good colour, a good skin and to be rid of what makes me loathsome to people”. he (the angel) rubbed him and his loathsomeness vanished and he was given a good colour and a good skin. he then asked him what type of property he would like best.

the leper replied that he would like camels - [or perhaps he said cattle, for ishaq (one of the subnarrator of the hadith) was uncertain, either said: 'camels,' or: 'cattle']. he was given a pregnant she-camel. the angel invoked for allah's blessing on it. the angel then went to the bald man and asked him what he would like best and he replied: "good hair and to be rid of what makes me loathsome to people". the angel ran his hand over him and he was given good hair. he then asked him what property he would like best. he replied that he would like cattle, so he was given a pregnant cow. the angel invoked allah's blessing on it. the angel then went to the blind man and asked him what he would like best, and he replied: "i wish that allah restore my sight to me so that i may see people." thereupon the angel ran his hand over him and allah restored his sight. the angel then asked what property he would like best. he replied that he would like sheep, so he was given a pregnant ewe. flocks and herds were produced for the three men, the first having a valley full of camels, the second one, a valley full of cows and the third one full of sheep. then the angel came in the form of a leper, to the one who had been a leper, and said: "i am a poor man and my resources have been exhausted in my journey, and my only means of reaching my destination are dependent on allah and then on you, so i ask you by him who gave you the good colour, the good skin and the property, for a camel by which i may get to my destination". he replied: "i have many dues to pay." the angel then said: "i think i recognize you. were you not a leper whom people found loathsome and a poor man to whom allah gave property?" he replied: "i inherited this property through generations". the angel said: "if you are telling a lie, may allah return you to your former condition". the angel went in the form of a bald man to the one who had been bald, and said the same as he had said to the former and received a similar reply. so he said: "if you are telling a lie, may allah return you to your former condition". the angel then went to the one who had been blind and said: "i am a poor traveller and my resources have been exhausted in my journey. my only means of reaching my destination are dependant on allah and then on you, so i ask you by him who restored your eyesight for a sheep by which i may get to the end of my journey". he replied: "yes, i was blind. allah restored my eyesight, so take what you wish and leave what you wish. i swear by allah that i shall not argue with you today to return anything you take, as i give it for allah's sake". the angel said: "keep your property. you have all simply been put to a test, and allah is pleased with you and displeased with both of your companions".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that abundance of property and wealth is also a trial. he alone succeeds in this trial who in the midst of his riches does not forget about allah's status and his own status. rather than becoming proud of his wealth, he takes pleasure in spending it in fulfilling the needs of people and expresses gratitude to him in practical terms. those who take an opposite course are regarded unsuccessful because on account of their wrong attitude, they tend to falsehood, pride and miserliness which cause the displeasure of allah.

66. shaddad bin aus (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "a wise man is the one who calls himself to account (and refrains from doing evil deeds) and does noble deeds to benefit him after death; and the foolish person is the one who subdues himself to his temptations and desires and seeks from allah the fulfillment of his vain desires".
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith highlights the importance of the accountability of one's self. mere desires which are not coupled with practical efforts are of no avail because allah grants reward on good deeds and not on yearnings and desires which are not supported by noble actions.

67. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "it is from the excellence of (a believer's) islam that he should shun that which is of no concern to him".
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith lays down a very important principle that one should avoid senseless talk and actions. if one acts upon this principle, he can save himself from many sins and evils.

68. `umar (may allah be pleased with him) reported that: the prophet (pbuh) said, "no man shall be asked for the reason of beating his wife".
[abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith is also reported by ibn majah and ahmad. sheikh al-albani* has classified this hadith as 'weak' since its narration is not authenticated, therefore its contents are also not valid. islam has not given the husbands absolute right over their wives and that they will not be questioned in the hereafter or that they should not be questioned for their action and misbehaviour with the wives. on the contrary,

islam has stressed upon them to be lenient and tender in relation with wives; and this means that they will be taken to task for any wrong and injustice done by them to their wives.

* sh. al-albani is the leading authority in the science of hadith.

Chapter 6: Piety

allah, the exalted, says:

“o you who believe! fear allah as he should be feared”. (3:102)

“so, keep your duty to allah and fear him as much as you can...” (64:16)

this second verse explains the meaning of the first one.

“o you who believe! keep your duty to allah and fear him, and speak (always) the truth”. (33:70)

“... and whosoever fears allah and keeps his duty to him, he will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). and he will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine...” (65:2,3)

“if you obey and fear allah, he will grant you furqan [(a criterion to judge between right and wrong), or (makhraj, i.e., a way for you to get out from every difficulty)], and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you; and allah is the owner of the great bounty”. (8:29)

69. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: it was asked, “o messenger of allah! who is the most honourable amongst mankind?” he (pbuh) said, “the most honourable of them is one who is the most pious of them.” they said, “we are not asking about this”. he said, “then, the most honourable of men was yusuf (joseph), the prophet of allah, the son of allah’s prophet, who was the son of the prophet of allah, who was the son of the khalil of allah (i.e., ibrahim (pbuh))’ they said, “we are not asking you about this.” he enquired, “are you then asking me about the classes of the arabs? the best of them in the pre-islamic period of ignorance are the best of them in islam, provided they comprehend the religious knowledge”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: we come to know from this hadith that the families which enjoyed popularity and prestige for their eminent qualities (like generosity, chivalry, honesty, etc.) in the pre-islamic period were also credited for these values after their acceptance of islam. but now their respect was qualified with their religious knowledge and practice. their capabilities, self-respect and other qualities were turned towards a different direction. these qualities which were previously used for paganism were now devoted for islam.

70. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the life of the world is sweet and green. allah makes you generations succeeding one another so that he may try you in respect of your actions. so beware of the beguilements of the world and those of women. the first trial of banu israel was through women”. [muslim].

commentary: wealth and property of this world are favourites of everyone like the fresh fruit which is sweet, delicious and attractive for all. everyone likes them and is attracted towards them. the most delicious fruit of this world is woman but at the same time it is the most baneful. one who inclines towards wealth and women and ignores the islamic legal injunctions, has at stake both his deen and faith; and one who benefits from them keeping oneself within the bounds of islam, would be safe from their ruinous effects.

71. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported that the prophet (pbuh) used to say: “allahumma inni as`alukal-huda wat-tuqa wal-`afafa wal-ghina (o allah! i ask you for guidance, piety, chastity and self-sufficiency)”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith contains four words, the meanings and implications of which constitute its essence. these words are guidance, piety (fear of allah), chastity and sufficiency. guidance here means guidance at every turn of life and steadfastness on the path of truth. fear of allah is the greatest means of piety and strongest defense against sins. chastity is the state of being free from what is unlawful. self-sufficiency is the antonym of poverty and here it means the self-contentment. what it implies is that one should not care for what people possess. in view of all these qualities, the prayer of the prophet (pbuh) mentioned in this hadith is very comprehensive and valuable.

72. `adi bin hatim at-ta`i (may allah be pleased with him) said: i heard the messenger of allah (pbuh) say: “he who has taken an oath (to do something) but found something else better than that (which brings him closer to allah), then he should do that which is better in piety (and he should expiate for the breaking of oath)”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith emphasizes the importance of having the fear of allah. so much so that if somebody has made a vow to commit some sin he should break it, arrange for its expiation and keep himself away from that sin or any other act that contravenes the fear of allah.

73. abu umamah (may allah be pleased with him) said: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) during the sermon of the farewell pilgrimage saying, "be mindful of your duty to allah; perform your five daily salat, observe saum during the month (of ramadan) , pay the zakat on your properties and obey your leaders; (if you do so) you will enter the jannah of your rubb".

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the word wada` , means to say farewell. the farewell pilgrimage was the last pilgrimage, the prophet (pbuh) performed, and on this occasion he bade farewell to the people and for this reason it came to be known as hajjat-ul-wada` . obedience of the rulers is stressed but it is conditional, that is to say, they are to be obeyed only if their orders are not against the injunctions of allah. similarly, their obedience is obligatory till such time that they do not do anything which amounts to open disbelief. if any of these two things occurs, then no obedience would be due to them.

Chapter 7: Firm Belief and Perfect Reliance on Allah

allah, the exalted, says:

“and when the believers saw al-ahzab (the confederates), they said: ‘this is what allah and his messenger (muhammad (pbuh)) had promised us, and allah and his messenger (muhammad (pbuh)) had spoken the truth, and it only added to their faith and to their submissiveness (to allah)’. (33:22)

“those (i.e., believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, ‘verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them.’ but it (only) increased them in faith, and they said: ‘allah (alone) is sufficient for us, and he is the best disposer of affairs (for us)’. so they returned with grace and bounty from allah. no harm touched them; and they followed the good pleasure of allah. and allah is the owner of great bounty”. (3:173,174)

“and put your trust (o muhammad (pbuh)) in the ever living one who dies not.” (25:58)

“and in allah (alone) let the believers, put their trust.” (14:11)

“... then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in allah...” (3:159)

“and whosoever puts his trust in allah, then he will suffice him”. (65:3)

“the believers are only those who, when allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts; and when his verses (this qur’an) are recited unto them, they (i.e., the verses) increase their faith; and they put their trust in their rubb (alone).” (8:2)

74. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i was shown the past nations. i saw a prophet who had a very small group (less than ten in total) with him, another prophet who was accompanied by only one or two men and some did not have even one. suddenly i was shown a huge crowd and i thought that they were my ummah, but i was told: ‘this is musa (moses) and his people, but look towards the other side.’ i looked and beheld a great assemblage. i was told: ‘these are your people and amongst them there are seventy thousand who shall enter jannah without being taken to account or torment”.

then the prophet (pbuh) stood up and went into his apartment, and the companions began to guess who may be those people who would enter jannah without any accounting or torment. some said: “probably, they are the ones who kept company with messenger of allah (pbuh)”. others said: “probably, they are the ones who have been born as muslims and have never associated anyone with allah in worship”. then messenger of allah (pbuh) came out and asked, “what are you discussing?” so they told him. he then said, “they are those who do not make ruqyah (blowing over themselves after reciting the qur’an or some prayers and supplications the prophet (pbuh) used to say) nor seek it, nor perceive omens (i.e., they are not pessimistic) but keep trust in their rubb (allah).” on this ‘ukashah bin mihsan stood up and asked: “pray to allah to make me one of them.” the prophet (pbuh) said, “you are one of them.” then another man stood up and asked the same thing. the prophet (pbuh) answered, “‘ukashah has surpassed you”.

[al-bukhari and mulsim].

commentary:

1. this hadith mentions the importance of faith in allah, inducement for having trust in him and the distinction of people who have these qualities.

2. although the practice of blowing over someone after reciting the qur’an or supplications of the prophet (pbuh) and medical treatment are permissible but they who avoid them because of their extreme trust in allah and save themselves from bad omen, enjoy a distinguished position.

3. these conditions of various communities were shown to the prophet (pbuh) in dreams for the dreams of the prophets reflect the truth, or by means of revelation, or he had witnessed them in the event of isra (the night journey) of the prophet (pbuh).

4. the followers of the prophet (pbuh) exceed the followers of other prophets in number.

75. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported that the messenger of allah (pbuh) used to supplicate: “o allah! to you i have submitted, and in you do i believe, and in you i put my trust, to you do i turn, and for you i argued. o allah, i seek refuge with you through your power; there is none worthy of worship except you alone; that you safeguard me against going astray. you are the ever living,

the one who sustains and protects all that exists; the one who never dies, whereas human beings and jinn will all die”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

76. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) said: when (prophet) ibrahim (abraham) was thrown into the fire, he said: “allah (alone) is sufficient for us, and, he is the best disposer of affairs.” so did messenger of allah muhammad (pbuh) when he was told: “a great army of the pagans had gathered against him, so fear them”. but this (warning) only increased him and the muslims in faith and they said: “allah (alone) is sufficient for us, and he is the best disposer of affairs (for us)”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: even in the worst circumstances one should always have faith and trust in allah.

77. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “a group of people (both men and women) whose hearts will be like the hearts of birds, will enter jannah”.

[muslim].

it has been interpreted that such people are those who put their trust in allah; another interpretation is that these people are tender-hearted.

commentary:

1. excellence of trust in allah and kindness of heart are most valuable qualities because both of them are means to enter jannah.

2. one should not worry much about one’s food and means of subsistence. in fact, people should have the heart like birds who do not collect to keep in reserve anything and go out every morning in search of food and return to their nests fully satiated. this advice is repeated in another hadith to the effect that when birds leave their nests in the morning they are hungry but when they come back, their stomachs are full and they do not need any more food.

78. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i went in an expedition along with the prophet (pbuh) in the direction of najd. when messenger of allah (pbuh) returned, i also returned with him. then the mid-day sleep overtook us in a valley full of prickly shrubs. messenger of allah (pbuh) got down and the people scattered around seeking shade under the trees.

messenger of allah (pbuh) hang up his sword on the branch of a tree. we were enjoying a sleep when messenger of allah (pbuh) called us, and lo! there was a desert arab bedouin near him. he (pbuh) said, “this man brandished my sword over me while i was asleep. i woke up and saw it in his hand unsheathed. he asked: ‘who will protect you from me?’ i replied: ‘allah’ - thrice”. he did not punish him and sat down. [al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration, jabir (may allah be pleased with him) said: we accompanied messenger of allah (pbuh) in the campaign of dhat-ur-riqa`. we left messenger of allah (pbuh) to take rest under a shady tree. one of the polytheists came to him. the sword of messenger of allah (pbuh) was hanging on a tree. he drew it and said: “are you afraid of me?” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “no”. then he said: “who will then protect you from me?” messenger of allah (pbuh) replied, “allah”.

and in a narration of abu bakr al-isma`ili, the polytheist asked: “who will protect you from me?” messenger of allah (pbuh) replied, “allah.” as soon as he said this, the sword fell down from his hand and messenger of allah (pbuh) catching the sword, asked him, “who will protect you from me.” he said, “please forgive me.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on condition you testify that there is none worthy of worship but allah and that i am his messenger.” he said, “no, but i promise you that i shall not fight against you, nor shall i be with those who fight with you”. the prophet (pbuh) let him go. he then went back to his companions and said: “i have come to you from one of the best of mankind”.

commentary: besides the prophet’s habit of pardoning, and gracious attitude, this hadith mentions his utmost trust in allah. it tells that one who has trust in allah is helped by him. later on, the bedouin mentioned in the hadith embraced islam. in the battle of dhat-ur-riqa` which took place in the sixth year of the hijra, due to intense heat and lack of footwear, the companions of the prophet (pbuh) wrapped their feet with pieces of cloth and for this reason it was called “war of patches of cloth (dhat-ur-riqa`)”. some scholars have also given a different reason for this name.

79. `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying: “if you all depend on allah with due reliance, he would certainly give you provision as he gives it to birds who go forth hungry in the morning and return with full belly at dusk”. [at-tirmidhi].

commentary: trust in allah does not mean that one should not give any importance to material resources. what it really means is that along with their due importance, one should have full trust in allah. without his will, material resources are of no avail. but nevertheless it is necessary to have material resources because their procurement is also ordained by him. birds do not keep sitting in their nests for food but fly out in search of it.

80. al-bara' bin `azib (may allah be pleased with them) said: messenger of allah (pbuh) asked me to recite whenever i go to bed: "allahumma aslamtu nafsi ilaika, wa wajjahtu wajhi ilaika, wa fawwadtu amri ilaika, wal-ja'tu zahri ilaika, raghbatan wa rahbatan ilaika, la malja wa la manja minka illa ilaika. amantu bikitabikal-ladhi anzalta, wa nabiiyyikal-ladhi arsalta (o allah! i have submitted myself to you, i have turned my face to you, entrusted my affairs to you; and committed my back to you out of desire for you and fear of you; expecting your reward and fearing your punishment). there is no refuge and no place of safety from you but with you. i believe in the book you have revealed and in the prophet you have sent." messenger of allah (pbuh) said that if anyone recited these words and died that night, he would die in the true religion. in case he remains alive till morning, he will obtain good. [al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration: he reported messenger of allah (pbuh) as saying: "if you go to bed, perform the salat wudu', lie down on your right side and say [the above du`a (supplication)] and let these words be your last".

commentary: it is better to make wudu' before going to sleep. similarly, it is also meritorious to recite the invocation mentioned in the hadith before one goes to bed, because it is a prayer for the renewal of islam and faith and request for grant of peace and security.

81. abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah be pleased with him) said: when messenger of allah (pbuh) and i were in the cave of thaur and i saw the feet of the polytheists who were above us at the mouth of the cave (on the eve of the emigration), i submitted: "o messenger of allah! if one of them were to look down below his feet, he would see us". he (pbuh) said, "o abu bakr! what do you think of two whose third is allah". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this incident occurred when the prophet (pbuh) was emigrating from makkah to al-madinah with abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah be pleased with him) the disbelievers had announced a huge reward for their arrest for which people were searching them wildly. in the course of their search, some of them reached the mouth of the cave of thaur where the prophet (pbuh) and abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) were staying for refuge and rest. this hadith describes the valour, fearlessness and unlimited confidence and trust of the prophet (pbuh) in allah; it also indicates how allah helps his favourites. see verse (40:51) of the qur'an in this regard.

82. umm salamah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: whenever the prophet (pbuh) stepped out of his house, he would say, "bismillah, tawakkaltu `alallah. allahumma inni a`udhu bika an adilla aw udalla, aw azilla aw uzalla, aw azlima aw uzlama, aw ajhala aw yujhala `alayya". "[i go forth. (i begin with the name of allah, i trust in allah; o allah! i seek refuge in you from leaving or being led astray, or against slipping or being caused to slip; or doing injustice or being done injustice; or doing wrong or having wrong done to me)]".

[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi reported it. according to at-tirmidhi, this hadith is classified as hasan sahih. its wording is from abu dawud].

83. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "whoever says (upon leaving his house): `bismillah, tawakkaltu `alallah, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah [i begin with the name of allah; i trust in allah; there is no altering of conditions but by the power of allah], it will be said to him: 'you are guided, defended and protected.' the devil will go far away from him".

[abu dawud, at-tirmidhi and an-nasa'i].

abu dawud reported it with this addition: "one devil will say to another: 'how can you deal with a man who has been guided, defended and protected?'".

commentary: the prayer quoted in this hadith shows the importance of confidence and trust in allah and request for security against the mischief of satan.

84. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: there were two brothers in the days of the prophet (pbuh). one of them used to attend the prophet's circle (to acquire knowledge) and the other used to earn their living). once the latter complained to the prophet (pbuh) against the former (for not earning his living). he (pbuh) replied, "perhaps you are being provided because of him".
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith evidently shows that it is permissible and desirable to devote oneself or make someone else to devote himself for religious knowledge. such students of religious knowledge should not be considered a burden. similarly, one should also not ignore those students and scholars who are devoted to such knowledge because allah makes their help a means of increasing the donor's sources of subsistence.

Chapter 8: Uprightness and Steadfastness

allah, the exalted, says:

“so stand (ask allah to make) you (muhammad (pbuh)) firm and straight (on the religion of islamic monotheism) as you are commanded...” (11:112)

“verily, those who say: ‘our rubb is allah (alone),’ and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): ‘fear not, nor grieve! but receive the glad tidings of jannah which you have been promised! we have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the hereafter. therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask. an entertainment from (allah), the oft-forgiving, most merciful.’” (41:30-32)

“verily, those who say: ‘our rubb is (only) allah,’ and thereafter stand firm and straight (on the islamic faith of monotheism), on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. such shall be the dwellers of jannah, abiding therein (forever), - a reward for what they used to do.” (46:13,14)

85. sufyan bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i said, “o messenger of allah, tell me something of islam which i will not ask anyone else about it.” he (pbuh) said, “say, ‘i believe in allah’ and then be steadfast”. [muslim].

commentary: steadfastness means adhering firmly to the injunctions of islam, to act upon what is ordained and avoid what is prohibited, to perform dutifully orders in respect of obligations and what is regarded desirable and avoid what is unlawful. faith is not a mere expression of shahadah. the real faith is one which is coupled with its actual practice because practice of religion is in fact the fruit of faith. a tree which does not bear any fruit, has no value, similarly; faith becomes meaningless without practice. steadfastness is the mark of perfect faith.

86. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “follow the right path of faith strictly, and be steadfast; and keep in mind that none of you can achieve salvation through his (good) actions.” someone asked, “not even you, o messenger of allah?” he (pbuh) said, “not even me, unless allah grants me his mercy and grace”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that although the importance of faith and its practice is beyond any shadow of doubt, because this is the only way to attain his favours and blessings, but one should not entirely depend upon practice only because any shortcoming (which one does not even know) can ruin a good deed. it is, therefore, essential that we also pray that our good deeds are accepted by allah and that he grants us his infinite mercy and sincerity because even the greatest noble deed is invalid without it.

Chapter 9: Pondering over the Great Creation of Allah

allah, the exalted, says:

“i exhort you to one (thing) only: that you stand up for allah’s sake in pairs and singly, - and reflect (within yourselves the life history of the prophet (pbuh))”. (34:46)

“verily! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. those who remember allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): ‘our rubb! you have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to you! (exalted be you above all that they associate with you as partners)’. (3:190,191)

“do they not look at the camels, how they are created? and at the heaven, how it is raised? and at the mountains, how they are rooted (and fixed firm)? and at the earth, how it is spread out? so remind them (o muhammad (pbuh)), you are only a one who reminds”. (88:17-21)

“have they not travelled through the earth, and seen..”. (47:10)

ayat of the qur’an and ahadith on the subject are many. see for example hadith no. 66 mentioned before.

Chapter 10: Hastening to do Good Deeds

allah, the exalted, says:

“so hasten towards all that is good”. (2:148)

“and march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your rubb, and for jannah as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for al-muttaqun (the pious)”. (3:133)

87. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. a man would be a believer in the morning and turn to disbelief in the evening, or he would be a believer in the evening and turn disbeliever in the morning, and would sell his faith for worldly goods.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells that the day of resurrection will be preceded by a long chain of calamities. because of the rush of these calamities, religion and faith will loose their value in people. there will be a race for wealth, so much so that people would not hesitate to compromise their religion and faith to acquire wealth. people will rapidly change their faces. this is what actually happening. in this situation true believers are exhorted to adhere strictly to faith and perform noble deeds without delay.

88. `uqbah bin al-harith (may allah be pleased with him) said: once i performed the 'asr prayer in al-madinah behind the prophet (pbuh). he (pbuh) got up quickly after finishing the prayer with taslim, and stepping over the people, went to one of the rooms of his wives. the people were startled at his haste, and when he came out and saw their astonishment at his urgency he said, “i recalled that there was left with me some gold which was meant for charity; i did not like to keep it any longer, so i gave orders that it should be distributed”.

[al-bukhari].

in another narration, messenger of allah said, “i had left some gold for sadaqah in the house, and did not wish to keep it overnight”.

commentary:

1. a person should not keep such a thing because of which his attention is diverted from allah (swt) towards that thing.

2. although it is undesirable to jump over the neck of people in ordinary circumstances but it is permissible when special conditions warrant it.

89. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man, said to the prophet (pbuh) during the battle of uhud: “tell me where i shall be if i am killed”. when he (pbuh) replied that he would be in jannah, the man threw away some dates which he had in his hand and fought until he was killed. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the passion of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) for jihad and its reward which is jannah. it also says that if a person heartily desires martyrdom, allah certainly grants him this distinction and honour.

90. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) said: there came a man to the prophet (pbuh) and said, “o messenger of allah, which charity is the most rewardable?” he (pbuh) said, “that you should give charity (in a state when you are) healthy and stingy and fear poverty, hoping to become rich (charity in such a state of health and mind is the best). and you must not defer (charity to such a length) that you are about to die and would be saying: ‘this is for so-and-so, and this for so-and-so.’ lo! it has already come into (the possession of) so-and-so”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: charity in the real sense is that which a person gives when he is healthy. if a person gives charity when he is facing death, it does not have much value before allah. moreover, in that condition he cannot give more than one-third of his property in charity because then it becomes the property of his successors, which cannot be spent even in the way of allah. for this reason allah has prescribed a limit in this respect, according to which if a person going through a mortal disease wants to give his property in charity or donate it for some charitable purpose, he cannot spend more than one-third of it on this account. this injunction is an inducement for people to hurry in doing good deeds, especially in the matter of alms and charity. in fact, he should do it without delay.

91. anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: messenger of allah (pbuh) took up a sword on the day of the battle of uhud and said, “who will take this sword from me?” everyone stretched forth his hand saying: “i will take it; i will take it”. he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “who will take it with its full responsibility (i.e., to use it to fight allah’s enemies with it)?” the companions hesitated.

abu dujanah (may allah be pleased with him) said: “i shall take it;” and with it he cracked the skulls of the pagans.
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the chivalry and distinction of abu dujanah (may allah be pleased with him) but it should not be taken to mean that other companions of the prophet (pbuh) showed cowardice on that occasion. the latter had in fact hesitated to get the honour and reward attached with the prophet’s sword. it is evident from the fact that when the prophet (pbuh) offered it without any condition everyone stretched his hand to take it.

92. az-zubair bin `adi said: we went to anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) and complained to him of suffering at the hands of al-hajjaj. he replied: “show endurance, for no time will come but will be followed by one worse (than the present one) till you meet your rubb. i heard this from your prophet (pbuh)”.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith contains the prediction that with the passage of time, conditions will become from bad to worse with the result that rulers would become more and more cruel. in such circumstances, the remedy suggested here is that rather than making any effort to reform the rulers, one should try to reform oneself and worry to make one’s own life in the hereafter, and endure patiently the tyrannies perpetrated by the rulers.

93. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “hasten to do good deeds before you are overtaken by one of the seven afflictions.” then (giving a warning) he said, “are you waiting for such poverty which will make you unmindful of devotion; or prosperity which will make you corrupt, or disease as will disable you, or such senility as will make you mentally unstable, or sudden death, or ad-dajjal who is the worst expected absent, or the hour, and the hour will be most grievous and most bitter”.
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the purpose of this hadith is that before overcoming of the obstructions, one should do one’s best to improve his hereafter by means of good deeds lest one is deprived of good deeds by some obstruction.

94. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: on the day of the battle of khaibar, messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i shall hand over this banner to one who loves allah and his messenger, and allah will give us victory through him.” `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said: “i had never longed for leadership but that day i expected that i might be called for. however, messenger of allah (pbuh) called `ali bin abu talib (may allah be pleased with him) and handed the banner to him and said, “go forth and do not turn around till allah bestows victory upon you”. (on hearing this) `ali proceeded a little and then halted and without turning around inquired in a loud voice: “o messenger of allah, for what shall i fight them?” he (pbuh) replied, “go on fighting till they affirm that none has the right to be worshiped but allah and that muhammad is the messenger of allah. if they admit that, their lives and their properties will be secured, subject to their obligations according to islam, and they will be answerable to allah”.

[muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith refers to prominence, special distinction and greatness of `ali (may allah be pleased with him).
2. it mentions the miracle of the prophet (pbuh) in the form of his prophecy about the conquest of khaibar which came true.
3. islamic sanctions would be applied on the apparent conduct of the people. thus, a person who would announce his acceptance of islam, will be considered a muslim. what is hidden in his heart will be left to allah. he will, however, be punished with retaliation (qisas) in case of unjust murder and execution for apostasy.

Chapter 11: The Struggle (in the Cause of Allah)

allah, the exalted, says:

“as for those who strive hard in us (our cause), we will surely, guide them to our paths (i.e., allah’s religion - islamic monotheism). and verily, allah is with the muhsinun (gooddoers)”. (29:69)

“and worship your rubb until there comes unto you the certainty (i.e., death)”. (15:99)

“and remember the name of your rubb and devote yourself to him with a complete devotion.” (73:8)

“so whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it”. (99:7)

“and whatever good you send before you for yourselves (i.e., nawafil - non-obligatory acts of worship: prayers, charity, fasting, hajj and umrah, etc.), you will certainly find it with allah, better and greater in reward.” (73:20)

“and whatever you spend in good, surely, allah knows it well.” (2:273)

95. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah the exalted has said: ‘i will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of mine. and the most beloved thing with which my slave comes nearer to me is what i have enjoined upon him; and my slave keeps on coming closer to me through performing nawafil (prayer or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till i love him. when i love him i become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks (something) from me, i give him, and if he asks my protection (refuge), i protect him”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. those who make innovations in religion and associate partners with allah (such as hululi - who believe in the indwelling light in the soul of man,

wujudi - who believe in the physical form of allah, and pagans who worship other than allah) interpret this hadith in support of their beliefs and thus seek support of one wrong from another although the meaning and interpretation of the hadith is not at all what they describe. the hadith means that when a person adds voluntary prayers to the obligatory ones, he becomes a favourite slave of allah and on account of it, he receives special help from allah. then he is protected by allah to the extent that he supervises every organ of his body. thus, he is saved from disobedience of allah. he bears what is liked by allah, sees what is liked by him, handles what pleases him. when he attains that lofty position of love and obedience of allah, then allah in return also grants prayers of his obedient and loyal slaves.

2. a saint is not one who has a peculiar attire and appearance, or who occupies the seat of a righteous as his successor, or a person who is lost in meditation, or a half-mad, or one who has invented his own style of remembrance and worship of allah, but it is one who strictly fulfills the obligations imposed by islam, is fond of voluntary prayers and adheres to divine injunctions in every walk of life.

3. the love of such righteous is a means to attain the pleasure of allah, and enmity (hatred and repulsion) with them is a cause of his serious displeasure and wrath.

4. voluntary prayer is certainly a means of attaining the pleasure of allah, but it must be preceded by the fulfillment of obligatory prayers. the former is of no value if the latter is neglected. the desire to attain nearness of allah without strict observance of the obligatory prayers is fallacious and meaningless.

96. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "allah says: 'when a slave of mine draws near to me a span, i draw near to him a cubit; and if he draws near to me a cubit, i draw near to him a fathom. and if he comes to me walking, i go to him running.'". [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith mentions infinite benevolence, generosity, kindness and regard of allah for his slaves, which is evident from the reward that he gives to his slaves even on their minor good deeds.

97. ibn abbas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “there are two blessings in which many people incur loss. (they are) health and free time (for doing good)”.

[al-bukhari]

commentary:

1. al-ghabn in arabic means loss. what it really signifies is to sell something of one's own on less than its due price, or to buy something on its double or triple price. in both cases one is a loser. when a person comes to know about such a loss, he repents and feels sorry for it. this loss coupled with regret is called al-ghabn. in ahadith, man has been compared with trader, and health and leisure enjoyed by him with merchandise. one who uses his merchandise with care, gains profit while he who wastes it, that is to say, uses it carelessly, will be a loser on the day of resurrection.

2. the majority of people do not take proper care of both these things, with the result that one wastes the time in useless activities and spends the physical strength and energy in the disobedience of allah. one will have to face severe consequences of it on the day of resurrection when he will be brought into account for everything.

98. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) said: the prophet (pbuh) would stand (in prayer) so long that the skin of his feet would crack. i asked him, “why do you do this while your past and future sins have been forgiven?” he said, “should i not be a grateful slave of allah?”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. all the prophets were free from major sins. however, some religious scholars justify some of their minor sins with plausible reasons but the majority of them maintain that they are free from all sins because of their innocence. in this situation, it does not make any sense to speak of their sins. but the fact of the matter is quite different. anything short of excellent done by them is counted as a sin.

2. the more one is rewarded by allah, the greater the proportion of one's gratitude of allah for his benevolence should be. the best form of doing so is that one should not only be highly obedient and dutiful in the performance of the obligations but also add maximum voluntary prayers to them.

99. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) said: with the start of the last ten days of ramadan, messenger of allah (pbuh) would pray all the night, and would keep his family awake for the prayers. he tied his lower garment (i.e., avoided sleeping with his wives) and devoted himself entirely to prayer and supplication.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: one should try to do more good deeds in the blessed hours and times, as was the practice of the prophet (pbuh) during the last ten days of the month of ramadan every year.

100. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "a strong believer is better and dearer to allah than a weak one, and both are good. adhere to that which is beneficial for you. keep asking allah for help and do not refrain from it. if you are afflicted in any way, do not say: `if i had taken this or that step, it would have resulted into such and such,' but say only: `allah so determined and did as he willed.' the word `if' opens the gates of satanic thoughts".

[muslim].

commentary:

1. in this hadith, goodness is acknowledged in weak as well as strong because the real faith is a common feature of both. the one who is stronger is, however, better with allah for the reason that he is more active and energetic in the matter of noble deeds and performance of ritual prayers, obligatory as well as voluntary.

2. this hadith ordains that in case of trouble, one should exercise patience and show submission and obedience rather than saying `ifs' and `buts' about it, because it provides satan with a chance to mislead the sufferer.

101. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said. "the (hell) fire is surrounded with all kinds of desires and passions, while jannah is surrounded with adversities."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the way to hell is littered with these evils. when a person crosses them, it is an indication that he has entered into hell.

on the other side exists a series of griefs and calamities, islamic injunctions and obligations (the compliance with which is often irksome for man) impede his way to jannah. when a person endures them with patience he, in fact, overcomes those obstacles and becomes eligible for jannah.

102. hudhaifah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i offered salat (tahajjud - optional night prayer) with the prophet (pbuh) one night, and he started reciting (surat) al-baqarah. i thought that he would bow at the end of one hundred verses, but he continued reciting; i, then, thought that he would perhaps recite the whole (surah) in a rak'ah, but he proceeded on, and i thought he would perhaps bow on completing (this surah); he then started (reciting surat) an-nisa' he then started (surat) al-imran and his recitation was unhurried. and when he recited the verses which referred to the glory of allah, he glorified him (by saying subhan allah - my rubb, the supreme is far removed from every imperfection), the great, and when he recited the verses that mention supplication, he supplicated, and when he recited the verses that mention seeking refuge of the rubb, he sought (his) refuge. then he bowed and said: "my rubb, the supreme is far removed from every imperfection (subhana rabbiyal-azim);" his bowing lasted about the same length of time as his standing (and then on returning to the standing posture after ruku`) he said: "allah listened to him who praised him (sami` allahu liman hamidah, rabbana wa lakal hamd)." then he stood about the same length of time as he had spent in bowing. he then prostrated himself and said: "my rubb, the supreme is far removed from every imperfection (subhana rabbiyal-a'la)," and his prostration lasted nearly the same length of time as his standing. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith makes the following three points clear:

firstly, optional salat can also be performed in congregation.

secondly, as is commonly believed, it is not essential that in salat, the ayat of qur'an are recited according to their sequence in the book. it is permissible to recite them regardless of their sequence in the qur'an.

thirdly, it is commendable to relatively prolong the optional prayers.

103. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) said: one night i joined the prophet (pbuh) in his (optional) salat.

he prolonged the standing so much that i thought of doing something evil. he was asked: "what did you intend to do?" he replied: "to sit down and leave him".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith makes it evident that opposition of imam (one who leads the prayer) is an evil act because one is ordered to follow him in the prayers.

2. it is permissible to ask clarification of something which is ambiguous or abstruse.

104. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "three follow a dead body: members of his family, his possessions and his deeds. two of them return and one remains with him. his family and his possessions return; his deeds remain with him".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith induces one to perform such deeds which always remain with him in the grave, where every being and thing leaves one and he is all alone in the grave. what is left is his good deeds which become the means of refuge and salvation.

105. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "jannah is nearer to anyone of you than your shoe-lace, and so is the (hell) fire".

[al-bukhari].

commentary: going to jannah or hell is the result of one's own actions, both are close to everyone. one will be admitted into jannah if he does good deeds, and will be consigned to hell if he does evil. after death, one's entitlement for jannah or hell will be decided.

106. rabi`ah bin ka`b al-aslami (may allah be pleased with him (a servant of the messenger of allah and also one of the people of as-suffah) said: i used to spend my night in the company of messenger of allah (pbuh) and used to put up water for his ablutions. one day he said to me, "ask something of me." i said: "i request for your companionship in jannah". he inquired, "is there anything else?" i said, "that is all." he said, "then help me in your request by multiplying your prostrations".

[muslim].

commentary: there was a terrace at the end of the prophet's mosque which is called as-suffah in arabic. people of poor means who were taught by him used to live there. this hadith evidently shows the importance of good actions and faithful following of the practice of the prophet (pbuh). leave others alone, in the absence of these two, even such people will not be close to the prophet (pbuh) who used to be all the time with him. it is not difficult to visualize the fate of those who neither perform good deeds nor follow in the footsteps of the prophet (pbuh).

107. thauban (may allah be pleased with him) said: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, **“perform salah more often. for every prostration that you perform before allah will raise your position one degree and will remit one of your sins”**.
[muslim].

commentary: abundance of prostrations means strict observance of salat and performance of obligatory and optional and voluntary prayers, it is a means for atonement of sins and the elevation of one's status in this life and the hereafter.

108. `abdullah bin busr al-aslami (may allah be pleased with him) said: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“the best of people is one whose life is long and his conduct is good”**.
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. longevity of life is a blessing, provided it is accompanied by faith and good deeds; otherwise, the longer life one has, the greater will be the number of sins. such a long life is disastrous.

2. those who do not realize the blessings of longevity of life will be losers.

109. anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: my uncle anas bin an-nadr (may allah be pleased with him) was absent from the battle of badr and he said: “o messenger of allah! i was absent from the first battle you fought against the pagans, and if allah let me participate in a battle against the pagans, allah will see what i do.” so he encountered the day of uhud battle. the muslims left the positions (the prophet (pbuh) told them to keep) and were defeated, he said: **“o allah! excuse these people (i.e., the muslims) for what they have done, and i am clear from what the pagans have done”**.

then he went forward with his sword and met sa`d bin mu`adh (fleeing) and said to him: “by the rubb of the ka`bah! i can smell the fragrance of jannah from a place closer than uhud mount”. sa`d said: “o messenger of allah, what he did was beyond my power”. anas said: “we saw over eighty wounds on his body caused by stabbing, striking and shooting of arrows and spears. we found that he was killed, and mutilated by the polytheists. nobody was able to recognize him except his sister who recognized him by the tips of his fingers.” anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: “we believe that the ayah `among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with allah [i.e., they have gone out for jihad (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]...’ (33:23), refers to him and his like”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith brings into prominence the exemplary life of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) for martyrdom and jannah.

2. it also shows the enthusiasm of the believers for dedicating their lives to good deeds and their fervent supplication for their acceptance by alah.

110. abu mas`ud `uqbah bin `amr al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) said: when the ayah enjoining sadaqah (charity) was revealed,* we used to carry loads on our backs to earn something that we could give away in charity. one person presented a considerable amount for charity and the hypocrites said: “he has done it to show off.” another one gave away a few sa` of dates and they said: “allah does not stand in need of this person’s dates”. thereupon, it was revealed:

“those who defame such of the believers who give charity (in allah’s cause) voluntarily, and such who could not find to give charity (in allah’s cause) except what is available to them...” (9:79)
[al-bukhari and muslim].

* this is the ayah in which allah says! “take sadaqah (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and supplicate alah for them...” (9:103)

commentary: this hadith shows that everyone can give charitable donation according to one’s means. it can be more or less as one likes.

to regard those as showy and criticize those who pay less to withhold them from alms amounts to hypocrisy. believers must ignore such criticism of the hypocrites and refrain from such things in their dealings.

111. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) said: the prophet (pbuh) said, "allah, the exalted, and glorious, said; 'o my slaves, i have prohibited myself injustice; and have made oppression unlawful for you, so do not oppress one another. o my slaves, all of you are liable to err except the one whom i guide on the right path, so seek guidance from me so that i will guide you to the right path. o my slaves, all of you are hungry except the one whom i feed, so ask food from me, i will feed you. o my slaves, all of you are naked except those whom i clothe, so ask clothing of me and i shall clothe you. o my slaves, you commit sins night and day and i forgive all sins, so seek my forgiveness and i shall forgive you. o my slaves, you can neither do me any harm nor can you do me any good. o my slaves, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and jinn of you to be as pious as the most pious heart of any man of you, that would not increase my domain a thing. o my slaves, were the first of you, and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as wicked as the most wicked heart of any man of you, that would not decrease my domain in a thing. o my slaves, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to stand in one place and make a request of me, and were i to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what i have, any more than a needle decrease the sea if put into it. o my slaves, it is but your deeds that i reckon for you and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good (i.e., in the hereafter) praise allah and let him who finds other than that blame no one but himself.'".

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the power and majesty of allah and stresses that one should supplicate allah for everything that one needs. from guidance to sustenance, the treasures of everything are with him - the treasures which are unlimited and any withdrawal from them does not make any reduction in them. similar is the case of his sovereignty; it is not affected even if the whole universe supports or opposes them. thus, it is in the interest of man that he should dedicate himself entirely to allah and beg all his needs from him and him alone.

Chapter 12: Urging towards increasing Good Actions in later part of Life

allah, the exalted, says:

“did we not give you lives long enough, so that whosoever would receive admonition, - could receive it? and the warner came to you.” (35:37)

ibn `abbas and others said that “long enough” in the verse means sixty years. the hadith which follows supports this. others said it means eighteen years; al-hasan al-basri, al-kalbi and masruq said it means forty years, it has also been reported by ibn abbas and others that whenever the people of al-madinah turned forty years of age, they would devote themselves completely to worship. “long enough” in the verse has also been interpreted to mean the age of puberty. ibn `abbas and the majority of muslim scholars said that the “warner” in the verse refers to the prophet (pbuh). `ikrimah bin `umaiyyah and others interpreted this word as the grayness or whiteness of hair”. allah knows better.

112. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “allah excuses and grants forgiveness to a person until he attains the age of sixty years”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. this hadith makes it evident that allah does not punish any individual or nation without warning them first.

2. the second point is that a person who is given sixty years of life and yet he neglects the obligations of faith, will have no excuse.

3. after the age of sixty years, one must not neglect his religious obligations because then one is closer to death. although one may die even at a young age, in youth one is still hopeful of life. after crossing the age of sixty, to hope for longer age, while leading a sinful life and defying divine injunctions constitute a disastrous conduct. may allah save us from doing so.

113. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) said: `umar (may allah be pleased with him) used to make me sit with the noble elderly men who had participated in the battle of badr. some of them disliked it and said to `umar: “why do you bring in this boy to sit with us when we have sons like him?” `umar replied:

“because of the status he has, which you already know about (i.e., belongs to the source of knowledge and the house of the prophet (pbuh)).” one day, `umar called me and seated me in the gathering of those people; and i think that he called me just to show them (of my religious knowledge). `umar then questioned them (in my presence). “how do you interpret the ayah of allah: `when there comes the help of allah (to you, o muhammad (pbuh) against your enemies) and the conquest (of makkah).” someone said that when allah’s help and the conquest (of makkah) came to us, we were called upon to celebrate the praise of allah and ask for his forgiveness. some others remained silent and did not utter a word. thereupon `umar asked me: “ibn `abbas! do you say the same.” i replied: “no”. he said: “what do you say then?” i replied: “that is the sign of the prophet’s death about which he had been informed. allah, the exalted, says:

‘when there comes the help of allah (to you, o muhammad (pbuh) against your enemies) and the conquest (of makkah)’.

so declare the remoteness of your rubb from every imperfection, and ask for his forgiveness. verily, he is the one who accepts the repentance and who forgives”.

on that `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said: “i do not know anything about it other than what you have said”.

[al-bukhari]

commentary:

1. this value of man does not go with the length of age but with that of intellect, intelligence, knowledge and consciousness. for this reason, a young boy can have precedence and preference over the elders due to his clear understanding and vast knowledge.

2. when a person gets closer to death, he must devote himself more and more to the praise and glorification of allah and beg pardon from him.

114. ‘ aishah (may allah be pleased with her) said: after the revelation of (the surah) “when the help of allah comes (to you, o muhammad (pbuh) against your enemies) and the conquest (of makkah)” (110:1), messenger of allah (pbuh) used to recite in every prayer: “subhanaka rabbana wa bihamdika, allahum-maghfir li (far removed you are from every imperfection, our rubb, and all praise is for you, forgive me, o allah)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) recited frequently in bowing and prostration: “subhanaka rabbana wa bihamdika, allahum-maghfir li. (far removed you are from every imperfection, our rubb, and all praise is for you, forgive me, o allah)”. he elucidated that it has been commanded in the noble qur’an to recite: “so glorify the praises of your rubb, and ask for his forgiveness. verily, he is the one who accepts the repentance and who forgives”. (v.110:1) and he (the messenger of allah) acted upon it.

according to the narration in muslim, messenger of allah (pbuh) frequently recited these words just before he passed away: “subhanaka rabbana wa bihamdika. astaghfiruka wa atubu ilaika.” i `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) asked him: “o messenger of allah! what are these new words which i hear from you repeatedly.” he replied, “a sign has been appointed for me relating to my people that i should repeat these words at the sight of that sign”. then he recited surat an-nasr.

another narration in muslim related from `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) is: messenger of allah (pbuh) often recited, “glory be to allah and praise be to him; i seek forgiveness of allah and turn to him in repentance.” i said to him: “o messenger of allah, i hear you recite frequently: `o allah, you are free from every imperfection our rubb and all praise is for you; i seek forgiveness of allah and turn to him in repentance.” he replied, “my rubb has informed me that i would soon see a sign regarding my people, whenever i see it, i repeat this statement more often (of his glorification and praise and beg pardon of him and turn to him). now i have witnessed the sign. the revelation of surat an-nasr and the victory is the conquest of makkah.”

“when there comes the help of allah (to you, o muhammad (pbuh) against your enemies) and the conquest (of makkah). and you see that the people enter allah’s religion (islam) in crowds. so glorify the praises of your rubb, and ask his forgiveness. verily, he is the one who accepts the repentance and who forgives.” (110:1-3)

commentary:

1. acceptance and approval of reciting the words `subhanaka rabbana wa bihamdika, allahum-maghfirli’ in ruku` and sujud respectively, instead of the words `subhana rabbiyal-azim’ and `subhana rabbiyal-a`la’.

2. one must express his gratitude to allah whenever he receives a blessing from him.

115. anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: **allah the rubb of honour and glory sent revelation to his messenger (pbuh) more frequently before his death than at any other time.**

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: during the last days of the prophet (pbuh) the abundance of wahy (revelation) was an indication that he was about to leave this world.

116. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) said: the prophet (pbuh) said, **“every one will be raised in the condition in which he dies”.**

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith has a meaning similar to the one quoted at another place which signifies that if a person dies performing good deeds, he will have a good end; and the one who dies in misdeeds, he will come to a bad end. it is, therefore, necessary that one should always avoid disobedience of divine injunctions, especially in old age and illness because one may fall in the clutches of death at any time .

Chapter 13: Numerous ways of doing Good

allah, the exalted, says:

“... and whatever you do of good deeds, truly, allah knows it well.” (2:215)

“and whatever good you do, (be sure) allah knows it.” (2:197)

“so whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it.” (99:7)

“whosoever does a good deed, it is for his ownself...” (45:15)

117. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i asked: “o messenger of allah! which action is the best?” he (pbuh) said, “faith in allah and jihad in the way of allah.” i asked: “which neck (slave) is best (for emancipation)?” he said, “that which is dearest of them in price and most valuable of them to its masters”. i asked: “if i cannot afford (it)?” he said, “then help a labourer or work for one who is disabled”. i asked: “if i cannot do (it)?” he said, “you should restrain yourself from doing wrong to people, because it (serves as) charity which you bestow upon yourself”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith shows the excellence of jihad and emancipation of slaves. it also highlights the importance of co-operation and sympathy with others. similarly, one who refrains from putting others into trouble, his reward for it is no less than that of propitiatory offering and kindness. it also tells that faith in allah is the basis for the acceptance of good deeds. in fact, conduct is the fruit of one’s faith. without faith nothing will be acceptable by allah.

118. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when you get up in the morning, charity is due from every one of your joints. there is charity in every ascription of glory to allah; there is charity in every declaration of his greatness; there is charity in every utterance of praise of him; there is charity in every declaration that he is the only true god (worthy of worship); there is charity in enjoining good; there is charity in forbidding evil. two rak`ah of duha (forenoon prayer) is equal to all this (in reward)”.

[muslim].

commentary: there are three hundred and sixty joints in a human body. it is these joints which enable him to work and make all kinds of movements.

if man's body did not have these joints it would have been impossible for him to sit, stand, lie, move and make use of different organs of his body. thus every joint is a blessing for which one must express gratitude to allah. it is yet another blessing of allah that he has also told man a very easy way of thanksgiving which can be practised even by the poorest man in the world. this means of thanksgiving is recitation of tasbih (subhan allah), tahmid (al-hamdu lillah), takbir (allahu akbar), tahlil (la ilaha illallah), and to preach virtue and forbid wrong/ unlawful, etc. if one is unable to do even this, then he should perform two rak'ah prayer at any time between sunrise and sunset. if one wants to enlarge their number, he can increase them to eight with the condition that the eight are divided into four couplets.

119. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "the deeds of my people, good and bad, were presented before me, and i found the removal of harmful objects from the road among their good deeds, and phlegm which might be in a mosque left unburied among their evil deeds".
[muslim].

commentary:

1. allah has listed in virtue even the good deed which is for the benefit of people or can save them from loss. what is its opposite, however small it may be, is reckoned as mischief. this hadith induces one to do good deeds to attain the pleasure of allah and prevents one from evil deeds so that one is saved from the displeasure of allah.

2. the hadith enjoins cleanliness of mosques and forbids throwing of anything there which violates its sacredness, i.e., spitting. if any such dirty thing is found there, it must be removed immediately.

120. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: some people said to messenger of allah (pbuh): "o messenger of allah, the rich have taken away (all the) reward. they observe salat (prayers) as we do; and give sadaqah (charity) out of their surplus wealth." upon this he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, "has allah not prescribed for you (a course) following which you can (also) give sadaqah? in every declaration of the glorification of allah (i.e., saying subhan allah) there is a sadaqah, and in every takbir (i.e., saying allahu akbar) is a sadaqah, and in every celebration of praise (saying al-hamdu lillah) is a sadaqah, and in every declaration that he is one (la ilaha illallah) is a sadaqah, and in enjoining of good is a sadaqah,

and in forbidding evil is a sadaqah, and in man's sexual intercourse (with his wife) there is a sadaqah." they (the companions) said: "o messenger of allah, is there reward for him who satisfies his sexual need among us?" he said, "you see, if he were to satisfy it with something forbidden, would it not be a sin on his part? similarly, if he were to satisfy it legally, he should be rewarded".

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights two important points. firstly, the enthusiasm of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) for surpassing each other in good actions. secondly, it tells that virtue has a vast meaning in islam and it includes every action which is done with good intention, provided it does not involve disobedience of allah. so much so that it covers even natural activities of man which fall in the category of mubah (that which is permissible and may be omitted without fear of sin) and one is rewarded for them. not only that, one is rewarded even for abstaining from a sin on the condition that the abstention is for the obedience of allah. then abstention rises to the level of an act of obedience and is rewarded likewise.

121. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "do not belittle any good deed, even meeting your brother (muslim) with a cheerful face".

[muslim].

commentary: we learn from this hadith that meeting somebody cheerfully is also a virtue for two reasons. firstly, it is a sign of good manners. secondly, it creates affection and friendship among the muslims which is a meritorious act.

122. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "every day the sun rises charity (sadaqah) is due on every joint of a person: you administer justice between two men is a charity; and assisting a man to mount his beast, or helping him load his luggage on it is a charity; and a good word is a charity; and every step that you take (towards the mosque) for salat (prayer) is a charity and removing harmful things from the road is a charity".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in muslim, it is reported on the authority of `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) that messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "everyone of the children of adam has been created with three hundred and sixty joints;

so he who declares the glory of allah (i.e., saying allahu akbar), praises allah (i.e., al-hamdu lillah), declares allah to be one (i.e., la ilaha illallah), glorifies allah, and seeks forgiveness from allah (i.e., astaghfirullah), and removes stone, or thorn, or bone from people's path, and enjoins good and forbids evil, to the number of those three hundred and sixty, will walk that day having rescued himself from hell".

commentary: this hadith also tells that even a person who does not have the capacity to pay sadaqah (charity, alms, propitiatory offerings, etc.) can also pay it in the manner prescribed above and earn its reward. moreover, he can also pay alms for the joints in his body.

123. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "he who goes to the mosque at dawn or dusk (for salat), allah prepares a hospitable abode for him in jannah, every time when he walks to it or comes back from it".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith induces us to go to the mosque and perform salat in congregation.

124. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: o muslim women, never belittle any gift you give your neighbour even if it is a hoof of a sheep".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith enjoins that any gift presented sincerely by a neighbour should not be treated as humble, however ordinary it may be, because in spite of being of small worth it has a high value with allah.

125. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him): the prophet (pbuh) said, "iman has over seventy branches, the uppermost of which is the declaration: `none has the right to be worshipped but allah' and the least of which is the removal of harmful object from the road, and modesty is a branch of iman."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith tells us that from the standpoint of practice, faith has several stages. it also tells that faith and practice are inseparable.

2. it also makes evident the importance and excellence of bashfulness because it induces a person to good deeds and deters him from evils.

126. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “while a man was walking on his way he became extremely thirsty. he found a well, he went down into it to drink water. upon leaving it, he saw a dog which was panting out of thirst. his tongue was lolling out and he was eating moist earth from extreme thirst. the man thought to himself: ‘this dog is extremely thirsty as i was.’ so he descended into the well, filled up his leather sock with water, and holding it in his teeth, climbed up and quenched the thirst of the dog. allah appreciated his action and forgave his sins”. the companions asked: “shall we be rewarded for showing kindness to the animals also?” he (pbuh) said, “a reward is given in connection with every living creature”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

in the narration of al-bukhari, the prophet (pbuh) is reported to have said: “allah forgave him in appreciation of this act and admitted him to jannah”.

another narration says: “once a dog was going round the well and was about to die out of thirst. a prostitute of banu israel happened to see it. so she took off her leather sock and lowered it into the well. she drew out some water and gave the dog to drink. she was forgiven on account of her action”.

commentary:

1. this hadith emphasizes the importance of kindness to every creature, even animals, because allah is pleased with such kindness.

2. allah’s quality of mercy and forgiveness is immensely vast. if he wants he may forgive a person even on a minor good action done by him.

127. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “i saw a man going about in jannah (and enjoying himself) as a reward for cutting from the middle of the road, a tree which was causing inconvenience to the muslims”. [muslim].

another narration says: “a man who passed by a branch of a tree leaning over a road and decided to remove it, saying to himself, ‘by allah! i will remove from the way of muslims so that it would not harm them.’ on account of this he was admitted to jannah”.

according to the narration in al-bukhari and muslim: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “while a man was walking, he saw a thorny branch on the road, so he removed it and allah appreciated his action and forgave him”. commentary: the act of saving people from harm and loss is greatly liked by allah, no matter how small it is. allah is greatly pleased if a person removes from the passage something that causes harm to people. on the contrary, persons who restrict or obstruct passages and thereby create inconvenience for the passers-by, as is usually done with great audacity on marriage parties, or create trouble for people by encroachment, do in fact incur allah’s displeasure. but our moral sense has been so blunted that rather than feeling any compunction, we do such things boastfully forgetting that ‘truly, to allah we belong and truly, to him we shall return.’ we have now become so low that we take pride in going against our religious teachings and practices thus incurring allah’s displeasure. is there any further stage of moral turpitude and revolt against him?.

128. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who performs his wudu’ perfectly and comes to jumu`ah prayer and listens (to the khutbah) silently, the sins which he has committed since the previous friday plus three more days (i.e., 10 days) will be forgiven for him. one who distracts himself with pebbles during the khutbah will not get the (jumu`ah) reward”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings into prominence the following five important points:

1. it induces one to take full care in ablutions, that is to say, it should be strictly performed according to sunnah.
2. the excellence of jumu`ah (friday prayer), which is obligatory for every sane, adult, healthy and resident muslim, whether he lives in a town or village. the friday prayer is performed in the mosque in congregation. it has two rak`ah at the time of noon prayer and is preceded by khutbah of imam (who leads the prayer). it is not performed individually at home.

3. whoever does one good act will get ten-times reward in return. according to this principle, one who performs a friday prayer, his minor sins relating the rights of allah which are committed by him in ten days are forgiven.

4. silence during the khutbah is a must, otherwise, one loses the reward of jumu`ah prayer.

5. it is also necessary for a khatib to deliver a brief khutbah.

129. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a muslim or a believer washes his face (in the course of wudu’), every sin he has committed with his eyes is washed away from his face along with water, or with the last drop of water; when he washes his hands, every sin they wrought is erased from his hands with the water, or with the last drop of water; and when he washes his feet, every sin towards which his feet walked is washed away with water, or with the last drop of water, with the result that he comes out cleansed of all sins”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the excellence of wudu’. obviously a person who performs wudu’ five times daily would be free from sins. thus, wudu’ is a means of both outward and inward cleanliness.

130. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the five (daily) salat (prayers), and from one jumu`ah prayer to the (next) jumu`ah prayer, and from ramadan to ramadan are expiations for the (sins) committed in between (their intervals); provided the major sins are not committed”.

[muslim].

commentary: if a muslim saves himself from major sins and does not neglect his obligations to people, then he remains free from sins by means of the `ibadah (**worship**) stated above.

131. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “should i not direct you to something by which allah obliterates the sins and elevates (your) ranks.” they said: “yes, o messenger of allah”. he said, “performing wudu’ properly, even in difficulty,

frequently going to the mosque, and waiting eagerly for the next salat (prayer) after a salat is over; indeed, that is ar-ribat”.

[muslim].

commentary: ribat means staying on the frontier of an islamic country, for security and defense purposes. thus, it is a continuous process of jihad. continuous good deeds and `ibadah have been compared with ribat. performing full ablution in makarib (**where severe unpleasantness and hard labour is involved**) is quite difficult. for instance, in winter it is very cumbersome to properly wash all the organs of the body but a muslim does it to please allah. thus, its reward will be more in proportion to the labour. similarly, the nearness of a mosque is in many respect very useful but its being far from the house is better in this respect that the greater distance one has to cover for going to the mosque, the higher the reward for going there will be. those who live close to the mosque do not have this credit.

132. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“he who observes the fajr and `asr (prayers) will enter jannah.”**

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: muslims are enjoined to take special care of two of the five prescribed salat, namely fajr and `asr because they occur during very comfortable hours. their excellence, and inducement on them, have been mentioned here for the reason that there is greater possibility of laziness and negligence in these two salat. it is very difficult indeed to rise for salat-ul-fajr (**the dawn prayer**). similar is the case of salat-ul-`asr (**the afternoon prayer**). it is the time when a person is very busy in winding up his daily affairs and thus there is serious risk of losing this salat on this account. one who observes these two at their stated time, can easily secure the other three without much effort. this endeavour on his part to secure salat will be a very effective means for him to enter jannah.

133. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“when a slave of allah suffers from illness or sets on a journey, he is credited with the equal of whatever good works he used to do when he was healthy or at home”.**

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith refers to the actions which a muslim should take to gain the blessings of allah and acceptance of his prayers by him, because one is duty-bound to fulfil all his obligations in all circumstances.

134. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported that he heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “every good deed is charity”. [al-bukhari].

muslim has reported the same on the authority of hudhaifah (may allah be pleased with him).

commentary: we come to know from this hadith that whatever good action and deed is done by a muslim, he gets a reward of sadaqah on it. the word ma`ruf stands here for every virtue and noble deed. renunciation of evils is also a virtue (mar`uf).

135. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a muslim plants a tree, whatever is eaten from it is charity from him and whatever is stolen is charity and whatever is subtracted from it is charity”. [muslim].

another narration says: “if a muslim plants a tree, or sows a field and men and beasts and birds eat from it, all of it is charity from him”.

commentary: this hadith highlights the importance of gardening and agriculture. it is also one of the merits of these two occupations that if someone patiently bears the loss that he suffers due to pilferage or theft of their produce, he is rewarded for it.

136. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the tribe banu salimah wanted to move nearer to the mosque. on learning this messenger of allah (pbuh) said to them, “i heard that you intend to move nearer to the mosque”. they said, “that is so, o messenger of allah, we do want to do that”. he said, “o banu salimah, keep to your homes, your steps (to the mosque) are recorded”. [muslim].

another narration says: “there is for every step (towards the mosque) a degree (of reward) for you”.

[muslim].

commentary:

1. the more labour a good deed involves, the greater the proportion of reward for it will be.

2. no matter how great the distance of the mosque from one’s house may be, one must go to it to perform salat with congregation.

137. ubayy bin ka`b (may allah be pleased with him) reported: there was a man, and i do not know of any other man whose house was farther than his from the mosque, and he never missed salat (in congregation). it was said to him (or i said to him): “if you buy a donkey you could ride it in the dark nights and in the burning sand.” he said: “i do not like my house to be by the side of the mosque, for i (eagerly) desire that my steps towards the mosque and back from it should be recorded when i return to my family.” upon this messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah has granted you all the rewards for you”.

[muslim].

another narration says: “you will get the reward for what you have anticipated”.

commentary: this hadith brings into focus the fervent zeal of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) for reward of good deeds in the hereafter. it also tells that one gets reward for actions according to one’s intentions. if we see the matter of salat from this angle, we find that location of mosque at a long distance from a muslim’s house is a blessing for him.

138. abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “there are forty kinds of virtue; the uppermost of them is to lend a (milch) she-goat (to someone in order to benefit from it and then return it). he who practices any of these virtues expecting its reward and relying on the truthfulness of the promise made for it, shall enter jannah.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: loaning of anything to someone for temporary benefit, without losing the right of its ownership, is a meritorious act.

139. `adi bin hatim (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard the prophet (pbuh) saying, “protect yourself from (hell) fire, by giving of half of a date (in charity)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration `adi bin hatim (may allah be pleased with him) reported messenger of allah (pbuh) as saying: “allah will surely speak with everyone of you without an interpreter. he (the man) will look at his right side and will see nothing but (the deeds) which he had done before, and he will look to his left side and will see nothing but (the deeds) which he had done before. then he will look in front of him and will find nothing but hell-fire facing him. so protect (yourselves) from (hell) fire, by giving in charity even half a date; and if he does not finds it, then with a kind word”.

commentary: this hadith brings into prominence the following three points:

1. the horror of the day of resurrection when one will have to stand before allah to account for all his actions which will then be lying at his both hands.
2. everyone should spend according to his capacity in the way of allah in the form of sadaqah and alms. in this way, good manners like polite conversation, etc., can also become a means of his salvation.
3. one’s actions alone would help him on the day of resurrection.

140. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah will be pleased with his slave who praises him (i.e., says al-hamdu lillah) when he eats and praises him when he drinks”.

[muslim].

commentary: if a person expresses his gratitude to allah for food, which besides being a source of nourishment is enjoyable for him, he gets a reward for it and thus even eating can become rewardable too.

141. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “giving in charity is an obligation upon every muslim”.

it was said (to him): “what about one who does not find (the means) to do so?” he (pbuh) said, “let him work with his hands, thus doing benefit to himself and give in charity.” it was said to him: “what if he does not have (the means) to do so?” he (pbuh) said, “then let him assist the needy, the aggrieved.” it was said: “what about if he cannot even do this?” he (pbuh) said, “then he should enjoin good.” he was asked: “what if he cannot do that?” he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “he should then abstain from evil, for verily, that is a charity from him”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith emphasizes two things. firstly, it induces one to work hard so that he can fulfill his own needs and also spend in the way of allah. secondly, it points out a great variety of virtues and good deeds so much so that even to abstain from sin also comes in the category of sadaqah.

Chapter 14: Moderation in Worship

allah, the exalted, says:

“ta-ha. we have not sent down the qur’an unto you (o muhammad (pbuh)) to cause you distress”. (20:1,2)

“allah intends for you ease, and he does not want to make things difficult for you”. (2:185)

142. aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: the prophet (pbuh) came in when a woman was sitting beside me. he asked me, “who is she?” i said: “she is the one whose performance of salat (prayer) has become the talk of the town.” addressing her, he (pbuh) said, “(what is this!) you are required to take upon yourselves only what you can carry out easily. by allah, allah does not withhold his mercy and forgiveness of you until you neglect and give up (good works). allah likes the deeds best which a worshipper can carry out constantly”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith prohibits `ibadah (worship) beyond one’s capacity lest one gets tired and stops it altogether. one should be, therefore, moderate in this respect.

2. allah likes that good action which is done regularly, even if it is a small one. any good deed which is done continuously, will also have an everlasting reward. on the contrary, a good deed which is done for a short period will have a short return.

143. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: three men came to the houses of the wives of the prophet (pbuh) to inquire about the worship of the prophet (pbuh). when they were informed, they considered their worship insignificant and said: “where are we in comparison with the prophet (pbuh) while allah has forgiven his past sins and future sins”. one of them said: “as for me, i shall offer salat all night long.” another said: “i shall observe saum (fasting) continuously and shall not break it”. another said: “i shall abstain from women and shall never marry”. the prophet (pbuh) came to them and said, “are you the people who said such and such things? by allah, i fear allah more than you do, and i am most obedient and dutiful among you to him, but still i observe fast and break it;

perform salat and sleep at night and take wives. so whoever turns away from my sunnah does not belong to me”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith deals with the following five points:

a) moderation in worship.

b) obligation to marry.

c) inducement for following in the prophet’s footsteps.

d) prohibition from observing saum (fasts) all the time.

e) prohibition of keeping awake all the night for nawafil prayers.

2. there is neither virtue nor reward for making innovations in religion. all the blessings and rewards lie only in the obedience and following the conduct of the prophet (pbuh).

144. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “ruined are those who insist on hardship in matters of the faith.” he repeated this three times.

[muslim]

commentary: this hadith shows disgust against exercises which many sufis have introduced in religion which deviate from the conduct of the prophet (pbuh) and encourage self-violence. similarly, such people who are hypocritical and make unnecessary probe into religious matters also fall in this category and are usually far from the teachings and practice of the prophet (pbuh).

145. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the religion (of islam) is easy, and whoever makes the religion a rigour, it will overpower him. so, follow a middle course (in worship); if you can’t do this, do something near to it and give glad tidings and seek help (of allah) at morn and at dusk and some part of night”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: besides moderation in worship, this hadith enjoins that such times should be fixed for worship when one is fresh so that one feels pleasure in performing it. but this principle is for optional and voluntary prayers only. obligatory salat are to be performed at the prescribed times only.

146. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) came into the mosque and noticed a rope stretched between two poles. he enquired, “**what is this rope for?**” he was told: “this is zainab’s rope. when during her voluntary prayer, she begins to feel tired, she grasps it for support”. the prophet (pbuh) said, “**untie it. you should perform prayers so long as you feel active. when you feel tired, you should go to sleep**”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith deals with the following three points:

1. it forbids undue strictness and taking support of anything in the course of salat.
2. if wrong can be corrected by hand, it must be stopped immediately.
3. one should be moderate in `ibadah and select such times for optional and voluntary prayers when one feels real pleasure in them.

147. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**when one of you feels drowsy during prayer, let him lie down till drowsiness goes away from him, because when one of you performs prayers while feeling sleepy, he does not know whether he seeks forgiveness or abuses himself**”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

148. jabir bin samurah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: **i used to perform prayer with the prophet (pbuh) and his salat was of a moderate length and his khutbah too was moderate in length.**

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that imam should neither lengthen the salat nor give a long khutbah in the congregational salat because both of these things are not according to the practice of the prophet (pbuh).

149. abu juhaifah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) made a bond of brotherhood between salman and abud-darda'. salman paid a visit to abud-darda' and found umm darda' (his wife) dressed in shabby clothes and asked her why she was in that state. she replied: "your brother abud-darda' is not interested in (the luxuries of) this world. in the meantime abud-darda' came in and prepared a meal for salman. salman requested abud-darda' to eat (with him) but abud-darda' said: "i am fasting." salman said: "i am not going to eat unless you eat." so, abud-darda' ate (with salman). when it was night and (a part of the night passed), abud-darda' got up (to offer the night prayer) but salman asked him to sleep and abud-darda' slept. after some time abud-darda' again got up but salman asked him to sleep. when it was the last hours of the night, salman asked him to get up and both of them offered (tahajjud) prayer. then salman told abud-darda': "you owe a duty to your rubb, you owe a duty to your body; you owe a duty to your family; so you should give to every one his due. abud-darda' came to the prophet (pbuh) and reported the whole story. prophet (pbuh) said, "salman is right". [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following points:

1. although the performance of voluntary prayers (nawafil) is highly meritorious, it should not be done at the cost of obligations for, in this case, they lose their merits and are disliked by allah.
2. the right time for tahajjud (**optional prayers at night**) is the last third part of the night. the reason being that in the first two portions of the night, one should take rest and perform his conjugal duties.
3. voluntary fasting can be broken (**for valid reasons**) without any expiation.
4. it is permissible to establish fraternity on the basis of deen, and when this is established, the families so affiliated can associate with each other.
5. muslims must provide right guidance to each other.
6. in case of need, it is permissible to speak to an unknown woman while observing the teachings of the prophet (pbuh) in this regard, such as lowering the gaze and be as brief as possible.

150. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) was informed that i said that i would perform prayers the whole night and observe fasting every day as long as i live. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "is it you who said this?" i said to him, "o messenger of allah! i ransom you with my parents, it is i who said that." messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "you will not be able to do that. observe fast and break it; sleep and get up for prayer, and observe fast for three days during the month; for every good is multiplied ten times and that will be equal to fasting the whole year." i said, "o messenger of allah! i can do more than that." he said, "observe fast one day and leave off the next two days." i said, "o messenger of allah! i have strength to do more than that." messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "observe fast every other day, and that is the fasting of dawud (pbuh) and that is the most moderate fasting".

according to another narration: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "that is the best fasting." i said, "but i am capable of doing more than this". thereupon, messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "there is nothing better than this." `abdullah bin `amr (may allah be pleased with them) said (when he grew old): "had i accepted the three days (fasting during every month) as the messenger of allah had said, it would have been dearer to me than my family and my property".

in another narration `abdullah is reported to have said: messenger of allah (pbuh) said to me, "o `abdullah! have i not been informed that you observe fast during the day and offer prayer all the night." i replied, "yes, o messenger of allah!" messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "don't do that. observe fast for few days and then leave off for few days, perform prayers and also sleep at night, as your body has a right upon you, and your eyes have a right upon you; and your wife has a right upon you; your visitors have a right upon you. it is sufficient for you to observe fast three days in a month, as the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times, so it will be like fasting the whole year." i insisted (on fasting) and so i was given a hard instruction. i said, "o messenger of allah! i have strength." messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "observe fast like the fasting of prophet dawud (pbuh); and do not fast more than that." i said: "how was the fasting of prophet dawud?" he (pbuh) said, "half of the year (i.e., he used to fast on every alternate day)."

afterwards when `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) grew old, he used to say: "would that i had availed myself of the concession granted to me by messenger of allah."

in another narration `abdullah is reported to have said: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i have been informed that you observe fast continuously and recite (the whole of the qur’an) every night.” i said, “messenger of allah! it is right, but i covet thereby nothing but good,” whereupon he (pbuh) said, “then observe fasts like the fasting of prophet dawud (pbuh) as he was the most ardent worshipper of allah; recite the qur’an once every month.” i said, “o prophet of allah! i am capable of doing more than that.” he said, “then recite it (the complete qur’an) in every twenty days.” i said, “o prophet of allah i am capable of reciting more than that.” he said, “then recite it once in every ten days.” i said, “o prophet of allah! i am capable of reciting more than that.” he said, “then recite it once in every seven days, but not recite more than that.” the prophet of allah also said to me, “you do not know, you may have a longer life”. when i grew old i wished i had availed myself of the concession (granted to me by) the prophet of allah.

in another narration `abdullah is reported to have said: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the best fasting with allah is that of (prophet) dawud, and the best prayer with allah is that of dawud (pbuh) for he would sleep half of the night and stand for prayer for the third of it and (then) would sleep sixth part of it; he observed fast one day and leave off the other. he would not flee on meeting the enemy”.

in another narration `abdullah is reported to have said: my father helped me marry a noble woman and he used to inquire of his daughter-in-law regarding her husband. she would say: “he is, indeed, a fine man. since i have come to him, he has neither stepped on my bed nor he has had sexual intercourse with me”. when this state of affairs lasted for some time, my father mentioned the matter to messenger of allah (pbuh) who directed my father saying, “send him to me”. i went to him accordingly. he asked me, “how often do you observe fast?” i replied; “daily”. he asked me, “how long do you take in reading the noble qur’an completely.” i said, “once every night”. then he narrated the whole story. he (in his old age) would recite one seventh of his nightly recitation to some members of his family during the day to lighten his task at night. whenever he wished to have a relief from his fast on alternate days, he would give up fasting for a few days and make up deficiency later by observing the number of fasts he had missed. he would not give up the number of fasts altogether because he did not like to abandon what he had settled with messenger of allah (pbuh).

commentary: this hadith brings the following two things into focus:

1. besides mentioning the continence and ardour for worship of the companions of the prophet (pbuh), it tells us of the teachings of the prophet of allah to adopt moderation and fulfill the lawful needs of life as well as religion.

2. it also presents a model of the chastity, modesty and bashfulness of the sahabiyat (**women who embraced islam and saw the prophet (pbuh)**). it tells how patiently they bore the indifference of their husbands. in the instance quoted in the above mentioned hadith, the politeness with which the wife of abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) answered her father-in-law when he inquired her about the treatment of her husband is a model of decency and modesty.

151. hanzalah al-usayyidi (may allah be pleased with him) who was one of the scribes of messenger of allah (pbuh), reported: i met abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) he said: "how are you o hanzalah?" i said, "hanzalah has become a hypocrite". he said, "far removed is allah from every imperfection, what are you saying?" i said, "when we are in the company of messenger of allah (pbuh) and he reminds us of hell-fire and jannah, we feel as if we are seeing them with our very eyes, and when we are away from messenger of allah (pbuh), we attend to our wives, our children, our business, most of these things (pertaining to life hereafter) slip out of our minds." abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) said, "by allah, i also experience the same thing". so abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) and i went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and i said to him, "o messenger of allah (pbuh), hanzalah has turned hypocrite." thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "**what has happened to you?**" i said, "o messenger of allah, when we are in your company, and are reminded of hell-fire and jannah, we feel as if we are seeing them with our own eyes, but when we go away from you and attend to our wives, children and business, much of these things go out of our minds." thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "**by him in whose hand is my life if your state of mind remains the same as it is in my presence and you are always busy in remembrance (of allah), the angels will shake hands with you in your beds and in your roads; but hanzalah, time should be devoted (to the worldly affairs) and time should be devoted (to prayer)**". he (the prophet (pbuh)) said this thrice. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith also tells us about the continence and piety of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) with reference to the natural instinct of man to think differently in different situations. this condition has nothing to do with nifaq (hypocrisy). islam is the deen of fitrah (pure nature) and takes the middle course in everything, and combines the benefits of this world and those of the hereafter. it also satisfies the needs of the body as well as that of the soul.

152. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: while the prophet (pbuh) was delivering khutbah (religious talk), he noticed a man who was standing, so he asked about him and was told that he was abu israel who had taken a vow to remain standing and not sit, or go into the shade, or speak while observing fasting. thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“tell him to speak, to go into the shade, to sit and to complete his fast”**.

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. this hadith makes it abundantly clear that one cannot attain the pleasure of allah by means of self-invented methods. it can only be achieved by ways and means prescribed in the qur’an and sunnah.

2. one should never vow for anything which is smeared with sin or which is not permitted by deen. an instance of this is quoted in the above mentioned hadith.

3. the majority of ‘ulama’ (scholars) who do not think the expiation of such vows necessary, quote this hadith in support of their view. they argue that the prophet (pbuh) has not prescribed expiation in such cases as is evident from this hadith.

Chapter 15: The Righteous conduct on Regular basis

allah, the exalted, says:

“has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe (in the oneness of allah - islamic monotheism) to be affected by allah’s reminder (this qur’an), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the scripture [the taurat (torah) and the injeel (gospel)] before (i.e., jews and christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened?” (57:16)

“and we sent `isa (jesus) - son of maryam (mary), and gave him the injeel (gospel). and we ordained in the hearts of those who followed him, compassion and mercy. but the monasticism which they invented for themselves, we did not prescribe for them, but (they sought it) only to please allah therewith, but that they did not observe it with the right observance.” (57:27)

“and be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it has become strong...” (16:92)

“and worship your rubb until there comes unto you the certainty (i.e., death).” (15:99)

and there are ahadith, one of them is narrated by `aishah (may allah be pleased with her): messenger of allah (pbuh) liked that act of worship most in the performance of which a person was regular and constant. [muslim].

153. `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “should anyone fall asleep at night and fail to recite his portion of the qur’an, or a part of it, if he recites it between the fajr prayer and the zuhr prayer, it will be recorded for him as though he had recited it during the night”.

[muslim].

commentary: the word `hizb’ originally means to take one’s turn for getting water from a well. subsequently, people started using it for daily round of recitation which one adopts on his own voluntarily. for instance, fixing a number of nawafil (voluntary prayers), recital of a certain portion of the noble qur’an or performance of some other noble deed as one’s daily routine.

this hadith stresses that one must adhere to such routine. it also tells that if for some reason one is unable to do it at the time fixed by him, he can do it later at the time closest to the one he has fixed for it. if one does so, he will be eligible to its full reward.

154. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said to me, “o abdullah! do not be like so-and-so. he used to get up at night for optional prayer but abandoned it later.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the excellence of manners demands that if someone has something reprehensible in his character, the person concerned should not be mentioned but the shortcoming must be indicated so that people refrain from it. the second point that we learn from this hadith is that if one starts a good deed, he should try his best to do it perpetually because its perpetuation is liked by allah.

155. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: when messenger of allah (pbuh) missed the optional night salat (tahajjud) due to pain or any other reason, he would perform twelve rak`ah during the day time.

[muslim].

commentary: the qada' of nawafil (offering prayer to make up for having failed to offer it at their due time) is not binding. but it is mustahab (desirable). the prophet (pbuh) did it.

Chapter 16: Observing the Sunnah and the manners of its obedience

allah, the exalted, says:

“and whatsoever the messenger (muhammad (pbuh)) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it)”. (59:7)

“nor does he speak of (his own) desire. it is only a revelation that is revealed.” (53:3,4)

“say (o muhammad (pbuh) to mankind): `if you (really) love allah then follow me (i.e., accept islamic monotheism, follow the qur’an and the sunnah), allah will love you and forgive you of your sins”. (3:31)

“indeed in the messenger of allah (muhammad (pbuh)) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the meeting with) allah and the last day...” (33:21)

“but no, by your rubb, they can have no faith, until they make you (o muhammad (pbuh)) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission”. (4:65)

“(and) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to allah and his messenger (pbuh)”. (4:59)

“he who obeys the messenger (muhammad (pbuh)), has indeed obeyed allah.” (4:80)

“and verily, you (o muhammad (pbuh)) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the straight path (i.e., allah’s deen of islamic monotheism):. (42:52)

“and let those who oppose the messenger’s (muhammad (pbuh)) commandment (i.e., his sunnah -- legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements) (among the sects), beware, lest some fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.” (24:63)

“and remember (o you the members of the prophet’s family, the graces of your rubb), that which is recited in your houses of the verses of allah and al-hikmah (i.e., prophet’s sunnah -- legal ways, so give your thanks to allah and glorify his praises for this qur’an and the sunnah).” (33:34)

156. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “do not ask me unnecessarily about the details of the things which i do not mention to you. verily, the people before you were doomed because they were used to putting many questions to their prophets and had differences about their prophets. refrain from what i forbid you and do what i command you to the best of your ability and capacity”.

[al-bukhari and muslim]

commentary: to be unnecessarily inquisitive and create differences and confusion in the injunctions of allah and his prophet (pbuh) leads to destruction. the safest course lies only in following the orders of allah and his prophet (pbuh) without `ifs' and `buts.' hairsplitting in religious issues falls in this category. it opens the door for chaos and conflict and paves the way for disunity and separation. may allah give sense to the muslim ummah to abandon this road and take the right path which ensures peace and security. let it be absolutely clear that the right path is one and one alone. there cannot be multiple right paths, it is one and singular. once a community leaves the straight path, it is sure to go astray.

157. `irbad bin sariyah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: one day messenger of allah (pbuh) delivered us a very eloquent khutbah on account of which eyes shed tears and hearts were full of tears. a man said: “o prophet of allah, this is as if it were a parting advice. so advise us”. he (pbuh) said, “i admonish you to fear allah, to listen and obey even if an abyssinian slave is appointed as your leader. because whoever among you shall live after me, will see much discord. so hold fast to my sunnah and the examples of the rightly-guided caliphs who will come after me. adhere to them and hold to it fast. beware of new things (in deen) because every bid`ah is a misguidance”.

[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith stresses piety, obedience to the leader, following in the footsteps of the prophet (pbuh) and the first four noble caliphs. it strictly forbids innovation in deen.

this hadith also reveals the prediction of the prophet (pbuh) that the muslim ummah will become a victim of dissension. he also prescribed the right means to counteract it. the remedy that he has proposed for this problem is that muslims should never deviate from the path laid for them by him and his righteous successors. this is the touchstone for discovering the truth from the mess of different views. all the troubles of muslims would come to an end if they accept this as the one singular criterion of right and wrong.

158. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “everyone of my ummah will enter jannah except those who refuse”. he was asked: “who will refuse?” he (pbuh) said, “whoever obeys me, shall enter jannah, and whosoever disobeys me, refuses to (enter jannah)”.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: the word ummah here stands for the community which accepted the invitation of the prophet (pbuh), that is to say, the people who on his call embraced islam. out of this community who follow him faithfully will go to jannah.

159. salamah bin al-akwa` (may allah be pleased with him) reported: my father said that a person ate in the presence of messenger of allah (pbuh) with his left hand. he (pbuh) said, “eat with your right hand”. he said, “i cannot do that.” thereupon he (the prophet) said, “may you never do that.” it was pride that prevented him from doing it. and he could not raise it (the right hand) up to his mouth afterwards.
[muslim].

commentary:

1. to eat with the left hand without a valid reason, is a repulsive act. besides eating, every other good action was done by the prophet (pbuh) with his right hand.

2. to ignore the injunctions of allah and the practice of the prophet (pbuh) out of pride is a serious offense and can endanger even the faith of a muslim.

160. nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “straighten your rows (during salat) or allah would create dissension amongst you”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration reported by muslim, nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with them) narrated: messenger of allah (pbuh) used to straighten our rows (in salat), as if he was straightening an arrow with their help until he saw that we had learnt it from him. one day he came out, stood up (for salat) and was about to say: allahu akbar (allah is the greatest), (marking the beginning of the prayer) when he saw a man, whose chest was bulging out from the row. he said, “slaves of allah, you must straighten your rows or allah would create dissension amongst you.”

commentary: the real meaning of this saying is that allah will create dissension and conflict among you. in any case, this hadith makes abundantly clear the importance of setting the rows in congregational salat to which the present-day muslims do not pay much attention. because of the lack of understanding of islamic principles, no one pays heed to the proper formation of rows in mosques in congregational salat.

161. abu musa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a house in al-madinah caught fire at night and the roof and walls

fell down upon the occupants. when this was reported to messenger of allah (pbuh) he said, “fire is your enemy; so put it out before you go to bed”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the order of the prophet (pbuh) in this hadith relates to the lamps which produced light by means of oil and wick which can cause fire. such lamps were used in the time of the prophet (pbuh). there is no such risk in electric bulbs which are being used in the present age.

162. abu musa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the similitude of guidance and knowledge with which allah has sent me is like a rain which has fallen on some ground. a fertile part of earth has absorbed water and brought forth much grass and herbs. another part, which is solid, held the water and allah benefits men thereby, who drank and gave others to drink, and used it for irrigation. but some of it has fallen on a portion of sandy land which neither retains the water nor produces herbage. such is the likeness of the man who understands the religion of allah and who gets benefit of what allah has sent me with; he learns and teaches others. it is also the likeness of the man who neither raises his head on that account (meaning he does not benefit from what the prophet (pbuh) was sent with) nor accepts allah’s guidance with which i am sent”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in this hadith the guidance and knowledge which was sent to mankind through the prophet (pbuh) is compared to the rain which is beneficial, because this knowledge resuscitates the dead hearts as does the rain to a barren land. one who makes use of this knowledge is likened to a good soil, and one who acquires this knowledge and imparts it to others but does not put it into practice is considered akin to a hard land which holds water and other people utilize it. a person who neither learns it nor acts upon it is like a desolate land which neither holds water nor produces anything. such a person is the worst of all because he neither himself benefits from it nor lets others make use of it. this hadith induces one to acquire knowledge, impart it to others, put it into actual practice and warns people from neglecting this duty.

163. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “my parable and that of yours is like a man who kindled a fire. when it has illuminated all around him, the moths and grasshoppers began to fall therein. he tried to push them away, but they overcame him and jumped into it. i am catching hold of your waists ties (to save you) from fire, but you slip away from my hands”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the extreme kindness which the prophet (pbuh) had for the welfare of his followers. it also mentions the misfortune of those who would become the fuel of hell for not accepting islam in spite of the utmost affection and ardour of the prophet (pbuh) to bring them in the fold of islam. people who fail to accept islam would fall in the hell-fire in the same way moths fall in the fire.

164. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) commanded the licking of fingers (after eating) and the cleaning of the dish, saying: “you do not know in what portion the blessing (of allah) lies”.
[muslim].

in another narration, jabir said: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a morsel of any of you falls down, you should pick it up and remove any dirt or dust on it and then eat it; and don't leave it for satan; and do not wipe your hand with the towel until you have licked your fingers, for you do not know in what portion of the food the barakah* (of allah) lies”.

* barakah is the abundance of goodness and its continuity.

commentary: this hadith enjoins muslims to lick their fingers after meals, wipe off the food left in the utensils and eat morsels which fall down in the course of eating. all these things have many advantages:

1. may be that is the blessed portion of the food which sticks to the fingers or utensils.
2. this practice is a sign of humility and aversion from the style of proud and haughty people.
3. it saves one from being ungrateful to allah.
4. by these means one defeats satan.

in the light of these islamic injunctions one can very well judge violation of islamic teachings and ungratefulness to allah which is evident from the large quantity of food which is thrown on the garbage.

165. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on the day of resurrection you will be assembled barefooted, naked and uncircumcised”. he then recited: “as we began the first creation, we shall repeat it. (it is) a promise binding upon us. truly, we shall do it,” and continued: “the first to be clothed on the day of resurrection will be (prophet) ibrahim. then some of my companions will be taken to the left, (i.e., towards hell-fire) and when i will say, ‘they belong to my ummah, o my rubb!’ it would be said: ‘you do not know what they invented after you had left them.’ i shall then say as the righteous slave [i.e., `isa (jesus (pbuh))] said: ‘and i was a witness over them while i was amongst them, when you took me up, you were the watcher over them and you are a witness to all things. if you punish them, they are your slaves, and if you forgive them, verily, you, only you are the all-mighty, the all-wise.’ i shall be told: ‘they continued to turn on their heels since you parted from them”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that the punishment of apostasy is hell. for this reason, this crime is punishable by death in islam.

2. we also learn from this hadith that the prophet (pbuh) had neither knowledge of the unseen nor is he omnipresent and omniscient, as is falsely believed by deviated people. if he had the knowledge of the unseen, or had he been omnipresent and omniscient, he would not have accepted such persons as his companions and followers who were in fact apostates. this is the reason when he was informed of their real conduct through wahy (revelation), he disowned them in the same way as prophet `isa (jesus) had disowned the people who had started worshipping him and his mother as god.

166. `abdullah bin mughaffal (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) prohibited flicking pebbles by the index finger and the thumb; and he said, “it does not kill a game animal nor does it inflict wound on the enemy, but breaks the tooth and gorges the eye”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration it is said: a close relative of `abdullah bin mughaffal (may allah be pleased with him) was hitting with pebbles using the index finger and the thumb; he said: "messenger of allah (pbuh) **has forbidden it saying that it does not kill the game**". he repeated the act and ibn mughaffal said to him: "i told you that the prophet (pbuh) had prohibited it but you repeated it. i shall never talk to you."

commentary:

1. this hadith exhorts us not to do anything which is likely to harm others.

2. it also tells us that it is permissible to sever connections and speech with the people who disobey the injunctions of allah and his prophet (pbuh).

167. `abis bin rabi`ah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i saw `umar bin al-khattab(may allah be pleased with him) kissing the black stone (al-hajar al-aswad) and saying: "**i know that you are just a stone and that you can neither do any harm nor give benefit. had i not seen messenger of allah (pbuh) kissing you, i would not have kissed you**". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. the statement of `umar (may allah be pleased with him) quoted in this hadith is highly significant in the sense that he wanted to make it absolutely clear to the illiterate and ignorant that al-hajar al-aswad (**black stone of the ka`bah**) is not kissed for because stones are venerated in islam, as was the practice in pre-islamic period. what he wanted to emphasize was that kissing the black stone was in accordance with the sunnah of the prophet (pbuh).

2. obedience of the prophet (pbuh) in every affair is a must, whether one understands the wisdom behind it or not. by analogy, kissing of the black stone, some people think it is permissible to kiss and show respect to the tombs of saints. but this is not valid reason because kissing the black stone is an `ibadah (**act of worship**), or a part of it, and every `ibadah is tauqifiyah (**prescribed by allah and the prophet (pbuh)**) and it can neither be increased nor diminished, nor can it be graded as something else.

Chapter 17: Obedience to the command of Allah is an obligatory duty

allah, the exalted, says:

“but no, by your rubb, they can have no faith, until they make you (o muhammad (pbuh)) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.” (4:65)

“the only saying of the faithful believers, when they are called to allah (his words, the qur’an) and his messenger (pbuh), to judge between them, is that they say: ‘we hear and we obey.’ and such are the successful (who will live forever in jannah).” (24:51)

168. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when it was revealed to messenger of allah (pbuh): “to allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and whether you disclose what is in your own selves or conceal it, allah will call you to account for it,” the companions of messenger of allah (pbuh) felt it hard and severe and they came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and sat down on their knees and said: “o messenger of allah, we were assigned some duties which were within our power to perform, such as salat (prayer), saum (fasting), jihad (striving in the cause of allah), sadaqah (charity). then this (the above mentioned) verse was revealed to you and it is beyond our power to live up to it.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “do you want to say what the people of two books (jews and christians) said before you: ‘we hear and disobey?’ you should rather say: ‘we hear and we obey, we seek forgiveness, our rubb and unto you is the return.’” and they said: “we hear and we obey, (we seek) your forgiveness, our rubb! and unto you is the return.” when the people recited it and it smoothly flowed on their tongues, then allah revealed immediately afterwards: “the messenger (muhammad (pbuh)) believes in what has been sent down to him from his rubb, and (so do) the believers. each one believes in allah, his angels, his books, and his messengers. (they say), ‘we make no distinction between one another of his messengers’ - and they say, ‘we hear, and we obey. (we seek) your forgiveness, our rubb, and to you is the return (of all)’. when they did that, allah abrogated this (ayah) and allah the great revealed: “allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. he gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned.”

(the prophet (pbuh) said): “yes. ‘our rubb! lay not on us a burden like that which you did lay on those before us (jews and christians)”. (the prophet (pbuh) said): “yes. ‘our rubb! put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear”. (the prophet (pbuh) said): “yes. ‘pardon us and grant us forgiveness. have mercy on us. you are our maula (patron, supporter and protector) and give us victory over the disbelieving people”.

he (the prophet (pbuh)) said: “yes”.
[muslim].

commentary: we learn from this hadith that initially every person was answerable for thoughts and doubts even those which crossed his mind; something on which nobody had any control. the companions of the prophet (pbuh) were naturally disturbed on this situation. but when they heard and obeyed the orders of the prophet (pbuh) then almighty allah revoked this order with the elaboration that he does not put anyone to trouble beyond his capacity. it is, therefore, essential for every muslim to obey all the injunctions of allah because none of it is such that he is unable to carry out.

Chapter 18: Prohibition of heresies in religion

allah, the exalted, says:

«so after the truth, what else can there be, save error?». (10:32)

«we have neglected nothing in the book». (6:38)

«(and) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to allah and his messenger (pbuh)». (4:59)

«and verily, this is my straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from his path». (6:153)

«say (o muhammad (pbuh) to mankind): «if you (really) love allah then follow me (i.e., accept islamic monotheism, follow the qurʾan and the sunnah), allah will love you and forgive you your sins». (3:31)

169. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, «if anyone introduces in our matter something which does not belong to it, will be rejected». [al-bukhari and muslim].

the narration in muslim says: «if anybody introduces a practice which is not authenticated by me, it is to be rejected».

commentary: this hadith lays down a very important principle. unfortunately, muslims have not attached any importance to this hadith and the principle given in it with the result that innovations in the deen have become so common that they have been taken for true deen; our people act upon them and are made to practice them. one reason for this is their lack of education and ignorance about deen. the second reason is their lack of understanding of the principle prescribed in this hadith although it is stated in very explicit terms.

the principle that we learn from this hadith is that every such action or activity is innovation which is done as a virtue and to gain the pleasure of allah but is not consonant with the teachings of the qurʾan and sunnah, or which does not agree with the interpretation of the nuss (text) given by the companions of the prophet (pbuh) or their successors (tabi`un).

the reason being that the period of the companions and the tabi`un is the khair-ul-qurun (the best of all generations). thus any action or activity that is deprived of the support of these generations falls in the category of heresies.

170. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: whenever the messenger of allah (pbuh) delivered a khutbah, his eyes would become red, his tone loud and he showed anger as if he were warning us against an army. he (pbuh) would say, "the enemy is about to attack you in the morning and the enemy is advancing against you in the evening". he would further say, "i am sent with the final hour like these two fingers of mine." messenger of allah (pbuh) held up his index finger and the middle finger together to illustrate. he used to add: "to proceed, the best speech is the book of allah and the best guidance is the guidance of muhammad (pbuh), the worst practice is the introduction of new practices in islam and every bid`ah is a misguidance". he would also say, "i am, in respect of rights, nearer to every believer than his own self. he who leaves an estate, it belongs to his heirs, and he who leaves a debt, it is my responsibility to pay it off." [muslim]. same hadith as reported by `irbad bin sariyah (may allah be pleased with him) has already been recorded in the previous chapter regarding safeguarding the sunnah of the prophet (pbuh).
(see hadith number 158)

commentary:

1. this hadith mentions the style of the speech of the prophet (pbuh). his auspicious presence is regarded in it as a sign of the nearness of the day of resurrection.
2. it emphasizes the importance of the qur'an and the sunnah and brings into focus the destruction caused by bid`ah in deen.
3. it clearly lays down that the orphans and the needy are the liability of the government/bait-ul-mal (public exchequer). the reason being that the caliphs were the successors of the prophet (pbuh) and the work which was done by him in his lifetime was after him their responsibility.
4. the rightful owners of the deceased are their heirs and none else.

Chapter 19: Heretics doing desirable or undesirable deeds

allah, the exalted, says:

“and those who say: `our rubb! bestow on us from our wives and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the muttaqun (the pious)”. (25:74)

“and we made them leaders, guiding (mankind) by our command”. (21:73)

171. jarir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: we were with messenger of allah (pbuh) shortly after dawn when there came to him some people clad in woollen rags, or covered with sleeveless blankets; and with swords hanging down from their necks. most of them rather, all of them, belonged to the mudar tribe. the face of the prophet (pbuh) changed when he saw them starving. then he went into his house and came out; then he commanded bilal (may allah be pleased with him) to proclaim adhan (call to prayers). so he proclaimed adhan and recited iqamah and the prophet (pbuh) led the salat. then he delivered a khutbah saying, “o mankind! be dutiful to your rubb, who created you from a single person (adam), and from him (adam) he created his wife (eve), and from them both he created many men and women; and fear allah through whom you demand your (natural) rights, and do not sever the relations of kinship. surely, allah is ever an all-watcher over you.” (4:1) he also recited the ayah which is in the end of surat al-hashr: “o you who believe! fear allah and keep your duty to him. and let every one look what he has sent forth for the tomorrow”. (59:18). thereafter, every man gave in charity dinar, dirham, clothes, measure-fulls of wheat and measure-fulls of dates till he said: “(give in charity) be it half a date”. then a man of the ansar came with a bag which was difficult for him to hold in his hand. thereafter, the people came successively (with charity) till i saw two heaps of food and clothes. i noticed that the face of messenger of allah (pbuh) was glowing like that of the bright moon or glittering gold. then he (pbuh) said, “whosoever introduces a good practice in islam, there is for him its reward and the reward of those who act upon it after him without anything being diminished from their rewards. and whosoever introduces an evil practice in islam, will shoulder its sin and the sins of all those who will act upon it, without diminishing in any way their burden” [muslim].

commentary:

1. some people try to deduce a proof for good innovations from the words: “mun sana’ fi al- islam sunah hasanah”. whosoever introduces a good practice in islam.

thus they classify innovations bid`ah into two categories, namely good innovations and bad innovations. but this is wrong. no innovation can be good. it is always bad because it amounts to inventing shar`iah which no one has the right to do. constitution of shar`iah is the exclusive right of allah alone. it is he who constitutes the shar`iah and it is on his behest that his prophets convey it to the people. not to speak of scholars and others.

2. what this hadith makes abundantly clear is that anyone who tries to find new ways and means to preach and practice islamic shar`iah, which are later on adopted by other people also, would not only get the reward of doing so but he will also be rewarded for the endeavours of those who will after him continue them and perform good deeds. but anything of which we do not find any trace in shar`iah is bad. it cannot be good in any case, no matter what means are adopted for this purpose.

3. other benefits of this hadith are self-evident and do not need further elaboration.

172. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the first son of adam* takes a share of the guilt of every one who murders another wrongfully because he was the initiator of committing murder”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

* the son of adam in the hadith is said to be qabil. allah tells us about his story in surat al-ma`idah (the table spread with food). verses 27-31.

commentary: this hadith gives us an idea how serious is the crime of initiating an evil which is followed by others. one who initiates an evil would be sinful for all those who follow him in that crime till the day of resurrection. the safest course, therefore, is that one should abstain from heresy and stick to obedience only.

Chapter 20: Calling to right guidance and forbidding depravity

allah, the exalted, says:

“and invite (men) to (believe in) your rubb [i.e., in the oneness (tauhid) of allah - (1) oneness of the rububiyah of allah; (2) oneness of the worship of allah; (3) oneness of the name and qualities of allah]. (28:87)

“invite (mankind, o muhammad (pbuh)) to the way of your rubb (i.e., islam) with wisdom (i.e., with the divine revelation and the qur’an and fair preaching)”.(16:125)

“help you one another in al-birr and at-taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety)”. (5:2)

“let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (islam).” (3:104)

173. abu mas`ud `uqbah bin `amr al-ansari al-badri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**whoever guides someone to virtue will be rewarded equivalent to him who practices that good action**”.
[muslim].

commentary: the statement quoted in this hadith was made by the prophet (pbuh) when, on a certain occasion, someone requested him to give an animal for riding. the prophet (pbuh) replied that he did not have any. a man who was present there said that he could show him the man who could help him in the matter. this is how the prophet (pbuh) revealed the reward of directing people to good deeds, which is mentioned in this hadith.

174. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**if anyone calls others to follow right guidance, his reward will be equivalent to those who follow him (in righteousness) without their reward being diminished in any respect, and if anyone invites others to follow error, the sin, will be equivalent to that of the people who follow him (in sinfulness) without their sins being diminished in any respect**”.
[muslim].

commentary: `invitation' and `call' stand to mean here that someone induces others to virtue or seduces to sin by means of his speech or action. we come to know from this hadith that one who becomes a medium for either of them is given a reward or punishment respectively by allah (swt).

175. sahl bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said on the day of the khaibar battle, "i will give this banner to a person at whose hands allah will grant victory; a man who loves allah and his messenger (pbuh), and allah and his messenger love him also." the people spent the night thinking as to whom it would be given. when it was morning, the people hastened to messenger of allah (pbuh). every one of them was hoping that the banner would be given to him. he (the prophet (pbuh)) asked, "where is `ali bin abu talib?" they said: "o messenger of allah! his eyes are sore." he (pbuh) then sent for him and when he came, messenger of allah (pbuh) applied his saliva to his eyes and supplicated. `ali (may allah be pleased with him) recovered as if he had no ailment at all. he (pbuh) conferred upon him the banner. `ali (may allah be pleased with him) said: ``o messenger of allah, shall i fight against them until they are like us?" thereupon he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, "advance cautiously until you reach their open places; thereafter, invite them to islam and inform them what is obligatory for them from the rights of allah, for, by allah, if allah guides even one person through you that is better for you than possessing a whole lot of red camels".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: besides mentioning the excellence of `ali (may allah be pleased with him) and the miracle of the prophet (pbuh), this hadith tells about the procedure of jihad. according to procedure, first of all, polytheists and infidels should be invited to islam, and if they reject the invitation, then jihad be made against them. jihad is such an action that if at its initial stage, that is to say at the stage of invitation, some people accept the guidance, then the people who will participate in jihad will get the reward of good deeds done by those who would join the fold of islam.

176. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a young man from the tribe of aslam said, "o messenger of allah (pbuh), i wish to fight (in the cause of allah) but i do not have anything to equip myself with (for fighting)". he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, "go to so-and-so, for he had equipped himself (for fighting) but he fell ill." so he (the young man) went to him and said, "messenger of allah (pbuh) sends you his greetings and says that you should give me the equipment that you have provided yourself with." the man said (to his wife or servant): "o so-and-so, give him the equipment i have collected for myself and do not withhold anything from him. by allah, if you withhold anything from him, we will not be blessed therein".
[muslim].

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that if a person has made preparations for doing some good deed but he is unable to do it due to illness or some other genuine reason, and he gives the material to be used for that purpose to someone else then he will also be equally eligible to the reward of that good deed.

2. rather than spending wealth in the way of allah, those who withhold it, displease allah, and their wealth becomes deprived of his blessing.

Chapter 21: Assistance towards righteousness and piety allah, the exalted, says:

“help you one another in al-birr and at-taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety)”. (5:2)

“by al-`asr (the time). verily, man is in loss. except those who believe (in islamic monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (al-ma`ruf) which allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (al-munkar) which allah has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in allah’s cause during preaching his religion of islamic monotheism or jihad)”. (103:1-3)

177. khalid al-juhani (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “he who equips a warrior in the way of allah (will get the reward of the one who has actually gone for jihad); and he who looks after the family of a warrior in the way of allah will get the reward of the one who has gone for jihad”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells the mode which can make jihad more effective and give the participants of jihad equal share in its reward. every society has many able-bodied young people who want to take part in jihad but do not have the resources for it, and this is how a very useful segment of the society fails to make any contribution to it. on the other hand, there are people in the society who have plenty of resources but do not possess health, vigour and youth which are essential for jihad. according to the method prescribed in this hadith, not only the requisite manpower and resources essential for jihad are combined but everyone gets an even share in its reward. it should be kept in mind that in the early period of islam, mujahidun (the muslims who took part in jihad) were neither professional soldiers nor were they paid regular salaries, the way they now constitute a regular, permanent and vast military institution. these mujahidun used to take part in jihad voluntarily as is being done nowadays under many organizations also.

178. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) sent a detachment to banu lahyan tribe and remarked, “let one of every two men get ready to advance, and both will earn the

Chapter 22: Giving Counsel

allah, the exalted, says:

“the believers are nothing else than brothers (in islamic religion)”. (49:10)

“(nuh said) i give sincere advice to you”. (7:62)

“(and hud said) and i am a trustworthy adviser (or well-wisher) for you”. (7:68)

181. tamim bin aus ad-dari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “ad-deen is sincerity”. we said: “for whom?” he replied, “for allah, his book, his messenger and for the leaders of the muslims and their masses”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith stresses the importance and merits of general sincerity. sincerity for allah here means that one must have true faith in him and he should be worshipped with full devotion and sincerity. sincerity for the qur’an means that one should confirm its truth with one’s full heart and mind, recite it regularly, act upon the injunctions contained in it with meticulous care and strictly avoid its misinterpretation. sincerity of the prophet (pbuh) means sincere confirmation of his prophethood, faithful obedience of his orders and adherence to his sunnah. the goodwill of the muslim rulers stands here for co-operating with them in their lawful orders and obedience of their such orders which are free from any trace of sin. if they deviate from the straight path they should be persuaded to turn to virtue. one should not revolt against them unless they commit infidelity. the goodwill of the muslim masses means that one should work for the betterment of their life in this world and the hereafter. they should be provided the right guidance, induced to perform good deeds and deterred from evils.

182. jarir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i made my covenant with messenger of allah (pbuh) on the observance of salat, payment of zakat, and giving counsel to muslim.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith emphasizes the importance of goodwill to all the muslims to the extent that the prophet (pbuh) would require his companions to vow for their goodwill giving counsel to each other in the same way as he did in the case of most important obligations like salat and zakat.

183. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “no one of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: we learn from this hadith about the importance and virtue of mutual love among the muslims. if we act upon the injunctions mentioned in this hadith, the muslim societies will be immediately purged of the evils like exploitation, bribery, dishonesty, falsehood, cheating, forgery, etc., which are rampant in them at present. islam has taught golden principles to its followers who have unfortunately neglected them and in consequence are leading a life of utter disgrace and moral turpitude. may allah guide them to the straight path.

Chapter 23: Enjoining Good and forbidding Evil

allah, the exalted, says:

“let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (islam), enjoining al-ma`ruf (i.e., islamic monotheism and all that islam orders one to do) and forbidding al-munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that islam has forbidden). and it is they who are the successful.” (3:104)

“you (true believers in islamic monotheism, and real followers of prophet muhammad (pbuh) and his sunnah) are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin al-ma`ruf (i.e., islamic monotheism and all that islam has ordained) and forbid al-munkar (polytheism, disbelief and all that islam has forbidden)”. (3:110)

“show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e., don't punish them).” (7:199)

“the believers, men and women, are auliya' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) al-ma`ruf (i.e., islamic monotheism and all that islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from al-munkar (i.e., polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that islam has forbidden)”. (9:71)

“those among the children of israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of dawud (david) and `isa (jesus), son of maryam (mary). that was because they disobeyed (allah and the messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. they used not to forbid one another from the munkar (wrong, evildoing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed. vile indeed was what they used to do”. (5:78,79)

“and say: `the truth is from your rubb.' then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve”. (18:29)

“therefore proclaim openly (allah's message - islamic monotheism) that which you are commanded...” (15:94)

“we rescued those who forbade evil, but with a severe torment. we seized those who did wrong because they used to rebel against allah's command (disobey allah)”. (7:165)

184. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**whoever amongst you sees an evil, he must change it with his hand; if he is unable to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is unable to do so, then with his heart; and that is the weakest form of faith**”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith contains a very important prescription to prevent the muslim society from all things which are forbidden in islam. so long as muslims adhered to it and ceaselessly and fearlessly performed their obligation of enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong, their society was largely safe from many evils and sins.

185. abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**never a prophet had been sent before me by allah to his people but he had, among his people, (his) disciples and companions, who followed his ways and obeyed his command. then there came after them their successors who proclaimed what they did not practise, and practised what they were not commanded to do. and (he) who strove against them with his hand is a believer; he who strove against them with his heart is a believer; and he who strove against them with his tongue is a believer ; and beyond that there is no grain of faith**”.

[muslim].

186. `ubadah bin as-samit (may allah be pleased with him) reported: **we swore allegiance to messenger of allah (pbuh) to hear and obey; in time of difficulty and in prosperity, in hardship and in ease, to endure being discriminated against and not to dispute about rule with those in power, except in case of evident infidelity regarding which there is a proof from allah. we swore allegiance to messenger of allah (pbuh) to say what was right wherever we were, and not to fear from anyone’s reproach.**

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: it has been emphasized in this hadith that even if a muslim ruler is sinful and cruel, one should not disobey him unless he orders to go against the divine injunctions. in that case, such rulers should not be obeyed. similarly, it is not permissible to revolt against them until they commit clear-cut infidelity because there is a greater danger of loss in revolt and rebellion.

it should be noted once and for all that the expression of truth and compliance with religious injunctions have top priority on all occasions. this should be done regardless of what people say on this account.

187. nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the likeness of the man who observes the limits prescribed by allah and that of the man who transgresses them is like the people who get on board a ship after casting lots. some of them are in its lower deck and some of them in its upper (deck). those who are in its lower (deck), when they require water, go to the occupants of the upper deck, and say to them : `if we make a hole in the bottom of the ship, we shall not harm you.’ if they (the occupants of the upper deck) leave them to carry out their design they all will be drowned. but if they do not let them go ahead (with their plan), all of them will remain safe”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: we learn from this hadith that the consequences of committing acts which are forbidden in islam are not confined only to those persons who commit them, but the whole society has to suffer for them. it is, therefore, essential that the people who are in the habit of committing sinful acts and violate divine injunctions, should be checked to save the whole society from destruction. if this is not done, the entire society will have to face the divine punishment.

188. umm salamah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “you will have rulers some of whom you approve and some of whom you will disapprove. he who dislikes them will be safe, and he who expresses disapproval will be safe, but he who is pleased and follows them (will be indeed sinful)”. his audience asked: “shall we not fight them?” he replied, “no, as long as they establish salat amongst you”.

[muslim].

commentary:

1. by qualifying the obedience of muslim rulers with salat, it has been made clear that what actually distinguishes between kufr and islam is salat.

2. if a person has the power to stop the rulers from committing evil deeds, he must use this power for it. if he is incapable of it, he should at least condemn their evil deeds in his heart. to join or acquiesce in the evil deeds of the rulers is an extremely dangerous trend. from this angle, participation in political parties is a dangerous affair because when these parties come into power, all their members have to endorse and pursue their good as well as bad policies.

189. zainab (may allah be pleased with her) reported: the prophet (pbuh) came to visit me one day frightened and he ù said, “**la ilaha illallah (there is no true god but allah). woe to the arabs because of an evil which has drawn near! today an opening of this size has been made in the barrier restraining ya’juj and ma’juj (gog and magog people).**” and he (pbuh) made a circle with his thumb and index finger. i said, “o messenger of allah! shall we perish while still there will be righteous people among us?” he (pbuh) replied, “**yes, when wickedness prevails**”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith also tells us about the ominous of sin. it says that when vice becomes common, then in spite of the presence of some virtuous persons, that community will be destroyed. but on the day of resurrection, those noble persons who had done their duty of preaching virtue and checking vice will stand apart from the sinners. thus this hadith induces one to keep away from sins.

190. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**beware of sitting on roads (ways).**” the people said: “we have but them as sitting places.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**if you have to sit there, then observe the rights of the way**”. they asked, “what are the rights of the way?” he (pbuh) said, “**to lower your gaze (on seeing what is illegal to look at), and (removal of harmful objects), returning greetings, enjoining good and forbidding wrong**”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith tells us that it is improper to sit on roadsides and passages in such a way which causes inconvenience to men and women who pass by. it is really very unfortunate that now we do not care about such things at all.

2. if sitting on roadside is indispensable at all, then it is essential to observe the requirements mentioned in the hadith to justify the needful.

3. some other islamic etiquette mentioned in this hadith have also been stated in other ahadith. for instance, politeness of speech, sharing of someone's burden, helping the oppressed and the troubled, guiding the wayward person to the right path, answering (in the prescribed manner) one who sneezes, etc.

191. `abdullah bin `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) saw a man wearing a gold ring. so he (the prophet (pbuh)) pulled it off and threw it away, saying, **“one of you takes a live coal, and puts it on his hand.”** it was said to the man after messenger of allah (pbuh) had left: **“take your ring (of gold) and utilize it,”** whereupon he said: **“no, by allah, i would never take it when messenger of allah (pbuh) has thrown it away”**.
[muslim].

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that wearing of gold ring is prohibited for men and so is wearing of golden ornament by them. it is very unfortunate indeed that nowadays it has become a popular fashion to present men gold ring on their marriage and they wear it with great pride. it is a very dangerous custom and must be altogether shunned for two reasons. firstly, it is an unnecessary formality and burden to exchange presents and hold big feasts on betrothal ceremony. it is also open to objection in islamic law. secondly, to give and take unlawful things is all the more forbidden and is akin to building one sin over another.

2. the spirit of obedience mentioned in this hadith is matchless.

192. abu sa`id al-hasan basri reported: `aidh bin `amr (the companion) (may allah be pleased with him) visited `ubaidullah bin ziyad (the ruler) and said to him: **“son, i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, `the worst shepherds (rulers) are those who deal harshly in respect of supervision. beware, don't be one of them!”** ibn ziyad said to him, **“sit down, you are but husk from among the companions of the prophet (pbuh).”** `aidh bin `amr (may allah be pleased with him) retorted: **“was there any husk among them? surely, husk came after them and among others than them”**.
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith presents a model of courage and boldness of speaking the truth before a tyrant. it was displayed by `aidh (may allah be pleased with him) in the court of ubaidullah bin ziyad, governor of basrah. the latter humiliated `aidh (may allah be pleased with him) for his straight forwardness and truth but he repeated his statement about the eminence of the companions of the prophet ü and said none of them could be called husk.

193. hudhaifah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “[by him in whose hand my life is, you either enjoin good and forbid evil, or allah will certainly soon send his punishment to you. then you will make supplication and it will not be accepted](#)”.
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: to abandon the practice of enjoining virtue and forbidding vice is likely to incur the displeasure of allah. this trend is indeed fraught with the danger of rejection of prayers and supplications by him.

194. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “[the best type of jihad \(striving in the way of allah\) is speaking a true word in the presence of a tyrant ruler.](#)”
[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: jihad has many degrees. preaching of virtue is also jihad. the most meritorious of all is the effort of communicating the message of allah to an unjust ruler. similarly, if a society is so much given to a vice that no one can dare to utter a word against it, then to protest against it can also be reckoned as the best jihad.

195. abu `abdullah tariq bin shihab (may allah bepleased with him) reported: a person asked the prophet (pbuh) (when he had just put his foot in the stirrup): “what is the highest form of jihad?” he (pbuh) said, “[speaking the truth in the presence of a tyrant ruler](#)”.
[an-nasa’i].

196. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[the first defect \(in religion\) which affected the children of israel in the way that man would meet another and say to him: `fear allah and abstain from what you are doing, for this is not lawful for you.](#)”

‘ then he would meet him the next day and find no change in him, but this would not prevent him from eating with him, drinking with him and sitting in his assemblies. when it came to this, allah led their hearts into evil ways on account of their association with others.’ then he (pbuh) recited, “those among the children of israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of dawud (david) and `isa (jesus), son of maryam (mary). that was because they disobeyed (allah and the messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. they used not to forbid one another from the munkar (wrong, evildoing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed. vile indeed was what they used to do. you see many of them taking the disbelievers as their auliya’ (protectors and helpers). evil indeed is that which their own selves have sent forward before them; for that (reason) allah’s wrath fell upon them and in torment will they abide. and had they believed in allah and in the prophet (muhammad (pbuh)) and in what has been revealed to him, never would they have taken them (the disbelievers) as auliya’ (protectors and helpers); but many of them are the fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to allah).” (5:78-81)

then he (pbuh) continued: “nay, by allah, you either enjoin good and forbid evil and catch hold of the hand of the oppressor and persuade him to act justly and stick to the truth, or, allah will involve the hearts of some of you with the hearts of others and will curse you as he had cursed them”. [abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

the wording in at-tirmidhi is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when the children of israel became sinful, their learned men prohibited them but they would not turn back. yet, the learned men associated with them and ate and drank with them. so, they were cursed at the tongues of dawud and `isa (jesus), son of maryam (mary), because they were disobedient and were given to transgression.” at this stage messenger of allah (pbuh) who was reclining on a pillow sat up and said, “no, by him in whose hand my soul is, there is no escape for you but you persuade them to act justly.”

commentary: this hadith tells us that the duty of `ulama’ is to check the people from vice and if, in spite of all their efforts people do not abandon them, they should avoid associating with them because it is a matter of religious reverence and vanity. if they do not do it, they will also be cursed like the disobedient lot. may allah save us from this negligence.

197. abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah bepleased with him) reported: “o you people! you recite this verse: `o you who believe! take care of your ownelves. if you follow the (right) guidance [and enjoin what is right (islamic monotheism and all that islam orders one to do) and forbid what is wrong (polytheism, disbelief and all that islam has forbidden)] no hurt can come to you from those who are in error.’ (5:105) but i have heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying: “when people see an oppressor but do not prevent him from (doing evil), it is likely that allah will punish them all.”

[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: what abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah bepleased with him) had stated was that the ayah mentioned in this hadith was generally understood to mean that if a person is on the straight path then it is not necessary for him to preach virtue and forbid vice because in that case he neither has the fear of being harmed by the disobedience and sins of others nor is he answerable to allah for their misdeeds. thus, what it implies is that muslim ummah is not responsible for the enforcement of islamic shari`ah in the world and all it is concerned with is its own improvement only. by narrating this hadith, abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah bepleased with him) refuted this interpretation of the ayah and made it clear that it is the duty of the ummah and each of its member to make best possible efforts to check the vices prevalent in the society. so much so that if a muslim has the ability to check the vices by means of force or speech but he does not do it, his negligence in this regard will become a cause of divine wrath and punishment. the true significance of this ayah is that if, in spite of the best efforts on the part of the pious ones there is no improvement, and people do not abstain from sins and disobedience of allah, then the pious persons will not be held responsible for what the defaulters do, nor would they suffer on this account. this interpretation of the ayah removes the conflict that seems to exist between the meaning of the ayah and the hadith

Chapter 24: Chastisement for one who enjoins good and forbids evil but acts otherwise .

allah, the exalted, says:

«enjoin you al-birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the scripture [the taurat (torah)]! have you then no sense?». (2:44)

«o you who believe! why do you say that which you do not do? most hateful it is with allah that you say that which you do not do». (61:2,3)

«(shu`aib said:) i wish not, in contradiction to you, to do that which i forbid you.» (11:88)

198. usamah bin zaid (may allah bepleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, «a man will be brought on the day of resurrection and will be cast into hell, and his intestines will pour forth and he will go round them as a donkey goes round a millstone. the inmates of hell will gather round him and say: `what has happened to you, o so-and-so? were you not enjoining us to do good and forbidding us to do evil?» he will reply: `i was enjoining you to do good, but was not doing it myself; and i was forbidding you to do evil, but was doing it myself». [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith serves a stern warning for such `ulama, preachers and reformers of the ummah whose own conduct is contrary to the sermons they give from the pulpit.

Chapter 25: Discharging the Trusts

allah, the exalted, says:

“verily! allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due.” (4:58)

“truly, we did offer al-amanah (the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which allah has ordained) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e., afraid of allah’s torment). but man bore it. verily, he was unjust (to himself) and ignorant (of its results)”. (33:72)

199. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “there are three signs of a hypocrite: when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he is trusted, he betrays his trust.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration adds the words: ‘even if he observes fasts, performs salat and asserts that he is a muslim’.

commentary: a hypocrite is the one who professes islam before the muslims but conceals hatred and animosity against them. this double-dealing is worse than kufr. this is the reason the noble qur’an has declared about them that they will be in the lowest depths of the hell. the hypocrites referred to here lived at the time of the prophet (pbuh) and he was informed about them through wahy (revelation). it is very difficult to identify the class of hypocrites in this age. it is almost impossible to know the hypocrisy of faith. the practical hypocrisy is, however, now very common among the muslims. it can be identified on the strength of the traits which have been stated in the ahadith about them. these traits are very common among many of the present-day muslims. their conduct bears the marks of hypocrisy. this practical hypocrisy is, however, not kufr as is the case with the hypocrisy of faith.

200. hudhaifah bin al-yaman (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) foretold to us two ahadith. i have seen one (being fulfilled), and i am waiting for the other.

he (pbuh) told us, “amanah (the trust) descended in the innermost (root) of the hearts of men (that is, it was in their heart innately, by fitrah, or pure human nature). then the qur’an was revealed and they learnt from the quran and they learned from the sunnah.” then the (prophet (pbuh)) told us about the removal of amanah. he said, “the man would have some sleep, and amanah would be taken away from his heart leaving the impression of a faint mark. he would again sleep, and amanah would be taken away from his heart leaving an impression of a blister, as if you rolled down an ember on your foot and it was vesicled. he would see a swelling having nothing in it.” he (the prophet (pbuh)) then took up a pebble and rolled it over his foot and said, “the people would enter into transactions with one another and hardly a person would be left who would return (things) entrusted to him (and there would look like an honest person) till it would be said: ‘in such and such tribe there is a trustworthy man.’ and they would also say about a person: ‘how prudent he is! how handsome he is and how intelligent he is!’ whereas in his heart there would be no grain of faith.” hudhaifah bin al-yaman (may allah bepleased with him) added: i had a time when i did not care with whom amongst you i did business, i entered into a transaction, for if he were a muslim, his faith would compel him to discharge his obligation to me; and if he were a christian or a jew, his guardian (surety) would compel him to discharge his obligation to me. but today i would not enter into a transaction except with so-and-so. [al-bukh ri and muslim].

commentary: the word ‘amanah’ (trust) is a very comprehensive term which includes everything like adherence to islamic injunctions, fairness in dealing, giving everybody his due, etc. according to this hadith, with decline in moral values the true sense of amanah will gradually go on diminishing and eventually a stage will come which has been elucidated in the text of this hadith.

201. hudhaifah and abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with them) reported that they heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “allah will assemble mankind, and the believers will stand till jannah will be brought near them. they will then go to adam (pbuh) and say, ‘o our father, ask (allah (swt), that jannah may be opened for us, but he will reply: ‘there was nothing that put you out of jannah except your father’s sin. i am not the one to do that, go to my son ibrahim (abraham), the beloved man of allah.

' then ibrahim (pbuh) when approached, will say: 'i am not the one to do that, for i was only a friend; and that is not a lofty status but ask musa (moses) to whom allah spoke.' they will then go to musa (pbuh) but he will say: 'i am not the one to do that; go to 'isa (jesus), allah's word and spirit.' 'isa (pbuh) will say: 'i am not the one to do that.' so they will come to me; and i will stand and be given permission. amanah and ties of relationship will be sent forth and will stand on the sides of the sirat (that is, the bridge set over hell-fire) right and left, and the first of you will pass like lightning." i said (that is abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him)) :i ransom you with my father and mother, what is like the movement of lightning?" the messenger of allah replied, "have you not seen how the lightning goes and returns in the twinkling of an eye? next (group will pass) like the passing of the breeze, next like the passing of a bird, and the next with the speed of a running man, according to the quality of their deeds. (during all this time) your prophet (pbuh) will remain standing on the bridge saying: 'o my rubb, keep (them) safe, keep (them) safe,' till men's deeds are so weak that a man comes who will be able only to crawl. on both sides of the bridge pronged flesh hooks, placed under command will be hung and will seize those about whom they receive command, some people being lacerated and escaping and others being thrown violently into hell." abu hurairah added: by him in whose hand abu hurairah's soul is, the pit of jahannam (hell) is seventy years in depth.
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the horrors of the day of resurrection which are evident from the fact that even prophets will be fearful of allah and making supplication to him. prophet muhammad (pbuh) alone will be requesting allah for bestowing his mercy on humans. this hadith also describes the grace of the prophet (pbuh) who will then intercede for all.

202. abu khubaib `abdullah bin az-zubair (may allah bepleased with them) reported: when az-zubair, got ready to fight in the battle of al-jamal, he called me and said: "my son, whoever is killed today will be either a wrongdoer or a wronged one. i expect that i shall be the the wronged one today. i am much worried about my debt. do you think that anything will be left over from our property after the payment of my debt? my son, sell our property and pay off my debt." az-zubair then willed one-third of that portion to his sons; namely `abdullah's sons. he said, "one-third of the one-third. if any property is left after the payment of debts, one-third (of the one-third of what is left is to be given to your sons.

" (hisham, a subnarrator added: "some of the sons of `abdullah were equal in age to the sons of az-zubair, e.g., khubaib and abbad. `abdullah had nine sons and nine daughters at that time)". (the narrator `abdullah added:) he kept on instructing me about his debts and then said: "my son, should you find yourself unable to pay any portion of my debt then beseech my master for his help." by allah, i did not understand what he meant and asked: "father, who is your master?" he said: "allah." by allah! whenever i faced a difficulty in discharging any portion of his debt; i would pray: "o master of zubair, discharge his debt," and he discharged it. zubair was martyred. he left no money, but he left certain lands, one of them in al-ghabah, eleven houses in al-madinah, two in basrah, one in kufah and one in egypt. the cause of his indebtedness was that a person would come to him asking him to keep some money of his in trust for him. zubair would refuse to accept it as a trust, fearing it might be lost, but would take it as a loan. he never accepted a governorship, or revenue office, or any public office. he fought along with messenger of allah (pbuh) and abu bakr, `umar and `uthman (may allah be pleased with them).

`abdullah added: i prepared a statement of his debts and they amounted to two million and two hundred thousand! hakim bin hizam met me and asked me: "nephew, how much is due from my brother as debt?" i kept it as secret and said: "a hundred thousand." hakim said: "by allah! i do not think your assets are sufficient for the payment of these debts." i said: "what would you think if the amount were two million and two hundred thousand?" he said: "i do not think that you would be able to clear off the debts. if you find it difficult let me know."

az-zubair (may allah be pleased with him) had purchased the land in al-ghabah for a hundred and seventy thousand. `abdullah sold it for a million and six hundred thousand, and declared that whosoever had a claim against az-zubair (may allah be pleased with him) should see him in al-ghabah. `abdullah bin ja`far (may allah be pleased with him) came to him and said: "az-zubair (may allah be pleased with him) owed me four hundred thousand, but i would remit the debt if you wish." `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) said: "no." ibn ja`far said: "if you would desire for postponement i would postpone the recovery of it." `abdullah said: "no." ibn ja`far then said: "in that case, measure out a plot for me." `abdullah marked out a plot. thus he sold the land and discharged his father's debt. there remained out of the land four and a half shares.

he then visited mu`awiyah who had with him at the time `amr bin `uthman, al-mundhir bin az-zubair and ibn zam`ah (may allah bepleased with them). mu`awiyah (may allah bepleased with him) said: "what price did you put on the land in al-ghabah?" he said: "one hundred thousand for a each share. mu`awiyah inquired: "how much of it is left?" `abdullah said: "four and a half shares." al-mundhir bin az-zubair said: "i will buy one share for a hundred thousand". `amr bin `uthman said: "i will buy one share for a hundred thousand". ibn zam`ah said: "i will buy one share for a hundred thousand." then mu`awiyah asked: "how much of it is now left?" `abdullah said: "one and a half share. mu`awiyah said: "i will take it for one hundred and fifty thousand." later `abdullah bin ja`far sold his share to mu`awiyah for six hundred thousand.

when `abdullah bin az-zubair (may allah bepleased with him) finished the debts, the heirs of az-zubair (may allah bepleased with him) asked him to distribute the inheritance among them. he said: "i will not do that until i announce during four successive hajj seasons: `let he who has a claim against az-zubair come forward and we shall discharge it.'" he made this declaration on four hajj seasons and then distributed the inheritance among the heirs of az-zubair (may allah bepleased with him) according to his will. az-zubair (may allah bepleased with him) had four wives. each of them received a million and two hundred thousand. thus az-zubair's total property was amounted to fifty million and two hundred thousand.

[al-bukhari]

Chapter 26: Unlawfulness of Oppression and Restoring Others Rights

allah, the exalted, says:

“there will be no friend, nor an intercessor for the zalimun (polytheists and the wrongdoers), who could be given heed to.” (40:18)

“and for the zalimun (wrongdoers, polytheists and disbelievers in the oneness of allah) there is no helper.” (22:71)

203. jabir bin `abdullah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “beware of injustice, for oppression will be darkness on the day of resurrection; and beware of stinginess because it doomed those who were before you. it incited them to shed blood and treat the unlawful as lawful.”

[muslim]

204. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on the resurrection day, the rights will be paid to those to whom they are due so much so that a hornless sheep will be retaliated for by punishing the horned sheep which broke its horns”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith makes it abundantly clear that there will be utmost justice on the day of resurrection. so much so that allah will redress even the grievance of the agressed animals against the aggressors. thus, this hadith serves a severe warning for people. when animals, who are devoid of sense, will not be forgiven, how would mankind be, which is gifted with senses? the latter will not be pardoned if they are guilty of having been unjust to anyone without adequately compensating them.

205. ibn `umar (may allah bepleased with them) reported: we were talking about the farewell pilgrimage without knowing what was it when messenger of allah (pbuh) was also present. he (pbuh) stood up and recited the praise and glorification of allah. he then gave a detailed account of ad-dajjal and said, ‘every prophet sent by allah had warned his people against his mischief. nuh (pbuh) warned his nation and so did all the prophets after him. if he (i.e., ad-dajjal) appears among you,

his condition will not remain hidden from you. your rubb is not one-eyed, but ad-dajjal is. his right eye is protruding like a swollen grape. listen, allah has made your blood, and your properties as inviolable as of this day of yours (i.e., the day of sacrifice), in this city of yours (i.e., makkah), in this month of yours (i.e., dhul -hijjah). listen, have i conveyed allah's message to you?" the people replied in affirmative. there upon he said, "o allah, bear witness." and he repeated it thrice. he (pbuh) concluded: "do not revert after me as infidels killing one another".
[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith brings out the following three points:

1. some marks and signs of pseudo-messiah (al-masih ad-dajjal) are mentioned to warn the believers against his mischief.
2. the lives and properties of muslims are inviolable for each other. in other words, it means that each of them is a protector and guardian of the life, property and honour of the other.
3. internal war among the muslims is a great crime and can even lead to infidelity (kufr). may allah save us all from it.

206. `aishah (may allah bepleased with her) reported: messenger of al-lah (pbuh) said, "whoever usurps unlawfully even a hand span of land a collar measuring seven times (this) land will be placed around his neck on the day of resurrection".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that even a minor injustice to anybody in this world can cause great trouble on the day of resurrection.

207. abu musa (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "verily, allah gives respite to the oppressor. but when he seizes him, he does not let him escape." then he (pbuh)) recited, "such is the seizure of your rubb when he seizes the (population of) towns while they are doing wrong. verily, his seizure is painful (and) severe". (11:102).
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: one should not take the respite for exemption because no one knows when respite granted by him will come to an end and punishment will follow.

208. mu`adh (may allah bepleased with him) reported that messenger of allah (pbuh) sent me (as a governor of yemen) and instructed me thus: "you will go to the people of the book. first call them to testify that `there is no true god except allah, that i am (muhammad (pbuh)) the messenger of allah.' if they obey you, tell them that allah has enjoined upon them five salat (prayers) during the day and night; and if they obey you, inform them that allah has made zakat obligatory upon them; that it should be collected from their rich and distributed among their poor; and if they obey you refrain from picking up (as a share of zakat) the best of their wealth. beware of the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and allah".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. if it comes to jihad against infidels, polytheists and the people of the book (ahl-ul-kitab) then before waging war against them, they should be invited to islam and told about the prescribed salat (prayers), zakat and other teachings of islam.

2. the zakat collected from the rich of a locality must be spent on the poor of that place. if some amount is left unspent only then it should be distributed among the deserving people of other areas.

3. the collectors of zakat should refrain from aggression in its collection as in that case they will be invoking the curse of the people concerned and thereby invite the wrath of allah.

209. abu humaid bin sa`d as-sa`idi (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) employed a man from the tribe of al-azd named ibn lutbiyyah as collector of zakat. when the employee returned (with the collections) he said: "(o prophet (pbuh)!) this is for you and this is mine because it was presented to me as gift." messenger of allah (pbuh) rose to the pulpit and praised allah and extolled him. then he said, "i employ a man to do a job and he comes and says: `this is for you and this has been presented to me as gift'? why did he not remain in the house of his father or the house of his mother and see whether gifts will be given to him or not? by allah in whose hand is the life of muhammad,

if any one of you took anything wrongfully, he will bring it on the day of resurrection, carrying it on (his back), i will not recognize anyone of you, on the day of resurrection with a grunting camel, or a bellowing cow, or a bleating ewe.” then he raised his hands till we could see the whiteness of his armpits. then he said thrice, ``o allah ! have i conveyed (your commandments)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: there is a stern warning in this hadith for the government functionaries. nowadays official positions are very much misused and people have developed the habit of giving presents and gifts to them. according to this hadith, all such presents and gifts which are given to the government employees due to their official position are unlawful and constitute bribery. the taking and accepting of bribery are both unlawful.

210. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “he who has done a wrong affecting his brother’s honour or anything else, let him ask his forgiveness today before the time (i.e., the day of resurrection) when he will have neither a dinar nor a dirham. if he has done some good deeds, a portion equal to his wrong doings will be subtracted from them; but if he has no good deeds, he will be burdened with the evil deeds of the one he had wronged in the same proportion”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith tells us that if one does not compensate a person who has been harmed by one and has not been pardoned for it, then it would have a serious consequence in the hereafter. its detail is mentioned in this hadith. thus, negligence in the case of public rights, which we take very lightly, is in fact ruinous.

211. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah bepleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “a muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the muslims are safe; and a muhajir (emigrant) is the one who refrains from what allah has forbidden”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the hadith shows that a true muslim is one who does not do any harm to others, overtly or covertly. similarly, the true muhajir is one who avoids disobeying allah. thus, if a person leaves his hearth and home to emigrate to some other place but does not save himself from sins, his emigration is of no avail.

212. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah bepleased with them) reported: a man named kirkirah, who was in charge of the personal effects of messenger of allah (pbuh) passed away and the prophet (pbuh) said, "he is in the (hell) fire." some people went to his house looking for its cause and found there a cloak that he had stolen. [al-bukhari]

commentary: the hadith shows that stealing and breach of trust fall in the category of major sins for which one can be consigned to hell.

213. abu bakrah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "time has completed its cycle and has come to the state of the day when allah created the heavens and the earth. the year consists of twelve months of which four are inviolable; three of them consecutive - dhul-qa`dah, dhul-hijjah and muharram and rajab, the month of mudar (tribe), which comes between jumada and sha`ban. what month is this?" we said, "allah and his messenger (pbuh) know better". the prophet (pbuh) remained silent for some time until we thought that he would give it a name other than its real name. then asked, "is it not (the month of) dhul-hijjah?". we replied in the affirmative. he asked, "which city is this?". we replied: "allah and his messenger know better". he remained silent until we thought that he would give it another name. he (pbuh) asked, "is it not al-baldah (makkah)?" we said: "yes". he (pbuh) asked, "what day is this?". we said: "allah and his messenger know better." he (pbuh) remained silent until we thought that he would give it another name. he asked, "is it not the day of an-nahr (the sacrifice)?" we replied in the affirmative. thereupon he said, "your blood, your property and your honour are inviolable to you all like the inviolability of this day of yours, in this city of yours and in this month of yours. you will soon meet your rubb and he will ask you about your deeds. so do not turn to disbelief after me by striking the necks of one another. behold! let him who is present here convey (this message) to him who is absent; for many a person to whom a message is conveyed has more retentive memory than the one who hears it." he (pbuh) again said, "have i conveyed the message to you? behold! have i conveyed the commandments (of allah) to you." we submitted: "yes". he then said, "o allah, bear witness (to this)". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. the cycle of years and months (that is to say a month consists of 30 or 29 days and a year has 12 months) was completed at the time of creation of heavens and earth.

2. the hadith mentions the sanctity of life, property, respect and honour of each muslim for the other and lays stress upon the importance of this bond in them.

3. it reminds that everyone will be answerable for his actions on the day of requittal.

4. it urges that one should not just keep to oneself the commandments of allah and his prophet's teachings but disseminate them among others also. it is quite possible that someone who remembers these teachings more adheres to them more in practice.

214. abu umamah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah decrees the (hell) fire and debars jannah for the one who usurps the rights of a believer by taking a false oath." one man asked: "o messenger of allah! even if it should be for an insignificant thing?" he said, "even if it be a stick of the arak tree (i.e., the tree from which miswak sticks are taken)".
[muslim].

commentary: the importance of rights of people is evident from the threat of severe punishment that this hadith holds for the usurpers of these rights. their case will depend entirely on the will of allah. such defaulters may be forgiven even in the initial stage or they may be pardoned by allah after some punishment.

215. `adi bin `umairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "whosoever among you is appointed by us to a position and he conceals from us even a needle or less, it will amount to misappropriation and he will be called upon to restore it on the day of resurrection". (`adi bin `umairah added:) a black man from the ansar stood up - i can see him still - and said: "o messenger of allah, take back from me your assignment." he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, "what has happened to you?" the man replied: "i have heard you saying such and such." he (pbuh) said, "i say that even now: whosoever from you is appointed by us to a position, he should render an account of everything, big or small, and whatever he is given therefrom, he should take and he should desist from taking what is unlawful".
[muslim].

commentary: here again functionaries of government are warned to perform their duties with co-operation and integrity. if they neglect their duties or take undue advantage of their official position, they will be held guilty by allah for dereliction of their duties and misuse of power, as has been stated in a hadith quoted before. it also tells us that it is the duty of the superior officers to keep a strict watch on their subordinates and not to let them indulge in bribery and abuse; otherwise, their negligence or slackness or overlooking or shirking from their duty in this behalf will also be treated as crime. it is not difficult to imagine the fate of such officers who conspire in the loot and plunder as is the case in our society today.

216. `umar bin al-khattab (may allah bepleased with him) reported: on the day (of the battle) of khaibar, some companions of the prophet (pbuh) came and remarked: "so-and-so is a martyr and so-and-so is a martyr". when they came to a man about whom they said: "so-and-so is a martyr," the prophet (pbuh) declared, "no. i have seen him in hell for a mantle (or cloak) which he has stolen".
[muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith tells us that the rights of people will not be forgiven even by martyrdom.
2. misappropriation in the national exchequer is a horrible sin.

217. abu qatadah al-harith bin rib`i (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "faith in allah and striving in his cause (jihad) are the deeds of highest merit." a man stood up said: "o messenger of allah! tell me if i am killed in the cause of allah, will all my sins be forgiven?" he (pbuh) replied, "yes, if you are killed in the cause of allah while you are patient, hopeful of your reward and marching forward not retreating." then the prophet (pbuh) said to him, "repeat what you have said." the man said: "tell me if i am killed in the cause of allah, will all my sins be remitted?". he replied, "yes, if you are martyred while you are patient, hopeful of your reward and march forward without retreating, unless, if you owe any debt, that will not be remitted. angel jibril told me that".
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also shows the importance of rights of people and repayment of loan which will not be pardoned in any case. it is, therefore, essential that every muslim should exercise utmost care to fulfill his obligations in these matters.

218. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “do you know who is the bankrupt?” they said: “the bankrupt among us is one who has neither money with him nor any property”. he said, “the real bankrupt of my ummah would be he who would come on the day of resurrection with salat, saum and sadaqah (charity), (but he will find himself bankrupt on that day as he will have exhausted the good deeds) because he reviled others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully devoured the wealth of others, shed the blood of others and beat others; so his good deeds would be credited to the account of those (who suffered at his hand). if his good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be entered in his account and he would be thrown in the (hell) fire”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that a muslim has to take strict care in the performance of obligations like prescribed salat (prayers), zakat, etc, but he has to take similar care in his dealings, manners and morals. salvation lies in the proper fulfillment of all these requirements. fulfillment of one at the cost of the other will not be sufficient for salvation.

219. umm salamah (may allah bepleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “verily, i am only a human and the claimants bring to me (their disputes); perhaps some of them are more eloquent than others. i judge according to what i hear from them). so, he whom i, by my judgment, (give the undue share) out of the right of a muslim, i in fact give him a portion of (hell) fire”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. the prophet (pbuh) has explained through this hadith that he, too, was a man like others and was thus liable to judging by what he hears by the facile tongue, cleverness and eloquence of people. but it does not detract from his innocence as a prophet because it has no concern with his duty as a preacher and prophet, the responsibility of protection of which has been accepted by allah.

2. a judge (**qadi**) should decide on the case which comes before him in the light of arguments presented to him by the litigants. he should not make decision according to speculation but go by the arguments which are in his opinion more convincing.

3. the decision of the qadi will be evidently enforced, but it will not make the lawful as unlawful or vice versa. that is to say, it will not be enforced intrinsically, as is believed by some people. if somebody succeeds in winning a case, it will be invalid and the one who secures it will suffer its consequences in the hell-fire.

220. ibn `umar (may allah bepleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a believer continues to guard his faith (and thus hopes for allah’s mercy) so long as he does not shed blood unjustly”. [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith has two meanings. firstly, so long as a muslim does not kill another muslim without valid reason, he remains, by the grace of allah, capable of acting upon the deen. that is to say, he is more hopeful of the mercy of allah, and deserves it also, as long as he does not commit murder. when he kills an innocent person, the gate of allah’s compassion is closed on him.

ibn al-arabi interpreted this hadith as follows:

a muslim will still have ample chance for accomplishing good deeds to face evil deeds until he sheds blood. or, he has the chance of forgiveness until he sheds blood. (m.r.m.)

221. khaulah bint `thamir (may allah bepleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “many people misappropriate (acquire wrongfully) allah’s property (meaning muslims’ property). these people will be cast in hell on the day of resurrection”. [al-bukhari].

commentary: misappropriation in national exchequer and its use for vested rather than public interest is a major sin which is punishable, if the delinquent does not sincerely beg pardon for it.

Chapter 27: Reverence towards the Sanctity of the Muslims

allah, the exalted, says:

“and whosoever honours the sacred things of allah, then that is better for him with his rubb”. (22:30)

“and whosoever honours the symbols of allah, then it is truly from the piety of the heart”. (22:32)

“and lower your wing for the believers (be courteous to the fellow believers)”. (15:88)

“...if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind”. (5:32)

222. abu musa (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the relationship of the believer with another believer is like (the bricks of) a building, each strengthens the other.” he (pbuh) illustrated this by interlacing the fingers of both his hands.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith enjoins unity in the muslim community, each member of which is like a brick, which, when they are all combined, lend strength to each other. similarly, muslims are like hands and arms, which physically joined together, are bound to co-operate with one another.

223. abu musa (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “whoever enters our mosque or passes through our market with arrows with him, he should hold them by their heads lest it should injure any of the muslims”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: islam has made a forceful and elaborate arrangement for the security of the lives of the muslims, but the abundance of arms and ammunition has vitiated this arrangement. its senseless use has resulted in killing at large scale. it is used even on happy occasions to spread terror.

sometimes firing in the air for jubilation, costs some precious lives. similarly, display of fireworks on festivities is a cause of great nuisance for the people living in that locality. may allah grant us guidance to adhere to his injunctions in every walk of life.

224. nu`man bin bashir (may allah bepleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“the believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. when one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever”**. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has the same purport which is mentioned in the previous hadith. it says that muslims are akin to a living person. when he feels pain in one of his eyes, for example, his entire body feels it. when he suffers from a headache, he feels its pain throughout his body.

225. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) kissed his grandson al-hasan bin `ali (may allah bepleased with them) in the presence of al-aqra` bin habis. thereupon he remarked: “i have ten children and i have never kissed any one of them.” messenger of allah (pbuh) looked at him and said, **“he who does not show mercy to others will not be shown mercy”**. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: to kiss children with kindness and affection is not only permissible but also a means of attaining allah’s mercy.

226. `aishah (may allah bepleased with her) reported: some bedouins came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and asked: “do you kiss your children?” he said, “yes”. they then said: “by allah, we do not kiss them.” the prophet (pbuh) replied, **“i cannot help you if allah has snatched kindness from your hearts”**. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: showing kindness and affection to children is a sign of that mercy and compassion with which allah endows mankind.

227. jarir bin `abdullah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“he who is not merciful to people allah will not be merciful to him.”** [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: kind treatment to allah's creatures is very much liked by allah. even animals and birds are included in this category. kind treatment with them makes a person eligible to the mercy of allah. decent behaviour with people has been specifically mentioned in this hadith although all creatures are covered by it.

228. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "when one of you leads the salat, he should not prolong it because the congregation includes those who are feeble, ill or old". one version adds: "those who have to attend to work") while offering prayers alone, you may pray as long as you like".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: according to this hadith, the imam - one who leads the congregational prayer, is enjoined to shorten the prayer in consideration of those who pray behind him. shortening of prayer here means that the surah of the qur'an recited by him in the prayer should not be very long. this does not mean, however, that the postures of salat, such as standing, bowing, prostration and sitting should not be done properly, as it is taken to mean by muslims in general. although it is a sunnah about which the noble prophet (pbuh) is reported to have said, "pray as you see me praying." thus, it is essential to perform salat properly.

229. `aishah (may allah bepleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) would sometimes abstain from doing something he wished to do, lest others should follow him and it might become obligatory upon them.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith indicates the affection which the prophet (pbuh) had for his followers. in spite of his fervent desire, he would sometime deliberately leave voluntary prayer lest it became obligatory upon the muslims.

230. `aishah (may allah bepleased with her) reported: the prophet (pbuh) prohibited his companions out of mercy for them, from observing continuous fasting without a break. they said: "but you observe fast continuously". he replied, "i am not like you. i spend the night while my rubb provides me with food and drink".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

(this means that allah has bestowed upon him the power of endurance like that of a person who eats and drinks).

commentary: the words “i am not like you” should not be taken to mean here: “i am not a human like you”. what they really mean is that no one else has that special contact with allah which he has. on account of this quality which was special to the prophet (pbuh), it is prohibited to keep fast continuously. in fact it is not only prohibited, but unlawful. in such cases, it is obligatory for muslims to follow him faithfully.

231. abu qatadah al-harith bin rib`i (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[i stand up to lead salat with the intention of prolonging it. then i hear the crying of an infant and i shorten the salat lest i should make it burdensome for his mother](#)”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: in this hadith, brevity of prayers stands for recitation of short surah of the noble qur’an in prescribed congregational prayers. the sahih muslim has elucidated this by saying that the prophet (pbuh) would recite short surah on hearing the crying of a baby. in short, this hadith mentions that affection which he had for his followers. its importance can be judged by the fact that he made a demonstration of it even in the prescribed prayers.

232. jundub bin abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[when anyone offers the fajr \(dawn\) prayer, in congregation, he is in the protection of allah. so let not allah call him to account, withdrawing, in any respect, his protection. because, he will get hold of him and throw him down on his face in the hell-fire.](#)”

[muslim]

commentary: this hadith tells us that the fajr prayer is in the nature of an agreement between allah and his slave (muslim). it tells us that he would not all day long depart from the way of allah as he has not done by performing his fajr prayer. he will not only perform all the other prescribed prayers but would also do nothing which will displease allah. a muslim who does not care to adhere to this agreement, and thereby shows disobedience of allah, will be answerable to him for it on the day of resurrection.

233. ibn `umar (may allah bepleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a muslim is a brother of another muslim. so he should not oppress him nor should he hand him over to (his satan or to his self which is inclined to evil). whoever fulfills the needs of his brother, allah will fulfill his needs; whoever removes the troubles of his brother, allah will remove one of his troubles on the day of resurrection; and whoever covers up the fault of a muslim, allah will cover up his fault on the day of resurrection”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith is extremely important for the reason that it advises muslims to live like family members. it says that one does not like to subject one's own son, brother, etc, to suppression, nor leaves him helpless in trouble, but helps him when he is in need of it, endeavours to relieve him of hardship and admonishes him when he does anything wrong. almighty allah is pleased with such behaviour and gives him best reward for it in this world and the next.

234. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a muslim is a brother to a muslim. he should neither deceive him nor lie to him, nor leave him without assistance. everything belonging to a muslim is inviolable for a muslim; his honour, his blood and property. piety is here (and he pointed out to his chest thrice). it is enough for a muslim to commit evil by despising his muslim brother.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith deals with the subject discussed in the preceding one. in fact, it elucidates the points raised there. now, the heart is one thing which no one can check out; allah alone knows about it. the case of those who openly lead a sinful and impious life is of course quite different. to show hatred and disgust against such people is warranted by faith.

235. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “do not envy one another; do not inflate prices by overbidding against one another; do not hate one another; do not harbour malice against one another; and do not enter into commercial transaction when others have entered into that (transaction); but be you, o slaves of allah, as brothers. a muslim is the brother of another muslim; he neither oppresses him nor does he look down upon him, nor does he humiliate him. piety is here, (and he pointed to his chest three times).

it is enough evil for a muslim to hold his brother muslim in contempt. all things of a muslim are inviolable for his brother-in-faith: his blood, his property and his honour”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith elaborates the importance of mutual brotherhood and goodwill among the muslims. they are warned against jealousy which is a very malicious moral disease. one who suffers from it does not like to see others in happy circumstances and wants that they are deprived of whatever good they have.

this hadith also prohibits muslims from mutual hatred, enmity and indifference to others because all such things go against the concept of islamic fraternity. the hadith also warns muslims against najash (**false bidding to raise the price in an auction**) as it is clear deception and fraud is opposed to goodwill for others, while muslims are required to express for each other goodwill, not ill-will.

this hadith also prohibits making one bargain over the others because it generate malice and enmity.

236. anas (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “no one of you shall become a true believer until he desires for his brother what he desires for himself”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith deals more comprehensively with the subject discussed above. when a muslim likes the same thing for another muslim which he does for himself, then he will be obviously expressing goodwill to his fellow muslims. when muslims adopt this attitude at the community level, no muslim will be an enemy of the other. in fact, each muslim would then be a well-wisher and helper of other muslims. may allah enable us to adopt this attitude.

237. anas (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or is oppressed”. a man enquired: “o messenger of allah! i help him when he is oppressed, but how can i help him when he is an oppressor?” he (pbuh) said, “you can keep him from committing oppression. that will be your help to him”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith contains a very comprehensive injunction to eliminate disturbance and tyranny in the muslim society. it not only ordains helping the oppressed but also encourages people endowed with moral courage to stop the oppressor's oppression. doing so requires great courage and boldness, but muslims would be able to do full justice to their duty of wishing well to their fellow muslims when they develop the moral courage to stop the oppressor from tyranny, or at least protest against it verbally.

238. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "a believer owes another believer five rights: responding to greetings, visiting him in illness, following his funeral, accepting his invitation, and saying `yarhamuk-allah (may allah have mercy on you),' when he says `al-hamdu lillah (praise be to allah)' after sneezing". [al-bukhari and muslim].

muslim's narration is, "there are six rights of a muslim upon a muslim: when you meet him, greet him; when he invites you, respond to him; when he seeks counsel, give him advice; when he sneezes and praises allah, say to him: `may allah have mercy on you (yarhamuk-allah)' when he is sick, visit him; and when he dies, follow his funeral".

commentary: the bond of brotherhood among the muslims has been further strengthened by the list in this hadith about the rights of muslims on one another.

239. al-bara' bin `azib (may allah bepleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) commanded us to observe seven things and forbade us seven. he ordered us to visit the sick; to follow funeral processions; to respond to a sneezer with `yarhamuk-allah (may allah have mercy on you)' when he says `al-hamdu lillah (praise be to allah),' to help the oppressed and to help others to fulfill their oaths, to accept invitation and to promote greeting. he forbade us to wear gold rings, to drink in silver utensils, to use mayathir (silk carpets placed on saddles), to wear al-qassiy (a kind of silk cloth) to wear fine silk brocade. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: to materialize the pledge means that if a person relies on you and says that by allah, you must do such and such a thing, then you should not let him down, you should do that work and fulfill his pledge. but this is subject to the condition that the work in question is not unlawful. it is not only permissible but also comes in the list of high moral values.

Chapter 28: Covering Faults of the Muslims

allah, the exalted, says:

“verily, those who like that (the crime of) illegal sexual intercourse should be propagated among those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the hereafter.” (24:19)

240. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “allah will cover up on the day of resurrection the defects (faults) of the one who covers up the faults of the others in this world”. [muslim].

commentary: covering up the shortcomings and faults of people is an excellent manner. that is why this quality is very much liked by almighty allah. on the day of resurrection, allah will give a matching reward to that man who has such a quality, which means that allah will forgive his sins and will not call him to account for his sins. if at all he will do so, he will not do it publicly so that he is not embarrassed before others. then allah may forgive him or send him to hell for a short while.

241. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “every one of my followers will be forgiven except those who expose (openly) their wrongdoings. an example of this is that of a man who commits a sin at night which allah has covered for him, and in the morning, he would say (to people): “i committed such and such sin last night,’ while allah had kept it a secret. during the night allah has covered it up but in the morning he tears up the cover provided by allah himself.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: we learn from this hadith that commission of a sin due to human frailties on which one is ashamed but does not like to express is something which might hopefully be forgiven by allah. in fact, its remission after penitence is almost sure. but to commit a sin openly is totally different because, firstly, the heart of such a person is deprived of the fear of allah. secondly, he has no respect and regard for divine injunctions. thirdly, such a person usually does not repent his sins. fourthly, he makes a declaration of breach of divine injunctions which amounts to inviting his wrath and punishment.

242. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “when a slave-girl commits fornication and this fact of fornication has become evident, she must be given the penalty of (fifty) lashes without hurling reproaches at her; if she does it again, she must be given the penalty but she should not be rebuked. if she does it for the third time, he should sell her, even for a rope woven from hair (i.e., something worthless)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: if a slave-girl is guilty of fornication, she is liable to a punishment of fifty stripes, and this punishment can be given by her master. this hadith is, in fact addressed to the master of such a slave-girl. the order that one should not censure and reproach her is perhaps based on the consideration that she may abstain from such a sin in future because politeness often proves more effective than reproach. if politeness proves ineffective and she commits that sin again then that slave-girl should be sold for cheap.

243. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: a man who had drunk wine was brought to the prophet (pbuh) and he asked us to beat him; some struck him with their hands, some with their garments (making a whip) and some with their sandals. when he (the drunkard) had gone, some of the people said: “may allah disgrace you!” he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “do not say so. do not help the devil against him”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: to imprecate a muslim virtually amounts to helping satan against him, because the latter is avowed to mislead people and to expose man to humiliation in this world and the hereafter. such people who believe that no hadd punishment is fixed for drinking take support from this hadith. they hold that its punishment is discretionary which can be increased or decreased according to the circumstances. but other learned men who hold that its hadd is forty stripes argue that the incident quoted in this hadith relates to the period when its hadd had not been fixed. when the prophet (pbuh) ordered the punishment of forty stripes for it then it became its prescribed hadd. abu bakr (may allah bepleased with him) followed it during the period of his caliphate. `umar (may allah bepleased with him) also applied it in the early years of his caliphate but subsequently raised its punishment to eighty stripes. the `ulama' who maintain the punishment of forty stripes contend that the original hadd was forty stripes and the additional forty stripes comprised discretionary punishment for which the head of a state has full authority.

if he feels, he can add discretionary punishment to the hadd. the nature of this additional punishment depends on his discretion. the latter opinion seems to be more correct that hadd is fixed for drinking and its punishment is not based on discretion. the hadd for it is forty stripes but this hadd can be increased by adding discretionary punishment to it. allah knows best.

Chapter 29: Fulfillment of the needs of the Muslims

allah, the exalted, says:

“... and do good that you may be successful”. (22:77).

244. ibn `umar (may allah bepleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a muslim is a brother of (another) muslim, he neither wrongs him nor does hand him over to one who does him wrong. if anyone fulfills his brother’s needs, allah will fulfill his needs; if one relieves a muslim of his troubles, allah will relieve his troubles on the day of resurrection; and if anyone covers up a muslim (his sins), allah will cover him up (his sins) on the resurrection day”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that we should fulfill the needs of muslims for the pleasure of allah only, regardless of any vested interest or worldly motive. it is a very meritorious approach. the needs of people who adopt this attitude in life are fulfilled by allah, and the reward they get for it in the hereafter will be greater than that to be given in this world.

245. abu hurairah (may allah bepleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “he who removes from a believer one of his difficulties of this world, allah will remove one of his troubles on the day of resurrection; and he who finds relief for a hard-pressed person, allah will make things easy for him on the day of resurrection; he who covers up (the faults and sins) of a muslim, allah will cover up (his faults and sins) in this world and in the hereafter. allah supports his slave as long as the slave is supportive of his brother; and he who treads the path in search of knowledge, allah makes that path easy, leading to jannah for him; the people who assemble in one of the houses of allah, reciting the book of allah, learning it and teaching, there descends upon them the tranquillity, and mercy covers them, the angels flock around them, and allah mentions them in the presence of those near him; and he who lags behind in doing good deeds, his noble lineage will not make him go ahead.”

[muslim]

commentary: besides other advantages mentioned in this hadith, we learn the following from it:

1. it is an act of great merit to relieve a muslim from his financial difficulty.
2. to strive for attaining religious knowledge is a highly meritorious act.
3. to recite the noble qur'an, make arrangement for its study and teaching, and hold meetings for the understanding and elucidation of the message of the noble qur'an are acts of great distinction and reward.

Chapter 30: Intercession

allah, the exalted, says:

“whosoever intercedes for a good cause will have the reward thereof.”
(4:85)

246. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: whenever a needy person would come to the prophet (pbuh), he would turn to those who were present and say, “if you make intercession for him, you will be rewarded, because allah decreed what he likes by the tongue of his messenger”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the recommendation mentioned in this hadith relates to lawful and permissible matters. one is not permitted to make any intercession for unlawful matter nor for remission of hadd.

247. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them), reported in connection with the case of barirah (may allah be pleased with her) and her husband: the prophet (pbuh) said to her, “it is better for you to go back to your husband.” she asked: “o messenger of allah, do you order me to do so.” he replied, “i only intercede” she then said: “i have no need for him”.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: barirah (may allah be pleased with her) was a slave-girl of `aishah (may allah be pleased with her). barirah was married to a slave named mughith (may allah be pleased with him). she was freed by `aishah (may allah be pleased with her). now, islam has permitted a slave-girl that after being freed, she can break her matrimonial bond if she does not like to live with her husband. mughith was madly in love with her and he would all the time persuade her not to break their bond of marriage. when the prophet (pbuh) came to know the condition of mughith, he interceded for him and asked barirah to restore her matrimonial connection with her husband. since this was an advice and recommendation, she did not think it suitable for herself and regretted that she could not accept it. the hadith evidently shows that islam accepts legitimate rights of individuals and honours personal freedom, provided they do not exceed the limits of shari`ah.

this freedom cannot be forfeited by suppression or force.

Chapter 31: Making Peace among People

allah, the exalted, says:

“there is no good in most of their secret talks save (in) him who orders sadaqah (charity in allah’s cause), or ma`ruf (islamic monotheism and all the good and righteous deeds which allah has ordained), or conciliation between mankind.” (4:114)

“...and making peace is better.” (4:128)

“so fear allah and adjust all matters of difference among you.” (8:1)

“the believers are nothing else than brothers (in islamic religion). so make reconciliation between your brothers.” (49:10)

248. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on every joint of man, there is charity, on everyday when the sun rises: doing justice between two men is charity, and assisting a man to ride an animal or to load his luggage on it is charity; and a good word is charity, every step which one takes towards (the mosque for) salat is charity, and removing harmful things from the way is charity”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: almighty allah has made human body flexible, that is to say, its parts have joints which enable him to make all kinds of movements. if human beings did not have these joints, it would not have been possible for its different parts to make movements which they do. had it been so, one would not have been able to use various parts of his body as he likes. thus, these joints are a valuable gift from allah for which one should always be grateful to him. in all, a person has three hundred and sixty joints in his body, as has already been stated in a hadith narrated earlier.

according to some ahadith, two rak`ah of duha prayer (optional forenoon prayer) has been regarded sufficient for this purpose, while in others, it has been stated that if one cannot do anything else for expressing gratefulness to allah, he should refrain from harming others as it is a form of sadaqah.

249. umm kulthum bint `uqbah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, 'the person who (lies) in order to conciliate between people is not a liar, when he conveys good or says (something) good'.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

the narration in muslim added: she said, "i never heard him (she meant the prophet (pbuh)) giving permission of lying in anything except in three (things): war, conciliating between people and the conversation of man with his wife and the conversation of a woman with her husband".

commentary: this hadith tells us a very important principle, that is, in spite of its being unlawful, one is permitted to tell a lie if one has to do it for reforming one's society or family or in the interest of muslims in general. if two muslim brothers are estranged and someone communicates to them such things which are likely to remove conflict and rancour between them, promote mutual love and bring them nearer to each other, such action, even if it has a lie, is not called a lie in islam.

1. in order to keep the enemy unaware of the true position, it is permissible to make false propaganda as it is an indispensable device for winning war.

2. in order to maintain pleasant atmosphere in family life, and for this purpose telling a lie becomes inevitable. shari`ah has permitted lying on such occasions.

250. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) heard the voices of altercation of two disputants at the door; both the voices were quite loud. one was asking the other to make his debts little (so that he could pay them) and was pleading with him to show leniency to him, whereupon the (other one) said: "by allah, i will not do that". then there came messenger of allah (pbuh) to them and said, "where is he who swore by allah that he would not do good?" he said: "o messenger of allah, it is me. now he may do as he desires".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following four main points:

1. it is desirable to help someone who is in straitened circumstances because of a debt. if the lender forgives a part of the loan or gives concession of time in repayment of loan, it is an act of great merit. as allah says:

“and if the debtor is in a hard time (has no money), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay; but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know.” (2:280)

2. if someone seems to incline towards evil, he should be scolded so that he would keep himself away from it and would turn to virtue.

3. such people who quarrel among themselves should not be left to mutual bickering but efforts should be made for their reconciliation.

4. people who are quarrelling should also co-operate with those who make efforts for reconciliation, and respect their spirit of goodwill.

251. sahl bin sa`d as-sa`idi (may allah be pleased with him) reported: there was some quarrel among the members of banu `amr bin `auf. messenger of allah (pbuh) went with some of his companions to bring about peace between them and he was detained. the time for salat approached and bilal (may allah be pleased with them) went to abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) and said to him: “messenger of allah (pbuh) has got late and it is the time for salat. will you lead salat?” he said: “yes, if you desire”. bilal (may allah be pleased with him) proclaimed the adhan and then pronounced iqamah. abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) stepped forward and commenced as-salat. (he recited takbir and the people followed him). in the meantime, messenger of allah (pbuh) arrived and, passing through the rows, took his stand in the first row. the people started clapping. it was the habit of abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) that whenever he started praying, he would never look round. he paid no heed (to the clapping). when the clapping increased, he turned round and saw messenger of allah (pbuh). he (the prophet (pbuh)) beckoned him to continue performing salat. but abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) raised his hands and praised allah. then he retreated, taking his steps backwards. when messenger of allah (pbuh) saw that, he went ahead and led salat. when he finished salat, he faced the congregation and said, “why do you clap when something happens during the salat. clapping is only for women. if something happens in the course of salat you should say, subhan allah. it is bound to attract attention. and you, abu bakr, what prevented you from carrying on with salat, after i beckoned to do so?” he said, “it was not becoming for the son of abu quhafah to lead salat in the presence of messenger of allah (pbuh)”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. banu `amr bin `auf was a big tribe of aus which consisted of many families, they lived in quba. a quarrel arose among them on some issue and they used stones and brickbats against each other. when the prophet (pbuh) came to know about it, he personally went to them. the hadith shows how important it is to bring about reconciliation amongst muslims who are estranged from each other so that tension among them is not aggravated. if efforts are not made for reconciliation at the initial stages, the conflict will be escalated and then it will become difficult to resolve it.

2. salat can be offered behind two imam, one after the other.

3. in the course of salat if imam makes an error, his followers should bring it to his attentions by saying the words “subhan allah” aloud. women may clap only.

4. in case of need, it is permissible in salat to turn one’s face slightly, to look with glances and move a little onward or backward. such an act does not constitute a defect which renders the prayer invalid.

Chapter 32: Superiority of Poor, Weak and unrenowned Muslims

allah, the exalted, says:

“and keep yourself (o muhammad (pbuh)) patiently with those who call on their rubb (i.e., your companions who remember their rubb with glorification, praising in prayers, and other righteous deeds) morning and afternoon, seeking his face, and let not your eyes overlook them.” (18:28)

252. harithah bin wahb (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “shall i not inform you about the people of jannah? it is every person who is, modest and humble (before allah), a person who is accounted weak and is looked down upon but if he adjures allah, allah will certainly give him what he desires. now shall i not inform you about the inmates of hell? it is every violent, impertinent and proud man”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us about distinction of such weak, poor and secluded persons who do not have any important position in society but are so eminent in the realm of piety that, out of their utmost trust in allah, if they take an oath for something, almighty allah fulfills their oath. thus, this hadith highlights the importance of modesty and condemns pride, miserliness and lust for name and fame.

253. sahl bin sa`d as-sa`idi (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man passed by the prophet (pbuh), so he asked a man who was sitting near him, “what is your opinion about this man?” that man replied: “he is one of the noblest men. by allah he is certainly a proper person for (a girl) being given in marriage if he seeks to marry, and his recommendation is fit to be accepted if he recommends”. messenger of allah (pbuh) remained silent. then another man passed. messenger of allah (pbuh) enquired, “what is your opinion about this man?” he replied: “o messenger of allah, he is one of the poor muslims. he is not a proper person (for a girl) to be given in marriage to, and his recommendation would not be accepted if he makes one; if he speaks, he is not to be listened to.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he is better than the former by earthfuls”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith contains the following two important points:

1. the distinction and greatness of such poor muslims who are neither known in society because due to their poverty nor are they respected by people. but due to their faith and piety, each of them is better in the sight of allah than others. this hadith makes it abundantly clear that what really matters with allah is faith and piety not lineage nor pomp and show.

2. for marriage purposes, men and women of noble character should be selected even if they are poor because at the level of religion they are on par with other muslims. thus, the principle underlined here is that the preference should be given to the equality in respect of religion rather than worldly wealth and richness.

254. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said: **there was a dispute between the hell and jannah. the hell said: "the haughty and proud are my inmates." jannah said: "the modest and the humble are my residents". thereupon, allah the exalted and glorious (addressing jannah) said: "you are my mercy, through you i shall show mercy to those whom i wish". (and addressing the hell), he said: "you are (the means) of my punishment by which i shall punish such of my slaves as i wish and each one of you would have its fill".** [muslim].

commentary: in this hadith people who are termed as `modest' and `humble' are the rich in faith and piety. they lead a life of patience and contentment. this hadith gives glad tidings to such noble people. on the contrary, it has a threat of hell for those who disobey divine injunctions and are haughty and proud. now, it is entirely one's own choice which way he goes.

the dialogue between jannah and hell quoted in this hadith is not something impossible. it is not at all difficult for allah to create in them such intelligence and consciousness which can enable them to make a discussion on the subjects mentioned in the hadith. thus, there is no need to offer any justification for the veracity of such ahadith. these should, therefore, be taken as literally correct. this hadith is mentioned in detail in musnad ahmad and is narrated by abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) at greater length than in the narration of abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) quoted in kitab-ut-tafsir (the book of commentary) of sahih al-bukhari.

255. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on the day of resurrection, there will be brought forth a bulky person whose value to allah will be less than that of the wing of a mosquito”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith means that manifestation of power and splendour, which are considered so important for people in this world, will be of no value to allah. in the hereafter, allah will judge a person by his faith, devotion and piety. it is, therefore, essential that one should concentrate on the reformation of his own heart and mind.

256. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a black woman (or probably a young man) used to clean the mosque. messenger of allah (pbuh) missed her (or him) and asked about her (or him). he was told that she (or he) had died. he (pbuh) said, “why did you not inform me?” (it seemed as if) they (companions) considered the matter insignificant. then he (pbuh) said, “show me her (or his) grave.” when it was shown to him, he offered (janazah-funeral) prayer over it and said, “these graves cover those in them with darkness, and allah illumines them for the inmates as a result of my supplication for them”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: on the basis of some other narrations, the ‘ulama’ have accepted that the person mentioned in this hadith who used to sweep the mosque was a woman known as umm mihjan. this hadith highlights the following four important points:

1. the merit of keeping mosques clean.
2. the height of compassion and kindness of the prophet (pbuh).
3. the importance of participation in the funeral prayer of virtuous persons.
4. permission to perform funeral prayer of virtuous person after his/her burial, if one is unable to participate in it when it is performed before the burial of the deceased.

257. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “many a person with shaggy and dusty hair, dusty and driven away from doors (because of their poverty and shabby clothes) were to swear by allah (that something would happen), allah will certainly make it happen”.

[muslim].

258. usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “i stood at the gate of jannah, and (i saw) that the majority of those who entered it are the poor, and the wealthy were kept confined. the inmates of the fire had been ordered to (enter) the fire (hell), and i stood at the gate of hell and saw that the majority of its inmates are women”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the prophet (pbuh) was told about the state of affairs in jannah and hell by means of wahy (revelation). in some cases, the conditions of the inhabitants of jannah and hell were shown to him by means of dreams. the prophet (pbuh) stated that one of the main reasons for a greater number of women in hell is that they are more ungrateful to their husbands. women referred to in the hadith are those who do not follow the divine injunctions and do not discharge their duty towards allah.

259. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “none spoke in the cradle but only three (persons), isa (jesus) son of maryam (mary), the second one was the companion of juraij who was a pious person. juraij took a secluded monastery for worship and confined himself in it. his mother came to him as he was busy in prayer and she called: `juraij.` he said: `my rubb, my mother (is calling me while i am engaged in) my prayer.` he continued with the prayer. she returned and she came on the next day and he was (still) busy in prayer. she called: `juraij.` and he said: `my rubb, my mother (is calling me while i am engaged) in prayer, and he continued with the prayer,` and she returned. then on the next day she again came while he was busy in prayer and called: `juraij.` and he said: `my rubb, my mother (is calling me while i am engaged) in my prayer.` and he continued with the prayer. she said: `my rubb, don't let him die until he has seen the faces of the prostitutes.` the story of juraij and that of his meditation and prayer spread amongst banu israel. there was a prostitute who had been a beauty personified.

she said (to the people): 'if you like, i can lure him to evil.' she presented herself to him but he paid no heed (to her). she came to a shepherd who lived near the temple and she offered herself to him. he (the shepherd) had sexual intercourse with her and so she became pregnant. when she gave birth to a baby she said: 'this is from juraij.' so they came and asked juraij to get down and demolished the temple and began to beat him. he asked them what the matter was. they said: 'you have committed fornication with this prostitute and she has given birth to a baby from you.' he said: 'where is the baby?' they brought him (the baby) and then he said: 'just leave me so that i should perform prayer.' he performed prayer and when he finished, he lifted the baby in his stomach and asked him: 'o boy, who is your father?' the baby answered: 'he is such and such a shepherd.' so, the people turned towards juraij, kissed him and touched him (for seeking blessing) and said: 'we are prepared to construct your temple with gold.' he said, 'no just, rebuild it with mud as it had been,' and so they did". (the prophet (pbuh) continued:) "then there was a baby who was sucking at his mother's breast when a person dressed in fine garment came on a priceless riding animal's back. his mother said: 'o allah, make my child like this one.' he (the babe) left sucking and looked at him, and said: 'o allah, don't make me like him.' he then returned to the breast and resumed sucking." he (abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) said: as though i can see messenger of allah (pbuh) as he is illustrating the scene of his sucking milk with his forefinger in his mouth and sucking that. he (abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him)) further reported messenger of allah (pbuh) as saying, "there happened to pass by them a slave girl who was being beaten and they were saying: 'you have committed fornication and theft.' she was saying: 'allah is enough for me and he is my good protector, and his mother said: 'o allah, don't make my child like her.' he left sucking looked at her and said: 'o allah! make me like her.' it was followed by a conversation between the mother and the child. she said: 'a good looking man happened to pass by and i said: o allah, make my child like him, and you said: o allah, don't make me like him, and there passed a girl while they were beating her and saying: you committed fornication and theft, and i said: o allah, don't make my child like her, and you said: o allah, make me like her.' the child said: 'that man was a tyrant, and i said: o allah don't make me like him; and they were saying about the girl: you committed fornication, whereas in fact she had not committed that and they were saying: you have committed theft, whereas she had not committed theft, so i said: o allah, make me like her". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us of three babies who spoke in the cradle. all the three babies were from banu israel and their story is mentioned in sahih muslim in the story of ashab-ul-ukhdud. this hadith proves the following points:

1. when a person is called by his parents while he is engaged in voluntary prayer, he should give priority to the call of parents.

2. a true muslim has to pass sometimes through great trials. he must face them with patience and steadfastness because ultimately almighty allah helps the true believers.

3. one must avoid copying haughty people no matter how attractive their appearance is. one should try to emulate the virtuous people because true success lies in their conduct.

Chapter 33: Benevolent Treatment towards Orphans, Girls, the Weak, the Poor and the Humble Persons

allah, the exalted, says:

“and lower your wings for the believers (be courteous to the fellow-believers)”. (15:88)

“and keep yourself (o muhammad (pbuh)) patiently with those who call on their rubb (i.e., your companions who remember their rubb with glorification, praising in prayers, and other righteous deeds) morning and afternoon, seeking his face, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world.” (18:28)

“therefore, treat not the orphan with oppression. and repulse not the beggar.” (93:9,10)

“have you seen him who denies the recompense? that is he who repulses the orphan (harshly). and urges not the feeding of al-miskin (the poor)”. (107:1-3)

260. sa`d bin abu waqqas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: six of us were with the prophet (pbuh) when the infidels said to him: “drive these ones away, lest they should begin to venture against us”. the six were, myself, ibn mas`ud, a man of the hudhail tribe, bilal and two other men whose names i don't know. messenger of allah (pbuh) thought what allah wished him to think, and allah revealed: “and turn not away those who invoke their rubb, morning and afternoon seeking his face.” (6:52) [muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that those people alone have value in the sight of allah who are equipped with faith and good deeds, no matter how humble they are in the eyes of people because of their poverty and indigence. those who are deprived of faith and good conduct have absolutely no value in his sight even if they hold a high status in this world.

this hadith also exhorts the believers that criterion for respect and honour should also be faith, not the lineage or wealth.

261. `aidh bin `amr al-muzani (may allah be pleased with him) reported: abu sufyan passed by salman, suhaib and bilal and some other companions (may allah be pleased with them). they said to him: “did not the swords of allah exact their due from the foes of allah?” abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) said to them: “do you speak like this to the chief of the quraish and their master?” then he went to the prophet (pbuh) and related this to him. he (pbuh) said, “**abu bakr, perhaps you have angered them. if so, you have angered your rubb**”. abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) went back to them and said: “brothers, did i offend you?” they replied: “no. may allah forgive you, brother”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith enjoins the muslims to treat one another with affection and kindness and keep their hearts free from ill-feeling and malice. if someone inadvertently says to another anything that hurts the latter’s feelings, he must immediately apologize to him.

262. sahl bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**i will be like this in jannah with the person who takes care of an orphan**”. messenger of allah (pbuh) raised his forefinger and middle finger by way of illustration. [al-bukhari].

commentary: it will be indeed a great honour to be close to the prophet (pbuh) in jannah. this honour will be given to those who are kind to the orphans. the prophet (pbuh) has regarded it the ‘best house’ in which an orphan is treated with kindness. he declared the worst home in which an orphan child is not treated with affection.

263. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**he who takes care of an orphan, whether he is his relative or a stranger, will be in jannah with me like these two**”. the narrator, malik bin anas raised his forefinger and middle finger for illustration. [muslim].

commentary: the islamic system of welfare and economic security is not restricted to relatives only. it includes every orphan and needy. if muslims put this system into practice, there will be no need for insurance - a system which is based on usury. may allah enable the muslims to adopt the teachings of islam so that they will be relieved of the curse of the system of usury.

264. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a miskin (needy) is not the one who can be turned away with a date-fruit or two, or a morsel or two. the true miskin is one who, despite his poverty, abstains from begging”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “ a miskin is not the one who goes round begging from people and who can be turned away with a morsel or two, or a date-fruit or two. a true miskin is he who does not find enough to suffice him, does not disclose his poverty so that he might be given alms, and does not stand up to beg”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith throws light on a very important problem relating to beggars who go door to door begging. they are, in fact, not poor because they accumulate a lot of wealth through small amounts which they collect every day. the real needy and poor are those who are not well-to-do, but their appearance and dress hide their poverty. their self-respect does not permit them to make a request for help. the real purport of this hadith is that it is the latter category of poor people, with a sense of self-respect, who should be given preference in financial help over the professional beggars because it is they who are really poor.

265. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “one who strives to help the widows and the poor is like the one who fights in the way of allah.” the narrator said: i think that he (pbuh) added also: “i shall regard him as the one who stands up (for prayer) without rest and as the one who observes fasts continuously”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here the words `widow` and `poor` have been mentioned for example only while they cover the whole range of indigent, invalid and needy people. efforts for their care, support and welfare has been regarded equivalent to jihad. islam has done full justice in supporting the helpless individuals and the entire poor class of the society by elevating the status of those who undertake this noble task to the level of mujahidun.

it makes it clear that worship is not restricted to prayers and fasting only but also covers every good deed. thus, those who are always mindful of the weak and the poor and constantly strive for their welfare are engaged in perpetual worship.

266. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the worst food is the food of the marriage banquet from which those are left out who would like to come; and to which those are invited who refuse to come. he who rejects an invitation disobeys allah and his messenger”.
[muslim].

in another narration messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the worst food is the food of the marriage banquet to which the rich are invited and from which the poor are left out”.
[muslim].

commentary: our rich class has made walimah (marriage banquet given by the bridegroom) a highly luxurious affair and a means of displaying wealth and richness. this excessive exaggeration of a simple feast has brought in its wake many religious, moral and social evils. in its present form, it is sheer extravagance and wastage which are satanic acts and those who do it are brothers of satan. it is such a big loss and serious threat that if our rich class is left with any sense of religion, it should immediately abandon this extravagance which is escalating day by day. its moral disadvantage is that one invites in this function only men of his own status and not the the poor, whereas the fact is that it is the latter who deserve to be invited because of their need, and not the former. good manners also warrant that the needy should be given priority over the affluent. its social disadvantage is that display of wealth on such occasions creates a sense of deprivation in the poor segments of society while what islam teaches is the uplift, material and moral help, consolation and encouragement and respectable treatment of the poor.

instead of holding sumptuous feasts on walimah, if the muslims shift to one or two simple food items and invite the poor along with their friends and relatives, they not only save themselves from all the three evils mentioned above, but also prevent themselves from the accountability in the hereafter; otherwise they will suffer loss in both the worlds.

this hadith exhorts the muslims to participate in the walimah ceremony but it is the kind of feast which is simple and in accordance with the teachings of islam.

267. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “[whoever supports two girls till they attain maturity, he and i will come on the day of resurrection like this](#)”. messenger of allah (pbuh) joined his fingers illustrating this.
[muslim].

commentary: in the pre-islamic era, arabs were greatly dejected and showed resentment on the birth of a daughter, which in fact reflected the status of women in society, in order to give them their rightful place in the society, islam taught its followers to recognize their legitimate rights. among the injunctions which were issued in this behalf, the most important was that their proper upbringing, education and training were made a means to attain jannah so that people did not only feel joy over the birth of sons but also felt pleasure on the birth of daughters. in this respect, islam is the first religion which has not only ensured protection of their rights but also made full arrangements for their respect and prestige in society. for instance, they have been prohibited from having close contacts with men and for this purpose restriction of the veil has been imposed on them. islam has emancipated them from the obligation of earning their own livelihood so that they are safe from the malicious eyes of evil-minded, and secure from the sexual lust of men, the way it is happening with women who are working side by side with men in the west. but it is a curse indeed that due to intellectual immaturity and evil trends, this freedom of women, which has disgraced and robbed them of the virtues of a chaste life, is liked by many people and they are trying that muslim women should also imitate the style of western women. to the people of such crooked thinking, the islamic teachings, which ensure the honour and chastity of women, appear to be the yoke of slavery and they want to release women from it.

268. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: a woman came to me with her two daughters. she asked me (for charity) but she found nothing with me except one date-fruit, so i gave it to her. she accepted it and then divided it between her two daughters and herself ate nothing out of that. she then got up and went out. when messenger of allah (pbuh) came in, and i narrated to him the story, he said, “[he who is involved \(in the responsibility\) of \(bringing up\) daughters, and he is benevolent towards them, they would become protection for him against hell-fire](#)”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith also tells us about the great merit and reward of kind treatment with daughters.

269. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: a poor woman came to me carrying her two daughters. i gave her three date-fruits. she gave a date to each of them and then she took up one date-fruit and brought that to her mouth to eat, but her daughters asked her that also. she then divided between them the date-fruit that she intended to eat. this (kind) treatment of her impressed me and i mentioned that to messenger of allah (pbuh) who said, **'verily, allah has assured jannah for her, because of (this act) of her,'** or said, **"he (swt) has rescued her from hell-fire"**.
[muslim].

commentary: besides great merit of the upbringing of daughters, this hadith also tells us that if a wife has secured general permission from her husband about sadaqah (alms and charity) she can offer sadaqah, and its reward will be given to both of them. the former will be entitled to it for paying it, while the latter will be eligible to it for giving his consent to it.

270. abu shuraih khuwailid bin `amr al-khuza`i (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, **"o allah, i declare inviolable the rights of two weak ones: the orphans and women"**.
[an-nasa'i].

commentary: the poor are generally treated callously in human society. women and orphans are regular victims of this cruelty. they are deprived of their share in property to which they are entitled under the islamic law. in some cases their properties are usurped and they are maltreated at the hands of usurpers. the prophet (pbuh) has threatened them with serious consequences to prevent the muslims from committing such injustice. the attitude of muslims and the teachings of islam in this matter are two different things. how can islam be blamed for the attitude of muslims? it is time muslims should understand that islam is getting a bad name because of their bad conduct. as a result of this they are committing a double crime. on the one hand, they are guilty of usurping others of their legitimate rights and perpetrating cruelties, and on the other, disgracing their religion. in other words, rather than preaching islam they are creating obstacles in the way of people joining the fold of islam. may allah grant us guidance to follow the right path. amin!

271. mus`ab bin sa`d bin abu waqqas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: sa`d considered himself better than his inferiors, so the prophet (pbuh) said to him, “**you are given help and provision because of your weak ones**”.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith exhorts the resourceful people not to look down upon the poor and resourceless people of the society and not to consider themselves superior to others. they should learn to respect the weak and co-operate with them because may be almighty, allah, is providing them because of the poor.

272. abud-darda (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**seek among your weak ones, for you are given provision and help only because of the weak amongst you.**”
[abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith mentions the reason for the acceptance of the invocations of the weak and poor. since their hearts are free from the worldly vices and are gifted with greater sincerity and fear of allah, their prayers are more acceptable to him. this point has been mentioned more explicitly in nasa’i which says: “**almighty allah helps the ummah because of the prayers, worship and devotion of its weak people**”. (**al-umma`bud, vol. no. 2, chapter al-jihad**). the words which occur in most of the manuscripts of riyad-us-saliheen are (abghow fi ad-duafa’) and the translation quoted here follows these words. but in the manuscripts of abu dawud, the word (fi) does not figure in the text. in one manuscript, however, we find the words (**abghow fi ad-duafa’**) which means “**for me search muslims who are weak so that i find reason to support you with their prayers**”.

Chapter 34: Recommendations with regard to Women

allah, the exalted, says:

“... and live with them honourably”. (4:19)

“you will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire, so do not incline too much to one of them (by giving her more of your time and provision) so as to leave the other hanging (i.e., neither divorced nor married). and if you do justice, and do all that is right, and fear allah by keeping away from all that is wrong, then allah is ever oft-forgiving, most merciful.” (4:129)

273. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “take my advice with regard to women: act kindly towards women, for they were created from a rib, and the most crooked part of a rib is its uppermost. if you attempt to straighten it; you will break it, and if you leave it alone it will remain crooked; so act kindly toward women”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration of al-bukhari and muslim, messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “a woman is like a rib, if you attempt to straighten it, you will break it; and if you benefit from her, you will do so while crookedness remains in her”.

in another narration of muslim, messenger of allah (pbuh) said: ‘woman has been created from a rib and will in no way be straightened for you; so if you want to benefit from her, you will benefit from her while crookedness remains in her. if you attempt to straighten her, you will break her, and breaking her is divorcing her”.

commentary: the words (istawso bi' nisa') mean, take care of your wives. whatever is the formation of the words of the hadith, it stresses the importance of kind treatment to wives because woman is not only weaker than man by nature, but also less intelligent. on account of his being more intelligent and having greater patience, man should be more forgiving in his dealing with her. the secret of a pleasant family life lies in this advice of the prophet (pbuh) with its emphasis on kind treatment to wives.

274. `abdullah bin zam`ah (may allah be pleased with him) reported that he heard the prophet (pbuh) giving a speech when he mentioned the she-camel (of prophet salih) and the man who had killed her. messenger of allah (pbuh) said: **“when the most wicked man among them went forth (to kill the she-camel).”** (91:12) signifies that a distinguished, wicked and most powerful chief of the people jumped up to kill the she-camel.” then he (pbuh) made mention of women and said, **“some of you beat your wives as if they were slaves, and then lie with them at the end of the day”**.

then he (pbuh) admonished them against laughing at another’s passing of wind, saying, **“why does any of you laugh at another doing what he does himself”**

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: although islam has permitted man, in inevitable circumstances, to rebuke his wife, it has also suggested a very wise course for it. it has suggested that first of all he should advise and preach her, and if she does not mend her ways by these means, then he should stop sleeping with her, which is a great warning for the sensible wife. if she does not improve even by this method, then he may take recourse to slight beating, but in that he must avoid her head and face. he should take recourse to beating if he thinks that it would work, otherwise it is better to avoid it. but surprisingly enough some start the process of reformation with beating and that too with great ruthlessness which has not been permitted by islam in any case. it is this aspect which the prophet (pbuh) has highlighted in this hadith. he has contended that when the wife is indispensable for man and it is very difficult for him to pass night without her then why should he beat her like a slave or bondmaid? he should try to understand that she, too, has feelings and her position is like one of the two wheels of the cart of life. if at all it comes to beating her then he must keep her true status in view before taking recourse to it. he should never loose sight of her importance in conjugal life.

275. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“a believer must not hate (his wife) believing woman; if he dislikes one of her characteristics he will be pleased with another”**. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith also contains a very wise counsel for a happy married life. it tells us that every person has certain good qualities as well as some shortcomings.

man has been advised here to overlook the shortcomings that he does not like in his wife and appreciate her good qualities. similarly, a woman is advised to ignore the shortcomings of her husband and admire his good qualities.

276. `amr bin al-ahwas al-jushami (may allah be pleased with him) reported that he had heard the prophet (pbuh) saying on his farewell pilgrimage, after praising and glorifying allah and admonishing people, “**treat women kindly, they are like captives in your hands; you do not owe anything else from them. in case they are guilty of open indecency, then do not share their beds and beat them lightly but if they return to obedience, do not have recourse to anything else against them. you have rights over your wives and they have their rights over you. your right is that they shall not permit anyone you dislike to enter your home, and their right is that you should treat them well in the matter of food and clothing**”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: 1. here again we find justification for beating one's wife in case of her persistence in default, but it is to be done in the manner prescribed in the hadith quoted above.

2. it is the responsibility of the wife that during the absence of her husband, besides the guarding of her own chastity, and property of her husband, she should not let in anyone who is not liked by her husband, however closely related that person be to her.

3. it is the responsibility of the husband to provide, according to his means, good food and clothes to his wife.

277. mu`awiyah bin haidah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i asked messenger of allah (pbuh): “what right can any wife demand of her husband?” he replied, “**you should give her food when you eat, clothe her when you clothe yourself, not strike her on the face, and do not revile her or separate from her except in the house**”.

[abu dawud].

commentary: if it comes to temporarily severing relation with a disobedient wife to set her right, it should be done within the house and the best course for it is that one suspends the practice of sleeping with her. some people say that this suspension should be to the extent of sleeping with her only and one should not stop speaking to her because that will increase the rift between the two.

but in case of special circumstances, one can separate from her by leaving his home, as was done by the prophet (pbuh) by shifting to upper room of his house.

278. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best behaviour, and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives”.

[at-tirmidhi].

279. iyas bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “do not beat allah’s bondwomen.” when `umar (may allah be pleased with him) came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and complained saying: “the women have become very daring towards their husbands,” he (pbuh) gave permission to beat them. then many women went to the family of the messenger of allah (wives) complaining of their husbands, and he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “many women have gone round muhammad’s family complaining of their husbands. those who do so, that is, those who take to beating their wives, are not the best among you”.

[abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith tells us that those who take to beating their wives are not perfect people. the decency of manners warrants that one must refrain from beating, as is evident from the conduct of the prophet (pbuh) who neither resorted to beating with his own hand any of his wives nor slaves nor any other. he would avenge those who transgressed the limits of allah.

280. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the world is but a (quick passing) enjoyment; and the best enjoyment of the world is a pious and virtuous woman”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the qualities of a virtuous woman. when her husband looks at her, she pleases him; when he orders her, she obeys him; and when he is absent, she guards herself (chastity) and the property of her husband. (abu dawud and nasa’i).

this hadith stresses the fact that if one wants success in this world and the hereafter, he should select a pious wife. rather than going after her beauty, lineage and wealth, one should give preference to her faith over all other considerations. if he chooses a woman who is faithful to her deen and strictly adheres to the shari`ah, she would be a source of blessing for him in this life and the hereafter.

Chapter 35: Husband's rights concerning his Wife

allah, the exalted, says:

“men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. therefore, the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to allah and to their husbands), and guard in the husband's absence what allah orders them to guard (e.g., their chastity and their husband's property).” (4: 34)

281. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond and he (the husband) spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a woman spends the night away from the bed of her husband, the angels curse her until morning”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “by him in whose hand is my life, when a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond, the one who is above the heaven becomes displeased with her until he (her husband) becomes pleased with her”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith makes it abundantly clear that obedience of the husband is compulsory on the wife. if, in the absence of any lawful reason, she refuses to obey the orders of her husband, she will be liable to the wrath and curse of allah until she returns to obedience. this hadith has a stern warning for those women who do not care for the displeasure of their husbands because of their bad temperament, stubbornness and habit of dominating their husbands.

282. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is not lawful for a woman to observe (voluntary) fasting without the permission of her husband when he is at home; and she should not allow anyone to enter his house without his permission.”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: it lays down a principle for a wife that performing nawafil (voluntary acts of worship) at the cost of the husband rights is not permissible.

283. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “all of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects. the ruler is a guardian of his subjects, the man is a guardian of his family, the woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husband’s house and his offspring; and so all of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith ordains every individual in society, whether he is a ruler or ruled citizen or even a woman who leads her life within the four walls of her house, to perform his duties within his own sphere. not only that, every person has been made responsible to reform the state of affairs in his control and establish equity and justice because he will be held accountable for any negligence on his part in this respect.

284. abu `ali talq bin `ali (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire, she must go to him even if she is occupied with the oven”.

[at-tirmidhi and an-nasa’i].

285. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “if i were to order anyone to prostrate himself before another, i would have ordered a woman to prostrate herself before her husband”.

[at-tirmidhi]

commentary: this hadith also shows the unique importance of the wife’s obedience to her husband within her capacity and as long as he does not order her to disobey allah.

286. umm salamah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “any woman dies while her husband is pleased with her, she will enter jannah”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the distinction mentioned in this hadith is for those women who abide by the duties and obligations entrusted to them by islam and also endeavour to keep their husbands happy.

allah (swt) will pardon their ordinary acts of omission and commission and admit them to jannah.

287. mu`adh bin jabal (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**whenever a woman harms her husband in this world (that is without any due right), his wife among the (houris in jannah) says: `you must not harm him. may allah destroy you! he is only a passing guest with you and is about to leave you to come to us`**” .
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the islamic shari`ah commands men to treat their wives with kindness. in the same spirit it commands wives to be obedient to their husbands. she can hurt the feelings of her husband by using indecent language, immodest conduct, immoral actions and making unfair demands which are beyond his means. it is very common among women to tease and trouble their husbands by these three practices, except for pious women.

288. usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**i am not leaving behind me a more harmful trial for men than women**” .
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: according to this hadith, women and their beauty are the greatest and most disastrous mischief for men. this fact can be easily verified by observation. men are generally constrained to take to corruption and unfair means of income to fulfill undue demands of their wives. if women learn to lead a simple life, men will not need much to make money through unlawful means. similarly, it is women who compel men to hold all kinds of meaningless customs and ceremonies on marriage parties and thereby violate islamic injunctions, and incur more expenses. if women go by the islamic injunctions, the marriages would become a greater source of happiness and pleasure.

Chapter 36: Sustentation of the Members of the Family

allah, the exalted, says:

“the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother’s food and clothing on a reasonable basis”. (2:233)

“let the rich man spend according to his means, and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what allah has given him. allah puts no burden on any person beyond what he has given him”. (65:7)

“and whatsoever you spend of anything (in allah’s cause), he will replace it”. (34:39)

289. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a dinar you spend in allah’s way, or to free a slave, or as a charity you give to a needy person, or to support your family, the one yielding the greatest reward is that which you spend on your family”.

[muslim].

commentary: a muslim is ordained to spend first of all on the need of his wife and children and their food and clothes. there is greater reward for him in this because these expenses are obligatory on him while spending on other items is in the nature of nawafil. obviously, one cannot forego the former for the latter.

290. thauban bin bujdud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the most excellent dinar is one that a person spends on his family, and the dinar which he spends on his riding-animal in the way of allah (in jihad), and the dinar he spends on his companions in the way of allah”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith relates to the same subject which has been mentioned in the previous hadith. it stresses that men of small means should first of all spend on their own families and children. it is in fact an act of great merit. after fulfilling their needs, if he still has something left with him then he can spend it on other items in the order of precedence mentioned in the hadith.

291. umm salamah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i asked messenger of allah (pbuh), “would i be rewarded for what i spend on abu salamah’s sons? for i can’t let them go here and there (to beg people).” messenger of allah (pbuh) replied, “**spend on them and you will be rewarded for what you spend on them**”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: although parents spend money on their children out of their natural love for them, allah is so gracious that he not only rewards them for it, but he gives it in greater proportion than what they spend on other meritorious items.

292. sa`d bin abu waqqas (may allah be pleased with him) reported in a hadith included in the chapter of intention, that messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**whatever you spend seeking thereby the pleasure of allah, will have its reward, even the morsel which you put in the mouth of your wife**”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith also highlights the point that one should feed his family and children with the intention that it has been ordained by allah. in that case, this natural instinct will become an act of worship for which he will be rewarded.

293. abu mas`ud al-badri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**when someone spends on his family seeking his reward for it from allah, it is counted as a charity from him**”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: ‘seeking his reward’ means that one is supporting his family as a duty entrusted by allah. it is also warranted by compassion for the near ones. a person who does it as a duty ordained by allah and shows mercy to his deserving relatives to attain his pleasure then what he spends with this intention on his children will be eligible for reward from allah.

294. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**neglecting one’s own dependents is a reason enough for a man to commit a sin**”.

[abu dawud]

the narration in muslim is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is enough sin for a person to hold back the due of one whose provision is in his hand”.

commentary: this hadith tells us that negligence in matter of maintenance of one’s family is such a great sin that if a person is free from all other sins, this one alone will be enough to make him accountable before allah. the words used in this hadith are so comprehensive that they include servants and slaves besides family and children because he is also equally responsible for their maintenance. thus, this hadith makes it evident that it is the responsibility of the head of the family to provide the necessities of life to all his dependents; and any negligence on his part in this respect is a great sin.

295. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “two angels descend every morning, and one says: ‘o allah, give him who spends something, in place of what he spends.’ the other one says: ‘o allah, give destruction to him who withholds”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith provides justification to pray for virtuous people to get better than what they have spent, and to destroy the wealth of the niggardly who refuse to spend in the way of allah.

296. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the upper hand is better than the lower one (i.e., the spending hand is better than the receiving hand); and begin (charity) with those who are under your care; and the best charity is that which given out of surplus; and he who asks (allah) to help him abstain from the unlawful and the forbidden, allah will fulfill his wish; and he who seeks self-sufficiency will be made self-sufficient by allah”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith mentions the importance of spending in the way of allah, preference of one’s family and children over others, and chasteness and contentment. it also tells us that allah helps one in getting what one prays for.

Chapter 37: Spending favorite things for Allah's sake

allah, the exalted, says:

“by no means shall you attain al-birr (piety, righteousness - here it means allah's reward, i.e., jannah), unless you spend (in allah's cause) of that which you love.” (3:92)

“o you who believe! spend of the good things which you have (legally) earned, and of that which we have produced from the earth for you, and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it.” (2:267)

297. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) was the richest among the ansar of al-madinah and possessed the largest property from palm-trees, and among his possessions what he loved most, was his garden known as bairuha' which was opposite the mosque, and messenger of allah (pbuh) often visited it and drank from its fresh water. when this ayah was revealed: “by no means shall you attain al-birr (piety, righteousness - here it means allah's reward, i.e., jannah), unless you spend (in allah's cause) of that which you love,” (3:92), abu talhah came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said, “allah says in his book: `by no means shall you attain al-birr, unless you spend (in allah's cause) of that which you love,' and the dearest of my property is bairuha' so i have given it as sadaqah (charity) for allah's sake, and i anticipate its reward with him; so spend it, o messenger of allah, as allah guides you.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “well-done! that is profit earning property. i have heard what you have said, but i think you should spend it on your nearest relatives.” so abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) distributed it among nearest relatives and cousins.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith mentions the spirit of obedience to allah and his prophet (pbuh) and effort which the companions of the prophet (pbuh) made for attaining a higher status in virtue.

2. to spend the best of one's property in the way of allah is a sign of perfection of faith.

3. in the matter of sadaqat (**alms giving and charity**), preference must be given to one's closest relations, provided they are poor and stand in need of help, otherwise, these should be spent on other deserving people.

Chapter 38: Urging one's kith and kin to Obey Allah and refrain from evils

allah, the exalted, says:

“and enjoin salat (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them (i.e., the salat).” (20:132)

“o you who believe! ward off yourselves and your families against a fire (hell), whose fuel is men and stones.” (66:6)

298. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: al-hasan bin `ali (may allah be pleased with them) took one of the dates of the sadaqah (charity) and put it in his mouth, whereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “leave it, leave it, throw it away. do you not know that we do not eat the sadaqah (charity)?” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith emphasizes the following points:

1. sadaqah is not lawful for the prophet (pbuh) and his family. his family here means banu hashim and banu abdul-muttalib.
2. proper upbringing of children is extremely important. they must be prohibited by parents from such things which are indecent and unbecoming.
3. what is collected as sadaqah is a national trust. the houses and institution where it is collected and kept, should take strict care of its proper utilization. it is the duty of the custodians of sadaqat that they protect them and give them to the deserving people.

299. `umar bin abu salamah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i was a boy under the care of messenger of allah (pbuh), and my hand would wander about in the dish. messenger of allah (pbuh) said to me “mention allah's name (i.e., say bismillah before you start eating), eat with your right hand and eat from what is near to you”. i always followed this way of eating after this incident. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings the following points into focus:

1. teaching good manners and morals to the children.
2. one must start his meals with bismillah (**begin with the name of allah**) and take his share of food from the side of vessel in front of him, if all are eating from one vessel. if there are many varieties of fruit on the table then one can choose freely.
3. if a child makes any mistake, he should be corrected right away because that proves more effective and is engraved in his mind and heart.

300. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**all of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects. the ruler is a guardian and responsible for his subjects; the man is a guardian of his family; the woman is guardian in her husband’s house and responsible for her wards; a servant is guardian of his master’s property and responsible for his ward. so all of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects**”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith ordains every individual in society, whether a ruler or ruled or even a woman who leads her life within the four walls of her house, to perform one’s duties within one’s own sphere.

301. `amr bin shu`aib reported on his father’s authority that his grandfather (may allah be pleased with him) said: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**command your children to perform salat (prayer) when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and do not let (boys and girls) sleep together**”.

[abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following points:

1. the importance of the prescribed five daily salat (**prayers**).
2. when warranted by the situation, it is permissible to beat children for their proper upbringing and education. but this should not be in any case violent and aggressive. it should rather be done in a manner that the child does not suffer any physical injury and receives the right type of training.

it is an absurd theory that children should be given a free hand, and leave alone the corporal punishment, they should not even be rebuked on doing something wrong. suitable punishment is essential for their proper training and education.

3. muslim jurists have written that like salat, other injunctions of shari`ah should also be instilled in the minds of children, and if possible, they should also be given practical training for their performance. for instance, they should be made to observe saum (fast) occasionally in accordance with their age and capacity during the month of ramadan, so that the importance of obligation of fasting is impressed on their minds in an early age. this exercise will prove very fruitful when they attain maturity. they will then be conscious that for a muslim, fasting in the month of ramadan is compulsory like the five daily salat.

4. a child generally does not attain maturity at the age of ten years, but nevertheless he does acquire some sense. it is, therefore, necessary that rather than putting children in one bed they are provided separate beds once they reach the age of 10, especially children of the opposite sex.

302. sabrah bin ma`bad al-juhani (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “teach a boy salat (the prayer) when he attains the age of seven years, and punish him (if he does not offer it) at ten”.

[abu dawud and tirmidhi].

the narration in abu dawud is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “order a boy to perform salat (the prayer) when he is seven years old”.

commentary: obviously only such teachers and parents can persuade the children to perform salat who are themselves very strict about it. in the early period of islam, one could not even think of a muslim who ignored it. it is very unfortunate indeed that in the present-day muslim societies, a large majority of muslims are careless about this fundamental religious duty. in such a state of affairs who would instruct and persuade them to perform this religious obligation of the first order?

Chapter 39: Rights of Neighbors

allah, the exalted, says:

“worship allah and join none with him (in worship); and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, al-masakin (the poor), the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess.” (4:36)

303. ibn `umar and `aishah (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “jibril kept recommending treating neighbours with kindness until i thought he would assign a share of inheritance”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith illustrates the importance of nice treatment to neighbours in islam.

304. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) commanded me thus, “o abu dharr! whenever you prepare a broth, put plenty of water in it, and and give some of it to your neighbours”.

[muslim].

in another narration of muslim, narrated abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him): my friend, (messenger of allah (pbuh)) advised me saying, “whenever you prepare a broth, put plenty of water in it, and give some to your neighbours and then give them out of this with courtesy.”

commentary: this hadith makes it clear that islam does not like a muslim to ignore his poor neighbour and eat up everything himself. it stresses that one must take care of his poor neighbours. if a person is not in a position to do more, he should at least add some water in the broth he cooks for his own food and send a portion of it to his deserving neighbour. it leads us to the conclusion that a muslim should in no case be unmindful of his neighbour and if he is well-to-do, he should be all the more charitable to his neighbours.

305. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “by allah, he is not a believer! by allah,

he is not a believer! by allah, he is not a believer.” it was asked, “who is that, o messenger of allah?” he said, “one whose neighbour does not feel safe from his evil”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration of muslim is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he will not enter jannah whose neighbour is not secure from his wrongful conduct”.

commentary: this hadith reveals that hurting or troubling a neighbour is such a serious offence that it causes allah’s wrath, and thus punishment in hell.

306. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “o muslim women! no one of you should consider insignificant (a gift) to give to her neighbour even if it is (a gift of) the trotters of a sheep”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith means that neighbours should present gifts to each other. the rich men and the poor according to their means. one who is poor should not think that what he is presenting to his neighbour is not worthy of giving. even his humble gift, provided it is presented with sincerity, will find acceptance with allah. according to the noble qur’an: “so whosoever does good equal to the weight of an ant (or a small ant) shall see it.” (99:7)

it is, however, better for a rich person to present a gift which goes well with his means. he should not give anything to his neighbour which is stale or which he does not like for himself because apart from insincerity, such a thing shows his contempt for the neighbour while gift is, in fact, a token of sincerity and brotherhood.

307. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “no one should prohibit his neighbour from placing a peg in his wall”. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) added: now i see you turning away from this (sunnah), but by allah, i shall go on proclaiming it.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the importance of the injunction contained in this hadith comes into prominence in localities comprising huts and tents, or at places where the two neighbours still have common walls between their houses. (in big cities each house has its own independent walls.) in any case, it is evident from this hadith that a muslim should be considerate of his neighbours. islam ordains us to co-operate and sympathize with them. all muslims are likened to a body each organ of which is linked with the other. in the light of this injunction, one can very well understand the rights of the neighbours in islam.

308. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who believes in allah and the last day let him not harm his neighbour; and he who believes in allah and the last day let him show hospitality to his guest; and he who believes in allah and the last day let him speak good or remain silent”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith unfolds the fruits of faith. one who does not have the qualities mentioned in it, is deprived of the blessings of the faith. faith of such a person is like a fruitless tree, or a flower without fragrance, or a body without soul.

309. abu shuraih al-khuza`i (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “he who believes in allah and the last day, let him be kind to his neighbour; and he who believes in allah and the last day, let him show hospitality to his guest; and he who believes in allah and the last day, let him either speak good or remain silent”.

[muslim].

310. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i said, “o messenger of allah (pbuh), i have two neighbours, to which of them should i send a present?” he (pbuh) replied, “to the one whose door is nearer to you”.

[al-bukhari]

commentary: when a muslim does not have the means to present gifts to his neighbours and wants to present a gift only to one of them, he should go by the principle laid down in this hadith. the principle enunciated here is: “one who is the nearest neighbour, should have precedence over all others.”

311. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the best of companions with allah is the one who is best to his companions, and the best of neighbours to allah is the one who is the best of them to his neighbour”.
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: companion is a common word which covers companions in journey and stay. muslims are ordained to treat all of them nicely. but one’s neighbour has precedence over others. nice treatment to him is the best means to attain a distinctive place with allah.

Chapter 40: Kind Treatment towards Parents and establishment of the ties of Blood Relationship

allah, the exalted, says:

“worship allah and join none with him (in worship); and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, al-masakin (the poor), the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess”. (4:36)

“and fear allah through whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship)”. (4:1)

“and those who join that which allah has commanded to be joined (i.e., they are good to their relatives and do not sever the bond of kinship)”. (13:21)

“and we have enjoined on man to be good and dutiful to his parents”. (29:8)

“and your rubb has decreed that you worship none but him. and that you be dutiful to your parents. if one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour. and lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: `my rubb! bestow on them your mercy as they did bring me up when i was young”. (17:23,24)

“and we have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. his mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years- give thanks to me and to your parents”. (31:14)

312. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i asked the prophet (pbuh) , “which of the deeds is loved most by allah?” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[salat at its proper time.](#)” i asked, “`what next?” he (pbuh) replied, “`[kindness to parents.](#)” i asked, “`what next?” he replied, “`[jihad in the way of allah.](#)”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: performance of salat at the stated time means its performance in earliest prescribed or at least its regularity. one should not give preference to mundane affairs over it. salat and jihad are the two most meritorious duties of a muslim. when nice treatment to parents is mentioned along with salat and jihad, it gives further importance to this injunction.

313. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “no son can repay (the kindness shown by his father) unless he finds him a slave and buys him and emancipates him”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith also brings out the eminence of parents and outstanding importance of their rights.

314. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who believes in allah and the last day, let him be hospitable to his guest; and he who believes in allah and the last day, let him maintain good the ties of blood relationship; and he who believes in allah and the last day, must speak good or remain silent”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith is mentioned here to highlight the importance of kindness to relatives. it enjoins considerate treatment to relatives and stresses that one should maintain relationship with them at all costs. so much so that even if they misbehave and sever relations with him, one should make efforts to restore not only relationship with them but also their rights. this is what kindness to relatives really means. islam has laid great stress on it. relatives include both paternal and maternal relatives.

315. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah created all the creatures and when he finished the task of his creation, ar-rahm (ties of relationship) said: `(o allah) at this place i seek refuge with you against severing my ties.’ allah said: `that i treat with kindness those who treat you with kindness and sever ties with those who sever ties with you.’ it said: `i am satisfied.’ allah said: `then this is yours”. then messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “recite this ayah if you like: `would you then, if you were given the authority, do mischief in the land, and sever your ties of kinship? such are they whom allah has cursed, so that he has made them deaf and blinded their sight”. (47:22,23). [al-bukhari and muslim].

the words in al-bukhari are: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah (swt) says: `he who maintains good ties with you, i maintain good ties with him; and he who severs your ties, i sever ties with him”.

commentary: this hadith also stresses the importance of proper treatment with relatives for the reason that this is a special means of attaining the nearness and mercy of allah. a conduct contrary to it, that is to say, devouring the rights of relatives and continuation of estrangement with them, is the cause of displeasure and wrath of allah.

316. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a person came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and asked, “who among people is most deserving of my fine treatment?” he (pbuh) said, “your mother”. he again asked, “who next?” “your mother”, the prophet (pbuh) replied again. he asked, “who next?” he (the prophet (pbuh)) said again, “your mother.” he again asked, “then who?” thereupon he (pbuh) said, “then your father.”

in another narration: “o messenger of allah! who is most deserving of my fine treatment?” he (pbuh) said, “your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father, then your nearest, then nearest”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that the rights of the mother are three times more important than that of the father for the reasons that:

1 she is weaker than the father.

2. the following three troubles are borne exclusively by the mother while the father does not share them with her:

a) she carries the baby in her womb for nine months,

b) the labor pain which she suffers.

c) two years' period of suckling which disturbs her sleep at night and affects her health. she has also to be very cautious in her food for the welfare of the baby.

317. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “may he be disgraced! may he be disgraced! may he be disgraced, whose parents, one or both, attain old age during his life time, and he does not enter jannah (by rendering being dutiful to them)”. [muslim].

commentary: the word “ragham” means soil. when a person’s nose is soiled, it is a mark of his extreme humiliation. this metaphor carries a curse for an unfortunate person who does not win the pleasure of allah by serving and obeying his parents. in fact, it is a malediction as well as a prediction of someone’s inauspicious end. service of parents is essential at every stage of their life - whether they are young or old. but this hadith mentions their old age for the reason that in that period of their life they stand in greater need of care and service. it is a very callous offense to leave them at the mercy of circumstances when they are old, senile and depend on others for their needs. to neglect them at that stage is a major sin for which one deserves hell-fire.

318. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man said to messenger of allah (pbuh): “i have relatives with whom i try to keep the ties of relationship but they sever relations with me; and whom i treat kindly but they treat me badly, i am gentle with them but they are rough to me.” he (pbuh) replied, “if you are as you say, it is as if you are feeding them hot ashes, and you will be with a supporter against them from allah as long as you continue to do so”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith has three important lessons:

first, the misbehaviour of one’s relative is no justification for the misbehaviour of another, let alone the severing of relations on that account.

second, the person who treats his relatives nicely in all events and circumstances is blessed by allah who will send from heaven helpers to support him.

third, the consequence of denying compassion and kindness to relatives is as woeful as the eating of hot ashes.

319. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who desires ample provisions and his life be prolonged, should maintain good ties with his blood relations”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: one who is benevolent and compassionate towards one's own relatives, stands to gain at least two definite advantages in this world besides the reward in the next. these two advantages are the increase in his subsistence and longevity of life.

increase in subsistence means that almighty allah will increase the quantity of his worldly goods or his means of subsistence will be blessed by him. similar is the case of longevity of life. the life of such person is either actually increased (in terms of years) or his life is graced with the blessings of allah. both interpretations are correct.

320. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) was the richest among the ansar of al-madinah and possessed the largest property; and among his possessions what he loved most was his garden known as bairuha' which was opposite the mosque, and messenger of allah (pbuh) often visited it and drank from its fresh water. when this ayah was revealed: “by no means shall you attain al-birr (piety, righteousness - here it means allah's reward, i.e., jannah), unless you spend (in allah's cause) of that which you love,” (3:92). abu talhah came to messenger of allah (pbuh), and said: “allah says in his book: `by no means shall you attain al-birr, unless you spend (in allah's cause) of that which you love,' and the dearest of my property is bairuha' so i have given it as sadaqah (charity) for allah's sake, and i anticipate its reward with him; so spend it, o messenger of allah, as allah guides you”. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “well-done! that is profitable property. i have heard what you have said, but i think you should spend it on your nearest relatives.” so abu talhah distributed it among his nearest relatives and cousins.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned in the chapter which deals with the merits of spending of what one loves best in the way of allah. it has been repeated here in support of benevolence to the relatives. its repetition makes it clear that while spending in the way of allah, one should always first of all consider his relatives and help those of them who deserve assistance. after fulfilling their needs, if anything remains then it can be given to others.

321. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: a man came to the prophet (pbuh) of allah and said, "i swear allegiance to you for emigration and jihad, seeking reward from allah." he (pbuh) said, "is any of your parents alive?" he said, "yes, both of them are alive." he (pbuh) then asked, "do you want to seek reward from allah?" he replied in the affirmative. thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "go back to your parents and keep good company with them". [al-bukhari and muslim].

in another narration it is reported that a person came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and sought his permission to participate in jihad. the prophet (pbuh) asked, "are your parents alive?" he replied in the affirmative. the prophet a(pbuh) said, "(you should) consider their service as jihad."

commentary: under normal circumstances, jihad is fard kifayah (collective duty -- which means that if some people observe it, the rest of the muslims will be exempted from its obligation). in such circumstances permission of parents to participate in jihad is necessary because their service is fard-ul-`ain (individual duty -- an injunction or ordinance, the obligation of which extends to every muslim in person), and the former cannot be preferred to the latter. this hadith explains such a situation. in certain circumstances, however, jihad becomes fard-ul-`ain and in that case permission of the parents to take part in jihad is not essential because then every muslim is duty-bound to take part in it.

322. `abdullah bin `amr al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "the person who perfectly maintains the ties of kinship is not the one who does it because he gets recompensed by his relatives (for being kind and good to them), but the one who truly maintains the bonds of kinship is the one who persists in doing so even though the latter has severed the ties of kinship with him". [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith makes clear the essentials of kindness to relatives. those kinsmen who respect and honour you, would obviously be treated by you fairly. it goes without saying that people usually reciprocate sentiments showed to them. but this is not maintaining the ties of kinship but kindness for kindness. on the opposite side, there is a kinsman who is rough and rude and is always bent upon severing relation with you, but you tolerate his excesses with patience and perseverance, return his harshness with politeness, maintain relationship with him in spite of all his efforts to break it,

then what you are exercising is maintaining the ties of kinship. this is what islam actually demands from a muslim. but this is the excellence of faith which one must try to attain. there is nothing remarkable in exchanging dry smiles.

323. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“the bond of relationship is suspending from the throne, and says: `he who keeps good relations with me, allah will keep connection with him, but whosoever severs relations with me, allah will sever connection with him”**.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the discourse on compassion to relatives mentioned in this hadith is not impossible because almighty allah is omnipotent and is thus capable of doing what he likes. he can create perception, consciousness and power of speech in everything. an instance of it has already been mentioned in a hadith quoted earlier.

324. it has been narrated that maimuna bint al-harith (may allah be pleased with her) had set free a slave-girl without the prophet's permission. when her turn came (the prophet (pbuh) used to visit his wives in turns), she made mention of that to him saying, “did you know i have set slave-girl free?” he said, **“have you, indeed?”** she replied, “yes”. he (pbuh) then remarked, **“had you given her to your maternal uncles, you would have your reward increased”**.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings out the following two points:

1) a woman is free to spend anything of her own property without the permission of her husband, but not of things owned by her husband.

2) to spend on the needy relatives is more meritorious than to set a slave free because to set a slave free is a sadaqah (**charity**) only, while paying sadaqah to a kinsman has a double merit as it carries the reward of sadaqah as well as “maintaining the ties of kinship.”

325. asma' bint abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah be pleased with her) said: my mother came to me while she was still a polytheist, so i asked messenger of allah (pbuh), “my mother, who is ill-disposed to islam, has come to visit me.

shall i maintain relations with her?” he (pbuh) replied, “yes, maintain relations with your mother”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the woman mentioned in this hadith had come from makkah to al-madinah. what this hadith signifies is that it is essential to be kind to parents even if they are mushrikun (polytheists) and kuffar (disbelievers). this has also been clearly ordained in the noble qur’an: “... but behave with them in the world kindly”. (31:15).

326. zainab ath-thaqafiyah (may allah be pleased with her) the wife of `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when messenger of allah (pbuh) told the women that they should give sadaqah (charity), even if it should be some of their jewellery, i returned to `abdullah bin mas`ud and said, “you are a man who does not possess much, and messenger of allah (pbuh) has commanded us to give sadaqah. so go and ask him if giving to you will serve the purpose; otherwise, i shall give it to someone else.” he asked me that i should better go myself. i went and found a woman of the ansar at the door of messenger of allah (pbuh), waiting to ask a similar question as mine. the prophet (pbuh) was endowed with dignity, and so we could not go in. when bilal (may allah be pleased with him) came out to us, we said to him: “go to messenger of allah (pbuh) and tell him that there are two women at the door who have come to ask him whether it will serve them to give sadaqah to their husbands and to orphans who are in their charge, but do not tell him who we are. bilal (may allah be pleased with him) went in and asked him, and messenger of allah (pbuh) asked him who the women were. when he told him that they were a woman of the ansar and zainab, he asked him which zainab it was, and when he was told it was the wife of `abdullah bin mas`ud, he (pbuh) said, “they will have a double reward, one for maintaining the ties of kinship and another for sadaqah”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that a woman can also give sadaqah and zakat to her husband, provided he is poor. but its opposite is not permissible. that is to say, a husband cannot pay zakat to his wife because he is responsible for her maintenance while wife is not obliged to do it for her husband. so, the principle deduced from it is that one who is bound to pay zakat under the shari`ah is not permitted to pay it to his dependents.

2. in case of need, a woman can go out of her house subject to the condition that she observes the restriction of the veil prescribed by the shari`ah in this behalf.

3) like men, women should also take, keen interest in religious matters. they should not feel shy of doing it.

327. abu sufyan sakhr bin harb (may allah be pleased with him) mentioned heraclius in a long hadith and said: heraclius asked me, "what does this prophet (pbuh) teach you?" i said, "he orders us to worship allah alone and not to associate a thing with him in worship, to discard what our ancestors said, to perform the salat (prayer), speak the truth, and maintain the ties of kinship".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: besides tauhid (oneness of allah), this hadith enjoins punctuality in salat and excellence of character. in all the forms of worship, salat is the most important, and the best in the nobility of character is righteousness. after professing faith in tauhid and belief that muhammad (pbuh) is the last prophet of allah, a muslim should be punctual in salat and make himself a model of excellent character.

328. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "you will soon conquer a land where people deal with qirat."

and according to another version: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "you will soon conquer egypt where al-qirat is frequently mentioned. so when you conquer it, treat its inhabitants well. for there lies upon you the responsibility because of blood ties or relationship (with them)".

[muslim].

commentary: in this hadith, the prophet (pbuh) has urged his companions to treat the egyptians nicely for the reason of maintaining the ties of kinship and for the fact that egypt was the country of his in-laws (mariyah, the mother of ibrahim, and one of the prophet's wives was from that place). this is why this hadith has been included in the present chapter which deals with the subject of maintaining the ties of kinship. this hadith is also a prophecy of the prophet (pbuh) due to the fact that the prophecy he had made came true. a short time after his death, egypt became part of the muslim empire.

329. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when this verse was revealed: “**and warn your tribe (o muhammad (pbuh)) of near kindred**”. (26:214) messenger of allah (pbuh) called the quraish; when they gathered, he said to them: “o sons of `abd shams; o sons of ka`b bin lu`ai, rescue yourselves from the fire! o sons of murrah bin ka`b, rescue yourselves from the fire! o sons of `abd manaf, rescue yourselves from the fire! **o sons of `abdul-muttalib, rescue yourselves from the fire! o fatimah, rescue yourself from the fire, for i have no power (to protect you) from allah in anything except that i would sustain relationship with you**”. [muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith tells us that lineage in the hereafter will not help anybody. so much so that even one's relationship with messenger of allah (pbuh) shall not carry any weight on that day. the only thing that will then help in salvation will be one's good deeds. people for whom the prophet (pbuh) and pious men will intercede will be believers with some sins in their account and not the disbelievers devoid of faith and good actions. neither will anybody intercede for the infidels, nor will the infidels find salvation.

2. in preaching religion, priority must be given to one's own close relatives. they deserve it more than anyone else, and for this reason divine injunctions should be first of all conveyed to them.

3. even if a muslim's relatives are pagans and polytheists, their rights of kinsmen and the demands of “maintaining the ties of kinship” enjoined by islam must be fulfilled. the first and foremost demand of their rights is that they should be invited to the right path so that they will be saved from hell-fire.

330. abu abdullah `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) said: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying openly not secretly, “**the family of so-and-so (i.e., abu talib) are not my supporters. my supporter is allah and the righteous believing people. but they (that family) have kinship (rahm) with whom i will maintain good the ties of kinship**”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: messenger of allah (pbuh) had made it absolutely clear that although such persons were his near relatives, he did not have any affection and friendship with them because there cannot be any affection between a pagan and a muslim.

friendship and affection can only be for allah and those who have faith in him. one can accommodate the non-muslim relatives to the extent permitted by “maintaining the ties of kinship”, provided they are not at war with the muslims.

331. abu ayyub khalid bin zaid al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said, “direct me to a deed which will admit me to jannah and take me away from the fire”. the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[worship allah and associate no partner with him, perform as-salat, pay zakat, and maintain the ties of kinship](#)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith indicates the actions which constitute the means to attain jannah and salvation from hell. thus, it makes evident that jannah cannot be achieved by wishful thinking. one cannot get it without faith and good deeds. in the absence of these two factors, intercession of any person will be of no avail.

332. salman bin `amir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “[when you break fast, you should do it with a date-fruit for there is blessing in it, and if you do not find a date-fruit, break it with water for it is pure.](#)” messenger of allah (pbuh) added: “[charity towards a poor person is charity, and towards a relation is both charity and maintaining the ties \(of kinship\)](#)”.

[tirmidhi].

commentary: we learn two points from this hadith:

firstly, it is more rewarding to break the fast with date-fruit or water. secondly, payment of sadaqah to one’s poor relatives carries a double reward.

333. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i had a wife whom i loved but `umar (may allah be pleased with him) disliked her. he asked me to divorce her and when i refused, `umar (may allah be pleased with him) went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and mentioned the matter to him. messenger of allah (pbuh) [asked me to divorce her](#).

[at-tirmidhi and abu dawud].

commentary: if parents' order to divorce one's wife is based on the principles of shari`ah and morality, it must be obeyed, as is evident from this hadith. if their order is founded on other factors, then one should try to convince them politely so that they agree with one's view on the issue. here ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with him) loved his wife for love's sake, but his father `umar bin khattab (may allah be pleased with him) disliked her basing his decision on religious grounds. this is why the prophet (pbuh) ordered ibn `umar to obey his father.

334. abud-darda' (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to me and said, "i have a wife whom my mother commands me to divorce". i replied him that i had heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, "a parent is the best of the gates of jannah; so if you wish, keep to the gate, or lose it."
[at-tirmidhi and ibn majah].

commentary: the word "walid," applies to mother as well as father. as the word "walidain" is a dual form and covers mother and father both; similarly the noun "father", also applies to both. this hadith also stresses that obedience of parents and submission to their order must have preference over the love for the wife as long as this order of theirs is fair and just.

335. al-bara' bin `azib (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i heard the prophet (pbuh) saying: "a mother's sister is equivalent to (real) mother (in status)".
[at-tirmidhi]

commentary: this hadith tells us that one should be as respectful to one's aunt (mother's real sister) as one is to mother, as it is a virtue as well as "a form of maintaining the ties of kinship".

Chapter 41: Prohibition of Disobeying Parents and severance of Relations

allah, the exalted, says:

“would you then, if you were given the authority, do mischief in the land, and sever your ties of kinship? such are they whom allah has cursed, so that he has made them deaf and blinded their sight.” (47:22,23)

“and those who break the covenant of allah, after its ratification, and sever that which allah has commanded to be joined (i.e., they sever the bond of kinship and are not good to their relatives), and work mischief in the land, on them is the curse (i.e., they will be far away from allah’s mercy), and for them is the unhappy (evil) home (i.e., hell).” (13:25)

“and your rubb has decreed that you worship none but him. and that you be dutiful to your parents. if one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour. and lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: `my rubb! bestow on them your mercy as they did bring me up when i was young.’” (17:23,24)

336. abu bakrah nufai` bin al-harith (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “shall i not inform you of the biggest of the major sins?” messenger of allah (pbuh) asked this question thrice. we said, “yes, o messenger of allah. (please inform us.)”. he said, “ascribing partners to allah, and to be undutiful to your parents”. messenger of allah (pbuh) sat up from his reclining position and said, “and i warn you against giving forged statement and a false testimony; i warn you against giving forged statement and a false testimony”. messenger of allah (pbuh) kept on repeating that warning till we wished he would stop.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions some of the major sins. a major sin is one against which there is a serious warning in the noble qur’an and hadith. when disobedience to parents is mentioned along with shirk (**polytheism**), it makes the fact evident that both of these are very serious sins.

similar is the case of telling a lie and false testimony, which in the incident mentioned in this hadith made messenger of allah (pbuh) to leave his pillow and sit attentively. it indicates that the latter two are serious. may allah protect all muslims from all such sins.

337. abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “(of the) major sins are: to ascribe partners to allah, disobey parents, murder someone, and to take a false oath (intentionally)”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: there are many more major sins which have been enlisted and discussed at length by muhaddathun in independent volumes, such as az-zawajir `an iqtraf-al-kaba'ir, kitab-al-kaba'ir by adh-dhahabi. this hadith mentions some of the major sins enumerated by the prophet (pbuh) on a particular occasion. we can also say that the sins mentioned here are some of the most serious among the major sins.

338. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is one of the gravest sins to abuse one’s parents.” it was asked (by the people): “o messenger of allah, can a man abuse his own parents?” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he abuses the father of somebody who, in return, abuses the former’s father; he then abuses the mother of somebody who, in return, abuses his mother”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “one of the major sins is to curse one’s parents”. it was submitted: “o messenger of allah! how can a man curse his own parents?” he (pbuh) said, “when someone curses the parents of another man who in return abuses the former’s father; and when someone abuses the mother of another man who in return abuses his mother.”

commentary: we learn from this hadith that one should not abuse anyone’s parents, because in the event, he is paid in the same coin, he will be responsible for disgracing his own parents.

339. abu muhammad jubair bin mut`im (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the person who severs the bond of kinship will not enter jannah”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith poses a serious threat to those who violate the divine injunctions of maintaining good ties of kinship. in spite of such a serious warning, this major sin is very common in our present-day society. the purpose of this warning is that muslims prevent themselves from it. may allah save us from it.

340. abu `isa al-mughirah bin shu`bah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “allah has forbidden you: disobedience to your mothers, to withhold (what you should give), or demand (what you do not deserve), and to bury your daughters alive. and allah dislikes idle talk, to ask too many questions (for things which will be of no benefit to one), and to waste your wealth”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

Chapter 42: Excellence in doing Good to the Friends of Parents and other Relatives

341. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the finest act of goodness is that a person should treat kindly the loved ones of his father”.
[muslim].

342. `abdullah bin dinar reported: `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) met a bedouin on his way to makkah, he greeted him, offered him to mount the donkey he was riding and gave him the turban he was wearing on his head. ibn dinar said to him: “may allah make you pious! bedouins can be satisfied with anything you give them (i.e., what you have given the bedouin is too much). upon this, `abdullah bin `umar said, the father of this man was one of `umar’s friends whom he loved best, and i heard messenger of allah saying, “the finest act of goodness is the good treatment of someone whom one’s father loves”.

another narration goes: when `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) set out to makkah, he kept a donkey with him to ride when he would get tired from the riding of the camel, and had a turban which he tied round his head. one day, as he was riding the donkey, a bedouin happened to pass by him. he (`abdullah bin `umar) said, “aren’t you so-and-so?” the bedouin said, “yes”. he (`abdullah bin `umar) gave him his donkey and his turban and said, “ride this donkey, and tie this turban round your head”. some of his companions said, “may allah forgive you, you gave to this bedouin the donkey which you enjoyed to ride for change, and the turban which you tied round your head”. `abdullah bin `umar said, “i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, ‘the finest act of goodness is the kind treatment of a person to the loved ones of his father after his death,’ and the father of this person was a friend of `umar (may allah be pleased with him).
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith teaches that after the death of one’s parents, one should maintain contact with their friends and treat them nicely. besides being a great virtue it is warranted by the needs for showing compassion to relatives. to forget friends of one’s parents and break contact with them is condemned by the shari`ah.

343. abu usaid malik bin rabi`ah as-sa`idi (may allah be pleased with him) reported: we were sitting with messenger of allah (pbuh) when a man of banu salamah came to him and asked, "o messenger of allah! is there any obedience to parents left that i can show to them after their death?" he (pbuh) replied, "yes, to pray for them, to supplicate for their forgiveness, to fulfill their promises after their death, to maintain the ties of kinship which cannot be maintained except through them, and honour their friends."
[abu dawud].

commentary: we learn from this hadith that one should consider the life of one's parents a blessing because their life provides one with an opportunity to serve them wholeheartedly, which is ordained by allah. if one wants to be nice to them after their death, one should adopt the methods mentioned in this hadith. it needs to be noted that it does not mention the ceremonies like recitation of the noble qur'an on the third, seventh and fortieth day after the death of a person, in vogue in our society. all these methods of conveying the reward of virtuous deeds or rites are wrong for the reason that they are neither helpful for the dead nor the living. what really benefits the dead as well as living, is prayer and begging forgiveness from allah. in this hadith, these have been regarded as acts of beneficence for the deceased parents. it clearly means that the children will be rewarded for the virtuous acts they do for their parents and the status of the deceased parents will also be elevated in the next world. the acceptance of the prayer in favour of the deceased parents is also confirmed from that hadith also which tells that death brings to an end all the activities, except the following:

firstly, an ongoing sadaqah (**sadaqah jariyah**); like the digging of a well, the building of a mosque, etc.,

secondly, knowledge which benefits muslims;

thirdly, prayers of virtuous offspring.

344. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i never felt jealous of any of the wives of the prophet (pbuh) as much as i did of khadijah (may allah be pleased with her), although i have never seen her, but the prophet (pbuh) used to mention her very often. whenever he slaughtered a sheep, he would cut it into pieces and send them to the women friends of khadijah (may allah be pleased with her).

when i sometimes said to him: “you treat khadijah in such a way as if there is no woman on earth except her”. he (pbuh) would say, “khadijah was such and such (commending her and speaking well of her), and i had children from her”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: and if he (pbuh) slaughtered a sheep, he would send meat to the friends of khadijah (may allah be pleased with her) as a present as much as would suffice them.

another narration is: when a sheep was slaughtered, he (pbuh) would say, “send this meat to khadijah’s friends.” once, halah bint khuwailid (may allah be pleased with her), sister of khadijah (may allah be pleased with her), sought permission of messenger of allah (pbuh) to enter. he recognized and recalled to his mind the manner of khadijah (may allah be pleased with her) and was deeply moved. he said, “o allah, she must be halah bint khuwailid”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings out the following five points:

1. a brief reference to the great qualities of khadijah (may allah be pleased with her).

2. the love that messenger of allah (pbuh) had for khadijah (may allah be pleased with her) because of her great qualities.

3. reference to the kindness which messenger of allah (pbuh) continued to show to the women who were close to khadijah (may allah be pleased with her).

4. expression of the sentiments which the remembrance of some deceased friend brings with it. these sentiments can be pleasing as well as painful.

345. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i set out along with jarir bin `abdullah al-bajali (may allah be pleased with him) on a journey and he served me. i said to him: “don’t do that.” thereupon, he said, “i have seen the ansar doing this with messenger of allah (pbuh), and i swore by allah, whenever i accompany anyone of the ansar, i would serve him”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith gives a fair idea of the love that the companions of the prophet (pbuh) had for him. it was so profound that they regarded it a great honour to serve the servants of the prophet (pbuh), even if they were younger in age.

2. it also tells of the hospitality of the companions of the prophet (pbuh). they neither felt any hesitation in showing respect to their youngsters nor were they shy of serving them.

3. the companions of messenger of allah (pbuh) had a friendly, fraternal and faithful relationship with one another and it was founded on a common bond in them - the gratitude for the prophet (pbuh).

Chapter 43: Showing reverence to the Family of Allah's Messenger (pbuh)

allah, the exalted, says:

“allah wishes only to remove ar-rijs (evil deeds and sins) from you, o members of the family (of the prophet (pbuh)), and to purify you with a thorough purification.” (33:33)

“and whosoever honours the symbols of allah, then it is truly from the piety of the heart.” (22:32)

346. yazid bin haiyan reported: i went along with husain bin sabrah and `amr bin muslim to zaid bin arqam (may allah be pleased with them) and, as we sat by his side, husain said to him, “zaid, you acquired great merits, you saw messenger of allah (pbuh), listened to him talking, fought by his side in (different) battles, and offered salat (prayer) behind him. zaid, you have indeed earned great merits. could you narrate to us what you heard from messenger of allah (pbuh)?” zaid said, “by allah! i have grown old and have almost spent up my age and i have forgotten some of the things which i remembered in connection with messenger of allah (pbuh), so accept what i narrate to you, do not compel me to narrate what i fail to narrate”. he then said, “one day messenger of allah (pbuh) stood up to deliver a khutbah at a watering place known as khumm between makkah and al-madinah. he praised allah, extolled him, and exhorted (us) and said, `amma ba`du. o people, i am a human being. i am about to receive a messenger (the angel of death) from my rubb and i will respond to allah's call, but i am leaving with you two weighty things: the first is the book of allah, in which there is right guidance and light, so hold fast to the book of allah and adhere to it.’ he exhorted (us to hold fast) to the book of allah and then said, `the second is the members of my household, i remind you (to be kind) to the members of my family. i remind you (to be kind) to the members of my family. husain said to zaid, “who are the members of his household, o zaid? aren't his wives the members of his family?” thereupon zaid said, “his wives are the members of his family. (but here) the members of his family are those for whom zakat is forbidden”. he asked, “who are they?” zaid said, “ali and the offspring of `ali, `aqil and the offspring of `aqil and the offspring of ja`far and the offspring of `abbas.” husain asked, “for all of them the acceptance of zakat is forbidden?” zaid (may allah be pleased with him) said, “yes”. [muslim].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i am leaving behind me two weighty things. one of them is the book of allah; that is the strong rope of allah. whosoever holds firmly to it, will be the guided, and whosoever leaves it goes astray”.

commentary: this hadith brings out the following points:

1. messenger of allah (pbuh) was a human being. he too was subject to the inevitable law of death.

2. it stresses upon the establishment of a firm bond with the book of allah (the qur'an) and lays emphasis on showing respect and honour to the members of the prophet's family.

3. the members of the prophet's family are classified into two categories:

firstly, wives of messenger of allah (pbuh) or mothers of the believers. this is established from the categorical verses of the noble qur'an.

secondly, persons who have close relationship with messenger of allah (pbuh) . they are banu hashim and banu abdul-muttalib and include descendants of `ali, `aqil, ja`far, `abbas and harith (may allah be pleased with them). sadaqah is unlawful for the latter category.

347. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) said: “show reverence to messenger of allah (pbuh) by honouring the members of his family.”
[al-bukhari].

commentary: in this hadith, the love and respect for the members of the prophet's (pbuh) family has been tied with the love and respect of the prophet (pbuh). in other words, a person who loves and respects the descendants of the prophet (pbuh) will be deemed to be a lover and admirer of the prophet (pbuh). on the contrary, one whose heart is devoid of the love of the descendants of the prophet (pbuh), will be considered devoid of the love and respect of the prophet (pbuh). but love and respect here does not mean that they are taken for sinless persons and their status is exaggerated beyond reason, as is the case with the shiites. their whole religious thinking is founded on the exaggeration of the qualities of the members of the family of messenger of allah (pbuh) and they have exhausted their imagination in proving them sinless.

while their love and respect lies in adopting the noble features of their character and cherishing their piety. their love and respect does not lie in sentimental attachment with a particular family and exaggerating its praise beyond all limits.

Chapter 44: Revering the Scholars and Elders, Preferring them to others and raising their Status

allah, the exalted, says:

“say: `are those who know equal to those who know not?’ it is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e., get a lesson from allah’s signs and verses).” (39:9)

348. abu mas`ud `uqbah bin `amr al-badri al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the person who is best versed in the recitation of the book of allah, should lead the prayer; but if all those present are equally versed in it, then the one who has most knowledge of the sunnah; if they are equal in that respect too, then the one who has emigrated (to al-madinah) first, if they are equal in this respect also, then the oldest of them. no man should lead another in prayer where the latter has authority, or sit in his house, without his permission”.

[muslim].

in another narration in muslim: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “one who is senior most in accepting islam, should lead the salat (prayer)”.

yet another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a man who is well versed in the book of allah and can recite it better, should lead the salat (prayer); if (all those present) are equal in this respect, then the man who is senior most in respect of emigration, if they are equal in that respect too, then the oldest of them should lead the prayer”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following three points:

1. the order of priority for the appointment of imam [one who leads as-salat (the prayers) should be as follows:

first, preference should go to a good qari (reciter of the noble qur’an) who is also an expert in it, provided he is pious and acts upon the teachings of the noble qur’an faithfully. he should not be a non-practising muslim. nowadays, we have an abundance of imam but many of them are neither pious nor faithfully act upon religious teachings.

in any case, where we can find a qari who fulfills the requirements just mentioned, he deserves first preference for appointment as imam. even a religious scholar will come next to him. it must be borne in mind that nice recitation of the noble qur'an does not mean its recitation with great skill, but its essentials are elegant voice, acquaintance with the `ilm-ut-tajwid (or science of reciting the qur'an), clear and distinct recitation.

2. the ruler of a territory, its highest officer and governor should work as imam in their respective areas. in the early ages of islam, these authorities used to administer their areas, dispense justice and lead congregational prayers (salat).

3. when one goes to somebody's house, he should not occupy the place reserved for the master of the house unless he himself asks him to sit there.

349. abu mas`ud al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) would place his hands upon our shoulders when we would form rows for as-salat (the prayer) and say, "stand in straight rows and do not differ among yourselves, or else your hearts will differ due to disaccord. let those be nearest to me who are mature and endowed with understanding (of the religion), then those who are nearest to them in these respects and then those who are nearest to them".

[muslim].

350. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "let those be nearest to me in salat (prayer) who are mature and possess (religious) knowledge, then those who are nearest to them in these respects". he repeated this three times and then added, "beware of indulging in the loose talks of the markets (when you are in the mosque)".

[muslim].

commentary: the meaning of the last sentence of this hadith seems to be that one should not quarrel, make noise or engage in loose talk in or near a mosque to disturb the people in the mosque because such activities are severely condemned by islim.

351. sahl bin abu hathmah al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: `abdullah bin sahl and muhaiyisah bin mas`ud "(may allah be pleased with them) went to khaibar during the period of the truce (after its conquest) and they separated to perform their duties. when muhaiyisah returned to `abdullah bin sahl, he found him murdered, drenched in his blood. so he buried him and returned to al-madinah. then `abdur-rahman bin sahl, huwaiyisah and muhaiyisah, the two sons of mas`ud went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and spoke about the case of their (murdered) friend. `abdur-rahman, who was the youngest of them all, started talking. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "let those older than you speak first." so he stopped talking and the (other two) spoke about the case of their (murdered) friend. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "will you take an oath whereby you will have the right to receive the blood money of your murdered man?" and mentioned the rest of the hadith."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the author of this book, imam nawawi, has reproduced only that portion of hadith which is related to this chapter. this hadith makes out the following points:

1. the eldest person has the first right to speak in a gathering. but this principle is to be followed when all the persons present there are equal in virtue and intelligence; otherwise, one who is superior to others in these qualities will have a prior right to speak.

2. the hadith explains the issue of qasamah which was in vogue in the pre-islamic period and was maintained by islam. qasamah was a mode of settling cases of undetected murders. in such situations, fifty persons from the heirs of the victim were asked to take an oath that murder was committed by some person of that locality (or some persons from the heirs were required to take oath for fifty times to this effect); after this oath, the people of that area were liable to pay diyah (blood money) to the heirs of the victim. if the persons blamed for the murder said on the similar oath that none of them had committed that offense, they were absolved from the payment of diyah and the payment of blood money was made to the heirs of the victim from the bait-ul-mal (state exchequer). in the incident referred in this hadith when the prophet (pbuh) asked the brothers of the victim to take the required oath, they refused to do so as they were not sure as to who had committed the crime. the prophet (pbuh) did not ask the inhabitants of khaibar for the oath because they were jews and the heirs of the victim did not have faith in them. thus, the prophet (pbuh) himself made the payment of the blood money to the heirs of the victim.

352. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: after the battle of uhud, the prophet (pbuh) arranged the burial of two of the martyrs in one grave. in each case he would ask, “which one of them had learnt more qur’an by heart?” whichever was thus pointed out to him, was placed by him first in the lahd.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: lahd is a type of grave in which a niche is made on the left side of it to place the corpse. the grave which is straight, a common type, is called darih. this hadith tells about the distinction of the hafiz and his superiority over others. similarly, the learned, the pious and men of outstanding virtues should have preference over others. the hadith also indicates the permissibility to bury two or three persons in a single grave in time of need or necessity.

353. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “it was shown to me in my dream that i was cleaning my teeth with a miswak and two men came to me, one being older than the other. i gave the miswak to the younger one, but i was asked to give it to the older, which i did”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: a musnad hadith is one in which the full chain of its narrators is mentioned while the mu`allaq hadith is that in which the first one or two or more or all its narrators are omitted. this hadith has been mentioned in al-bukhari without any authority.

we learn two things from this hadith. first, one can use miswak of another person with his permission. second, the eldest people should have precedence over others in every matter, except in cases where a younger one excels them in some merit.

354. abu musa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is out of reverence to allah in respecting an aged muslim, and the one who commits the qur’an to memory and does not exaggerate pronouncing its letters nor forgets it after memorizing, and to respect the just ruler”.

[abu dawud]

commentary: an aged muslim here means one who lives a pious life till his old age. the word “hamil-ul-qur’an” translated here as ‘the one who commits the qur’an to memory,’ who have memorized the complete qur’an. that is to say he is not aggressive in putting it into practice and does not take shelter of far-fetched interpretations to justify his own intellectual and religious perversion. this hadith stresses that a pious old man, a hamil-ul-qur’an and a just head of a muslim government should be respected. since their respect has been ordained by allah, respecting them is in fact revering allah.

355. `amr bin shu`aib (may allah be pleased with him) on the authority of his father who heard it from his father reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “**he is not one of us who shows no mercy to younger ones and does not acknowledge the honour due to our elders**”.
[at-tirmidhi and abu dawud].

commentary: the words “he is not one of us” here mean that he is not following the way of the prophet (pbuh). to show compassion to younger means showing kindness and generosity to them. on the same principle, it is essential for the young that they respect the elders, the learned and the pious.

356. maimun bin abu shabib (may allah had mercy upon him) reported: a begger asked `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) for charity and she gave him a piece of bread. thereafter, one well-dressed person asked her for charity and she invited him to sit down and served him food. when she was asked about the reason for the difference in treatment, she said: “**messenger of allah (pbuh) instructed us: `treat people according to their status**”.
[abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith stresses that:

1. one should neither belittle a respectable person nor should one elevate a mean one. everyone should be treated according to his real status.
2. it is unbecoming to take support from the qur’an and hadith and twist it to substantiate one’s own views.

3. the hadith, however, is classified as da`if (weak) as there is no link in the chain of its narrators between `aishah and maimun.

357. ibn abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: `uyainah bin hisn came to al-madinah and stayed with his nephew al-hurr bin qais who was among those who were close to `umar (may allah be pleased with him) and had access to his council. the scholarly persons, whether they were old or young, had the privilege of joining his council and he used to consult them. `uyainah said to al-hurr: “my dear nephew, you have an access to the leader of the believers. will you obtain permission for me to sit with him?” al-hurr asked `umar and he accorded permission. when `uyainah came into the presence of `umar, he addressed him thus: “o son of al-khattab, you neither bestow much on us nor deal with us justly.” `umar (may allah be pleased with him) got angry and was about to beat him when al-hurr said: “o leader of the believers, allah has said to his prophet (pbuh): `show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e., don't punish them), [i.e., `uyainah] (7:199). this is one of the ignorant ones.” by allah! when al-hurr recited this, `umar became quite motionless in his seat. he always adhered strictly to the book of allah.

[al-bukhari]

commentary: this incident has been cited in this chapter for the reason it tells us that many `ulama' and qurra' were members of the special advisory council of `umar (may allah be pleased with him). therefore, men in authority should appoint their advisors from men who are known for their knowledge, intelligence and piety so that they have the benefit of their sincere and sagacious advice regardless of the flimsy and temporary worldly interests. besides this, the rulers should also be rich in patience and perseverance.

358. abu sa`id samurah bin jundub (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i was a boy during the lifetime of messenger of allah (pbuh), and used to commit to my memory what he said, but i do not narrate what i preserved because there were among us people who were older than me.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: ibn `allan has stated that scholars of hadith have disliked it that in the presence of an eminent and a pious scholar of hadith in a city, a man inferior to him narrates a hadith.

we learn from this hadith the following:

1. it is improper to talk about the sunnah of the prophet (pbuh) in the presence of someone who is older and knows better in this respect.
2. it is permissible for young children to attend the gathering of the aged and the learned.
3. honouring and respecting the elderly.

359. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "if a young man honours an older person on account of his age, allah appoints someone to show reverence to him in his old age"
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the reward of the noble behaviour mentioned in this hadith is confirmed by other authentic texts.

the hadith is classified as da`if (**weak**).

Chapter 45: Visiting the Pious Persons, loving them and adoption of their company

allah, the exalted, says:

“and (remember) when musa (moses) said to his boy-servant: `i will not give up (travelling) until i reach the junction of the two seas or (until) i spend years and years in travelling” (up to) “... musa (moses) said to him (khidr): `may i follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (guidance and true path) which you have been taught (by allah)?”. (18:60-66)

“and keep yourself (o muhammad (pbuh)) patiently with those who call on their rubb (i.e., your companions who remember their rubb with glorification, praising in prayers, and other righteous deeds) morning and afternoon, seeking his pleasure.” (18:28)

360. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: after the death of messenger of allah (pbuh), abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) said to `umar (may allah be pleased with him) : “let us visit umm aiman (may allah be pleased with her) as messenger of allah (pbuh) used to visit her”. as we came to her, she wept. they (abu bakr and `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said to her, “what makes you weep? do you not know that what allah has in store for his messenger (pbuh) is better than (this worldly life)?” she said, “i weep not because i am ignorant of the fact that what is in store for messenger of allah (pbuh) (in the hereafter) is better than this world, but i weep because the revelation has ceased to come”. this moved both of them to tears and they began to weep along with her.
[muslim].

commentary: umm aiman (may allah be pleased with her) belonged to ethiopia and was a slave-girl of the prophet's father (`abdullah bin `abdul-muttalib). after the death of `abdullah, umm aiman (may allah be pleased with her) remained with the prophet's mother, aminah, and took great care in his upbringing. subsequently, the prophet (pbuh) set her free and then she was married to zaid bin harithah (may allah be pleased with her) this hadith holds justification for weeping over the death of the pious and also shows that it is desirable to visit such persons to whom one's friends go to pay respect. the incident mentioned in this hadith also shows the love that the companions of the prophet (pbuh) had for him.

361. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “a man set out to visit a brother (in faith) in another town and allah sent an angel on his way. when the man met the angel, the latter asked him, “where do you intend to go?” he said, “i intend to visit my brother in this town.” the angel said, “have you done any favour to him?” he said, “no, i have no desire except to visit him because i love him for the sake of allah, the exalted, and glorious.” thereupon the angel said, “i am a messenger to you from allah (to inform you) that allah loves you as you love him (for his sake)”
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith points out the following:

1. the great merit of visiting muslims for allah’s sake.
2. the bond of brotherhood in islam is much stronger than the bonds of blood relationship and worldly interests and, therefore, comes before them in preference.
3. whoever loves someone for allah’s sake, allah will love him in a manner that suits his majesty.

362. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “whosoever visits an ailing person or a brother of his to seek the pleasure of allah, an announcer (angel) calls out: `may you be happy, may your walking be blessed, and may you be awarded a dignified position in jannah”.
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith highlights the merit of visiting the sick and muslim to gain the pleasure of allah.

363. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard the prophet (pbuh) saying, “the similitude of good company and that of bad company is that of the owner of musk and of the one blowing the bellows. the owner of musk would either offer you some free of charge, or you would buy it from him, or you smell its pleasant fragrance; and as for the one who blows the bellows (i.e., the blacksmith), he either burns your clothes or you smell a repugnant smell”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith enjoins that one should sit in the company of the pious persons and avoid the impious ones because the former has the quality of a perfume seller and the latter of a blacksmith. in the association of pious men, one stands to gain all the time and ultimately becomes like them. in bad company one is out-and-out a loser and can never hope to gain any benefit from them.

364. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “a woman is married for four things: for her wealth, for her lineage, for her beauty or for her piety. select the pious, may you be blessed!”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: only a pious woman is in the true sense faithful and obedient to her husband of good conduct. such a couple not only lead a happy life but its future generation is also brought up on the right lines with the help of such a woman. the women of the remaining three types are generally a source of trouble for their husbands and spoil their future generations. for this reason, while selecting a wife, one should give preference to religion over all other qualities.

365. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said to jibril (gabriel), “what prevents you from visiting us more frequently?” thereupon was revealed the ayah: “(the angels say:) `and we (angels) descend not except by the command of your rubb. to him belongs what is before us and what is behind us, and what is between those two”. (19:64)

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith tells us about the prophet’s desire for meeting angel jibril (gabriel) to have that knowledge which was revealed to him by means of wahy (revelation).

it also tells us that angels descend to earth for certain mission by the command of allah. they have no say of their own in any matter. it also indicates that it is permissible to enquire about muslim brothers after a long period of time as this is a sign of true love.

366. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “keep only a believer for a companion and let only a pious eat your food”.

[at-tirmidhi and abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith forbids muslims from befriending infidels and stresses that they should establish a bond of friendship and fraternity with the pious persons only.

the above hadith signifies that taking believers for company has good consequences on the muslim. while feeding only pious people compels the muslim host to provide only halal or lawful foodstuff for his household as well as his guests. (m.r. murad)

367. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard the prophet (pbuh) saying, “[man follows his friend’s religion, you should be careful who you take for friends](#)”.
[at-tirmidhi and abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith also induces one to avoid the company of impious people and seek the association of the pious persons.

368. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “[a person will be summoned with the one whom he loves](#)”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: the prophet (pbuh) was asked; “what about a person who loves a people but cannot be with them?” (i.e., either he cannot attain their lofty position of righteousness or that he has not met with them in this life). he (pbuh) replied, “a person will be in the company of those whom he loves”.

commentary: besides bringing to eminence the high merit of entertaining the love for the pious persons, this hadith tells us about the mercy and blessings of allah which he will shower upon those who love the pious people. because of this love, allah will elevate even the inferior people and include them among those whom he loves. this hadith also serves a warning that association and love with the impious people is extremely dangerous as one can meet the same bad end which is inevitable for them. may allah save us from it.

369. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a bedouin came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said to him, “when will be the hour (i.e., the day of resurrection)?” he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “[what preparation have you made for it?](#)”

” he said, “only the love of allah and his messenger.” then messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**you will be with those whom you love.**” [al-bukhari and muslim].

the narration in muslim is: the man replied: “i have made no significant preparation with regard to salat (prayer), saum (fasting) and sadaqah (charity) but i love allah and his messenger”.

commentary: the love of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) for allah and his prophet (pbuh) was not verbal only, as is the case of present-day muslims. their love was full of obedience and submission to allah in the true sense. this is what the bedouin mentioned in this hadith really meant when he said that he had not amassed a large treasure by way of salat, saum (fasts) and sadaqah for presentation on the day of resurrection. what he meant by them was voluntary acts and not the obligations. the reason being that the obligatory acts like salat, saum and zakat are incumbent on every muslim and no one can claim to be a true believer and lover of allah and his prophet (pbuh) who ignores them. any muslim who entertains true love of allah and his prophet (pbuh), makes it evident in his practical life by his strict performance of the duties and obligations enjoined by allah and demonstrated by his prophet (pbuh) through his sunnah. even if such a person does not have to his credit a large amount of voluntary acts, he will be declared successful by allah. this is the real import of this hadith, otherwise a muslim’s claim for the love of allah and his prophet (pbuh) will be void if he does not fulfill his religious obligations. in fact, without the fulfillment of religious obligations, his claim will be nothing short of self-deception. his claim for the love of allah and his prophet (pbuh), which is not supported by his actions will carry no weight before allah. this is what the following ayah of the noble qur’an enjoins: “say (o muhammad (pbuh) to mankind:) **if you (really) love allah then follow me (i.e., accept islamic tauhid, follow the qur’an and the sunnah), allah will love you and forgive your sins. and allah is oft-forgiving, most merciful.**” (3:31)

370. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said, “o messenger of allah! what do you think of a man who loves some people but does not go any nearer to their position?” he (pbuh) replied, “**a man will be with those whom he loves**”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: “**lam yalhaq bihim**” means that he has not been able to come close to them in righteousness and good deeds but in the next world almighty allah will, by his grace and mercy, elevate him and bring him on par with the righteous and the pious persons because of his love for them.

371. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “**people are like gold and silver; those who were best in jahiliyyah (pre-islamic period of ignorance) are best in islam, if they have religious understanding; and the souls are like recruited soldiers, they get mixed up with those similar with them in qualities and oppose and drift away from those who do not share their qualities**”.

[muslim].

commentary:

1. metals differ from each other. some of them are precious and others worthless. similar is the case of the people’s conduct and actions. there are people of both kinds in the world. if good persons of the pre-islamic period (who were distinguished for their noble character) embraced islam, and understood and acted upon the injunctions of islam, they were entitled to the same distinction which they were holding previously (in the pre-islamic period). there would be no reduction in their prestige and status with their conversion.

2. the words “souls are like recruited soldiers” signify the natural difference of nature and temperament in people. those who are noble, would be introduced to the pious ones; and others who are fascinated by evil, will be introduced to the mischievous ones. people of each kind will maintain contact with their own fellows, as is indicated by a proverb:

‘birds of a feather flock together, pigeons go with pigeons, hawks with hawks.’

some scholars have pointed out that a person who hates the righteous people must find out its cause because it is a dangerous symptom of one’s bad end. after discovering its cause he must try to change it.

372. usair bin `amr (ibn jabir) reported: when delegations from yemen came to the help of (the muslim army at the time of jihad) `umar (may allah be pleased with him) would ask them, “is there owais bin `amir amongst you?” (he continued searching him) until he met owais (may allah be pleased with him).

he said, "are you owais bin `amir?" he said, "yes". `umar asked, "are you from the qaran branch of the tribe of murad?" he said, "yes". he `umar (may allah be pleased with him) again said, "did you suffer from leucoderma and then you were cured from it but for the space of a dirham?" he said, "yes". he `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said, "is your mother still alive?" he said, "yes". he `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said, "i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, *'there would come to you owais bin `amir with the reinforcement from the people of yemen. he would be from qaran (the branch) of murad. he had been suffering from leucoderma from which he was cured but for a spot of a dirham. he has a mother to whom he is very dutiful. if he were to take an oath in the name of allah, allah would fulfill his oath. and if it is possible for you, ask him to ask forgiveness for you.'* so, ask forgiveness for me". he owais (may allah be pleased with him) did so. `umar (may allah be pleased with him) then said, "where do you intend to go?" he said, "to kufah." he `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said, "let me write a letter for you to its governor," whereupon he owais (may allah be pleased with him) said, "i love to live amongst the poor people". the following year, a person from among the elite (of kufah) performed hajj and he met `umar (may allah be pleased with him). `umar (may allah be pleased with him) asked him about owais (may allah be pleased with him). he said, "i left him in a state with meagre means of sustenance in a decayed house." (thereupon) `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said, "i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, *'there would come to you owais bin `amir of qaran, a branch (of the tribe) of murad, along with the reinforcement of the people of yemen. he had been suffering from leucoderma which would have been cured but for the space of a dirham. he has a mother to whom he is very dutiful. were he to swear, trusting allah, for something, allah would fulfill his oath. if you can ask him to pray for forgiveness for you, do so'*". this man went to owais (may allah be pleased with him) and asked him to pray for forgiveness for him. owais (may allah be pleased with him) said to him, "you have just returned from a blessed journey, it is you who should pray for forgiveness for me; and did you meet `umar?" the man said, "yes". `owais (may allah be pleased with him) then prayed for forgiveness for him. people became aware of the high status of owais (may allah be pleased with him) and he set out following his course. [muslim].

another narration is: a delegation from kufah came to `umar (may allah be pleased with him). among them was one who used to make fun of owais (may allah be pleased with him). `umar (may allah be pleased with him) enquired, "is there anyone among you who is from qaran?" so this man stepped forward. then `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said, "i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, `a man will come to you from yemen named owais. he will have left in the yemen only his mother. he was suffering from leucoderma and prayed to allah to be cured of it. so he was cured except for a space of the size of a dinar or a dirham. whoever of you should meet him should ask him to pray for forgiveness for him."

another narration is: `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said: "i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, `the best one of the next generation (at-tabi`un) is a man called owais, he will have a mother and he will be suffering from leucoderma. go to him and ask him to pray for forgiveness for you".

[muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith is one of the clear miracles of the prophet (pbuh) because he not only told the name of owais (may allah be pleased with him) but also some of his special qualities and characteristics which tallied with the description given by him.

2. it tells the virtues of simplicity, and anonymity.

3. the merit of nice treatment to mother.

4. this hadith is also a proof on owais being the best of the successors to the prophet's companions (i.e., at-tabi`un).

5. the humbleness of `umar (may allah be pleased with him) and his desire for goodness despite being in the position of the leader of the believers.

373. `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i sought permission of the prophet (pbuh) to perform `umrah. he granted me leave and said, "dear brother! do not forget us in your supplications". (`umar added): this is something i would not exchange for the whole world.

another narration is: he (pbuh) said, “include us, my dear brother, in your supplications.” [abu dawud and at-tirmidhi, who categorized the hadith as hasan sahih. sheikh salim al-hilali in his book “bahjatun-nazireen, sharh riyad-us-saliheen” classifies it as “da`if”, the reason being that `asim bin `abdullah is “weak” in narration].

commentary: it is mustahab (desirable) to request such a person for prayer who is proceeding on a journey, especially one who is going with the intention of hajj or `umrah. the reason being:

1. prayer for someone in his absence is imbued with sincerity.
2. the places a pilgrim visits in the course of hajj are such that prayers made there are accepted by allah.
3. it is also mustahab that during the course of hajj when a pilgrim supplicates on special sites and occasions, he should not pray for himself alone but also include his relatives and friends in his supplications.
4. the act of praying for others goes to prove the eminence of religious fraternity of the muslims. the prophet (pbuh) is the spiritual father of the entire muslim community, and is the most superior in nobility and excellence in the whole universe, but in respect of faith, he is also a brother of all the muslims and all the muslims are his brothers. it is illustrated by the fact that he called `umar (may allah be pleased with him) his brother.

374. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) used to visit quba', either mounted or on foot and would offer two rak`ah prayer in the mosque there. [al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: the prophet (pbuh) used to visit the mosque at quba' every saturday (i.e., every week) either mounted or on foot, and ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) used to do the same thing.

commentary:

1. quba' was a village about two miles away from al-madinah. now, it is a part of the city. according to a hadith, the prophet (pbuh) has regarded the performance of one salat there equal to an `umrah. (at-tirmidhi, al-jami` as-saghir).

2. this hadith also shows the passion which ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) had for following the sunnah for which he is well-reputed.

Chapter 46: Excellence and Etiquette of Sincere love for the sake of Allah

allah, the exalted, says:

“muhammad (pbuh) is the messenger of allah. and those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. you see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking bounty from allah and (his) good pleasure. the mark of them (i.e., of their faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration (during prayers). this is their description in the taurat (torah). but their description in the injeel (gospel) is like a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, and becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, that he may enrage the disbelievers with them. allah has promised those among them who believe (i.e., all those who follow islamic monotheism, the religion of prophet muhammad (pbuh) till the day of resurrection) and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward (i.e., jannah).” (48:29)

“and those who, before them, had homes (in al-madinah) and had adopted the faith, - love those who emigrate to them...” (59:9)

375. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “there are three qualities whoever has them, will taste the sweetness of iman: to love allah and his messenger (pbuh) more than anyone else; to love a slave (of allah) only for (the sake of) allah; and to abhor returning to infidelity after allah has saved him from it as he would abhor to be thrown into the fire (of hell)”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. in this hadith, the love of allah signifies the sweetness of iman.

2. the love of allah and his prophet (pbuh) is the cornerstone of the faith. when it is said that this love should exceed one's love for everything else in the universe, it means that what is enjoined by allah and his prophet (pbuh) must be given preference over everything else, whether it is love for the wife, children, worldly interests, desires or whims. when there is a clash between the two, the former should be given preference over the latter.

376. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “seven are (the persons) whom allah will give shade of his throne on the day when there would be no shade other than his throne’s shade: a just ruler; a youth who grew up worshipping allah; a man whose heart is attached to mosques; two persons who love and meet each other and depart from each other for the sake of allah; a man whom an extremely beautiful woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he (rejects this offer by saying): ‘i fear allah’ a man who gives in charity and conceals it (to such an extent) that the left hand does not know what the right has given; and a person who remembers allah in solitude and his eyes well up”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions seven types of people whom almighty allah provides special protection or his throne’s shade. in some ahadith this blessing has also been promised for some noble actions over and above those which have been mentioned here. some ‘ulama’ including as-sakhkhawi and al-hafiz ibn hajar have given a list of seventy such actions. imam as-suyuti said: “the (present) hadith mentions only seven qualities to bring into prominence their importance and also the importance of acting upon them’.

377. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on the day of resurrection, allah, the exalted, will say: ‘where are those who have mutual love for the sake of my glory? today i shall shelter them in my shade when there will be no shade except mine”.

[muslim].

commentary: it should be borne in mind that the shade referred to in the hadith is the shade of allah’s throne. referring to this shade in the arabic text as the shade of allah, is similar to the ‘she camel of allah,’ the ‘land of allah’ ‘the house of allah’ that are mentioned in the qur’an. (editor’s note)

378. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “by him in whose hand my soul is! you will not enter jannah until you believe, and you shall not believe until you love one another. may i inform you of something, if you do, you love each other. promote greeting amongst you (by saying as-salamu ‘alaikum to one another)”.

[muslim].

commentary: in this hadith, islam has been regarded as the medium of mutual love. this is the reason muslims have been enjoined to greet each other regardless of acquaintance. it does not, however, mean that a muslim will be a true believer or entitled to jannah, by mere greeting. what it really means is that his faith will become meaningful only when it is supported by actions. greeting is an islamic custom and a practical form and demonstration of it. the combination of faith and its practice will take a muslim to jannah.

379. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "a man set out to visit a brother (in faith) in another town and allah sent an angel on his way. when the man met the angel, the latter asked him, "where do you intend to go?" he said, "i intend to visit my brother in this town". the angel said, "have you done any favour to him?" he said, "no, i have no desire except to visit him because i love him for the sake of allah, the exalted, and glorious." thereupon the angel said, "i am a messenger to you from allah (to inform you) that allah loves you as you love him (for his sake)".
[muslim].

380. al-bara' bin `azib (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said about the ansar: "only a believer loves them, and only a hypocrite hates them. allah loves him who loves them and allah hates him who hates them".
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the way the ansar or helpers, faithfully served islam, muslims and the prophet (pbuh), constitutes not only one of the brightest chapters of islamic history but also makes them a model of excellent conduct and character. almighty allah rewarded them for their devotion to islam with immense love for faith - the love which became a symbol of their faith and love for allah. not only that, because of this devotion of the ansar, everyone who entertained jealousy and hatred against them was declared a hypocrite by allah. there were two famous tribes, namely al-aus and al-khazraj in al-madinah. in the pre-islamic days they were enemies to each other. when they embraced islam, they became close brothers. they welcomed the muhajirun (the emigrants) with open arms and rendered every possible assistance to them. for this reason they were named ansar. may allah be pleased with them and they be pleased with him.

381. mu`adh (bin jabal) (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah, the exalted, has said: `for those who love one another for the sake of my glory, there will be seats of light (on the day of resurrection), and they will be envied by the prophets and martyrs".

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith tells us that allah will grant an exalted position to such people who love one another for his sake. "they will be envied by the prophets and martyrs" does not mean that they will be granted a place higher than even the prophets because the highest position will be granted to the prophets, as these are the best of allah's creation. these words simply draw our attention to the superiority and the exalted position those who love one another for allah's sake will have on the day of resurrection.

382. abu idris al-khawlani (may allah had mercy upon him) reported: i once entered the mosque in damascus. i happened to catch sight of a young man who had bright teeth (i.e., he was always seen smiling). a number of people had gathered around him. when they differed over anything they would refer it to him and act upon his advice. i asked who he was and i was told that he was mu`adh bin jabal (may allah be pleased with him) the next day i hastened to the mosque, but found that he had arrived before me and was busy in performing salat. i waited until he finished, and then went to him from the front, greeted him with salam and said to him, "by allah i love you." he asked, "for the sake of allah?" i replied, "yes, for the sake of allah". he again asked me, "is it for allah's sake?" i replied, "yes, it is for allah's sake." then he took hold of my cloak, drew me to himself and said, "rejoice,! i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, `allah, the exalted, says: my love is due to those who love one another for my sake, meet one another for my sake, visit one another for my sake and spend in charity for my sake".

[malik].

commentary: besides the merit of mutual affection, contact and co-operation for the pleasure of allah, this hadith tells us that one should disclose one's affection to him whom one loves. it also tells us that when a person is engaged in worship or daily round of recitation, his visitor should not sit before him so that his concentration is not affected. he should sit behind him and wait till he has finished his prayer. the hadith also teaches us to approach someone from the front so as not to scare him.

383. abu karimah al-miqdad bin ma`dikarib (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “when a man loves his brother (for allah sake) let him tell him that he loves him”.
[at-tirmidhi and abu dawud].

commentary: the wisdom behind informing someone that one loves him for the sake of allah, is to make him aware of the regard shown to him so that this will turn into mutual affection and will, therefore, promote cooperation with each other.

384. mu`adh (bin jabal) (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) held my hand and said, “o mu`adh, by allah, i love you and advise you not to miss supplicating after every salat (prayer) saying: `allahumma a`inni `ala dhikrika wa shukrika, wa husni `ibadatika,’ (o allah, help me remember you, expressing gratitude to you and worship you in the best manner)”.
[abu dawud and an-nasa’i].

commentary: we learn from this hadith the following:

1. it is commendable to inform those whom one loves for allah’s sake, of this love.
2. the superiority of mu`adh.
3. it is commendable to say this du`a after each obligatory salat.
4. it is commendable to seek allah’s help in order to discharge one’s duties towards allah in the best possible manner.

385. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man was with the prophet (pbuh) when another man passed by and the former said: “o messenger of allah! i love this man (for allah’s sake)”. messenger of allah (pbuh) asked, “have you informed him?” he said, “no”. messenger of allah (pbuh) then said, “tell him (that you love him)”. so he went up to the man and said to him, “i love you for the sake of allah;” and the other replied, “may allah, for whose sake you love me, love you.”
[abu dawud].

Chapter 47: Signs of Allah's love for His slaves and the efforts for its Achievement

allah, the exalted, says:

“say (o muhammad (pbuh) to mankind): `if you (really) love allah then follow me (i.e., accept islamic monotheism, follow the qur'an and the sunnah), allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. and allah is oft-forgiving, most merciful.” (3:31)

“o you who believe! whoever from among you turns back from his religion (islam), allah will bring a people whom he will love and they will love him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the way of allah, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers. that is the grace of allah which he bestows on whom he wills. and allah is all-sufficient for his creatures' needs, all-knower.” (5:54)

386. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah, the exalted, has said: `i will declare war against him who treats with hostility a pious worshipper of mine. and the most beloved thing with which my slave comes nearer to me, is what i have enjoined upon him; and my slave keeps on coming closer to me through performing nawafil (voluntary prayers or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) until i love him, (so much so that) i become his hearing with which he hears, and his sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks me something, i will surely give him, and if he seeks my protection (refuge), i will surely protect him”.

[al-bukhari]

commentary: this hadith tell us the status and distinctive signs of the favoured men of allah ('auliya' allah) the noble qur'an has defined them as:

“those who believed (in the oneness of allah) and used to fear allah much (by abstaining from evil deeds and sins and by doing righteous deeds)”. (10:63).

according to this definition, every believer who really fears allah is a favoured of allah. it means that except for faith and piety, favoured of allah are neither people of the special kind nor have they any special distinctive signs, as is generally thought by some people.

in this respect, the ignorance of the general public is shocking because they regard even such persons as favoured of allah who not only neglect the religious obligations and the practice of the prophet (pbuh), but also woefully lack cleanliness. sometimes they call even mad or half-mad persons as favourites of allah, whereas a wali in the true sense is one who is meticulous about observing the obligations and is fearful of allah.

this hadith brings about the following four points:

firstly, the love of those whom allah loves entail the love of allah, and hating them entails the hatred of allah..

secondly, when a true muslim acquires nearness and love of allah by means of performing religious obligations, supererogatory and voluntary prayers, allah then becomes his special helper and protects his limbs and organs and does not let them work for his disobedience. then he does not use any part of his body for things which are disliked by him. it is wrong to infer from this hadith, as men of heretical and polytheistic trend try to do, that auliya' become the eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. of allah. that is to say that almighty allah descends in them. thus, on the basis of this contemptible reasoning, they conclude that it makes no difference whether one begs from allah or auliya because the two are one being. for such people supplicating "o allah! help us", "o prophet of allah! help us" and "o ali! help us" etc., are all right. one who says so has certainly gone astray, rather commits shirk (polytheism). may allah save us from these sins. according to the hadith, a true pious man likes and adopts what is liked by allah, and avoids all such things which are not liked by him.

thirdly, the performance of the obligatory acts of worshipping has the first and foremost importance for attaining the pleasure of allah because their fulfillment is liked the most by allah and also because they furnish the foundation, on which the edifice of islam is built. as we cannot think of a building without foundation, similarly, we cannot think of voluntary worship without fulfilling the basic obligations. the fact is that one who neglects them ceases to be a muslim. this is the reason for the severe warnings of allah to those who default on this account. those who neglect voluntary prayers have not been given any warning. it is, however, true that their performance in addition to the obligatory ones increases lustre of obligations. nawafil (**voluntary acts of worship**) help one to attain the exalted place of being loved by allah by virtue of which one is endowed with the special help of allah.

fourthly, almighty allah certainly grants the prayers of those whom he loves. but acceptance of their prayers, however, does not mean that their results appear at once. sometime the results of these prayers appear after a long time. the prayer of virtuous persons is certainly granted but whether it takes a long or short time depends solely on the will of allah.

387. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “when allah loves a slave, calls out jibril and says: ‘i love so-and-so; so love him’. then jibril loves him. after that he (jibril) announces to the inhabitants of heavens that allah loves so-and-so; so love him; and the inhabitants of the heavens (the angels) also love him and then make people on earth love him”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration of muslim is: messenger of allah, (pbuh) said: “when allah loves a slave, he calls jibril (gabriel) and says: ‘i love so-and-so; so love him.’ and then jibril loves him. then he (jibril) announces in the heavens saying: allah loves so-and-so; so love him; then the inhabitants of the heavens (the angels) also love him; and then people on earth love him. and when allah hates a slave, he calls jibril and says: ‘i hate so-and-so, so hate him.’ then jibril also hates him. he (jibril) then announces amongst the inhabitants of heavens: ‘verily, allah hates so-and-so, so you also hate him.’ thus they also start to hate him. then he becomes the object of hatred on the earth also”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the reward of love for the sake of allah. a person who loves for the sake of allah is not only loved by allah but also by the inhabitants of the earth as well as the heavens. on the other hand, those who are hated by allah are also hated by the inhabitants of the earth and the heavens. it must be borne in mind that they alone remain popular in this world who are righteous by nature - who strictly maintain the distinction between the lawful and the unlawful (ma`ruf and munkar). but those whose nature is defected by constant sins, cease to distinguish between right and wrong and lose their credibility. they generally hate the pious persons for the reason that every category of people loves and likes people of its own kind.

388. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah, (pbuh) appointed a man in charge of an army unit who led them in salat (prayer); he always concluded his recitation with surat al-ikhlas: “say (o muhammad (pbuh)): **‘he is allah, (the) one. allah-us-samad (allah - the self-sufficient). he begets not, nor was he begotten. and there is none equal or comparable to him.’**” (112:1-4) upon their return to al-madinah, they mentioned this to messenger of allah (pbuh), who said, **“ask him why he does so?”** he was asked and he said, **“this surah contains the attributes of allah, the gracious, and i love to recite it. messenger of allah (pbuh) then told them, “tell him that allah loves him”.** [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: we learn from the hadith the following:

1. the companions always rushed to the prophet (pbuh) to ask his opinion about anything they noticed strange to them.
2. the superiority of surat al-ikhlas as it clarifies points of tauhid.
3. the permissibility to recite two surah during salat, apart from surat al-fatihah, in one single rak`ah.
4. the permissibility of reciting the same surah over and over again, as this sahabi (companion) who led the salat used to recite surat al-ikhlas after each recitation.

Chapter 48: Warning against persecution of the Pious, the Weak and the Indigent

allah, the exalted, says:

“and those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly, they bear (on themselves) the crime of slander and plain sin.” (33:58)

“therefore, treat not the orphan with oppression. and repulse not the beggar.” (93:9,10)

389. jundub bin abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who performs the fajr (dawn) prayer comes under the protection of allah, so beware lest allah questions you about what you owe him. for if he questions anyone of you and he falls short of fulfilling the duty which he owes him, he will requite and then throw upon his face into the hell-fire”.

[muslim].

commentary: a muslim who performs fajr prayer receives the protection of allah. but he who does not fall short of fulfilling the duty which he to owes allah. it also serves a warning in case of not observing such duty, allah will demand failing to it. if he does, hell will be the requital. this highlights the merit of performing the fajr prayer with congregation, while the second warns a muslim that since he has started that day by a pledge with allah, he must keep it for the full day and abstain from doing anything which goes against it.

Chapter 49: Making Judgment of People

allah, the exalted, says:

“but if they repent and perform as-salat (iqamat-as-salat), and give zakat, then leave their way free. verily, allah is oft-forgiving, most merciful.” (9:5)

390. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i have been commanded (by allah) to fight people until they testify that there is no true god except allah, and that muhammad is the messenger of allah, and perform salat and pay zakat. if they do so, they will have protection of their blood and property from me except when justified by islam, and then account is left to allah”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings out the following three points:

1. the objective of jihad. this objective warrants that one must struggle against kufr (disbelief) and shirk (polytheism) and the worship of falsehood in all its forms. jihad has to continue until this objective is achieved. this contention is supported by a hadith, to the effect that jihad will continue till the day of resurrection. in this hadith the word (an-nas) translated above as “people” stands for the polytheists and idolaters. the reason being that other nasus (pl. of nass, meaning ‘text’) confirm the exemption of ahl-ul-kitab (people of the scriptures) from it subject to the condition that they agree to pay jizyah (dues imposed by islam on the people of the book living under the protection of an islamic state) and submit to the muslim rule. the arab pagans have only the choice to either embrace islam or face war. in the latter case, it is incumbent on the muslims to wage jihad against them to wipe out kufr and shirk and raise the banner of tauhid everywhere.

this hadith strongly refutes the people who distort the islamic concept of jihad and hold that islam preaches defensive war only. it is an apologetic approach because defensive war has to be fought in any case by every nation and country. thus, it is a compulsion and needs no justification. the real distinction of islam lies in its enjoining muslims to wage war for upholding the truth beside fighting for their own defense.

the domination of kufr, shirk and falsehood is darkness, heresy and tyranny, and the objective of islam is to purge the world of all these evils. it aims at liberating man from the worship of man, set them on the path of worship of allah, and to provide a just and equitable society to mankind. wherever in the world there is tyranny, ignorance and heresy, muslims are bound to fight such evils and finish them by means of jihad.

there is also a third form of jihad which is waged against countries where muslims are victims of aggression, suppression and cruelties of the non-muslims. it is incumbent upon muslims to liberate their brethren in faith from the clutches of the non-muslims by means of jihad. so long muslims performed this obligation with a sense of duty, islam and its followers were dominant in the world and ever since they have ignored this obligation, both are in subjugation and disgrace. in other words, the secret of power and stability of muslims lies in jihad. muslims need to understand this secret like their ancestors.

2. life and property of every person is secured after his joining the fold of islam. he will, however, be subject to the law of islam, one of which is payment of zakat. if he murders any muslim, he will also be killed in return, unless the heirs of the victim pardon the murderer or accept blood-money (diyah) for it.

3. when a person embraces islam, the laws of shari`ah apply to him according to his apparent condition only. his heart will not be probed for this purpose. in case, he is not sincere or he has some design in joining the fold of islam, no action will be taken against him until guilt is fully proved. what he has in his heart will be left to allah who will pass judgement on his intention on the day of resurrection. this hadith is related to this chapter for its third point. in their debate on this point, some `ulama' have contended that such people who believe in tauhid and obey the injunctions of shari`ah are not to be declared as infidels.

391. abu abdullah bin tariq bin ashayam (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "he who professes la ilaha il-lallah (there is no true god except allah), and denies of everything which the people worship besides allah, his property and blood become inviolable, and it is for allah to call him to account".

[muslim].

392. al-miqdad bin al-aswad (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i said, "tell me, o messenger of allah, if i meet an infidel, and we fight together, and he cuts off my hands with his sword, then hides from me behind a tree and (then) says he has submitted himself to allah. shall i kill him after he has said it?" he (pbuh) replied, "do not kill him." i submitted, "but o messenger of allah, he cut off one of my hands and only then he said it." messenger of allah (pbuh) then replied, "do not kill him, for if you do so, he will be in the position in which you were before you killed him (i.e., he will be considered a muslim and thus his life will be inviolable), and you will be in the position in which he was before he made his testimony (i.e., your life will not be inviolable, for his heirs can ask for qisas)". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that injunctions of islam will be enforced on a person according to his apparent condition not his insight. the reason being that nobody is capable of knowing the insight of others. when a person professes islam, we have to accept him a muslim; and it will be our duty to protect his life and property. if, in spite of knowing that his life and property are sacred, a muslim murders him, then it will be quite fair for the heirs of the victim to have qisas for the murder. if the murderer poses ignorance or takes shelter of some reason, then he will be liable for diyah only. the prophet (pbuh) arranged payment of diyah to the heirs of the victim in the case mentioned in this hadith because some of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) had advanced the argument that the murderer had slain the victim on the presumption that he had professed islam just to save his life.

393. usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) sent us to huraqat, a tribe of juhainah. we attacked that tribe early in the morning and defeated them, (then) a man from the ansar and i caught hold of a man (of the defeated tribe). when we overcame him, he said: `la ilaha illallah (there is no true god except allah).' at that moment, the ansari spared him, but i attacked him with my spear and killed him. by the time we went back to al-madinah, news had already reached messenger of allah (pbuh). he said to me, "o usamah, did you kill him after he professed la ilaha illallah (there is no true god except allah)?" i said, "o messenger of allah! he professed it only to save his life." messenger of allah (pbuh) repeated, "did you kill him after he had professed la ilaha illallah?" he went on repeating this to me until i wished i had not embraced islam before that day (so that i would have not committed this sin). [al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “did you kill him in spite of his professing la ilaha illallah?” i said, “o messenger of allah! he said out of fear of our arms.” he (pbuh) said, “why did you not cut his heart open to find out whether he had done so sincerely or not?” he continued repeating it until i wished that i had embraced islam only that day.

commentary: the relevance of this hadith with the present chapter is evident from the fact that it stresses that injunctions of islam will be enforced on every muslim according to his apparent condition. it is a very wise course indeed for the reason that it has closed the door of retaliation; otherwise, everyone could kill his enemy on the pretext that the victim was not sincere in his profession of islam. in order to rule out the possibility of any such mischief, probing into the true condition of the heart is ruled out. a muslim has to be treated according to his apparent condition only.

394. jundub bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) dispatched a contingent of the muslims to a tribe of the polytheists. the two sides met (in combat) at one place. a man among the polytheists was so dashing that, whenever he intended to kill a man from muslims, he killed him. amongst the muslims, too, was a man looking forward to (an opportunity of) his (polytheist's) unmindfulness. he (the narrator) said: we talked that he was usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with him). when he raised his sword, he (the soldier of the polytheists) uttered: “la ilaha illallah (there is no true god except allah).” but he (usamah bin zaid) killed him. when the good news of victory reached messenger of allah (pbuh) he asked him (about the events of the battle), and he informed him about the man (usamah) and what he had done. he (messenger of allah (pbuh)) sent for him and asked him why he had killed him. he (usamah) said, “o messenger of allah, he struck the muslims and killed such and such of them.” and he named some of them. (he continued): “i attacked him and when he saw the sword he said: `la ilaha illallah.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “did you kill him?” he (usamah) replied in the affirmative. the messenger of allah then remarked, “what would you do with regard to (the utterance): la ilaha illallah, when it comes (before you) on the day of resurrection?” he (usamah) said, “o messenger of allah! beg forgiveness for me”. he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “what would you do with regard to (the utterance): la ilaha illallah, when it comes (before you) on the day of resurrection?” he (messenger of allah (pbuh)) added nothing to it but kept repeating,

“what would you do with regard to (the utterance): la ilaha illallah, when it comes (before you) on the day of resurrection?”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the incident which has been quoted in the preceding one. there is only a slight variation in the wording of the two. this hadith is reported by muslim under the chapter “the prohibition of killing a kafir (disbeliever) after having testified that none has the right to be worshipped but allah”.

395. `abdullah bin `utbah bin mas`ud reported: i heard `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him) reported saying: “in the life-time of messenger of allah (pbuh) some people were called to account through revelation. now revelation has discontinued and we shall judge you by your apparent acts. whoever displays to us good, we shall grant him peace and security, and treat him as a near one. we have nothing to do with his insight. allah will call him to account for that. but whosoever shows evil to us, we shall not grant him security nor shall we believe him, even if he professed that his intention is good.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith also proves that the injunctions go with the apparent acts of a person and not with will and intention. it also indicates that a good intention does not waive the qisas and establishing the justice.

Chapter 50: Fear (of Allah)

allah, the exalted, says:

“and fear none but me”. (2:40)

“verily, (o muhammad (pbuh)) the grip (punishment) of your rubb is severe”. (85:12)

“such is the seizure of your rubb when he seizes the (population of) towns while they are doing wrong. verily, his seizure is painful, (and) severe. indeed in that (there) is a sure lesson for those who fear the torment of the hereafter. that is a day whereon mankind will be gathered together, and that is a day when all (the dwellers of the heavens and the earth) will be present. and we delay it only for a term (already) fixed. on the day when it comes, no person shall speak except by his (allah’s) leave. some among them will be wretched and (others) blessed. as for those who are wretched, they will be in the fire, sighing in a high and low tone”. (11:102-106)

“and allah warns you against himself (his punishment)”. (3:30)

“that day shall a man flee from his brother. and from his mother and his father. and from his wife and his children. every man that day will have enough to make him careless of others”. (80:34-37)

“o mankind! fear your rubb and be dutiful to him! verily, the earthquake of the hour (of resurrection) is a terrible thing. the day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her nursling, and every pregnant one will drop her load, and you shall see mankind as in a drunken state, yet they will not be drunken, but severe will be the torment of allah”. (22:1,2)

“but for him who fears the standing before his rubb, there will be two gardens (i.e., in jannah)”. (55:46)

“and some of them draw near to others, questioning. saying: `aforetime, we were afraid (of the punishment of allah) in the midst of our families. so allah has been gracious to us, and has saved us from the torment of the fire. verily, we used to invoke him (alone and none else) before. verily, he is al-barr (the most subtle, kind, courteous, and generous), the most merciful.”. (52:25-28)

396. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh), the truthful and the receiver of the truth informed us, saying, “the creation of you (humans) is gathered in the form of semen in the womb of your mother for forty days, then it becomes a clinging thing in similar (period), then it becomes a lump of flesh like that, then allah sends an angel who breathes the life into it; and (the angel) is commanded to record four things about it: its provision, its term of life (in this world), its conduct; and whether it will be happy or miserable. by the one besides whom there is no true god! verily, one of you would perform the actions of the dwellers of jannah until there is only one cubit between him and it (jannah), when what is foreordained would come to pass and he would perform the actions of the inmates of hell until he enter it. and one of you would perform the actions of the inmates of hell, until there is only one cubit between him and hell. then he would perform the acts of the dwellers of jannah until he would enter it.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith deals with the problem of fate in which faith is essential. what it means is that almighty allah already knows about every person, whether he will be pious or impious, whether he will go to jannah or hell. he has already recorded all this. but it does not mean that man is absolutely helpless and is deprived of will and power, as is believed by some deviant sects who have gone astray. fate is in fact a manifestation of the knowledge of allah and it has nothing to do with the will and intention of a person. allah has not created man as a helpless creature, but has endowed him with the freedom of will and action, because in the absence of these two qualities, there would be no justification for his trial. he could only be put to test if he was granted not only the ability to choose between good and evil but also the freedom to act. for this purpose, almighty allah, has clearly indicated to man both the paths and granted him freedom to choose whichever he likes. he has also told him the ultimate end of each. the noble qur’an says:

“verily, we showed him the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful”. (76:3)

“then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve”. (18:29).

but by mentioning this hadith in the chapter relating to the fear of allah, imam an-nawawi has warned that we should be fearful of allah, pray for his help, and an auspicious end of our life. he has advised us to adopt whatever means are available to us. in other words, we should make faith and piety a way of life because one can find the means and resources according to one's capacity. since nobody knows the result of his endeavours, one should leave it to allah and rest assured that he who has created him with a purpose will also create the ways and means to attain it. he who adopts piety, the ways to piety will open for him; and he who adopts evil, the ways to evil will open for him.

a muslim should never go towards evil at any stage of his life, lest his life comes to an end suddenly and he is deprived of the reward of all the good deeds he has done during his life and consequently he is consigned to hell rather than jannah. may allah save us from a bad end and such actions which lead one to hell.

397. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "[hell will be brought on that day \(the day of resurrection\) with seventy bridles; and with every bridle will be seventy thousand angels, pulling it](#)".
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith deals with the hidden matters relating to the unseen world. muslims are ordained by allah to believe in them. it is wrong to hold them as metaphorical. they are realities but we can not imagine them.

398. nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "[the least tortured man on the day of resurrection is one underneath whose feet will be placed two live coal, and his brain will be boiling, and he would think that he is the most tortured, while he is the least tortured](#)",
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: according to the narration in muslim, the straps of shoes to be worn by the inhabitants of hell would be of fire which will make their brains boil like a cooker placed on oven. some narrators have stated that the man alluded to will be abu talib, the real uncle of the prophet (pbuh) and his most kind and sympathetic supporter. but since he had died as polytheist, he will be sent to hell. may allah save us from it.

399. samurah bin jundub (may allah be pleased with him) reported: prophet of allah (pbuh) said, “among the people of hell are there those who will be emersed in fire to their ankels, some to their knees, some to their waists, and some to their throats”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that the inhabitants of jannah will be classified into different categories and enjoy different kinds of luxuries according to their merits. a similar classification will also be made in the inhabitants of hell and they will suffer torments according to their misdeeds.

400. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) as saying, “mankind will stand before allah, the rubb of the worlds (on the day of resurrection), some of them will stand submerged in perspiration up to half of their ears”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith gives us a glimpse of the horrible scene of the resurrection when people will stand in awe before allah.

401. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) delivered a khutbah to us the like of which i had never heard from him before. he said, “if you knew what i know, you would laugh little and weep much”. thereupon those present covered their faces and began sobbing.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) heard of something about his companions upon which he addressed them and said, “jannah and (hell) fire were shown to me and i have never seen the like of this day in good and in evil. if you were to know what i know, you would laugh little and weep much”. his companions experienced such suffering on that day that had no equal. they covered their faces and began to weep.

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that jannah and hell do exist. the prophet (pbuh) was shown both of them.

2. excessive laughing is improper because it indicates that one is careless and forgetful of the hereafter, while a muslim is required to be all the time alert and careful about it.

3. to weep out of fear of allah, is praiseworthy because it indicates that one's heart is full of fear and he is worried about the hereafter.

402. al-miqdad (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "on the day of resurrection, the sun will come so close to people that there would be left only a distance of one meel". sulaim bin `amir said: by allah, i do not know whether he meant by "meel", the mile of the distance measure or the stick used for applying antimony powder to the eye. (messenger of allah (pbuh) is, however, reported to have said:) "the people then will be submerged in perspiration according to their deeds, some up to their ankles, some up to their knees, some up to the waist and some will have the bridle of perspiration (reaching their mouth and nose) and, while saying this messenger of allah (pbuh) pointed to his mouth with his hand". [muslim].

commentary: it is not clear whether the arabic word (meel) in this hadith is for the mileage or is the stick used for applying antimony. a mile consists of eight furlongs. some of the commentators of hadith hold that it comprises four thousand dhira`. hafiz ibn hajar is of the opinion that it is equal to twelve thousand human steps. (for detail please see the book `mir'atul mafatih' chapter salat-us-safar). if it stands for the mileage even then it gives an idea of the heat of the sun. although it is billions of miles away from the earth but one cannot bear its heat in summer. when the sun shall be at a distance of one mile, its heat shall be so intense that people would be immersed in sweat. may allah save us from it.

403. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "the people will perspire on the day of resurrection and their perspiration will be seventy cubits down in the earth and it will reach up to their ears (they will be bridled with it)". [al-bukhari and muslim].

404. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: we were in the company of messenger of allah (pbuh) when we heard a bang. thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said. "do you know what this (sound) is?" we said, "allah and his messenger know better." he (pbuh) said, "that is a stone which was thrown into hell seventy years before and it has just reached its bottom". [muslim].

commentary: one can imagine the torments and horrors of hell from its depth.

405. `adi bin hatim (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “everyone of you will speak to his rubb without an interpreter between them. he will look to his right side and will see only the deeds he had previously done; he will look to his left and will see only the deeds he had previously done, and he will look in front of him and will see nothing but fire (of hell) before his face. so protect yourselves from fire (of hell), even by giving half a date-fruit (in charity)”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned. here it has been repeated in the context of the fear of allah because it also has an inducement for fear of allah and warning against the horrors of hell.

406. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i see what you do not see and i hear what you do not hear; heaven has squeaked, and it has right to do so. by him, in whose hand my soul is, there is not a space of four fingers in which there is not an angel who is prostrating his forehead before allah, the exalted. by allah, if you knew what i know, you would laugh little, weep much, and you would not enjoy women in beds, but would go out to the open space beseeching allah”. [at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. this hadith also highlights the importance of fear of allah because the more awareness a muslim has of the majesty and magnificence of allah, the greater shall be the terror in his heart for his punishment and hope of his mercy. with this state of mind, he will perform greater acts of obedience and abstain more rigidly from sins.

2. the hadith also mentions the heaven teeming with angels who are all the time prostrating before allah in worship. when this is the condition of the angels, who do not slack for a moment in the obedience of allah, how important it is for man to worship him because he is all the time violating commands of allah. it is, therefore, incumbent on man to obey allah and always seek his help and refuge.

407. abu barzah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “man’s feet will not move on the day of resurrection before he is asked about his life, how did he consume it, his knowledge, what did he do with it, his wealth, how did he earn it and how did he dispose of it, and about his body, how did he wear it out.” [at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. this hadith first of all highlights the importance and value of this transitory life, every breath of which is invaluable. not a moment of it should, therefore, be wasted in the disobedience of allah because one shall also be made to account for it.

2. man shall also be answerable for his knowledge. here, we find an inducement for acquiring religious knowledge because that alone is beneficial for him. he should make use of his knowledge for winning the pleasure of allah. if he does not do that then he must think about the justification for not doing so. he must also think how he would be facing allah on the day of resurrection.

3. the question in respect of wealth raised in this hadith clearly shows that one should earn wealth by legitimate means only and spend it strictly in a lawful manner. if he takes to unfair means of income or squanders it, he will be sinful and required to account for the violation of the divine injunctions.

4. one should protect his body from everything that is unlawful and force himself to submit to the divine injunctions. when he is asked to account for neglecting them, it will be difficult for him to escape the consequences of accountability.

in short, this hadith makes one conscious of the accountability so that one keeps it all the time in view so that he will be saved from humiliation on the day of resurrection. how nice would it really be if one bears the accountability of the day of resurrection always in mind!

408. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) recited, “that day it (the earth) will reveal its news (about all that happened over it of good or evil).” (99:4). then he (pbuh) inquired, “do you know what its news are?” he was told: “allah and his messenger know better”.

he said, “its news is that it shall bear witness against every slave man and woman they did on its back. it will say: `you did this and this on such and such day.’ those will be its news.”

[at-tirmidhi]

commentary: this hadith makes evident the perfect omnipotence of allah by telling us that he will bestow power of speech on the earth and it will bear witness to the acts committed on its surface. it has stern warning for people that however they may try to hide their sins from others, they will not be able to save themselves from allah and his system of accountability.

409. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “how can i feel at ease when the angel of the trumpet, (israfil) has put his lips to the trumpet and is waiting for the order to blow it”. he (pbuh) perceived as if this had shocked his companions, so he (pbuh) told them to seek comfort through reciting: `hasbunallah wa ni`mal-wakil [allah (alone) is sufficient for us, and he is the best disposer of affairs (for us)]”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. this hadith tells us about the fear of allah and the fright of the hereafter entertained by the prophet (pbuh) and his companions. it has a lesson for us that how, in spite of being innocent and having the assurance of the forgiveness of allah, they were always fearful of allah and the horrors of the day of resurrection. as against them, we are immersed in sins, neglect and violate the divine injunctions day and night but even then we have neither the fear of allah nor the fright of the day of resurrection.

2. in the event of fear and anxiety one should seek the help of allah and frequently recite the verse of the noble qur’an “hasbunallahu wa ni`mal wakil” [allah (alone) is sufficient for us, and he is the best disposer of affairs (for us).]” (3:173).

410. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “he who is afraid of the pillage of the enemy, sets out in the early part of the night; and he who sets out early, reaches his destination. be on your guard that the commodity of allah is precious. verily the commodity of allah is jannah”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: imam at-taibi has stated that the prophet (pbuh) mentioned this example for travellers to the hereafter, because satan is sitting on this passage and man's self and his false desires are his helpers. if a person is wide-awake in his travel and exercises caution in his activities, he is not only saved from the vices of satan, but his own false desires also do not stand in his way. the prophet (pbuh) also pointed out that the way to the hereafter is very hard and littered with great impediments and obstructions and it is by no means easy to traverse it. jannah is an invaluable gift and unless man gives the sacrifice of his life and wealth, he will not become eligible for entering it. "allah has purchased the lives and properties of muslims for jannah". (tuhfatul ahwadhi).

this hadith encourages us to observe obedience of our rubb and to spare no effort to desist from all acts of disobedience in order to achieve the lofty goal of entering jannah, by allah's leave.

411. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, "the people will be assembled on the day of resurrection barefooted, naked and uncircumcised". i said, "o messenger of allah! will the men and the women be together on that day; looking at one another?" upon this messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "o aishah, the matter will be too serious for them to look at one another".

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the horrors and torments of the day of resurrection which makes its connection with this chapter obvious. what this chapter, and ahadith mentioned in it, make clear is that a muslim should never be unmindful of the preparations for the hereafter nor should he ever lose sight of the fact that he has to appear before allah on the day of resurrection and account for all his actions. in order to save himself from the humiliation on that day, he should lead a life of faith and fear of allah. those who do not do so and lead a life free from fear of allah and torments of the hereafter, will have no hesitation in disobeying allah, which will inevitably lead them to humiliation, disgrace and heavy punishment in the hereafter.

Chapter 51: Hope in Allah's Mercy

allah, the exalted, says:

“say: o `ibadi (my slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! despair not of the mercy of allah: verily, allah forgives all sins. truly, he is oft-forgiving, most merciful”. (39:53)

“and never do we requit in such a way except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers)”. (34:17)

‘(say:) `truly, it has been revealed to us that the torment will be for him who denies (believes not in the oneness of allah, and in his messengers), and turns away (from the truth and obedience of allah)”. (20:48)

“and my mercy embraces all things”. (7:156)

412. `ubadah bin as-samit (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who bears witness that there is no true god except allah, alone having no partner with him, that muhammad is his slave and his messenger, that `isa (jesus) is his slave and messenger and he (jesus) is his word which he communicated to maryam (mary) and his spirit which he sent to her, that jannah is true and hell is true; allah will make him enter jannah accepting whatever deeds he accomplished”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration in muslim is: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “whosoever testifies that there is no true god except allah and that muhammad is the messenger of allah, allah (swt) saves him from the fire (of hell)”.

commentary: this hadith confirms that all prophets of allah were men and thus refutes those who attribute divinity to them and exclude them from the category of men or regard them a part of allah, as christians believes prophet `isa (jesus to be christ) by regarding him allah or his son, or the jews do prophet `uzair by venerating him as son of allah. the misconception has also taken hold of a sect of the muslims. they have invented the belief that prophet muhammad (pbuh) is “light from the light of allah”. thus further considering to be of him with divine qualities. they exclude him from the category of men.

this hadith tells us that the belief that prophets were men constitutes part of faith and denial of it is the denial of a part of faith and amounts to evasion from tauhid - oneness of allah.

prophet `isa (jesus) has been referred in the qur'an as "kalimatullah" (the word of allah) (4:171). what these words really mean is that he was born in an unusual manner, without being fathered by anyone, only on the express fiat of allah.

this hadith shows that a major sin does not cast a muslim out of the fold of islam, as is believed by certain deviant sects who have gone astray. such a person does remain a muslim and his eligibility for admission into jannah also remains intact but his admission entirely depends on the pleasure of allah. he may forgive a sinful muslim and send him to jannah even in the initial stage or keep him in hell for sometime and then send him to jannah. thus, when it is said that muslims are protected against hell, it means that they will not abide in hell for ever. it will be a temporary phase varying with his sins. when that punishment comes to an end, or even before it, when almighty, allah, wills, he will be removed from hell to jannah.

413. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "allah, the almighty, says: `whosoever does a good deed, will have (reward) ten times like it and i add more; and whosoever does an evil, will have the punishment like it or i will forgive (him); and whosoever approaches me by one span, i will approach him by one cubit; and whosoever approaches me by one cubit, i approach him by one fathom, and whosoever comes to me walking, i go to him running; and whosoever meets me with an earth-load of sins without associating anything with me, i meet him with forgiveness like that".

[muslim]

commentary: this hadith mentions the infinite compassion and mercy of allih to his obedient slaves and a special expression of which will be made by him on the day of resurrection. on that day, he will give at least ten times reward for each good deed. in some cases it may be far more than that, seven hundred times or more, as he would like. such benevolence on his part warrants that a muslim should never lose hope of his forgiveness.

414. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a bedouin came to the prophet (pbuh) and asked him, "o messenger of allah, what are the two imperatives which lead to jannah or hell". he (pbuh) replied, "he who dies without associating anything with allah will enter jannah, and he who dies associating partners with allah will enter the fire".

[muslim]

commentary: this hadith also holds promise for a muslim that being a muslim and muwahhid (believer in the oneness of allah) he will be at last sent to jannah. whether he goes straight to jannah or after suffering the punishment of his sins in hell, is a separate issue, but he will not remain in hell for ever. eternal punishment in hell is reserved only for pagans, polytheists, and infidels.

415. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: mu`adh bin jabal was riding on the beast with the prophet (pbuh), when he (pbuh) said to him, "o mu`adh!" mu`adh replied, "here i am responding to you, and at your pleasure, o messenger of allah." he (pbuh) again called out, "o mu`adh." he (again) replied, "here i am responding your call, and at your pleasure." he (messenger of allah) addressed him (again), "o mu`adh!" he replied, "here i am responding to you, and at your pleasure, o messenger of allah." upon this he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, "if anyone testifies sincerely that there is no true god except allah, and muhammad is his slave and messenger, truly from his heart, allah will safeguard him from hell." he (mu`adh) said, "o messenger of allah, shall i not then inform people of it, so that they may have glad tidings." he (pbuh) replied, "then they will rely on it alone (and thus give up good works altogether)." mu`adh (may allah be pleased with him) disclosed this hadith at the time of his death, to avoid sinning for concealing.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: imam at-taibi says that the honesty of heart means firmness of faith and arrangement of actions which will provide evidence of tauhid and risalah (oneness of allah and the prophethood of muhammad (pbuh)). al-hafiz ibn hajar states that imam at-taibi has made this elaboration to remove the ambiguity which arises from the wording of the hadith because it is generally held by ahadith that one who bears witness to tauhid and risalah will not go to hell, while ahlus-sunnah hold that it stands proved by concrete arguments that sinful muslims will be consigned to hell and then brought out from it by intercession.

it shows that for the determination of real meanings of this hadith we shall have to keep in view other related arguments as well. these meanings are riveted with good deeds. in other words, one who bears witness to tauhid and risalah and fulfills islamic injunctions and obligations and requirements of faith and fear of allah, will not be consigned to hell. some scholars are of the opinion that this hadith refers to such people who truly repented and renounced kufr and shirk and wholeheartedly professed tauhid and risalah but died soon after that and thus did not get an opportunity to do good deeds. such people will certainly go to jannah.

this hadith leads to the conclusion that ordinary people should not be told things the true meanings of which they find difficult to grasp and accomplish evil deeds relying on such glad tidings.

416. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) or may be abu sa'id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: on the day of the battle of tabuk, the muslims were hard pressed by hunger and they asked messenger of allah (pbuh): "o messenger of allah, grant us permission to slaughter our camels to eat and use their fat". he (pbuh) accorded permission. on this `umar (may allah be pleased with him) came and said: "o messenger of allah, if it is done, we shall suffer from lack of transportation. i suggest you pool together whatever has been left and supplicate allah to bless it." allah will bestow his blessing upon it. messenger of allah (pbuh) agreed and called for leather mat and had it spread out, and asked people to bring the provisions left over. they started doing it. one brought a handful of corn, another brought a handful of dates, a third brought a piece of bread; thus some provisions were collected on the mat. messenger of allah (pbuh) invoked blessings, and then said, "now take it up in your vessels". everyone filled his vessel with food, so that there was not left a single empty vessel in the whole camp. all of them ate to their fill and there was still some left over. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "any slave who meets allah, testifying there is no true god except allah, and that i am his messenger, without entertaining any doubt about these (two fundamentals), will not be banished from entering jannah."
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions a miracle of the prophet (pbuh) and the effect of his prayer by means of which a small quantity of food sufficed the whole army. the exact number of muslims who took part in the battle of tabuk is not mentioned in any reliable account.

al-hafiz ibn hajar has stated, with reference to some narratives of fath al-bari mentioned in connection with the biography of the prophet (pbuh) and the wars he had fought in the way of allah, that they numbered thirty to forty thousand men.

although these figures are open to question but one can safely infer from these figures that their number was very large. according to sahih al-bukhari: "a large number of muslims participated with the prophet (pbuh) in this war. their number was so large that they could not be described in a register. it was difficult for the prophet (pbuh) to discover who was absent except that he was informed about him by allah." (sahih al-bukhari, kitab al-maghazi, bab ghazwah tabuk, hadith ka`b bin malik). this extract goes to prove that although the number of muslims who took part in this war was very large the provisions weighing a few seers only sufficed for them all.

we also learn from this hadith that one who is blessed with the grace of allah, can offer advice to a person who is superior to him on this account. similarly, the one who is superior in virtue should listen to the advice of those who are inferior to him because there is every possibility that their advice may offer something better. it does not harm either of them. neither does it detract from the superiority of the superior nor can it be regarded an affront of a junior.

417. `itban bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported, who was with messenger of allah (pbuh) in the battle of badr: i used to lead my people at bani salim in salat (prayer) and there was a valley between me and those people. whenever it rained, it became difficult for me to cross it for going to their mosque. so i went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said, "i have weak eyesight and the valley between me and my people flows during the rainy season and it becomes difficult for me to cross it. i wish you to come to my house and offer salat at a place so that i could reserve that as a musalla (place for prayer)." messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "i will do so". so messenger of allah (pbuh) and abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) came to my house the (next) morning after the sun had risen high. messenger of allah (pbuh) asked my permission to enter and i admitted him. he did not sit before saying, "where do you want us to offer salat in your house?" i pointed to the place where i wanted him to offer prayers. so messenger of allah (pbuh) stood up for the prayer and started the prayer with takbir and we aligned in rows behind him; and he offered two rak`ah prayer and finished them with taslim, and we also performed taslim with him.

i detained him for a meal called khazirah which i had prepared for him. (khazirah is a special type of dish prepared from barley flour and meat soup). when the neighbours got the news that messenger of allah (pbuh) was in my house, they started coming till a large number of men gathered in my house. one of them said, "what is wrong with malik, for i do not see him?" one of them replied, "he is a hypocrite and does not love allah and his messenger". on that messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "don't say this. haven't you seen that he testified that there is no true god except allah," for allah's sake only." the man replied, "allah and his messenger know better, but by allah, we never saw him but helping and talking with the hypocrites." messenger of allah (pbuh) replied, "no doubt, whosoever testifies that there is no true god except allah, seeking by so professing the pleasure of allah only, allah will safeguard him against (hell) fire." [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following four points:

1. one can offer salat at home if one has a lawful reason for it.
2. in the event one is obliged to offer salat at home it is well to reserve a place for it.
3. it is not permissible to suspect a muslim on the basis of mere doubt.
4. in the end, every muslim will be sent to jannah. this point has already been elaborated.

418. `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him) reported: some prisoners were brought to messenger of allah (pbuh) amongst whom there was a woman who was running (searching for her child). when she saw a child among the captives, she took hold of it, pressed it against her belly and gave it a suck. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "do you think this woman would ever throw her child in fire?" we said, "by allah, she would never throw the child in fire." thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah is more kind to his slave than this woman is to her child". [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: al-hafiz ibn hajar states that the musnad ismai'li has the following additional words in the narrative: "after continuous search, she finally found her baby. she took the baby and hugged him".

it is permissible to illustrate by example what one cannot make others understand by means of reason and senses, the way the prophet (pbuh) did it in the present case. since it was not possible to describe the immensity of allah's mercy, he cited the example of that woman to illustrate his point.

419. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, **“when allah created the creatures, he wrote in the book, which is with him over his throne: `verily, my mercy prevailed over my wrath”**
[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“(allah wrote) `my mercy dominated my wrath”**.

still another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“(allah wrote) `my mercy surpasses my wrath”**.

commentary: imam al-khattabi states that here the word “kitab” (translated here as `book`) means the decision of almighty allah which he has already made, an instance of which is the following verse of the noble qur'an:

“allah has decreed: `verily, it is i and my messengers who shall be the victorious”. (58:21).

in this ayah the arabic word “kataba” is used in the sense of “qada' (decided);” or the word “kataba” signifies “lauh mahfooz” on which he has recorded everything. almighty allah is on the 'arsh' (the throne of allah) and this book is with him. (fath al-bari, kitab at-tauhid, bab: wa kana arshuhu `alal-ma'.)

420. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“allah has divided mercy into one hundred parts; and he retained with him ninety-nine parts, and sent down to earth one part. through this one part creatures deal with one another with compassion, so much so that an animal lifts its hoof over its young lest it should hurt it”**.
[al-bukhari and muslim]

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah has one hundred mercies, out of which he has sent down only one for jinn, mankind, animals and insects, through which they love one another and have compassion for one another; and through it, wild animals care for their young. allah has retained ninety-nine mercies to deal kindly with his slaves on the day of resurrection.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration in muslim is reported: by salman al-farisi: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah has hundred mercies, out of which one mercy is used by his creation for mutual love and affection. ninety-nine mercies are kept for the day of resurrection.”

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah created one hundred units of mercy on the day he created the heavens and the earth. each one of them can contain all that is between the heaven and the earth. of them, he put one on earth, through which a mother has compassion for her children and animals and birds have compassion for one another. on the day of resurrection, he will perfect and complete his mercy”. (that is he will use all the hundred units of mercy for his slaves on that day).

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that kind and compassionate treatment is liked by allah and is in fact his blessing and benevolence. this is the reason he has given a part of it to his creatures, and a person who is so hard-hearted, that he is not even aware of it has a defect which is extremely displeasing to allah. moreover, it is a sign that such a person is deprived of divine blessing and mercy.

2. on the day of resurrection, almighty allah will bestow upon the believers hundred mercies. this news has great hopes and joy for his slaves.

421. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “allah, the exalted, and glorious said: ‘a slave committed a sin and he said: o allah, forgive my sin,’ and allah said: ‘my slave committed a sin and then he realized that he has a rubb who forgives the sins and punishes for the sin.’ he then again committed a sin and said: ‘my rubb, forgive my sin,’ and allah (swt) said: ‘my slave committed a sin and then realized that he has a rubb who forgives his sin and punishes for the sin.’”

he then again committed a sin and said: `my rubb, forgive my sin,' and allah (swt) said: `my slave committed a sin and then realized that he has a rubb who forgives his sin and punishes for the sin.' he again committed a sin and said: `my rubb, forgive my sin,' and allah (swt) said: `my slave has committed a sin and then realized that he has a rubb who forgives the sin or takes (him) to account for sin. i have granted forgiveness to my slave. let him do whatever he likes”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

the last sentence “let him do..”. means, as long he keeps asking for forgiveness after the commission of sins, and repents, allah will forgive him because repentance eliminates previous sins”. (editor’s note)

commentary: this hadith tells us that so long as the heart of a muslim remains free from willful disobedience of divine injunctions and he does not deliberately neglect his religious duties, that is to say he goes on committing sins and each time wholeheartedly begs pardon for them, almighty, allah will forgive him. the reason being that he is penitent for his wrongs and does not insist upon them for fear of accountability. this condition of his shows that his heart is full of awe and majesty of allah and he does not feel any disgrace in showing his utter humbleness before him. now this is a merit of the sinful which is pleasing to allah. thus, he says that so long as his slave continues submission and prostration he will go on forgiving him.

on the contrary, there is a person who goes on committing sins but he neither repents for them nor seeks pardon for his wrongs; nor has any fear of accountability. obviously, he is altogether different from the kind of muslims mentioned before, and he will be therefore treated differently by allah. the conduct of the former is of a muslim who, in spite of his sins, is liked by allah while the second is of that of a rebel for whom he has kept severe punishment ready. may allah rank us among the former category of people.

422. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “by the one in whose hand my soul is, were you not to commit sins, allah would replace you with a people who would commit sins and then seek forgiveness from allah; and allah would forgive them”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also tells us that allah has a profound liking for such people who are penitent and seek pardon for their sins from him. so much so that if such people cease to exist who neither commit sins nor seek pardon from him, he will create people who will do so. it does not, however, mean that he likes sins or the sinful persons. what it really means is that he likes penitence and the penitents. this is the true purport of this hadith.

it also means that it is natural for man to commit sins, and that allah loves whenever a slave commits a sin to rush and beg for his forgiveness. (editor's note).

423. abu ayyub khalid bin zaid (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“were you not to commit sins, allah would create people who would commit sins and ask for forgiveness and he would forgive them”**.
[muslim].

424. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: we were sitting with messenger of allah (pbuh). abu bakr and `umar (may allah be pleased with them) were also there among the audience. in the meanwhile messenger of allah (pbuh) got up and left us. we waited long for his return: when we were worried about his safety, and got scared, we got up. i, therefore, went out to look for messenger of allah and came to a garden which belonged to the ansar. he (pbuh) said to me **“go and give glad tidings of jannah to anyone who testifies `la ilaha illallah (there is no true god except allah),’ being whole-heartedly certain of it”**
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also tells us that ultimately a muslim will be awarded jannah. whether he will go there in the first stage or after suffering the punishment in hell, is a matter that depends entirely on the will of allah.

425. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) recited the words of allah, the exalted, and the glorious, about ibrahim (pbuh) who said: **“o my rubb! they have led astray many among mankind. but whosoever follows me, he verily, is of me”**. (14:36) and those of `isa (jesus) (pbuh) who said: **“if you punish them, they are your slaves, and if you forgive them, verily, you, only you, are the all-mighty, the all-wise”**. (5:118).

then he (pbuh) raised up his hands and said, “o allah! my ummah, my ummah,” and wept; allah, the exalted, said: “o jibril (gabriel)! go to muhammad (pbuh) and ask him: `what makes you weep?” so jibril came to him and asked him (the reason of his weeping) and the messenger of allah informed him what he had said (though allah knew it well). upon this allah said: “jibril, go to muhammad (pbuh) and say: `verily, we will please you with regard to your ummah and will never displease you”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith makes two points clear:

firstly, the kindness and mercy which the prophet (pbuh) had for his ummah, a full manifestation of which will be seen on the day of resurrection.

secondly, the love that allah has for his prophet, muhammad (pbuh). both these benefits will then go to the advantage of the faithful muslims as they will be then blessed with mercy and forgiveness of allah. may allah include us among them.

426. mu`adh bin jabal (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i was riding a pillion with the prophet (pbuh) on a donkey. he (pbuh) said, “o mu`adh, do you know what is the right of allah upon his slaves, and what is the right of his slaves upon allah?” i said: “allah and his messenger know better”. upon this the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah’s right upon his slaves is that they should worship him alone and associate nothing with him; and his slaves’ right upon him is that he should not punish who does not associate a thing with him.” he (mu`adh) added: i said to the messenger of allah: “shall i give the glad tidings to people?” he (pbuh) said, “do not tell them this good news for they will depend on it alone”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that ordinary people, who are generally unable to understand the meanings of things in their context, will think that mere verbal profession of tauhid and risalah is sufficient to attain forgiveness, and it is not necessary to do what this profession entails. with this notion, they become unmindful of the obligations. verbal profession does give them the security that they would not abide in hell forever for ultimately they will go to jannah.

our people are generally under the impression that all sinful muslims, like the perfect muslims, will go to jannah in the very first instance. according to proofs furnished by other injunctions of shari`ah, this is not so. this point has been already discussed at length earlier. in any case, the point made here is that no muslim will go to hell means that no muslim will abide in hell for ever. it does not at all mean that however sinful a muslim may be, he will not be sent to hell or suffer its torments.

427. bara' bin `azib (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “when a believer is questioned in the grave, he testifies that, `there is no true god except allah and muhammad is the messenger of allah.’ about him the words of allah, the exalted, are: `allah will keep firm those who believe, with the firm statement (the testimony of faith) in this world and the hereafter)”. (14:27)
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions both the parts of the shahadah together, that is to say “la ilaha illallah, muhammad-ur-rasulullah” (there is no true god except allah, and muhammad (pbuh) is the messenger of allah).

the questioning in the grave is beyond question and is a part of muslim belief. every muslim will, by the grace of allah, give their correct answers in respect of tauhid and risalah.

428. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when an infidel accomplishes any good deed, he is rewarded for it in this world; and in the case of a muslim, allah stores up his good acts for him in the hereafter and provides him with subsistence in this life due to his obedience.”

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah does not wrong a believer a good deed because he is given blessings for it in this world and will be rewarded for it in the hereafter. but the infidel is given in the world the reward for good deeds, he has performed for the sake of allah and when he comes to the hereafter, there is no good deed for which he can be rewarded”.
[muslim].

commentary: the infidels also do in this world many works which are for public welfare, or which come under the category of good deeds.

almighty allah gives them reward for such good deeds in this world in the form of wealth, sound health, or saving them from some trouble, because belief is precondition for reward in the hereafter. since an infidel is deprived of it, he will also be deprived of their reward in the hereafter. thus, we learn that belief constitutes the basis of every action and is a precondition for the acceptance of any good deed by allah.

429. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the five daily salat (prayers) are like a great river running by your door in which you take a bath five times a day.” [muslim].

commentary: this hadith mentions the merits of performing the five-times prescribed salat (prayer) punctually. a person who takes bath five times daily, cannot have any dirt on his body; similarly, one who performs salat regularly is washed of all the minor sins. if he repents and makes penitence, his major sins are also pardoned. one who is meticulous about salat and other obligations, generally does not commit any major sin but if at all he commits it, he does not stick to it. he is sorry for it and abandons it. his minor sins are washed away by his salat.

430. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “any muslim dies and forty men who do not associate anything with allah (in worship), perform his funeral prayer, allah makes them intercede for him”. [muslim]

commentary:

1. the acceptance of intercession here means that allah grants the prayer which they (intercessors) make for the deceased and forgives him, provided he is worthy of it.

2. a large number of muwahhidun (believers in the oneness of allah) in a funeral holds greater promise of the pardon of the deceased.

431. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: there were, about forty of us with messenger of allah (pbuh) in a camp when he said, “aren’t you pleased that you will constitute one-fourth of the inhabitants of jannah?” we said, “yes”. he again said, “aren’t you pleased that you will constitute one-third of the inhabitants of jannah?”.

we said: “yes.” upon this he (pbuh) said, “by him in whose hand muhammad’s soul is, i hope that you will constitute one-half of the inhabitants of jannah; and the reason is that only muslims will be admitted into jannah; and you are no more compared to the polytheists than as a white hair on the skin of a black ox, or a black hair on the skin of a white ox.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith reveals the following two points:

1. as compared with the believers and the faithful, there will be a large number of infidels in hell.

2. as compared with the followers of other prophets, there will be a larger number of muslims in jannah, to the extent that half of its occupants will be muslims. this hadith has glad tidings for the muslim ummah and bestows great respect and honour on them. (may allah include us among them.)

432. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “on the day of resurrection, allah will deliver to every muslim, a jew or a christian and say: `this is your ransom from hell-fire.’”

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “there would come people amongst the muslims on the day of resurrection with sins as heavy as a mountain, and allah would forgive them”.

[muslim].

commentary: “this is your ransom” is interpreted by the hadith of abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him):

“there is a place for everyone in both jannah and hell. when the believer occupies his place in jannah, an infidel will take his place in hell on account of his infidelity. this also means: “you believers were exposed to fire, but this infidel is your ransom. because allah has prepared a number of his creature for hell, so when the infidels occupy it on account of their sins and infidelity, they are considered as ransoms for the believers. allah knows best.” (editor’s note)

commentary: this hadith tells us about the auspicious end of the believers and a bad one of disbelievers.

433. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “a believer will be brought close to his rubb on the day of resurrection and enveloping him in his mercy, he (swt) will make him confess his sins by saying: ‘do you remember (doing) this sin and this sin?’ he will reply: ‘my rubb, i remember.’ then he (swt) will say: ‘i covered it up for you in the life of world, and i forgive it for you today.’ then the record of his good deeds will be handed to him”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us about the believers who will be treated with special favour by allah. (may allah include us among them.) it also shows that the admittance of the sins leads to having them forgiven by allah. the hadith also encourages us to cover the sins of the believers as best we can.

434. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man kissed a woman and he came to the prophet (pbuh) and made a mention of that to him. it was (on this occasion) that this ayah was revealed:

“and perform as-salat (iqamat-as-salat), at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night [i.e., the five compulsory salat (prayers)]. verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e., small sins)”. (11:114)

that person said, “o messenger of allah (pbuh), does it concern me only?”. he (messenger of allah (pbuh)) said, “it concerns the whole of my ummah”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings out the following three points:

1. minor sins are forgiven by virtue of salat.
2. one must not expose one’s sins.

435. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to the prophet (pbuh) and said, “o messenger of allah, i have committed a sin liable of ordained punishment. so execute punishment on me”. messenger of allah (pbuh) did not ask him about it, and then came the (time for) salat (prayers).

so he performed salat with messenger of allah (pbuh). when messenger of allah (pbuh) finished salat, the man stood up and said: “o messenger of allah! i have committed a sin. so execute the ordinance of allah upon me”. he (pbuh) asked, “**have you performed salat with us?**” “yes”, he replied. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**verily, allah has forgiven you**”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the person who had committed the sin came to the prophet (pbuh) to seek punishment for his wrongdoing is said to have been abul-yusr ka`b bin `amr whose story was also mentioned in the previous hadith. the sin he had committed was not a major one that is why by salat it was wiped out.

436. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**allah is pleased with his slave who eats a meal and praises him for it; and takes a drink and praises him for it**”. [muslim].

commentary: one should always say “al-hamdu lillah” (all the praise and thanks be to allah) after food and drink.

this hadith has been mentioned in the present chapter for the reason that it holds fear as well as hope. if one remembers allah in the meals, he can hope for the pleasure of allah. one should also bear in mind that it is he who gives everything. if he likes, he can forfeit all those things or in spite of providing all the riches, deprive one of hunger and thirst, as it does happen in certain diseases. may allah protect us from such deprivations.

437. abu musa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**allah, the exalted, stretches his hand during the night so that those who commit sins by day may repent, and he stretches his hand in the day so that those who commit sins by night may repent. he keeps doing so until the sun rises from the west**”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith has been mentioned before.

allah’s stretching of his hands is one of his attributes, and as muslims we have to believe in this without reasoning, as is the case with his other attributes. this has been the stand of our pious predecessors (as-salaf-us-salih).

the process of acceptance of penitence by allah will continue until the day of resurrection when the sun will rise from the west and repenting or accepting islam will not avail. therefore, one should not make any delay in penitence.

we must add here that, we must not name or qualify allah except with what he or his messenger (pbuh) has named or qualified him; without changing them or ignoring them completely or twisting the meanings or giving resemblance to any created things:

“the most gracious (allah) rose over the (mighty) throne”. (20:5) above the seventh heaven; and he only descends to the first (nearest) heaven during the day of `arafah (hajj, i.e., the 9th dhul-hijjah) and also during the last third part of every night, as mentioned by the prophet (pbuh), but he is with us by his knowledge only, not in his essence (bi dhatihi): **“there is nothing like him, and he is the all-hearer, the all-seer”**. (42:11)

438. abu najih `amr bin `abasa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: in the pre-islamic period of ignorance, i used to think that people who used to worship idols, were deviated and did not adhere to the true religion. then i heard of a man in makkah who was preaching a message. so i mounted my camel and went to him. i found that (this man who was) messenger of allah (pbuh) remained hidden because of the persecution by his people. i had entered makkah stealthily and when i met him i asked him, “who are you?” he (pbuh) said, **“i am a prophet.”** i asked; “what is a prophet?” he said, **“allah has sent me (with a message)”**. i asked, “with what has he sent you?” he said, **“he sent me to strengthen the ties of kinship, to destroy idols so that allah alone should be worshipped and nothing should be associated with him”**. i asked, “who has followed you in this?” he said, **“a freeman and a slave”**. (at that time only abu bakr and bilal (may allah be pleased with her) were with him). i said, “i shall follow you”. he said, **“you can not do that now. do you not see my situation and that of the people? go to your people, and when you hear that my cause has prevailed, come to me”**. so i went back to my people, and while i was with my people, messenger of allah (pbuh) emigrated to al-madinah. i continued to ask people about him till some of my people visited al-madinah. on their return, i asked them, “how is that man who has arrived in al-madinah faring?” they said, “people are hastening to him.

his own people had planned to kill him but did not succeed.” then i went to al-madinah and came to him and said, “o messenger of allah, do you recognize me?” he (pbuh) said, “yes, you are the one who met me in makkah.” i said, “o messenger of allah, tell me of that which allah has taught you and of which i am unaware. tell me about salat first.” he (pbuh) replied, “perform the fajr (morning) salat, then stop salat until the sun has risen up to the height of a lance, for when it rises, it rises up between the horns of the devil, and the infidels prostrate themselves before it at that time. then perform salat, for salat is witnessed and angels attend it, until the shadow becomes equal to the length of its object; then stop salat, for at that time jahannam (hell) is heated up. then pray when the shadow becomes longer, for the prayer is witnessed and angels attend it, until you perform `asr prayer; then stop salat till sun sets, for it sets between the horns of a devil. at that time the infidels prostrate themselves before it.” i then asked the messenger of allah to tell me about wudu’, and he (pbuh) said, “when a person begins the wudu’ and washes his mouth and nose, the sins committed by his face, mouth and nostrils are washed out. then when he washes his face as commanded by allah, the sins of his face are washed out with the water from the sides of his beard. then when he washes his hands up to elbows, the sins of his hands are washed out through his fingers with water. then he passes his wet hands over his head and the sins of the head are washed out through the ends of his hair with water. then he washes his feet up to the ankles, the sins of his feet are washed out through his toes with water. then, if he stands up for salat and praises allah, glorifies him, proclaims his greatness as he deserves and devotes his heart wholly to allah, he emerges sin free as the day he was born”.

when `amr bin `abasaah (may allah be pleased with him) narrated this hadith to abu umamah (may allah be pleased with him) a companion of the prophet (pbuh), the latter said to him, “watch what you are saying. o `amr bin `abasaah, a man will be getting all of this in one shot?” `amr (may allah be pleased with him) replied, “o abu umamah, i have attained old age, my bones have become dry, my death is approaching and there is no need for me to tell lies concerning allah and his messenger (pbuh). had i not heard this from the messenger of allah only once, twice, thrice (and he counted up to seven) i would never have reported it. indeed i have heard this frequently”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith makes the following seven points:

1. the preacher should be concerned about the safety of his followers. it is for this reason, the prophet (pbuh) stressed upon `amr bin abasah (may allah be pleased with him) to stay at home and keep his conversion to islam secret.

2. no matter how unfavourable are the circumstances and how tough is the opposition, a preacher should always have firm hope of help from allah and be confident about his victory over his enemy. that is why, the prophet (may allah be pleased with him) asked `amr (may allah be pleased with him) to come to him when he received information about his domination.

3. it is a proof of his prophethood that what eventually happened was exactly according to his prophecy.

4. angels attend the salat. one should, therefore, perform salat not only with peace of mind but also with utmost humility and fear of allah, so that it is reported and becomes more meritorious.

5. the times when salat is unpraiseworthy are as follows:

a. after the salat of fajr to the time of sunrise.

b. at the time when the sun begins to decline.

c. after the salat of `asr to the time of sunset.

d. when the sun is rising or setting.

6. wudu' and salat expiate for sins. for this reason this hadith has been mentioned in this chapter.

7. even in the days of ignorance (pre-islamic period), pious and right-minded people were averse to idolatry and thought it a deviation from the right path.

439. abu mu sa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "when allah intends to show mercy to a people,

he collects their prophet before them and makes him a herald to happiness for them in the hereafter; and when he intends to destroy a people, he punishes them while their prophet is alive, and destroys them while he is alive and watches them and makes him witness their destruction because they disbelieved in him and disobeyed his commands”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us about a divine law in respect of prophets, which is meant to deter people from opposing the prophet (pbuh) and commands us to follow his footsteps, so that we can benefit from his intercession on the day of resurrection.

Chapter 52: Excellence of Good Hopes

allah, the exalted, says:

“(and the man who believed said:) `... and my affair i leave it to allah. verily, allah is the all-seer of (his) slaves.’ so allah saved him from the evils that they plotted (against him)”. (40:44,45)

440. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah says: `i am just as my slave thinks of me when he remembers me.’ by allah! allah is more pleased with the repentance of his slave than one of you who unexpectedly finds in the desert his lost camel. `he who comes closer to me one span, i come closer to him a cubit; and he who comes closer to me a cubit, i come closer to him a fathom; and if he comes to me walking, i come to him running”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the merits of expecting good treatment of allah. but this has to be backed by good actions, in the same way as one can hope for good results after ploughing and sowing seeds. it is obvious that one who accomplishes good deeds will expect good consequences, and one who does evil deeds will expect evil consequences. allah will treat people according to their expectation that are founded on their actions, and the reward will match their deeds.

441. jabir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard the prophet (pbuh) saying three days before his death: “let none of you die unless he has good expectations from allah”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also tells us that one should always perform good deeds because no one knows the time of his death. at the time of death one must entertain hope for allah’s pardon and mercy which cannot be possible without good actions. thus, this hadith conveys the same meanings of the following ayah:

“and die not except in a state of islam (as muslims)”. (3:102).

442. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "allah, the exalted, has said: `o son of adam, i forgive you as long as you pray to me and hope for my forgiveness, whatever sins you have committed. o son of 'adam, i do not care if your sins reach the height of the heaven, then you ask for my forgiveness, i would forgive you. o son of 'adam, if you come to me with an earth load of sins, and meet me associating nothing to me, i would match it with an earthload of forgiveness."

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. what it really means is that if sins of a muslim, committed in ignorance and carelessness, become so numerous that in stacks touch the heights of skies, he should not lose hope in allah's mercy. if he repents wholeheartedly for his sins, makes penitence for them and begs allah's forgiveness, he will certainly find allah's mercy open for him.

2. shirk (**polytheism**) is an absolutely unpardonable sin. all other sins, how many and how grave they may be, can be forgiven by allah. he will pardon them if he likes and send the sinful persons straight to jannah, or keep them for a while in hell and then shift them to jannah. in any case, the punishment of hell will not be eternal for them, as it is for the mushriks (**polytheist**).

Chapter 53: Combining Hope and Fear (of Allah)

allah, the exalted, says:

“none feels secure from the plan of allah except the people who are the losers.” (7:99)

“certainly no one despairs of allah’s mercy, except the people who disbelieve.” (12:87)

“on the day (i.e., the day of resurrection) when some faces will become white and some faces will become black...” (3:106)

“verily, your rubb is quick in retribution (for the disobedient, wicked) and certainly he is oft-forgiving, most merciful (for the obedient and those who beg allah’s forgiveness).” (7:167)

“verily, the abrar (pious and righteous) will be in delight (jannah). and verily, the fujjar (the wicked, disbelievers, sinners and evildoers) will be in the blazing fire(hell).” (82:13,14)

“then as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy, he will live a pleasant life (in jannah). but as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be light, he will have his home in hawiyah (pit, i.e., hell)”. (101:6-9)

443. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “if a believer had full knowledge of the chastisement of allah, none would covet his jannah; and were an infidel to know the mercy allah has, none would despair of his jannah”. [muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith mentions the torments which one will have to suffer in consequence of divine wrath. these are described to enable a sinner to save himself from them. it also tells about the infinite mercy of allah so that one will always be hopeful of.

2. only such people will receive allah’s grace and mercy who are obedient to him, while the disobedient will suffer the consequences of his wrath.

444. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when a dead body is placed on a bier and men carry it on their shoulders, if the deceased was pious, it (the corpse) will say: `take me in haste’ but if he was not, it will say (to its bearers): `woe to it. where are you taking it?’ everything except man hears its voice. had a human being heard its voice, he would have surely died”. [al-bukhari].

commentary: the speech of a dead is a matter of the realm of the unseen (or al-ghaib) which is mentioned in this hadith. a deceased person will certainly say what has been disclosed here. a muslim must have absolute faith in it. almighty allah is certainly capable of endowing the power of speech on a deceased person as he does speak with the angels (munkar and nakir) when they come to the dead in the grave and question him. this hadith is intended to induce people to virtues so that after death, one has not to say: “woe to me! where are you taking me?”. one should spend the life in such a manner that after death when he is taken to the graveyard for burial, he should be in a position to say: “hasten to take me to my grave so that i can enjoy divine blessings there”.

445. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “jannah is nearer to you than your shoelace, and so is the (hell) fire”. [al-bukhari].

commentary: jannah is close to him who adopts the path of righteousness and he can easily attain it. its opposite case is also equally true. he is close to hell who takes the path of evil. thus, this hadith has an inducement for virtue and warning against evil.

Chapter 54: Excellence of Weeping out of Fear from Allah (swt)

allah, the exalted, says:

“and they fall down on their faces weeping and it increases their humility.” (17:109)

“do you then wonder at this recitation (the qur’an)? and you laugh at it and weep not”. (53:59-60)

446. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said to me: “recite the qur’an to me”. i said, “o messenger of allah! shall i recite the qur’an to you, when it has been revealed to you?” he (pbuh) replied, “i love to hear it recited by others”. so i recited to him a portion from surat an-nisa’. when i reached the ayah:

“how (will it be) then, when we bring from each nation a witness and we bring you (o muhammad (pbuh)) as a witness against these people?”. (4:41)

he (pbuh) said, “enough for now”. when i looked at him i saw his eyes were shedding tears.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us that besides the recitation of the noble qur’an, a muslim should also listen to it from others so that he can contemplate further on it. it also makes one weep when one listens to the noble qur’an.

447. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) delivered a khutbah to us the like of which i had never heard from him before. in the course of the khutbah, he said: “if you knew what i know, you would laugh little and weep much”. thereupon those present covered their faces and began to sob.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has been mentioned in this chapter for the reason that it furnishes positive proof of the fact that the companions of the prophet (pbuh) used to weep out of fear of allah when they heard sermons and preachings. it induces us to follow them.

448. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “one who weeps out of fear of allah, will not enter the hell till milk returns back in the udder; and the dust raised on account of fighting in the path of allah and the smoke of hell will never exist together”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. a person who has such a fear of allah that he weeps on account of it, cannot be disobedient to allah. obviously, his life will generally be spent in obedience of allah and strict abstinence from sins. it is very true to say that it is as impossible for such a person to go to hell as the return of milk to the udders.

2. similarly, jihad is a highly meritorious act for a muslim. a mujahid, who fights for the sake of allah, is perfectly safe from hell because the dust that falls on this way on him, cannot mix with the smoke of hell.

449. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “seven people allah will give them his shade on the day when there would be no shade but the shade of his throne (i.e., on the day of resurrection): and they are: a just ruler; a youth who grew up with the worship of allah; a person whose heart is attached to the mosques, two men who love and meet each other and depart from each other for the sake of allah; a man whom an extremely beautiful woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he (rejects this offer and) says: ‘i fear allah’ a man who gives in charity and conceals it (to such an extent) that the left hand does not know what the right has given; and a man who remembers allah in solitude and his eyes become tearful”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has been included in this chapter for the reason that it highlights the merits of weeping for fear of allah. the fear of allah keeps one away from disobedience of allah, the reward of which in the hereafter is jannah - a world which abounds in the bounties and pleasure of allah.

450. `abdullah bin ash-shikhkhir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i came to messenger of allah (pbuh) when he was performing prayers. he was sobbing and his chest sounded like a boiling kettle.

[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith tells us how the prophet (pbuh) used to weep in prayer out of fear of allah. to weep in the course of supplication and at the thought of one's appearance before allah reflects piety.

451. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said to ubayy bin ka`b (may allah be pleased with him), "allah (swt) has ordered me to recite to you surat-al-baiyyinah (98): `those who disbelieve ..."

ubayy (may allah be pleased with him) asked, "did he name me?" messenger of allah (pbuh) replied in the affirmative. whereupon ubayy (may allah be pleased with him) began to weep.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following:

1. the permissibility of crying out of joy when a certain bounty has been bestowed upon one, and out of fear that one fails to show gratefulness to the bestower of the bounty (i.e., allah).
2. the superiority of ubayy bin ka`b (may allah be pleased with him) and the high position he occupies with regard to his recitation and memorization of the qur'an.

452. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: after the death of messenger of allah (pbuh), abu bakr said to `umar (may allah be pleased with them): "let us visit umm aiman (may allah be pleased with her) as messenger of allah (pbuh) used to visit her." as we came to her, she wept. they (abu bakr and `umar (may allah be pleased with them) said to her, "what makes you weep? do you not know that what allah has in store for his messenger (pbuh) is better than (this worldly life)?" she said, "i weep not because i am ignorant of the fact that what is in store for messenger of allah (pbuh) (in the hereafter) is better than this world, but i weep because the revelation has ceased to come." this reply moved both of them to tears and they began to weep along with her.
[muslim].

commentary: here, this hadith has been reproduced to furnish justification for weeping on the departure of virtuous people because their presence is a source of many blessings. with their departure from this world, people are deprived of many graces. pious people are certainly very much grieved on their death.

453. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: when the illness of messenger of allah (pbuh) became serious, he was asked about the leading of salat and he said, “ask abu bakr to lead salat.” whereupon, `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) said; “abu bakr is very tender hearted. he is bound to be overcome by weeping when he recites the qur’an.” messenger of allah (pbuh) repeated, “ask him (abu bakr) to lead salat”.

in another narration: `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) said: “when abu bakr stands in your place, he will not be able to recite the noble qur’an to the people on account of weeping.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith brings into prominence the distinction of abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah be pleased with him). it was because of this distinction that the companions of the prophet (pbuh) selected him as khalifah (caliph) after the death of the prophet (pbuh). on this occasion, `umar (may allah be pleased with him) said, “should we not like him for our (worldly life) political leadership when the prophet (pbuh) had chosen him for our deen”.

2. the justification for weeping at the time of the recitation of the noble qur’an. this was a special virtue of abu bakr as-siddiq (may allah be pleased with him) which was a mark of his perfect faith.

454. ibrahim bin `abdur-rahman bin `auf reported: food was brought to `abdur-rahman bin `auf (may allah be pleased with him) when he was observing saum (fast) and he said: “mus`ab bin `umair (may allah be pleased with him) was martyred and he was better than me, but only one sheet was available to shroud him. it was so small that when his head was covered; his feet remained uncovered and if his feet were covered, his head remained uncovered. then the bounties of this world have been bestowed upon us generously. i am afraid that the reward of our good deeds have been awarded to us in this world.” on this he began to sob and left the food untouched.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith tells us about the hospitality of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) and the respect they had for each other.

abdur-rahman bin `auf (may allah be pleased with him) was one of the figures of `al-ashratul-mubash-sharun bil jannah (the ten companions of the prophet (pbuh) who were given the glad tidings of entering jannah during their lifetime). for this reason, he is superior to mus`ab bin `umair (may allah be pleased with him), but he acknowledged him superior on the consideration of his martyrdom and poverty through which he had passed. he holds mus`ab bin `umair (may allah be pleased with him) better on the grounds that he had confronted the infidels in extremely difficult circumstances and sacrificed his life for the sake of allah.

the second point which this hadith brings out is the fear which abdur-rahman bin `auf (may allah be pleased with him) felt at the abundance of wealth and property, although he used to spend his wealth and riches in the way of allah and jihad. today, the only purpose of our wealth is that we waste it either on foolish customs and ceremonies of marriage or construction of buildings and their decoration. it was this abundance of wealth of which the companions of the prophet (pbuh) were afraid. the prophet (pbuh) had himself expressed great anxiety over it.

455. abu umamah sudaiy bin `ajlan al-bahili (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said: “nothing is dearer to allah than two drops and two marks: a drop of tears shed out of fear of allah and a drop of blood shed in allah’s way. regarding the two marks, they are: marks left in the cause of allah and a mark left in observing one of the obligatory act of worship of allah, the exalted”.

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith mentions the merits of the following:

1. weeping out of fear of allah.
2. the blood which flows in the way of allah.
3. the marks of injuries which are left on the bodies of those who take part in jihad.
4. the marks of wounds received in the performance of obligations.

the ahadith on the subject are many.

456. al-`irbad bin sariyah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: **one day messenger of allah (pbuh) delivered us a very eloquent khutbah on account of which eyes shed tears and hearts became softened.**
[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: even in the relevant chapter, the author has only given a reference of this hadith and not its full text. this has, however, been stated in chapter 16, bearing the title “observing the sunnah and the manners of its obedience”.

Chapter 55: Excellence of Leading an Ascetic Life, and Virtues of Simple Life

allah, the exalted, says:

“verily, the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the water (rain) which we send down from the sky; so by it arises the intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat: until when the earth is clad in its adornments and is beautified, and its people think that they have all the powers of disposal over it, our command reaches it by night or by day and we make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday! thus, do we explain the ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, laws, etc.) in detail for the people who reflect.” (10:24)

“and put forward to them the example of the life of this world: it is like the water (rain) which we send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. but (later) it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. and allah is able to do everything. wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. but the good righteous deeds that last, are better with your rubb for rewards and better in respect of hope.” (18:45,46)

“know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children. (it is) as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. but in the hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers-evildoers), and (there is) forgiveness from allah and (his) good pleasure (for the believers-gooddoers). and the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment”. (57:20).

“beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. this is the pleasure of the present world’s life; but allah has the excellent return (jannah with flowing rivers) with him.” (3:14).

“o mankind! verily, the promise of allah is true. so let not this present life deceive you, and let not the chief deceiver (satan) deceive you about allah.” (35:5).

“the mutual rivalry (for piling up of worldly things) diverts you. until you visit the graves (i.e., till you die). nay! you shall come to know! again nay! you shall come to know! nay! if you knew with a sure knowledge (the end result of piling up, you would not have been occupied yourselves in worldly things)”. (102:1-5).

“and this life of the world is only amusement and play! verily, the home of the hereafter is the real life if they but knew”. (29:64).

457. `amr bin `auf al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) sent abu `ubaidah bin al-jarrah (may allah be pleased with him) to bahrain to collect (jizyah). so he returned from bahrain with wealth. the ansar got news of it and joined with the prophet (pbuh) in the fajr prayer. when the prophet (pbuh) concluded the prayer, they stood in his way. when he saw them, he smiled and said, “i think you have heard about the arrival of abu `ubaidah with something from bahrain”. they said, “yes! o messenger of allah!”. he (pbuh) said, “rejoice and hope for that which will please you. by allah, it is not poverty that i fear for you, but i fear that this world will be opened up with its wealth for you as it was opened to those before you; and you vie with one another over it as they did and eventually it will ruin you as it ruined them”.
[muslim].

commentary: we learn from this hadith that, from the religious angle, poverty of an individual or nation is not as dangerous as its affluence. for this reason, the prophet (pbuh) cautioned his ummah against the consequences of abundance of wealth and warned his followers to save themselves from its evils. we witness today that all his fears have come true. the excess of wealth has made the majority of rich extremely care-less about their religious obligations. it is this negligence and evasion from religion about which the prophet (pbuh) had expressed grave fear.

458. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) sat on the pulpit and we sat around him. he said: “what i am concerned most is the flourishment and the beauty of this world will be available to you”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

459. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “the world is sweet and green (alluring); and verily,

allah is making you to succeed each other, generations after generations in it in order to see how you act. so beware of this world and beware of women”.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned under chapter 6, “piety”. the stress that it lays on guarding against the evil of women shows how grave a mischief woman is for man. the warning it contains is intended to alert men against the cunning and deceit of women and induces them to take preventive measures prescribed by the shari`ah in this behalf. those who disregard the injunctions of shari`ah in this respect generally become a victim of the seduction, wiles and guiles of women. may allah save us from their amorous ways.

460. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said: “o allah, there is no true life but the life of the hereafter”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the saying of the prophet (pbuh) quoted in this hadith relates to two different occasions.

firstly, to the ghazwah of al-khandaq (the battle of the trench) when muslims were engaged in digging the trench under very difficult circumstances. it was intended to impress upon them the need for patience and boost their morale. they were made to understand that they should not be perplexed by the strenuous period they were passing through because these were transitory and temporary phases of life after which lay the everlasting life, the real life that was not only permanent but also full of perpetual luxuries.

secondly, to the occasion of hajjat-ul-wada` (last hajj performed by the prophet (pbuh)) when he saw around him a large crowd of muslims. then he warned them against becoming proud or overjoyed by their strength and power. the grandeur and majesty being witnessed by them would come to an end. the real life was of al-`akhirah (hereafter) and they should do their utmost to reform it.

461. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “three (things) follow a dead person: members of his family, his property and his deeds. two of them return; and one remains with him. the people and his wealth return; his deeds remain with him”.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has a warning for the muslims that they should adopt the way of piety and fear (of allah), not of sin and impiety because those are actions which will go with him to the grave and which decide his fate in the life after death. if he carries with him good deeds, he will have a comfortable sojourn in barzakh (the intervening stage between death and resurrection). on the contrary, if the record of his life is devoid of good deeds, all the wealth that he leaves behind, even if it is beyond calculation, will be of no avail to him because what he will be having with him will be the bad deeds which he performed during his life. these bad deeds will be a constant source of torture for him during his stay in barzakh.

462. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “among the inmates of hell, a person who had led the most luxurious life in this world will be brought up on the day of resurrection and dipped in the fire and will be asked: `o son of adam! did you ever experience any comfort? did you happen to get any luxury?’ he will reply: `by allah, no, my rubb.’ and then one of the people of jannah who had experienced extreme misery in the life of this world will be dipped in jannah. then he will be asked: `o son of adam! did you ever experience any misery? did you ever encounter difficulty?’ he will say: “by allah, no my rubb, i neither experienced misery nor passed through hardship”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith also induces one to work for the life of the hereafter, as the amenities of this world which one strives hard to attain, and for which one violates the injunctions of shari`ah, will be forgotten with a glimpse of the hell-fire. therefore, the sensible course is that one should adopt a way of life which is full of true faith and good deeds so that one becomes eligible for the eternal blessings and joys of the life of the hereafter.

463. al-mustaurad bin shaddad (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “this world (i.e., its pleasures and duration) in comparison with the hereafter is (similar to the amount of water) one gets when he puts his finger in the sea. let him then see what it returns with”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith shows the value of the hereafter and its blessings compared to the worldly life. the proportion between the two is that the former is like an ocean while the latter is like the proportion of water left on one’s finger when dipped in the sea!.

464. jabir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) was passing through the bazaar with his companions on his both sides, when he saw a dead skinny lamb. he held its ear and said, “who of you would like to have it for a dirham”. they replied, “we do not like to get it for nothing, and what shall we do with it?”. then he (pbuh) asked, “would you like to have it for nothing?”. they replied, “had it been alive, it would have been defective because it is skinny; but when dead it is of no use”. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “truly, the world is more contemptible to allah than this (the dead lamb) is to you”. [muslim].

commentary: this hadith also shows the futility of this world for which one struggles so madly throughout his life. it is also an indication that the prophet (pbuh) used to seize the right opportunities to guide and teach his followers.

465. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i was walking with the prophet on the stony ground in al-madinah in the afternoon when uhud mount came into sight. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “o abu dharr!” i said, “o messenger of allah, here i am responding to you”. he said, “if i had as much gold as the weight of uhud, it would not please me to have a single dinar out of it with me after the passage of three days, but i would hold back something for the repayment of a debt. i would distribute it among the slaves of allah like this and like this and like this.” and he (pbuh) pointed in front of him, and on his right side and on his left side. we then walked a little further and he (pbuh) said: “the rich would be poor on the day of resurrection, except he who spent like this and like this and like this,”. and he pointed as he did the first time. “but such persons are few”. then he said, “stay where you are till i come back to you”. he (the prophet (pbuh)) walked ahead a little further in the darkness of the night and disappeared from my sight. i heard a loud voice. i said (to myself): “the messenger of allah might have met (mishap or an enemy)”. i wished i could go after him but i remembered his commanding me to stay till he came back. so i waited for him; and when he came, i made mention of what i had heard. he asked, “did you hear it?”. i said, “yes”. then he said, “it was jibril (gabriel), who came to me and said: ‘he who dies among your ummah without having associated anything with allah (in worship) will enter jannah.’ i said: ‘even if he committed illicit sexual intercourse or steals?’ he (jibril) said: ‘even if he has committed illicit sexual intercourse or steals’”. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the last portion of this hadith means that a muslim, having firm faith in the oneness of allah, will go to jannah even if he has committed major sins in his life. if allah wills, he will be sent straight to jannah, or he will be sent there after suffering punishment in hell for sometime. some scholars have associated this hadith with such persons who make repentance at the time when they are close to death and then they do not get time to do good or bad deeds. almighty allah will pardon even their major sins without giving them any punishment.

this hadith also tells us that it is permissible, rather essential, to reserve some money for the payment of loan because its repayment is far more important than giving (**voluntary alms**).

it also mentions the piety of the prophet (pbuh) and his passion for spending in the way of allah.

466. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “if i had gold equal to mount uhud (in weight), it would not please me to pass three nights and i have a thing of it left with me, except what i retain for repayment of a debt”.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the words of the prophet (pbuh) speak eloquently for his matchless piety and prove that he did not like to keep worldly goods with him. this hadith also shows that expression of a pious desire is permissible.

467. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “look at those who are inferior to you and do not look at those who are superior to you, for this will keep you from belittling allah’s favour to you.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

this is the wording in sahih muslim. the narration in al-bukhari is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “when one of you looks at someone who is superior to him in property and appearance, he should look at someone who is inferior to him”.

commentary: by looking at the worldly goods and riches of others, a person gradually becomes unthankful for the blessings which allah has bestowed on him. the best remedy for this “disease” is that which has been prescribed by messenger of allah (pbuh) in this hadith.

the remedy is that one should look at the people who have lesser worldly goods and riches than one's own. if a person has a small house of his own which can protect him from the harshness of weather, then he has no need to see enviously towards sky-high buildings and palatial houses of others. he should look at the homeless people who spend their nights on footpaths and live in huts which in rain leak like sieve and are swept away by a wave of flood water, etc. but from a religious angle, one should see towards those who are more fearful of allah and observe their salat meticulously so that one becomes more fond of obedience of allah, has a greater fear of him and devotes more time to prayer and devotion. this dispensation is also given in other ahadith.

468. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with ihm) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, **"may he be miserable, the worshipper of the dinar and dirham, and the worshipper of the striped silk cloak. if he is given anything, he is satisfied; but if not, he is unsatisfied"**.

[al-bukhari]

commentary: "a slave of dinar and dirham and silk cloaks (**clothes**)" here means a person who prefers these things to the divine injunctions and commands and strives day and night to amass worldly goods. instead of worshipping allah, he worships such things and is thus guilty of worship of others besides allah, a condition which causes his ruin.

469. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: **i saw seventy of the people of the suffah and none of them had a cloak. they had either a lower garment or a blanket which they suspended from their necks. some (cloaks) reached halfway down to the legs and some to the ankles; and the man would manage to keep it in his hand to avoid exposing his private parts.**

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the term "people of the suffah" mentioned in the hadith refers to those companions of the prophet (pbuh) who were poor. they used to resort to "the suffah", a shady place at the back of the prophet's mosque (in al-madinah).

470. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: **"the world is the believer's prison and the infidel's jannah"**.

[muslim].

commentary: as compared with the pleasures and luxuries, which are in store for a true believer in jannah in the hereafter, this world is a prison; and against the ceaseless torture that awaits the kuffar (disbelievers) in hell, this world is a jannah for them. it can also mean that the way a muslim saves himself in life from lusts and desires and leads a pious life with fear of allah, this world is a prison for him because he is fettered in the chains of rules and regulations, while a kafir (disbeliever) is free from all kinds of restrictions and is completely given to lusts and desires, and this is how this world is a jannah for him. the purpose of this hadith is to induce muslims for the preparation of al-akhirah (the hereafter) and prevent them from unlawful luxuries of this world.

471. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) took hold of my shoulders and said, “be in the world like a stranger or a wayfarer”.

ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) used to say: “when you survive till the evening, do not expect to live until the morning; and when you survive until the morning, do not expect to live until the evening; (do good deeds) when you are in good health before you fall sick, and (do good deeds) as long as you are alive before death strikes”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: a person who will consider this world as a temporary stage, will certainly not like that his clothes be entangled in thorny bushes of this world. the greatest fault of man is that he does not understand this status of the world. in spite of the fact that he is not sure of a moment's life here, he occupies himself in amassing goods and riches which would last for a hundred years.

472. sahl bin sa`d as-sa`idi (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to the prophet (pbuh) and said, “o messenger of allah, guide me to such an action which, if i do allah will love me and the people will also love me.” he (pbuh) said, “have no desire for this world, allah will love you; and have no desire for what people possess, and the people will love you.”

[ibn majah]

commentary: “zuhd” (ascetism) does not mean renunciation of the world and obligations of life. what it really means is that one should be contented with what he possess and rid himself of greed.

islam neither permits renunciation of the world nor does it condemn genuine struggle to acquire wealth and riches. therefore, involvement in worldly affairs and struggle for lawful means of livelihood are not against zuhd. a person who is contented with the lawful means of income is a distinguished person as all his activities are exalted to the level of worship. similarly, unconcern with the wealth and riches of others and ignoring them is a part of zuhd and contentment. one additional advantage of it is that such a person wins the love and respect of the people because he who begs people, rather than allah, has to suffer disgrace and is disliked by the people. the case of begging from allah is just the opposite. the more a person begs him, the more pleased he will be with him. in fact, he is displeased if someone does not beg him. this has been exquisitely stated in an arabic verse, the meaning of which is:

“do not stretch your hands before anyone for your needs, but beg from him (allah) whose door is always open”.

“if a person does not beg him (allah), he is displeased, while if one begs someone he becomes furious”.

473. an-nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with them) reported: `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him) spoke at length regarding the worldly prosperity that people had achieved and said: “i saw that the messenger of allah (pbuh) would pass his days in hunger and could not get even degraded dates to fill his stomach”.

[muslim].

commentary: during the reign of `umar (may allah be pleased with him), when people became more prosperous on account of frequent victories, he asked them to remember the early period of islam in which they were poor and faced very difficult circumstances, to the extent that even the prophet (pbuh) was placed in the situation mentioned in this hadith. the purpose of mentioning it was to warn the people against the evils of abundance of wealth and luxuries. they were exhorted to beware of the love of the world which could make them forget about al-akhirah (afterlife).

474. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) died when my house was void of any edible thing except for a small quantity of barley i had on a shelf and from which i kept eating it for a long time. then when i measured what was left of it, it soon finished.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: during the last days of the prophet (pbuh) the financial position of the muslims had largely improved due to the spoils of war and he could have lived a comfortable life if he liked, but he stuck to the same austere life which he had led earlier. in this hadith, `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) has related an account of the extremely austere and pious life of the prophet (pbuh) although her house was the house of his most beloved wife.

this hadith also tells us that in spite of his profound love for `aishah (may allah be pleased with her), the prophet (pbuh) did not accord her any preferential treatment. he treated all his wives equally. thus, this hadith has a lesson for `ulama' and their families that they should not look towards worldly riches and the amenities enjoyed by them but keep in view the life of the prophet (pbuh) and his wives and learn to keep themselves contented with minimum income.

475. `amr bin al-harith (may allah be pleased with him) the brother of juwairiyah (may allah be pleased with her), the mother of believers) reported: (when he died) messenger of allah (pbuh) left neither a dinar nor a dirham nor a male slave nor a female slave, nor anything else except his white riding mule, his weapons and his land which he had given in charity to wayfarers.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: banu al-mustaliq battle took place in the year 5 a.h. men and women who were made captives in it, included jawairiyah, and she came to the share of the prophet (pbuh). she embraced islam and the prophet (pbuh) married her. when the companions of the prophet (pbuh) learnt about it they released all the prisoners of banu mustaliq, who were about one hundred, in consideration of their being in-laws of the noble prophet (pbuh).

weapons here means lance and sword while land signifies that portion of land which the prophet (pbuh) had got as his share from fadak, and khaibar and al-qura valley, etc. he gave it in sadaqah saying that he was from the class of the prophets of allah who have no descendants. whatever is left by them is sadaqah (charity). at the time of his death, the prophet (pbuh) did not have any male or female slave whom he had not set free.

476. al-khabbab bin al-aratt (may allah be pleased with him) reported: we emigrated with messenger of allah (pbuh) seeking the pleasure of allah and expecting our reward from him. some of us died without enjoying anything of it. among them was mus`ab bin `umair (may allah be pleased with him), who was killed in the battle of uhud, leaving only a small coloured sheet of wool (which we used as his shroud). when we covered his head with it, his feet were exposed, and when we covered his feet with it, his head was uncovered. so the prophet (pbuh) told us to cover his head and to put some idhkhir (i.e., fragrant grass) over his feet. others among us enjoy prosperity.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith tells us about the distinction of hijrah (emigration) and jihad and their reward. in this world this reward is given to those mujahidun of islam who gain victory and will also be given to them in al-akhirah (hereafter). as for those mujahidun who get martyred on the battlefield, they will get all their rewards on the day of resurrection.

477. sahl bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “were this world worth a wing of mosquito, he would not have given a drink of water to an infidel.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith makes it clear that the world and its wealth and riches has no significance to allah. thus, it should not have much significance to the believers. it should be considered a means to reform the afterlife, or a place of trial.

478. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “verily! the world is accursed and what it contains is accursed, except remembrance of allah and those who associate themselves with allah; and a learned man, and a learning person.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary:

1. this hadith does not mean that this world is totally condemned. what it really means is that such things of this world are cursed which take a person away from allah and make him careless about his obedience. thus, anything of this world can be good and evil. for instance,

worldly goods are auspicious if one acquires them through lawful means and spends them in a permissible manner, otherwise, they are condemnable. similar is the case of other things of this world.

2. that knowledge is good which brings one closer to allah and is a source of benefit for mankind, otherwise, it is also condemnable.

3. this hadith also brings into prominence the distinction of men of learning, especially scholars of religious disciplines.

479. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: **“do not crave for property lest you should be absorbed in the desire of worldly life.”**
[at-tirmidhi]

commentary: the word **“dai`ah”** translated here as **“property”** means land, industry, agriculture or business. one should not be so engrossed in them to the extent that, they become the sole purpose of one’s life and all one’s efforts are exhausted to acquire them, thus forgetting all about the hereafter. to the extent of one’s genuine needs and self-sufficiency, making and maintaining of property, land, industry, agriculture and commerce come in permissible acts. none of them is forbidden provided the means employed for making and maintaining them are fair and do not distract one’s attention from allah and the hereafter.

480. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: we were repairing our thatchy hut when messenger of allah (pbuh) passed by and asked us, **“what are you doing?”** we said, “the thatch had gone weak and we are repairing it.” he (pbuh) said, **“i see the sure thing (death) approaching sooner than this.”**
[abu dawud].

commentary: the word **“khuss”** means a hut or a house which is made of wood and reed/bamboo and plastered with mud. the hadith reminds us to be mindful of death at all times and be certain that there is nothing nearer to us than it. it also tells us that we should not engage in those worldly things which are bound to make us forget about our appointed term in this world.

481. ka`b bin `iyad (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“verily, there is a fitnah (trial) for every nation and the trial for my nation (or ummah) is wealth.”**
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the word “fitnah” means trial. anything with which a person is tried is a fitnah for him. for this reason children and property have been regarded fitnah for mankind in the noble qur’an. this hadith strongly urges the muslim ummah to exercise moderation in their love for worldly goods and riches otherwise all these things, which are gifts of allah, can become a source of woeful torture for them.

482. `uthman bin `affan (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “there is no right for the son of adam except in these (four) things: a house to live in, a cloth to cover therewith his private parts, bread and water.”
[at-tirmidhi].

483. `abdullah bin ash-shikhkhir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i came to the prophet (pbuh) while he was reciting (surat at-takathur 102):

“the mutual rivalry (for hoarding worldly things) preoccupy you. until you visit the graves (i.e., till you die). nay! you shall come to know! again nay! you shall come to know! nay! if you knew with a sure knowledge (the end result of hoarding, you would not have been occupied in worldly things). verily, you shall see the blazing fire (hell)! and again, you shall see it with certainty of sight! then (on that day) you shall be asked about the delights (you indulged in, in this world!)” (102:1-8)

(after reciting) he (pbuh) said, “son of adam says: ‘my wealth, my wealth.’ do you own of your wealth other than what you eat and consume, and what you wear and wear out, or what you give in sadaqah (charity) (to those who deserve it), and that what you will have in stock for yourself.”
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith enjoins that if a person is given wealth, he should spend it in the ways liked by allah because it is this sadaqah which will be a valuable treasure in the afterlife. whatever else he consumes in this world, will finish or rot in this world and will be of no avail in hereafter.

484. `abdullah bin mughaffal (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to the prophet (pbuh) and said, “o messenger of allah! by allah, i love you.

.” he (pbuh) said, “**think about what you are saying.**” the man repeated thrice, “i swear by allah that i love you.” he (prophet (pbuh)) said, “**if you love me, you should be ready for acute poverty; because poverty comes to those who love me, faster than a flood flowing towards its destination.**” [at-tirmidhi].

485. k`ab bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**two hungry wolves sent in the midst of a flock of sheep are no more destructive to them than a man’s greed for wealth and fame is to his deen.**”

[at-tirmidhi]

commentary: the havoc played by wealth, rank and position, which have been mentioned in this hadith, can be seen everywhere today. even some `ulama’ and self-proclaimed pious men have a craze for these things and they have not been able to save themselves from the ruin caused by it. may allah save us from these evils. greed for wealth and fame are doubtless detrimental to religion as preference of the life of the world over religion is explicit in such a trivial pursuit.

486. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) slept on a straw mat and got up with the marks left by it on his body. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) said, “o messenger of allah! would that you make us spread out a soft bedding for you.” he (pbuh) replied, “**what have i to do with the world? i am like a rider who had sat under a tree for its shade, then went away and left it.**” [at-tirmidhi].

commentary: beside mentioning the piety of the prophet (pbuh), this hadith tells in a very eloquent manner the reality of this world by means of an example.

487. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**the poor will enter jannah five hundred years before the rich.**” [at-tirmidhi].

commentary: al-fuqara’ (**the poor**) means those fuqara’ who are perfect in faith. such people will go to jannah five hundred years before the rich because the latter will have to account for their wealth, from where they had got it and how they had spent it,

while the former will not be answerable for any such thing.

488. ibn `abbas and `imran bin al-husain (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “i looked into jannah and saw that most of its dwellers are the poor; and i looked into hell and saw that most of its inmates were women.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the prophet (pbuh) had observed jannah and hell either on the eve of mi`raj (ascension to heavens), or of salat-ul-kusuf (eclipse prayer) in which he (pbuh) was shown jannah and hell. a large majority of fuqara' will go to jannah. the rich people do not attach much importance to the requirements of faith and its practice.

the reason women are the majority in hell is because they are given to taunts and curses and are ungrateful to their husbands. the hadith urges women to try to overcome these serious defects in order to be saved from the hell-fire.

489. usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “i stood at the gate of jannah and saw that most of those who enter it were poor, whereas the rich were held back; but those who were destined to go to hell were ordered to be sent there (immediately).”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

490. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the most truthful statement a poet has ever made is the saying of labid: everything besides allah is vain.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. we learn from this hadith that to compose, recite and quote good verses, as evidence, is permissible.

2. the verse of labid, quoted in this hadith, is the same effect as the verdict of the noble qur'an:

“whatsoever is on (the earth) will perish.” (55:26).

this verse accepts the elernity of the afterlife and the transitory nature of this world.

Chapter 56: Excellence of Simple Living and being Content with Little

allah, the exalted, says:

“then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up as-salat (the prayers) [i.e., made their salat (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times] and have followed lusts. so they will be thrown in hell. except those who repent and believe (in the oneness of allah and his messenger muhammad (pbuh)), and work righteousness. such will enter jannah and they will not be wronged in aught.” (19:59,60)

“so he went forth before his people in his pomp. those who were desirous of the life of the world, said: `ah, would that we had the like of what qarun (korah) has been given! verily, he is the owner of a great fortune.’ but those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: `woe to you! the reward of allah (in the hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds’.” (28:79,80)

“then, on that day, you shall be asked about the delights (you indulged in, in this world!)” (102:8)

“whoever desires the quick-passing (transitory enjoyment of this world), we readily grant him what we will for whom we like. then, afterwards, we have appointed for him hell; he will burn therein disgraced and rejected (far away from allah’s mercy).” (17:18)

491. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: the family of muhammad (pbuh) never ate to the fill the bread of barley for two successive days until he died. [al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) said: never did the family of muhammad (pbuh) eat to the fill, since their arrival to al-madinah, the bread of wheat for three successive nights until his death.

commentary: this hadith tells us about the extreme piety, contentment and simplicity of the prophet (pbuh). this mode of his life continued to his last days when he had started storing provision for one year for the maintenance of his wives.

but he would always distribute it among the needy, so much so that nothing was left with him. thus, the statement of the wives of the prophet (pbuh) that the family of muhammad (pbuh) had never taken bellyful of food for two days is absolutely true. if they had it on one day they did not have it on the next day. this is how they lived their whole life in the companionship of the prophet (pbuh).

492. `urwah from `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported that she used to say to urwah (may allah be pleased with him): “o son of my sister, by allah, i used to see the new moon, then the new moon, then the new moon, i.e., three moons in two months, and a fire was not kindled in the house of messenger of allah (pbuh). “i (`urwah) said, “o my aunt, what were your means of sustenance?” she said; “dates and water. but it (so happened) that messenger of allah (pbuh) had some ansar neighbours who had milch animals. they used to send messenger of allah (pbuh) some milk of their (animals) and he gave that to us to drink.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) did not say this by way of complaint but as warning and exhortation to the muslims, especially women, so that they would also live a simple life. the latter should prepare their family budget keeping in view the lawful earnings of their husbands and do not place so much burden on them that they are compelled to look for unfair means of earning.

493. abu sa`id maqburi reported: abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) said that he happened to pass by some people who had a roast lamb before them. they invited him, but he declined, saying: “the messenger of allah (pbuh) left the world without having eaten his fill with barley bread.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary:

1. this hadith shows how much care the companions of the prophet (pbuh) exercised in following him. they would even emulate him in matters in which it was not obligatory under the shari`ah to follow him. it was in fact the result of that extreme love that they had for the prophet (pbuh). they were not like the present-day lovers of the prophet (pbuh) whose love does not go beyond lip-service. they were his true lovers and they followed him faithfully.

2. one should refuse to participate in feasts where extravagance is displayed, as is in common practice today, so that the evil tendency of extravagance and wastage is discouraged. one who avoids such parties, does not refuse invitations but respects the principles and values of shari`ah which is a highly meritorious act.

494. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) neither ate on a dining cloth, nor ate soft bread throughout his life. [al-bukhari].

one narration adds: he (pbuh) never even saw a samit lamb.

samit is an animal prepared for food by removing its hair by boiling water, and then roasted without being skinned. this type of food is preferred by wealthy people. (editor's note)

commentary: it means that the prophet (pbuh) has not adopted the ways of the rich but embraced a simple way of life which is the mode of fuqara' - poor people. thus, he remained contented with simple food and had no relish for extravagant feasts.

495. an-nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i have seen your prophet (pbuh) when he did not find enough of even the inferior quality of dates to eat and fill his belly. [muslim].

496. sahl bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) had never seen bread made out of fine flour throughout his life, since allah commissioned him until his death. he was asked, "did you not have sieves at the time of the messenger of allah?" he replied, "messenger of allah (pbuh) never saw a sieve." he was asked, "how did you manage to eat barley bread made of unsieved flour?" he said, "we used to ground it and then blew away the husk, and what remained we kneaded into dough." [al-bukhari].

497. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) went out (of his house) one day, or one night, and there he met abu bakr and `umar (may allah be pleased with them) also. he (pbuh) said, "what made you leave your houses at this hour?" they said, "it is hunger, o messenger of allah."

he said, “by him in whose hands my soul is, what made you leave, made me also leave, so come along!” and he went along with them to a man from the ansar, but they did not find him in his house. when the wife of that man saw the prophet, she said, “you are most welcome.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said to her, “where is so-and-so?” she said, “he went to fetch some fresh water for us.” in the meantime, the ansari came back, saw messenger of allah (pbuh) and his two companions and said: “praise be to allah, today no one has more honourable guests than i.” he then went out and brought them a bunch of date fruit, having dates, some still green, some ripe, and some fully ripe, and requested them to eat from it. he then took his knife (to slaughter a sheep). messenger of allah (pbuh) said to him, “do not kill a milch sheep.” so he slaughtered a sheep for them. after they had eaten and drunk to their fill, messenger of allah (pbuh) said to abu bakr and `umar (may allah be pleased with them), “by him in whose hand my soul is, you will certainly be questioned about this treat on the day of resurrection. hunger brought you out of your homes, and you do not return to your homes till you have been blessed with this treat.”

[muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith refers to the period of great hardship through which the prophet (pbuh) and his companions had passed after hijrah (emigration).
2. it is permissible for one to seek help from such friends about whom one is confident that they will be happy to help.
3. the hadith enjoins us to respect our guests and to thank allah on their visit.

498. khalid bin `umar al-`adawi reported: `utbah bin ghazwan, the governor of basrah, delivered a khutbah. he praised allah, glorified him, then said: “amma b`adu, verily, the world has been given the news of its end and is running to meet its end swiftly. nothing is left out of it but a very little amount. similar to the remainder in a dish whose owner is collecting it to drink; and you are going to move to an abode which knows no end, and you should proceed there with the good before you, for we have been informed (by the prophet (pbuh)) that a stone would be thrown at one side of the hell and it would travel down for seventy years but would not reach its bottom. by allah,

it will be filled (with men and jinn). do you find it strange? we have been informed (i.e., by the prophet (pbuh)) that the distance between two shutters of the gate of jannah is forty years (distance). and a day would come when it would be fully packed; i was the seventh amongst the seven who had been with messenger of allah (pbuh), and we had nothing to eat but the leaves of the tree until the sides of our mouth were injured. we found a sheet which we tore into two and divided between myself and sa`d bin malik. i made the lower garment with half of it and so did sa`d. today, there is none amongst us who has not become the governor of a city, and i seek refuge with allah that i should consider myself great while i am insignificant to allah.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith brings the following points into prominence:

1. remembrance of al-akhirah (the hereafter) and the torment of hell.
2. description of the fast decline of the world and its trend towards destruction.
3. description of the vastness of jannah and hell.
4. reference to the affluence of the companions of the prophet (pbuh) which they had at a subsequent stage. it was in fact fulfillment of the promise of allah that he will bestow upon them power and majesty in this world.
5. the description of the graceful conduct of the companions of the prophet (pbuh). in spite of having power and authority, they had neither arrogance nor pride. goodwill and humility were special traits of their character and they always sought refuge with allah against vanity and pride.
6. the companions of the prophet (pbuh) had sought to gain the pleasure of allah rather than that of the people.
7. humbleness of the companions of the prophet (pbuh), as well as their good conduct and uprightness despite being in a position of authority.

499. abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) showed us a sheet and a thick lower garment and said to us messenger of allah (pbuh) was wearing them when he died.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the incident reported in this hadith abundantly proves that the prophet (pbuh) was not only austere in the matter of food but also in clothes and other worldly goods. he was contented with a minimum of necessities of life.

500. sa`d bin abu waqqas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: by allah, i am the first arab who shot an arrow in the cause of allah. we fought along with messenger of allah (pbuh) when our food was only the leaves of hublah and samur trees (wild trees) until one of us would defecate like the droppings of sheep.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary:

1. this hadith offers justification for enumerating the blessings of allah and the hardships which one may have suffered in one's past life, provided one does not mention the latter by way of complaint.

2. lack of provision does not mean that the companions of the prophet (pbuh) did not make any arrangement for food when they used to go for jihad, but that their provision would finish during their campaigns.

what it actually means is the scarcity of food. they did not have foodstuff which could last till the end of the war, nor had they any system for its supply according to the requirements, with the result that they sometimes had to live on the tree-leaves.

501. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) used to supplicate: "o allah, make the provisions of family of muhammad (pbuh) bare subsistence."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

502. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: by allah other than whom there is none worthy of worship, i used to press my stomach against the earth owing to my hunger; i would tie a stone over it. one day, i was sitting on the way they usually take when the prophet (pbuh) passed by me.

when he saw me he smiled at me and knew my condition and my feelings. he called me and i replied, “at your service, o messenger of allah.” he said, “[follow me.](#)” so i followed him. having arrived at home, he sought permission and entered. he allowed me in and i, too, entered. he found milk in a bowl and asked, “[where is this from?](#)” he was told that it was a gift for him from so-and-so. he called me and i responded: “at your service, o messenger of allah.” he said, “[go to the people of as-suffah and usher them in.](#)” he abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) explained: the people of as-suffah were guests of islam; they had no family, no property and no relations. when messenger of allah (pbuh) used to receive something in charity, he would send it to them without taking anything from it. when he received a present, he would send for them and share it with them. on this occasion, i disliked to give them anything. i said to myself: “this meagre quantity of milk will not be enough for all the people of as-suffah! i am more deserving of it than anyone else. by drinking it i may attain some strength. when they come, he will order me to give it to them. i do not expect that anything will be left for me from this milk.” as there was no alternative but to obey allah and his messenger (pbuh). i went and called them. they came and sought permission which was granted. they took their seats. the prophet (pbuh) called me and i responded, “at your service, o messenger of allah.” he then said, “[take the milk and give it to them.](#)” i took the bowl and gave it to one man who drank his fill and returned it to me, and i gave it to the next and he did the same. i went on doing this till the bowl reached messenger of allah (pbuh). by that time all had taken their fill. he (pbuh) took the bowl, put it on his hand, looked at me, smiled and said, “abu hurr.” i said, “at your service, o messenger of allah.” he said, “[now you and i are left.](#)” i said, “that is true, o messenger of allah.” he said, “[sit down and drink.](#)” i drank, but he went on saying, “drink some more.” i said, “by him who has sent you with the truth, i have no room for it.” he said, “[then give it to me.](#)” so i gave him the bowl. he praised allah, uttered the name of allah and drank the remainder.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: first, this hadith indicates the miracle of the prophet (pbuh) as well as his love and compassion for ahlus-suffah, i.e., those poor people who used to stay at as-suffah. second, the prophet (pbuh) would not accept charity, but only gifts. third, he would also let others share a gift given to him by somebody. fourth, as seen in this incident, the leftovers of a muslim, whether food or drink, is permissible to others to consume. fifth, to persuade a guest to eat or drink more is commendable. sixth, to eat or drink to one’s fill, without extravagance, is also permissible.

503. muhammad bin sirin (may allah be pleased with him) reported: abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) said: “i would fall in swoon between the pulpit of (the mosque of) messenger of allah (pbuh) and the chamber of `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) and every passer-by would put his foot on my neck thinking i was insane. i was not insane but i was awfully hungry.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the hadith throws light on the poverty of the companions as well as their self-respect, patience and contentment which prevented them from begging people.

504. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: when messenger of allah (pbuh) died, his armour was mortgaged with a jew for thirty sa` (measures) of barley.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in the hadith, there is a mention of the asceticism of the prophet (pbuh) and also a permissibility for transactions with the people of the book (the jews and the christians). that is why he mortgaged his coat of mail with a jew and took a loan against it.

505. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) mortgaged his armour for a quantity of barley, and i took to him some barley bread and rancid fat. i heard him saying: “the family of muhammad never possessed a measure of wheat from dawn to dusk although they were nine houses (to feed).”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the prophet (pbuh) was perfectly humble and very generous to the point that he did not put anything away for himself until he had to mortgage his own armour for food.

506. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i saw seventy of the people of as-suffah and none of them had a cloak. they had either a lower cloth or a blanket which they suspended from their necks. some reached half way down to the legs and some to the ankles, and one of them would manage to keep it in his hand to avoid exposing his private parts.

[al-bukhari].

507. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: **the mattress of messenger of allah (pbuh) was a piece of tanned skin stuffed with palm fibres.**

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the prophetic model of a simple way of living pictured in these ahadith is vastly different from today's luxurious lifestyle adopted by muslims. may they adopt the simplicity of their prophet (pbuh)!

508. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: we were once sitting in the company of messenger of allah (pbuh) when a man from the ansar came and greeted. as he was leaving, messenger of allah (pbuh) said to him, **“o brother of the ansar, how is my brother sa`d bin `ubadah?”** he replied, “he is well.” messenger of allah (pbuh) asked, **“which of you is desirous of visiting him?”** having said this he got up and we followed him. we were ten and odd in number and we had neither shoes nor light boots nor caps nor shirts. we walked on foot through the barren plain till we came to the residence of sa`d (may allah be pleased with him). his people made way and messenger of allah (pbuh) along with those who accompanied him went up to him.

[muslim].

commentary: in this hadith the description which the companions made about their condition reflects its relevance with this chapter. second, we come to know that the prophet (pbuh) called sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) as his brother. this shows his perfect humbleness and great care for his companions. third, if the house is small, the host is presumed to make arrangement within the narrow space to accommodate the visitors, so that they may sit beside the patient for a while and enquire about his health.

509. `imran bin husain (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, **“the best of you, are my contemporaries, then those who follow them, then those who will come after them. (`imran said, i do not know if he said this twice or thrice). then, they will be followed by those who will testify but will not be called upon to testify; they will betray the trust, and will not be trusted. they will make vows but will not fulfill them, and obesity will prevail among them.”**

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in this hadith, three eras have been called as the best of ages in a graded order: first, the prophetic era, second, the successors' era, and third, the followers of the successors' era. goodness and religion collectively prevailed during this time. then gradually there was an overall deterioration and every new era that the pass of time brought it, proved to be worse than the preceding one. today's muslims have fallen due to their weakness in character. now, the majority of muslims lack morals and belief as described in the qur'an and the hadith. the complaint is to be lodged only with allah!

510. abu umamah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "o son of adam, if you spend the surplus, it will be better for you; and if you retain it, it will be evil for you. you will not be reprimanded for storing what is enough for your need. first of all spend upon those who are your dependents."
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the muslims have been allowed, rather emphatically told and commanded, to possess as much wealth as could meet their personal and family needs. yet, they have also been advised to spend the spare money on the needy. man has been told that it is unwise on his part to be niggardly about money because it spawns unfavourable results in this world as well as in the hereafter. the concentration of wealth within a few hands freezes its vitality and leads to corruption in society. as for the hereafter, the result of stinginess will be definitely bad as the qur'an says:

"the things which they covetously withheld shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the day of resurrection." (3:180)

some `ulama' are of the opinion that after the payment of the annual zakat (poor-due), it is not necessary to spend more. but to be accurate, if somebody pays zakat and yet retains enough money with him, and there are some needy people also in his knowledge, then he will be bound to spend on them. at-tirmidhi quoted a hadith in which messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "indeed there is a right (for poor) in the wealth in addition to zakat."

511. `ubaidullah bin mihsan al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "whosoever begins the day feeling family security and good health; and possessing provision for his day is as though he possessed the whole world."
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: to have one-day food and to enjoy peace and health is indeed a great blessing. it may be said that one has the same satisfaction which one can have on getting the whole world. and if one lacks peace and health, the treasures of the whole world will be of no use because the heaps of wealth cannot provide peace of mind to one, nor can it make one enjoy sound health. the hadith also implies an advice to man that instead of running after wealth, he should endeavour to seek patience and contentment which alone can guarantee him peace and satisfaction. otherwise, he is likely to stake everything on the pursuit of this mirage.

512. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**successful is the one who enters the fold of islam and is provided with sustenance which is sufficient for his day’s needs, and allah makes him content with what he has bestowed upon him.**”
[muslim].

commentary: the real success of a man will be measured by his being blessed with divine mercy and forgiveness in the hereafter, and this is contingent on islam alone. if he lacks the wealth of islam, all the worldly possessions will not ensure his success in the next world. this hadith tells us that richness is not to be defined in terms of a lot of belongings, and that the real richness is gauged by the contentment of the soul.

513. fadalah bin `ubaid al-ansari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) say: “**happiness is due to him who is guided to islam and possesses provision that suffices him for his day and remains content.**”
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the word tuba (translated here as happiness) is given to jannah. some ahadith say that it is the name of a heavenly tree as well. lexically, however, it means greeting and good tiding. the sense of this hadith is analogous to that of the previous one.

514. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: **messenger of allah (pbuh) went to bed hungry for several successive nights, nor did his family have a thing for supper for many consecutive nights; and their bread was mostly of barley.**
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith also displays the asceticism and economic scantiness of the prophet (pbuh) and his wives.

515. fadalah bin `ubaid (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when messenger of allah (pbuh) led salat, some people would fall down from their standing posture out of extreme hunger. they were of the people of as-suffah. the nomad arabs would say that they were insane. after concluding salat, messenger of allah (pbuh) would turn to them and say, "if you were to know what is in store for you with allah, the exalted, you would wish to augment your starvation and lack of provisions."
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the habit of maintaining self-respect in the period of studentship makes man self-respecting, patient and content throughout his life. the dignity of `ulama' lies in patience, contentment and indifference and not in wishing to drain the purses of others and asking them for alms.

516. miqdad bin ma`dikarib (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) say: "no man fills a container worse than his stomach. a few morsels that keep his back upright are sufficient for him. if he has to, then he should keep one-third for food, one-third for drink and one-third for his breathing."
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith dissuades us from overeating as this causes laziness and affects one's health.

517. abu umamah bin tha`labah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the companions of messenger of allah (pbuh) mentioned the life of the world before him. he (pbuh) said, "do you not hear? do you not hear? simplicity (in life) is part of faith, simplicity is part of faith."
[abu dawud].

commentary: this hadith invites our attention to a simple way of living - ordinary dress and simple and non-rich food - and discourages us from being habitual of an affected life style - use of costly dress, delicious and rich food and other dainties of life. the more a man shuns the trappings and accessories of life, the better engaged will he be in being readied for the hereafter. the increased degree of his involvement in worldly comforts and luxuries will keep decreasing his concern for the accountability of future life.

we may keep it in mind that simplicity does not mean escape from cleanliness. because cleanliness is in itself 'half the faith'. how can a believer ignore purity and cleanliness?

518. jabir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) sent us in an expedition under the command of abu `ubaidah (may allah be pleased with him) to intercept a caravan of the quraish. he provided us with a bag of dates, apart from which he found nothing for us. abu `ubaidah (may allah be pleased with him) gave each of us one date (every day). he (the narrator) was asked: "what did you do with that?" he said: we sucked that just like a baby and then drank water over that, and it was sufficient for us for the day until night. we beat off leaves with the help of our sticks, then drenched them with water and ate them. we then went to the seaside, when there appeared before us something like a big mound. we came near it and we found that it was a beast called al-anbar. abu `ubaidah (may allah be pleased with him) said: "it is dead (so it useless for us)." he then said: "no (but it does not matter), we have been sent by messenger of allah (pbuh) in the way of allah and you are hard-pressed (on account of the scarcity of food), so you can eat that." we, three hundred in number, stayed there for a month until we fattened up (having plenty to eat of that fish). he (jabir) said: i saw how we extracted pitcher after pitcher full of fat from the cavity of its eye, and sliced from it compact piece of meat equal to a bull or almost like a bull. abu `ubaidah (may allah be pleased with him) called thirteen men from us and he made them sit in the cavity of its eye, and he held one of its ribs and raised it erect and then saddled the biggest of the camels we had with us and it passed through it (the arched rib), and we carried large pieces of meat for use in our journey. when we came back to al-madinah we went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and told him about that, whereupon he said, "that was a sustenance allah had brought forth for you. do you have any piece of meat left with you, for us to eat." jabir (may allah be pleased with him) said: we sent to messenger of allah (pbuh) some of that (meat) and he ate it.
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also points to the economic pinch from which the companions suffered in the early phase of islam. they braved it patiently. secondly, the blessing came to them in the sense that each one of them was patient enough to live on a single date-fruit and water in twenty-four hours. thirdly, it emphasizes that according to the circumstances, there is always room for ijihad (independent juristic reasoning). first abu `ubaidah (may allah be pleased with him) hesitated,

but later he established a different opinion on the basis of his ijihad and decided to use the body of the giant fish as food. fourthly, it provides us a proof of the sacrifice of the companions that allah miraculously granted them such a huge sea-fish that a group of three hundred people kept eating for one month. fifthly, it tells us that a sea-carrion is a lawful food as indicated in another hadith: “the water of the sea and its carrion are both halal.” sixthly, this particular fish, like the whale, is a gigantic phenomenon which is normally about 50 feet long.”

519. asma' bint yazid (may allah be pleased with them) reported: **the sleeves of the shirt of messenger of allah (pbuh) reached his wrists.** [at-tirmidhi].

commentary: wearing long clothes is commonly known to be a sign of arrogance. moreover, such type of dress retreads physical movement, whereas short clothes cause inconvenience to the wearer in summer and winter. moderation, therefore, is the best way and therefore, the prophetic example.

520. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: on the day of the battle of al-khandaq (the trench), we were digging the trench when a very hard boulder came in our way. the companions went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and told him about it. he said, **“i will go down the trench to see it.”** he stood up and it was noticed that he had tied a stone over his stomach due to intense hunger. we had not tasted anything for three days. he took up a spade and struck the hard rock with it and it turned into sand. i sought his permission to go home, (after reaching home i) said to my wife, “i have seen the prophet (pbuh) in a state that i am unable to endure. have you got anything in the house?” she said, “i have a small quantity of barley and a lamb.” i slaughtered the lamb, ground the barley and put the meat in the cooking pot. then i went to the prophet (pbuh). in the meantime the flour had been kneaded and the meat in the pot was nearly cooked. i said to him, “o messenger of allah, i have some food, will you come along with one or two companions?” he asked, **“how many men should go there?”** i told him the number. he said, **“it will be better if they are more in number. tell your wife not to remove the pot from the hearth nor the bread from the oven till i arrive.”** then he said to the muhajirun and the ansar: **“let us go (to eat).”** they all rose (and went with him). i went to my wife and said, “bless you, the prophet (pbuh), the muhajirun, the ansar and the whole company are coming.” she said, “did he (pbuh) ask you?” i replied in the affirmative.

(when they arrived) messenger of allah (pbuh) said to his companions, "enter, but do not crowd in." then he started breaking up the bread and putting meat on it. he would take from the pot and the oven then would cover them up, approach his companions and hand it over to them. he would then go back and uncover the pot and the oven. he continued to break up the bread and put meat on it till all had eaten to their fill and still some of the food remained. then he said to my wife, "eat from it, and send it as a present, for the people have been afflicted with severe hunger."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: jabir said: when the trench was being dug, i noticed the signs of hunger on the face of the prophet (pbuh). i returned to my wife and said to her, "have you got anything in the house? i have seen the signs of severe hunger on the face of messenger of allah (pbuh)." she brought out a bag which contained a sa` (a measure that equals approximately 3kg.) of barley. we had a lamb which was reared in the home. i slaughtered the lamb and she ground the flour for baking bread. i then cut the meat and put it in the cooking pot. when i was returning to messenger of allah (pbuh), my wife said to me, "do not embarrass me before messenger of allah (pbuh) and his companions." (she said this because she thought that the food would not be enough for everyone, for how can very little food cater for a thousand people?) when i came to him, i said to him in a low tone, "o messenger of allah (pbuh), we have slaughtered a small lamb and have ground a sa` of barley. please accompany me with a few of your companions." thereupon he (pbuh) announced in a loud voice, "o people of the trench, jabir has arranged a feast for you, so all of you are welcome." and addressing me he said, "do not take the pot off the fire, nor bake the kneaded flour till i arrive." so i came home and he came ahead of the people. my wife said, "it will be a matter of disgrace for you (because there is not enough food)." i said, "i did only what you told me." she brought out the kneaded flour and messenger of allah (pbuh) spat into it, and invoked the blessing of allah on it, and then he spat into the cooking pot and invoked the blessing of allah on it. then he said, "call another woman to help bake bread and let her take out from the cooking pot, but do not take it off the fire." there were about a thousand guests. all of them ate till they left the food and went off. our pot still bubbled as before and the dough was being baked as before.

commentary: this hadith throws light on the simple life style which the prophet (pbuh) and his companions led. it also throws light on the miracle of the augmentation of food.

besides, it highlights the humbleness of the prophet (pbuh) that he, side by side with his companions, also did hard and arduous jobs. also we are informed that it is preferable to make an offering, particularly to a needy and hungry person.

521. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) said to (to his wife) umm sulaim(may allah be pleased with her), "i noticed some weakness in the voice of messenger of allah (pbuh) and i feel it was due to hunger. have you got any food?" she said, "yes." so she brought out barley loaves, took off her head covering, in a part of which she wrapped these loaves and then put them beneath my mantle and covered me with a part of it. she then sent me to messenger of allah (pbuh). i set forth and found messenger of allah (pbuh) sitting in the mosque in the company of some people. i stood near them whereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) asked, "has abu talhah sent you?" i said, "yes." thereupon he said to those who were with him to get up (and follow him). he went forth and so did i, ahead of them until i came to abu talhah and informed him. abu talhah said, "o umm sulaim, here comes messenger of allah (pbuh) along with the people and we do not have enough (food) to feed them." she said, "allah and his messenger know better." abu talhah went out (to receive him) until he met messenger of allah (pbuh), and he came forward along with him until they both (messenger of allah (pbuh) and abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) came in. then messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "o umm sulaim, bring forth what you have with you." so she brought the bread. messenger of allah (pbuh) commanded that the bread be broken into small pieces and after umm sulaim (may allah be pleased with her) had squeezed clarified butter out of a butter container and made it just like soup. messenger of allah (pbuh) recited over it what allah wished him to recite. he then said, "allow ten guests to come in." they ate until they had their fill. they then went out. he (messenger of allah (pbuh)) again said, "allow ten (more to come in)", and he (the host) ushered them in. they ate to their fill. then they went out. he (pbuh) again said, "allow ten (more)," until all the people ate to their fill. they were seventy or eighty persons.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: anas said: when all had eaten, the remaining food was collected. it was as much as there was in the beginning.

yet another narration is: anas said: the groups of ten people ate by turn. after eighty persons had eaten, messenger of allah (pbuh) and the family of that house ate, and there was still a quantity left over.

another narration is: anas (may allah be pleased with him) said: i visited messenger of allah (pbuh) one day, and found him sitting in the company of his companions, with a belt tied over his waist. i asked, “why has messenger of allah (pbuh) tied the belt on his waist?” i was told, “due to hunger.” i went to abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) the husband of umm sulaim (may allah be pleased with her) and said, “o father, i have seen messenger of allah (pbuh) with a belt tied over his waist. i asked one of his companions about the reason of it and he said that it was on account of severe hunger.” abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) went to my mother and asked, “have you got anything?” she said, “yes. i have a piece of bread and some dry dates. were messenger of allah (pbuh) to come alone, we could feed him his fill, but if he comes along with others, there would not be enough food.” anas then narrated the hadith in full.

commentary: this hadith mentions the same things we have seen in the previous one. yet, in this latter one, there is an elucidation that the prophet (pbuh) and the host-family took meal after everybody had taken it. imam an-nawawi said: this shows that it is desirable that hosts should take meal after guests have taken it.

secondly, anas (may allah be pleased with him) addressed abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) as father and he did so out of respect. abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him) was the step-father of anas (may allah be pleased with him). his real father was malik bin an-nadir and mother was umm sulaim (may allah be pleased with him). she embraced islam but her husband remained a non-believer. he left his muslim wife and migrated to syria where he died. afterwards she married abu talhah (may allah be pleased with him). thirdly, the events of ascetic, contented and destitute life as experienced by the prophet (pbuh) and his companions are unthinkable today. but these are such facts, reported most authentically, as can be hardly refuted by being labelled as myths. yet, some scholars say that it was a particular phase of time when there existed a conflict between islam and paganism. it demanded that muslims, by being indifferent to the world and its comforts, should be engaged day and night in uprooting disbelief, and paving the way for the predominance of islam.

Chapter 57: Contentment and Self-esteem and avoidance of unnecessary begging of People

allah, the exalted, says:

“and no moving (living) creature is there on earth but its provision is due from allah.” (11:6)

“(charity is) for fuqara (the poor), who in allah’s cause are restricted (from travel), and cannot move about in the land (for trade or work). the one who knows them not, thinks that they are rich because of their modesty. you may know them by their mark, they do not beg of people at all.” (2:273)

“and those, who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but hold a medium (way) between those (extremes).” (25:67)

“and i (allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship me (alone). i seek not any provision from them (i.e., provision for themselves or for my creatures) nor do i ask that they should feed me (i.e., feed themselves or my creatures).” (51:56,57)

522. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**richness is not the abundance of wealth, rather it is self-sufficiency.**”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: self-sufficiency means that man lives on whatever he possesses, remains contentedly independent of others and avoids begging of them. herein lies a suggestion that man should submit to divine dispensation. he should not desire more than he needs, nor should he keep an eye on the wealth of others.

523. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**successful is the one who has entered the fold of islam and is provided with sustenance which is sufficient for his needs, and allah makes him content with what he has bestowed upon him.**”
[muslim].

commentary: to be contented with the independent subsistence (**kafaf**) has been counted a merit by the prophet (pbuh) because this prevents one from begging of people. the hadith points out the excellence of those people who remain satisfied with their limited resources and do not beg of people. similarly, autarky has its own merit because affluence often makes a man proud, whereas penury lowers his image in the eyes of people. yet adequate livelihood has no room for the pitfalls of the two other situations.

524. hakim bin hizam (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i begged messenger of allah (pbuh) and he gave me; i begged him again and he gave me. i begged him again and he gave me and said, “**o hakim, wealth is pleasant and sweet. he who acquires it with self-contentment, it becomes a source of blessing for him; but it is not blessed for him who seeks it out of greed. he is like one who goes on eating but his hunger is not satisfied. the upper hand is better than the lower one.**” i said to him, “o messenger of allah, by him who sent you with the truth i will not, after you, ask anyone for anything till i leave this world.” so abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) would summon hakim (may allah be pleased with him) to give his rations, but he would refuse. then ‘umar (may allah be pleased with him) would call him but he would decline to accept anything. so ‘umar (may allah be pleased with him) said addressing muslims: “o muslims, i ask you to bear testimony that i offer hakim his share of the booty that allah has assigned for him but he refuses my offer.” thus hakim did not accept anything from anyone after the death of messenger of allah (pbuh), till he died.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: man constantly remains engaged in hoarding wealth and there comes no point of termination to this process. rather, the more he gets it, the more he is overpowered by lust for it till he is carried to the grave. if man gets wealth in a dignified way without being crazy for it, ethics certainly allows him to do so.

525. abu burdah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: abu musa al-ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) said: “**six of us accompanied messenger of allah (pbuh) in an expedition. we had one camel with us; we rode it in turn. our feet got injured and my nails also fell out. we wrapped up our feet in rags; and because of this the campaign came to be known as dhat-ur-riqa` (the campaign of rags).**”

“abu burdah (may allah be pleased with him) says: **abu musa reported this hadith but regretted having done so.** he said, “**would that i had not mentioned it!**” he said so because he disliked to disclose anything concerning his deeds.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith also throws light on the ascetic and insightful life of the companions and their submission to the divine will. moreover, we are told that it is advisable not to disclose virtuous deeds in order to avoid committing the sin of showing off.

526. `amr bin taghlib (may allah be pleased with him) reported: some booty or prisoners of war were brought to messenger of allah (pbuh) and he distributed them, giving some men and neglecting others. then, he was informed that those whom he had not given a thing were displeased. on this the messenger of allah (pbuh) praised allah and glorified him and said, “**it is a fact that i give to one and overlook another. the one i ignore is dearer to me than the one i give. i give to those in whose hearts i perceive anxiety; others i leave with the richness and contentment that allah has put in their hearts. one of them is `amr bin taghlib.**” upon this `amr bin taghlib said, “by allah i shall not accept a herd of red camels in exchange for what the prophet said (about me).”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: whatever voluntary gifts or the spoils of war were brought to messenger of allah (pbuh), he divided them out to the companions. in distribution, he weighed different considerations in his mind and the beneficiaries were categorized into three groups: the needy, the deserving cases and those whose hearts were to be won over. his primary concern, however, was to make donations to only those people about whom he had apprehensions that, if ignored, they would display impatience and weakness. in this way the reliable and contented type of men were intentionally ignored. the superiority of `amr bin taghlib (may allah be pleased with him) is determined by the fact that the prophet (pbuh) counted him among the latter, and he rightly took it as a great honour for him. hence, we conclude that a ruler enjoys powers of expediency with regard to doling out from the public treasury. yet, he is supposed to carry into practice what is implied by piety, integrity and trustworthiness. he must not be subordinate to self interests.

527. hakim bin hizam (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “the upper hand is better than the lower one; and begin (charity) with those who are under your care; and the best charity is (the one which is given) out of surplus; and he who wishes to abstain from begging will be protected by allah; and he who seeks self-sufficiency will be made self-sufficient by allah.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: in this hadith the underlying points are self-evident but the last point is very important: those who avoid begging of others and remain independent of them are beloved to allah. indeed he helps such people. instead of leaving them alone to be degraded on account of begging, he bestows upon them the sense of self-sufficiency, patience and contentment.

528. abu sufyan (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “do not be importunate in begging. by allah! if one of you asks me for something and i give it to him unwillingly, there is no blessing in what i give him.”

[muslim].

commentary: here one has been prevented from making demands to others importunately, pressingly and persistently. because even if one gets something in this way, it will be bereft of blessing. the reason is that the giver's will is not involved in the matter as he has given the charity to the beggar with a sense of reluctance and aversion and out of modesty.

529. `auf bin malik al-ashja`i (may allah be pleased with him) reported: seven, eight or nine people, including myself, were with messenger of allah (pbuh) on an occasion when he (pbuh) remarked, “would you pledge allegiance to messenger of allah?” as we had taken oath of allegiance shortly before, we said, “we have already done so, o messenger of allah.” he again asked, “would you not pledge allegiance to messenger of allah?” so we stretched out our hands and said, “we have already made our pledge with you, o messenger of allah, on what should we make a pledge with you?” he said, “to worship allah and not to associate anything with him, to perform the five (daily) salat and to obey.” then he added in a low tone, “and not to ask people for anything.” thereafter, i noticed that some of these people who were present did not ask anyone to pick up even the whip for them if it fell from their hands. [muslim].

commentary: herein we find an approval of renewing the oath of loyalty; besides, there is also a ground for administering such oath in respect of the obedience and worship of allah, and decent behaviour. what is more, we are also under obligation to observe all that the oath of fealty stands for.

530. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, "if one of you would keep begging (of people) until he meets allah (on the day of resurrection) his face will be without a shred of flesh."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the lack of flesh from the face is either metaphorically indicative of disgrace and wretchedness, or it would factually happen as a symptom of sinning and the punishment thereof. this seems to be more plausible. aversion against begging has been fomented in this hadith because it brings shame both in this world and the hereafter.

531. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: while messenger of allah (pbuh) was on his pulpit (in the mosque) delivering a khutbah (religious talk) about sadaqah (charity) and begging, he said, "the upper hand is better than the lower hand, the upper hand is the one which gives and the lower hand is the begging one."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

532. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "he who begs to increase his riches is in fact asking only for a live coal. it is up to him to decrease it or increase it."

[muslim].

commentary: we come to know that begging without a pressing need is such a disgraceful crime that it brings one to hell-fire. what a pity that beggary prevails among the followers of a religion which brands it as an abominable crime! it is extremely pitiable and lamentable that muslims are ignorant of and indifferent to islamic teachings.

533. samurah bin jundub (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "begging is a cut that a person inflicts upon his face; except for asking a ruler, or under the stress of circumstances from which there is no escape."

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: to submit his demand to the head of state means that if a man deserves help, he should go to the public treasury which exists in an islamic country so as to fulfill the needs of the needy gracefully. if his access to it is not possible, he is free to put his demand to others as well.

534. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who suffers poverty and seeks relief from people, he will not be relieved; but he who seeks relief from allah alone, he will be relieved sooner or later.”

[abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: in this hadith, it has been suggested that a man in need should turn to allah alone and not to human beings because he alone meets the needs of all creatures. yet, if the situation and need so demand, he may also resort to people, but he should have the firm conviction that their co-operation and help depend on the will of allah.

535. thauban (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who guarantees me that he will not beg anything from anyone, i will guarantee him (to enter) jannah.” i said, “i give you the guarantee.” then thauban (may allah be pleased with him) never begged anything from anyone.

[abu dawud].

commentary: not to seek any kind of aid from anybody means that a request should not be made as such without need. because in the hour of need a man is permitted by the shari`ah to request somebody to meet his requirement. yet, if on such occasions he still avoids begging of anybody, it will reflect a very high point of his scrupulous uprightness. later thauban (may allah be pleased with him) adopted this way. ibn majah says in his sunan that if from the horseback his whip fell on the ground, instead of seeking the help of anybody he would himself get down and pick it up.

536. qabisah bin al-mukhariq (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i stood as surety for a debt and came to messenger of allah (pbuh) to seek his help in discharging it. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “wait till we receive charity and i shall give you out of it.” he (pbuh) added, “o qabisah, begging is not lawful except for three people.

one who has incurred debt (for assuming guarantee), for him begging is permissible till the guarantee is discharged and he should then refrain; a person whose property has been destroyed by a calamity is allowed to beg till he attains self-sufficiency; a person who meets with dire necessity (due to hunger) provided that three men of understanding from his people affirm the genuineness (of his poverty), for him begging is lawful till he attains means of his subsistence. other than these, o qabisah, anything received through begging is unlawful, its recipient devours it unlawfully.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith explicitly tells us about the three types of men who are allowed to beg of others. a detailed description has already been mentioned above.

537. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a needy person is not the one who goes from door to door, begging and is turned away with a morsel or two or with a date or two. but a needy person is the one who does not have enough to live upon, and neither from his appearance it occurs that he is needy and should be given alms, nor does he himself beg anything from others.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the professional beggars and the truly needy have clearly been identified here. the point is that we should try to find out deserving people and spend on them. because, despite being needy, they do not wear a professional look nor do they approach anybody to receive alms. in no way will it be counted as charity if we satisfy ourselves by giving a few coins to a professional beggar whom we come across on the road

Chapter 58: Permissibility of Assistance without Greed

538. salim, son of abdullah bin `umar, from his father abdullah; from `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) would give me some gift, but i would say: "give it to someone who needs it more than i." thereupon he (pbuh) would say, "take it when it comes to you without begging and without greed, and add it to your property. then use it yourself or give it away in charity. as for the rest, do not covet it." salim said: `abdullah bin `umar would never ask anything from anyone, nor would he refuse accepting it when it was given to him. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in this hadith, three points merit our attention. first, there is an account of the exemplary character of the companions who became unmindful of their own needs when they saw that somebody else was more needy and deserved assistance. second, there is an allowance for accepting a gift provided one's heart is free from desire for it. third, a man is allowed to accumulate wealth but on the condition that he would fulfill his personal and family needs. besides, he should resolve that he would also spend money on the needy as well as on the lines approved by allah so as to win his pleasure.

Chapter 59: Encouraging Livelihood by (working with) Hands and Abstaining from Begging

allah, the exalted, says:

“then when the (jumu`ah) salat (prayer) is ended, you may disperse through the land, and seek the bounty of allah (by working).” (62:10)

539. zubair bin `awwam (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is far better for you to take your rope, go to the mountain, (cut some firewood) carry it on your back, and sell it and thereby save your face than begging from people whether they give you or refuse.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: as compared to beggary, this hadith puts emphasis on hard work. however, people may look down upon manual labour or hard work, yet it is certainly far better than seeking charity servilely, because doing a job like this will certainly save a man’s self-respect, whereas begging puts him in an awkward position. to put it in this way, islam stands for a man’s deliverance from indignity and teaches him to keep his sense of dignity.

540. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is better for anyone of you to carry a bundle of wood on his back and sell it than to beg of someone whether he gives him or refuses.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

541. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “(prophet) dawud (pbuh) ate only out of that which he earned through his manual work.”

[al-bukhari].

542. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “(prophet) zakariyya (pbuh) was a carpenter.”

[al-bukhari].

543. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “no food is better to man than that which he earns through his manual work. dawud (pbuh),

the prophet of allah, ate only out of his earnings from his manual work.”
[al-bukhari].

commentary: labour and manual work make the living of a man good, laudable and excellent. the prophets also earned their living with their own work. upon such earnings we get the blessing of allah. some people wrongly think that earning a living is at variance with trust in allah. rather the right form of trust requires us to adopt ways and means according to our capacity and then to leave the matter to allah. also the prophetic argument tells us that any manual skill or occupation, and the one who depends on it for his living should not be considered inferior. instead, such people deserve respectable and worthy place in society because they emulate the example of the prophets. in our society, a highbrow attitude towards them is unfortunate and deserves our deprecation. we have chosen to put some trades in a very low estimate and so is our view of those who are attached with them. in fact, no trade is inferior, nor is the person who adopts it.

Chapter 60: Excellence of Generosity and Spending in a Good cause with Reliance on Allah

allah, the exalted, says:

“and whatsoever you spend of anything (in allah’s cause), he will replace it.” (34:39)

“and whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking allah’s countenance. and whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.” (2:272)

“and whatever you spend in good, surely allah knows it well.” (2:273)

544. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “envy is permitted only in two cases: a man whom allah gives wealth, and he disposes of it rightfully, and a man to whom allah gives knowledge which he applies and teaches it.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: envy in the hadith means “ghibtah” the equivalent of which does not exist in english language. what it means is that you wish to enjoy things which others have, such as wealth and knowledge, without wishing that they should be deprived of them to your exclusive benefit. envy is a corrosive disease of moral nature which snatches away man’s peace of mind. it means resentment at the condition of a man enjoying some divine favour, and to wish it to be finished. it is forbidden because it wipes out one’s good deeds. but there is no harm in being envious of somebody. it has some positive connotation in the sense that you admire allah’s blessing over a person and wish to be favoured with it too. this hadith interprets envy as a “ghibtah” but not in the absolute sense because it is condemnable.

this hadith, however, points out in unambiguous terms the excellence of a rich man who not only spends the gifts of allah (swt) on his own person but also allocates a portion of it to the poor and the needy as well as to the propagation of religion. it further throws light on the excellence of a man who is well-grounded in theological doctrine and suggests solutions to people’s problems in the light of the qur’an and the hadith and also imparts the religious knowledge to others.

everybody should aspire, apart from affluence, for an excessive fervour of spending in the way of allah. moreover, the quest of islamic disciplines and their underlying rationale should remain at the centre of his heart, so that he may inherit the legacy of the prophets, doing full justice to it as well. none can do it but with the blessing of allah.

545. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) asked, “**who of you loves the wealth of his heir more than his own wealth?**” the companions said: “o messenger of allah! there is none of us but loves his own wealth more.” he (pbuh) said, “**his wealth is that which he has sent forward, but that which he retains belongs to his heir.**” [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith spotlights in a wise fashion the significance and perception of spending in the way of allah. the real wealth of man is that which he spends in his way and the channels he approves. only this wealth will stand him in good stead on the day of resurrection. otherwise, what apart from it, will be personally used up by him in the worldly life, and what he leaves behind will fall to the lot of his heirs. it implies that if allah has bestowed worldly riches upon a man, he should spend them to the maximum in the way to allah.

546. `adi bin hatim (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**protect yourself from hell-fire even by giving a piece of date as charity.**” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned previously. it tells us that, according to one’s resource capacity, one can win the pleasure of allah even by spending a small quantity of wealth in his way.

547. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: **messenger of allah (pbuh) never said `no’ to anyone who asked him for anything.** [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith illustrates the refined morals, sublimity of soul and the generosity of the prophet (pbuh). had somebody asked him of something, provided it was in his possession, he would never say `no’ to him. he would also on occasions resort to borrowing to meet the want of a needy person. if the borrowing were not possible, he would promise to fulfill his need.

548. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “everyday two angels descend and one of them says, `o allah! compensate (more) to the person who gives (in charity)’ while the other one says, `o allah! destroy the one who withholds (charity, etc)”.

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the spending for which there is good news of divine blessing may be said as expenses on household and guests, etc., as well as voluntary and obligatory charity. and the miserliness which incurs imprecation is restraining from paying zakat, giving alms and not spending on what is commendable. destruction may imply the destruction of wealth or that of the miser himself. only allah knows better!

549. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah, the exalted, says, `spend, o son of adam, you will also be spent upon.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: according to the hadith, one who spends in the way of allah, will be duly paid. it means that allah will enhance the provision of such a man and grant him the best recompense.

550. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: a man asked messenger of allah (pbuh), “which act in islam is the best?” he (pbuh) replied, “to feed (the poor and the needy) and to greet those whom you know and those you do not know.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the provision of food to somebody may signify almsgiving or offering or an act of hospitality. it may also be interpreted as meeting the want of a needy person: if he is hungry, he should be fed; if he lacks clothes, the same should be given to him; if he is sick, medicine should be provided to him; and if he is under debt, he should be helped to pay off his debt, and so on. as for greeting (saying `as-salamu `alaikum’), it is meant to be popularized because it brings hearts closer to each other and is an antidote to hatred and hostility.

551. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “there are forty kinds of virtue, the highest of which is to gift a (milch) she goat.

he who practises any of these virtues, expecting its reward (from allah) and believing on the verity of the promise made for it, will enter jannah.” [al-bukhari].

commentary: the hadith speaks of the returnable gift of a mammal like a goat or she-camel which should be gifted to somebody for the provision of milk or wool. it is also a benevolent act and good trait of character. the forty qualities of character, as mentioned in this hadith, have been enumerated by some `ulama' in their own respective ways. but al-hafiz ibn hajar al-asqalani says that the prophet (pbuh) did not name these qualities, and that perhaps the reason behind this is that no one should disparage or underestimate a good act, no matter how small it may be, because this could lead to doing without this good act altogether.

552. abu umamah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “o son of adam, if you spend the surplus, it will be better for you; and if you retain it, it will be bad for you. you will not be reprimanded for keeping what is enough for your need. begin with those who are your dependents, and the upper hand (i.e., the one that spends in the way of allah) is better than the lower hand (i.e., the one that receives charity.)” [muslim].

commentary: a similar hadith reported by at-tirmidhi has already been mentioned. read the commentary on (hadith no. 510).

553. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: whenever the messenger of allah (pbuh) was asked a thing by one who is about to accept islam but he would give it. a man came to the prophet (pbuh) and he gave him a herd of sheep scattered between two mountains. when he returned to his people, he said to them: “o my people! embrace islam because muhammad gives like one who has no fear of poverty.” some people would embrace islam only for worldly gains, but soon islam becomes dearer to them than the world with all what it contains. [muslim].

commentary: in this hadith, there is a provision of giving economic aid to converts to win over their hearts so that their loyalty to islam is firmly established. the result of this sensible policy was that if somebody had embraced islam for the sake of gaining material gains, this sentiment, in due course of time, would be stripped off from his heart, and finally he would turn into a sincere muslim.

in view of its rationale, allah has termed the policy of reconciling hearts, to islam as a zakat expenditure. in other words, an allocated sum of the zakat fund can be expended on this head as well. some scholars argue that it is now no more permissible to spend on this head. but to be accurate, expending out of the zakat fund on this head is valid for all times. if a measure is adequately taken on an institutional basis to make the hearts of converts incline to islam, we can witness its benefits even today.

554. `umar (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) distributed some wealth and i said to him, "o messenger of allah! do you not think that there are other people who are more deserving than these whom you gave." he (pbuh) said, "they had, in fact, left no alternative for me except either they should beg of me importunately or they would regard me as a miser; but i am not a miser."
[muslim].

commentary: here also, we hear about the same converts who were still ignorant of islam and the status of prophethood. owing to this ignorance and weak faith, they could adopt such attitude as would have been inappropriate or would have caused lack of courtesy towards the prophet (pbuh). this brought him to giving preference to them with regard to the distribution of offerings so as to guard them against the sway of the weakness referred to. this reflects the prophet's generosity and his accommodating sense as well as the care which he took to win over the hearts as mentioned earlier. the purpose behind it was to help increase faith in their hearts and make them rise above mundane interests as sincere muslims.

555. jubair bin mut`im (may allah be pleased with him) reported: while i was walking with the prophet (pbuh) on his return from the battle of hunain, a few bedouins caught hold of him and began to demand their shares. they forced him to a tree and someone snatched away his cloak (which got entangled in that thorny tree). the prophet (pbuh) said, "give my cloak back to me. were i to have camels equal to the number of these trees, i would have distributed them all among you, and you would not have found me a miser, or a liar, or a coward."
[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith also throws light on the issue of distribution of charities for winning over hearts; besides, it depicts the sublime morals of the prophet (pbuh) as to how he tolerated the harshness and discourtesy of bedouins with patience and humbleness.

t also reveals that negative attributes like stinginess, falsehood and cowardice should not be attributed to imam (**religious leader**).

556. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**wealth is not diminished by giving (in charity). allah augments the honour of one who forgives; and one who displays humbleness towards another seeking the pleasure of allah, allah exalts him in ranks.**”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith has described three facts. first, sadaqah does not diminish wealth because allah blesses the rest of it and thus recompenses it. besides, the loss of wealth of the almsgiver will certainly be rewarded on the day of resurrection. second, man thinks that a conciliatory or forgiving attitude will weaken his position in the eyes of others. he erroneously takes it as his disparagement and insult. however, this hadith reveals the reality that by this way, allah (swt) raises his image and he is not belittled at all, because a forgiving gesture will enhance his esteem in the hearts of people, and in the hereafter, divine reward for it will definitely lead to his elevation. third, if somebody displays affability and humbleness in his behaviour, allah (swt) will project his prestige and dignity into the hearts of others or bless him in the hereafter.

557. abu kabshah `amr bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**i swear by allah for three (qualities) which i am going to tell you about. remember them well:**

(1) the wealth of a man will not diminish by sadaqah (charity).

(2) allah augments the honour of a man who endures an oppression patiently.

(3) he who opens a gate of begging, allah opens a gate of poverty (or he said a word similar to it).”

he (pbuh) also said, “**remember well what i am going to tell you: the world is for four kinds of people. (1) one upon whom allah has bestowed wealth and knowledge and so he fears his rubb in respect to them, joins the ties of blood relationship and acknowledges the rights of allah on him (and fulfills them); this type will have the best position (in jannah).**

(2) one upon whom allah has conferred knowledge but no wealth, and he is sincere in his intention and says: `had i possessed wealth, i would have acted like so-and-so.' if that is his intention, his reward is the same as that of the other. (3) one whom allah has given wealth but no knowledge and he squanders his wealth ignorantly, does not fear allah in respect to it, does not discharge the obligations of kinship and does not acknowledge the rights of allah. such a person will be in the worst position (in the hereafter). (4) one upon whom allah has bestowed neither wealth nor knowledge and he says: `had i possessed wealth, i would have acted like so-and-so (i.e., he would squander his wealth).' if this is his intention, both will have equal sin.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith highlights the following points:

1. those who forgive people and pardon them will be granted honour and elevation both in this life and in the hereafter.
2. those who have sufficient means to live on and still beg of people out of greed, will be afflicted with poverty.
3. the hadith also urges us to acquire religious knowledge, and also the practise of this knowledge along with the intention to please allah alone.
4. the hadith also criticizes ignorance of religious teachings and ignorant people, for ignorance can easily lead one to commit forbidden acts.

558. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) had slaughtered a sheep and distributed major portions of its meat. then he (pbuh) asked, “**is there anything left?**” she replied, “nothing, except the shoulder.” thereupon he said, “**all of it is left except its shoulder.**”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith reveals a truth to man that he should not eat up anything and everything all alone, rather in this regard he is supposed to take the maximum care for the distribution of alms and charity so that it may stand him in good stead in the hereafter. what one has given in charity will by no means be wasted, for he will doubtlessly find its reward with allah on the day of resurrection.

559. asma' bint abu bakr (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said to me, "do not hoard; otherwise, allah will withhold from you."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: herein is enshrined a divine principle; his retribution is determined by the kind of things done by man. a proverb may be quoted to this effect, "as you sow, so shall you reap". if we spend a lot in the way of allah, he will also recompense us a lot. and if we stint spending in his way, he will dispense sustenance to us with restraint, too. if we accumulate wealth in a miserly fashion and avoid spending it in the way of allah, he will also restrain the flow of his bounty to us. to sum up, the hadith inspires us to generously spend money in the way of allah and also sternly warns us of the consequences of stinginess and parsimony.

560. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying: "the case of a miserly man and a generous man who gives in charity is similar to that of two persons who are clad in armour from their breasts up to their collar bones. when the generous man gives in charity, his armour expands so much as to cover his fingertips and toes. when the miser intends to spend something the armour contracts and every ring of it sticks to the place where it is (sinks into his flesh). he tries to loosen it but it does not expand."

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the hadith metaphorically highlights the significance of giving in charity, saying it covers up a man's sins in such way as a full coat of mail, reaching his feet, conceals his whole body. aside from it, there is a good news for the almsgiver that his wealth will receive divine blessing and he will be safe from trials and tribulations. whereas a miser faces a warning that his sins and defects will be made known to people and not concealed from them, and he will remain the target of miseries. we are further told that when a generous man intends to give charity, his chest expands for it and he happily gives vent to his generosity. on the other hand, when a niggardly man intends to spend money in charity, his chest contracts and he withholds his giving hand. to conclude, this hadith brings good news to generous people, and a warning to misers.

561. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "he who gives in charity the value of a date which he legally earned,

and allah accepts only that which is pure, allah accepts it with his right hand and fosters it for him, as one of you fosters his mare, until it becomes like a mountain.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here is an attribute of allah, his hand, has been mentioned. we are supposed to believe in it without interpretation or comparison; that is to say that allah has hands as befit his glory. we cannot compare his essential attributes to anything, nor can we describe them.

it is evident from this hadith that allah increases the reward of charity which is given from lawfully-earned money until it becomes like a mountain in greatness.

562. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “while a man was walking through a barren land, he heard a voice coming out of a cloud saying: ‘irrigate the garden of so-and-so.’ thereupon the cloud drifted in a certain direction and discharged its water over a rocky plain. the streamlets flowed into a channel. this man followed the channel until it reached a garden and he saw the owner of the garden standing in its center, working with his spade spreading the water (changing the course of the water). he asked him: “o slave of allah, what is your name?” he told his name, which was the same that he heard from the cloud. the owner of the garden then asked him: “o slave of allah, why did you ask my name?” he replied: “i heard a voice from a cloud which poured down this water saying: ‘irrigate the garden of so-and-so.’ i would like to know what do you do with it.” he said: “now that you asked me, i will tell you. i estimate the produce of the garden and distribute one-third of it in charity, i spend one-third on myself and my family and invest one-third back into the garden.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith, besides the virtue of alms and charity, touches upon the theme of clairvoyance and miracles. it is something supernatural that a man should hear a voice from the cloud. yet such supernatural phenomenon signify only the omnipotence of allah. nobody is presumed to claim that he can demonstrate at will something unusual by virtue of his clairvoyant and miraculous power. there are indeed some people who lay such a claim and thereby swindle away the money of gullible souls and lead them astray.

Chapter 61: Prohibition of Miserliness

allah, the exalted, says:

“but he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient. and belies al-husna. we will make smooth for him the path for evil. and what will his wealth avail him when he goes down (in destruction)?” (92:8-11)

“and whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, then they are the successful ones.” (64:16)

563. jabir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “beware of oppression, for oppression will be darkness on the day of resurrection; and beware of stinginess because it destroyed those who were before you. it incited them to shed their blood and deem unlawful as lawful.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith has been mentioned before. refer to hadith no. 205.

Chapter 62: Selflessness and Sympathy

allah, the exalted, says:

“and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that.” (59:9)

“and they give food, in spite of their love for it (or for the love of him), to the poor, the orphan, and the captive.” (76:8)

564. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to the prophet (pbuh) and said; “i am hard pressed by hunger.” he (pbuh) sent a word to one of his wives who replied: “by him who has sent you with the truth, i have nothing except water.” then he sent the same message to another (wife) and received the same reply. he sent this message to all of them (i.e., his wives) and received the same reply. then he (pbuh) said, “**who will entertain this (man) as guest?**” one of the ansar said: “o messenger of allah, i will.” so he took him home and said to his wife: “serve the guest of messenger of allah (pbuh).”

another narration is: the ansari asked his wife: “have you got anything?” she answered: “nothing, except a little food for the children.” he said: “keep them busy with something, and when they ask for food put them to sleep. when the guest enters, extinguish the light and give him the impression that we are also eating.” so they sat down and the guest ate and they passed the night hungry. when he came to the prophet (pbuh) in the morning, he said to him, “**allah admired what you did with your guest last night.**”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith describes a unique example of hospitality and kindness liked by allah. it imparts to man the sense of self-sacrifice and a feeling of fellowship.

565. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**the food for two suffices for three; and the food for three suffices for four persons.**”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

in muslim, jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “**the food for one person suffices for two; the food for two suffices for four, and the food for four suffices for eight persons.**”

commentary: we are told that if on some occasion a host feels that the prepared food is too little to feed his guests, all of them should willingly share it with each other. this will be both blessing and rewarding from al-lah.

566. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: once we were on a journey with messenger of allah (pbuh) when a rider came and began looking right and left. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**whoever has an extra mount should offer it to him who is without it, and whoever has surplus food should give it to him who has nothing;**” and he continued mentioning other properties until we thought that none of us had any right to surplus of his own property.
[muslim].

commentary: the mention of this hadith in this chapter reveals that in their social life, particularly in a period of crisis, the muslims should adopt a co-operative, consolatory and sympathetic attitude towards one another, being willing to give over their superfluous things to the needy muslims. this commandment, however, is not of essential and binding nature. if it were so, no muslim could be in a position to amass wealth. this is simply desirable and based on free will. if the common muslims were possessed of generosity, this moral instruction would have been practised by all and sundry with muslim society being exemplary in terms of brotherhood and solidarity. yet, the lack of sublime morals has denuded this precept of its entire import and significance. small wonder, in muslim communities there is a general deplorable trend of showing indifference to fellow-muslims, instead of establishing a worth-emulating example of co-operation and fellow-feeling.

567. sahl bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a woman brought a woven piece of cloth to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said to him: “i have woven this sheet with my own hands for you to wear.” he accepted it as he was in need of it. he later came out wearing it as a lower garment. someone said: “how nice it is! kindly give it to me.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**very well.**” he remained in our company for some time, then he went back, folded it and sent it to the man. the people said (to that man): “you did not do well. messenger of allah (pbuh) wore it and he was in need of it, and you asked him for it when you are well aware that he (pbuh) never refuses a request.” he said: “i swear by allah that i did not ask it for wearing. i asked him for it so that it might be my shroud after my death.’

“ sahl (the narrator of this hadith) said: and in fact it was used as his shroud.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: first, the hadith is suggestive of accepting a present because the exchange of presents increases mutual love. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “offer presents to each other as these generate mutual love.” second, the prophet (pbuh) would never turn down anyone asking for something. third, it is permissible to get a thing prepared to meet a future need. fourth, we are allowed to receive a benediction from the pious ones as the companions did in case of those things which had touched the blessed body of messenger of allah (pbuh). yet, today the benedictory sanction is being misapplied by people. for example, the washing of graves is erroneously taken to be a sacred act. whereas, going by the islamic law, there is no room for the concretion of a grave, still less of washing it. rather this act is unclean and sacrilegious. similarly, we see some half-mad and insane people bereft of the sense of purity and cleanliness. yet, the masses consider them to be ecstatics and even try to seek benediction from them. as a matter of fact, such lunatics are totally unconscious of the obligations of islam, rather everything else. but the sanity of a man becomes questionable if he considers them saints. also there are places where some relics, attributed to the prophet (pbuh), are at display but without historical authenticity. we are supposed to shun them.

568. abu musa (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when the ash`ariyun run short of food in the jihad or when they are at home in al-madinah, they collect all the provisions they have in a sheet and then divide it equally among themselves. they are of me and i am of them.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: “they are of me and i am of them”. these prophetic words of the prophet (pbuh) imply nearness to and psychic identity (with some souls) in matter of moral sense, character and good actions. apart from the superiority of ash`ari clan, the hadith suggests the significance of brotherhood and the sense of togetherness. particularly there is an emphasis on this point that if in times of crisis and tribulation, people extend co-operation to one another, the have-nots will escape hardship and embarrassment. herein lies the essence of all the ahadith of this chapter. the ash`ariyun are the people of abu musa al-ash`ari, the companion (may allah be pleased with him).

Chapter 63: Competition in matters of the Hereafter

allah, the exalted, says:

“let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e., hasten earnestly to the obedience of allah).” (83:26)

569. sahl bin sa`d (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a drink was brought to the messenger of allah (pbuh) and he drank some of it. on his right was a boy and on his left were elderly people. he said to the boy, “would you permit me to give the rest of this drink to these on my left?” the boy said, “o messenger of allah, i would certainly not give preference to anyone in anything that might come to me from you.” so he handed over the rest of the drink to him.

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the shari`ah rule says that in order to distribute something in an assembly of people, a beginning should be made from the right side. in the said incident, ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) then a young boy, was sitting on the right side, while the aged people were sitting on the left side. regard for the age difference demanded that the beginning should have been made from the side of the latter. but the correct way was that the beginning should be made from ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) because he was sitting on the right side. for this reason, the prophet (pbuh) did not ignore his right of priority due to his young age, rather by seeking his permission he made it clear that priority should be given to a rightful person, irrespective of the fact that he happened to be a child. on the other hand, it was also essential for ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) that in view of respect for elders, he should surrender his right. but he faced a more delicate problem. the cup containing the left-over drink of the prophet (pbuh) had touched his blessed mouth and this fact prompted ibn `abbas i(may allah be pleased with them) to take lead in benefiting from the benediction. he, therefore, preferred the prophetic benediction to showing respect to the aged. the hadith throws light on the requisite respect for the aged as well as highlights the significance of receiving blessing from the pious persons. besides, it proves the right of priority of the rightful person.

570. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “while ayyub (pbuh) the prophet was taking a bath, naked, a large number of gold locusts fell on him.

he tried to collect them in a piece of cloth, when he heard his rubb (allah) calling him: `o ayyub ! have i not sufficed you to care for what you see (the worldly possessions)?' ayyub (pbuh) said: `indeed by your power, but i can never do away with your blessings.'"
[al-bukhari].

commentary: prophet ayyub (pbuh), as the hadith tells us, started collecting the gold pieces that looked like locusts. as the hadith involves an aspect of blessedness, it has been included in this chapter. it has two other sides as well: first, one can amass wealth (of course by fair means and by fulfilling the other relevant conditions); second, the shari`ah allows man to take a bath in the naked state, provided he is all alone and away from all eyes. however, it is commendable if one takes a bath with his private parts being covered, even if there is no one around.

Chapter 64: Excellence of a Grateful Rich Man

allah, the exalted, says:

“as for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to allah and fears him, and believes in al-husna. we will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness).” (92:5-7)

“and al-muttaqun (the pious and righteous) will be far removed from it (hell). he who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification. and who has (in mind) no favour from anyone to be paid back. except to seek the countenance of his rubb, the most high. he surely, will be pleased (when he will enter jannah).” (92:17-21)

“if you disclose your sadaqat (alms-giving), it is well; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you. (allah) will expiate you some of your sins. and allah is well-acquainted with what you do.” (2:271)

“by no means shall you attain al-birr (piety, righteousness - here it means allah’s reward, i.e., jannah), unless you spend (in allah’s cause) of that which you love; and whatever of good you spend, allah knows it well.” (3:92)

571. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “envy is permitted only in two cases: a man whom alah gives wealth, and he disposes of it rightfully, and a man to whom allah gives knowledge which he applies and teaches it.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned. yet, its relevance with this chapter has prompted us to repeat it here. it lays emphasis on two points. first, if allah gives wealth to a man, his sense of gratitude should be expressed in his spending it in good ways according to the divine command. second, if allah has endowed somebody with knowledge and wisdom, he should be thankful to his rubb by way of putting it into practice and by imparting it to others. it means one can aspire for knowledge and richness, provided one’s motive is to benefit others. envy is a bad quality which muslims must shun. in this hadith, however, envy (or ghibtah) refers to the feeling of wishing to have what somebody else has or to be like somebody else without these blessings be taken away from the envied person.

572. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said: “envy is justified in regard to two types of persons only: a man whom allah has given knowledge of the qur’an, and so he recites it during the night and during the day; and a man whom allah has given wealth and so he spends from it during the night and during the day.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: ahadith permit us to envy (in the positive sense of the word: see commentary on the previous hadith) only two traits of character of somebody. grammatically, the texts of these ahadith imply both feminine and masculine genders. in the preceding hadith, the word ‘knowledge’ has been used. it stands for the word of allah. to apply and teach knowledge means to put into practise the teachings of the qur’an. and that includes the recitation of the qur’an (both in salat and otherwise), imparting its teaching and passing judgements in its light. from this point of view both the ahadith convey the similar sense, and similarly we may also read into them two persons or two traits of character.

573. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: some of the poor emigrants came to messenger of allah (pbuh) and said to him, “the wealthy have obtained all high ranks and everlasting bliss.” he asked, “how is that?” they replied: “they offer salat as we do, and observe saum (fasting) as we do, but they give in sadaqah (charity) and we do not, and they emancipate slaves and we cannot.” he (pbuh) said, “shall i not teach you something whereby you will catch up with those who have preceded you and will get ahead of those who follow you, and no one will surpass you unless he does the same as you do?” they said, “surely, o messenger of allah.” he said, “say: subhan allah, and allahu akbar, and praise him (by saying al-hamdu lillah) thirty-three times at the end of every salat.” they returned to him and said: “our brothers, the possessors of wealth, having heard what we are doing, have started doing the same.” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “this is grace of allah which he gives to whom he wishes.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the wording of the hadith apparently reveals that subhan allah “glory be to allah”, al-hamdu lillah “praise be to allah”, and aallhu akbar “allah is the greatest” should be recited thirty-three times. if each group of words is said eleven times, the total number will become thirty-three. but al-hafiz ibn hajar believes that each formula should be uttered thirty-three times, that is to say,

after each prayer “subhan allah”, “al-hamdu lillah” and “allahu akbar” should be uttered thirty-three times each. but according to some ahadith, imam an-nawawi is of the view that “allahu akbar” should be said thirty-four times and in the end “la ilaha illallahu wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamdu, wa huwa `ala kulli shai'in qadir” (none has the right to be worshipped but allah, he is one; he has no partners; to him belongs the dominion and all the praise; and he has power over all things) should be recited. should we recite them together or separately? al-qadi `iyad is of the opinion that it is better to recite them separately, but imam an-nawawi is of the view that both ways are correct. in fact, in both ways the number remains the same. besides, an addition must not be made to the sunnah of messenger of allah (pbuh). practically we knew that it is necessary to use the prescription of a physician without making any alteration in its elements; otherwise, it will not work properly. similarly, there are spiritual benefits, blessings and efficacy in the number told by the prophet (pbuh). any alteration in it will nullify its blessing and efficacy. (fath al-bari).

this hadith reveals how fervently the companions were inclined towards good and how concerned about surpassing those who were better than them in some forms of good deeds. indeed, all muslims are equal with regard to the practice of religious principles. but what gives an edge to the rich over their poor coreligionists are the financial forms of worship, that is, charity and almsgiving, which the latter are unable to do.

Chapter 65: Remembrance of Death and Restraint of Wishes

allah, the exalted, says:

“everyone shall taste death. and only on the day of resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. and whoever is removed away from the fire and admitted to jannah, he indeed is successful. the life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing).” (3:185)

“no person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die...” (31:34)

“...when their term comes, neither can they delay nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment).” (16:61)

“o you who believe! let not your properties or your children divert you from the remembrance of allah. and whosoever does that, then they are the losers. and spend (in charity) of that with which we have provided you, before death comes to one of you, and he says: `my rubb! if only you would give me respite for a little while (i.e., return to the worldly life), then i should give sadaqah (i.e., zakat) of my wealth, and be among the righteous [i.e., perform hajj (pilgrimage to makkah) and other good deeds].’ and allah grants respite to none when his appointed time (death) comes. and allah is all-aware of what you do.” (63:9-11)

“until, when death comes to one of them (those who join partners with allah), he says: `my rubb! send me back. so that i may do good in that which i have left behind!’ no! it is but a word that he speaks; and behind them is barzakh (a barrier) until the day when they will be resurrected. then, when the trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that day, nor will they ask of one another. then, those whose scales (of good deeds) are heavy, they are the successful. and those whose scales (of good deeds) are light, they are those who lose their ownelves, in hell will they abide. the fire will burn their faces, and therein they will grin, with displaced lips (disfigured). `were not my verses (this qur’an) recited to you, and then you used to deny them?’ they will say: `our rubb! our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people. `our rubb! bring us out of this; if ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be zalimun (polytheists, oppressors,

unjust, wrong-doers, etc? he (allah) will say: `remain you in it with ignominy! and speak you not to me!' verily! there was a party of my slaves, who used to say: `our rubb! we believe, so forgive us, and have mercy on us, for you are the best of all who show mercy!' `but you took them for a laughing stock, so much so that they made you forget my remembrance while you used to laugh at them! verily! i have rewarded them this day for their patience, they are indeed the ones that are successful. he (allah) will say: `what number of years did you stay on earth?' they will say: `we stayed a day or part of a day. ask of those who keep account.' he (allah) will say: `you stayed not but a little, if you had only known! did you think that we had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to us?'" (23:99-115)

“has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe (in the oneness of allah - islamic monotheism) to be affected by allah’s reminder (this qur’an), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the scripture [the taurat (torah) and the injeel (gospel)] before (i.e., jews and christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened? and many of them were fasiqun (the rebellious, the disobedient to allah).” (57:16)

574. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) took hold of my shoulders and said, “**be in the world like a stranger or a wayfarer.**” ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) used to say: when you survive till the evening do not expect to live until the morning; and when you survive till the morning do not expect to live until the evening. while in good health (do good deeds) before you fall sick; and while you are alive (do good deeds) before death strikes. [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned. refer to the commentary on hadith no. 479.

575. `abdullah bin `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**it is the duty of a muslim who has something which is to be given as a bequest not to have it for two nights without executing a written will.**” [al-bukhari and muslim].

in the narration of muslim it is narrated as `three nights'. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) said: since i heard the messenger of allah say this, i have never spent a night without having my will with me.

commentary: the emphasis of messenger of allah (pbuh) on the necessity of making a last will shows that man has no knowledge of the time of his death. it is necessary for the rich that they should keep with them a testament so as to leave their affairs settled after their death and to ward off any untoward situation with regard to the distribution of their property among their inheritors.

576. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) drew a few lines and said, "one of them represents man and another indicates death; and a man continues like this until the nearest line (i.e., death) overtakes him."
[al-bukhari].

577. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) drew up a square and in the middle of it he drew a line, the end of which jutted out beyond the square. further across the middle line, he drew a number of smaller lines. then he (pbuh) said, "the figure represents man and the encircling square is the death which is encompassing him. the middle line represents his desires and the smaller lines are vicissitudes of life. if one of those misses him, another distresses him, and if that one misses him, he falls victim to another."
[al-bukhari].

commentary: this means that human life is perpetually exposed to mishaps. if man escapes one mishap, he comes across the other one. his life is spent in a continuous struggle against tackling the hostile situations. besides, his life remains entangled in unending hopes and wishes which are never fulfilled and finally he slips into the iron-grip of death. to sum up, man is ever closer to the border line of death and not supposed to remain unprepared for it. there is no end to wishful thinking and, therefore, he should not adopt a careless attitude towards the inescapable death in the pursuit of illusory hopes. the best course for him is to remain ever-ready for his exit from the worldly stage.

578. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "hasten to do good deeds before you are overtaken by one of the seven afflictions." then (giving a warning) he said, "are you waiting for poverty which will make you unmindful of devotion, or prosperity which will make you corrupt, or a disease which will disable you, or senility which will make you mentally unstable,

or sudden death which will take you all of a sudden, or ad-dajjal who is the worst expected, or the hour; and the hour will be most grievous and most bitter.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the hadith focuses on seven things which hold back man from the virtuous path. taking in consideration the turning health and the brief span of life to his account, he is, therefore, apt to gather up good deeds for the hereafter because an untoward situation may confront him any moment and render him unable to do good things to his benefit in the otherworldly life.

579. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “remember more often the destroyer of pleasures - death.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: being heedful and talking about death checks man from being lost in the worldly pleasures and seductions. we are, therefore, supposed to remember death frequently and to avoid remaining indifferent to post-death affairs and occurrences.

580. ubayy bin ka`b (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when one-third of the night would pass, messenger of allah (pbuh) would get up and call out, “o people, remember allah. the rajifah (i.e., the first blowing of the trumpet which will shake the whole universe and thus cause all life to cease) has come, followed by ar-radifah (i.e., the second blowing of the trumpet which will restore life and thus mark the resurrection day). death has approached with all that it comprises. death has approached with all that it comprises.” i said: “o messenger of allah (pbuh), i frequently invoke allah to elevate your rank. how much of my supplications should i devote to you?” he said, “you may devote as much as you wish.” when i suggested a quarter, he said, “do whatever you wish, but it will be better for you if you increase it.” i suggested half, and he said, “do whatever you wish, but it will be better for you if you increase.” i suggested two-thirds, and he said, “do whatever you wish but it will be better for you if you increase it.” i said, “shall i devote all my supplications invoking allah to elevate your rank?” he said, “then you will be freed from your worries and your sins will be forgiven.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the qur'an exactly corroborates what has been stated in this hadith. there will be two soundings of the trumpet. the first will throw the earth and mountains into tremendous convulsions, annihilating all life and disrupting the entire physical structure of the universe. the second - after an indefinite period of time known to allah alone - will mark the resurrection day and bring forth the whole scenario of the last judgement. messenger of allah (pbuh) has invited the attention of mankind to the horrendous ordeal awaiting it in the last hour. besides, this hadith urges the believers to send the maximum greetings to messenger of allah (pbuh). it also highlights the excellence of such an invocation. the qur'an itself makes this demand to the believers:

“allah sends his salat (graces, honours, blessings, mercy) on the prophet (muhammad (pbuh)), and also his angels (ask allah to bless and forgive him). o you who believe! send your salat on (ask allah to bless) him (muhammad (pbuh)), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the islamic way of greeting (salutation, i.e., as-salamu `alaikum).” (33:56).

Chapter 66: Desirability of visiting the Graves for men, and that they should say

581. buraidah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “(in the past) i forbade you from visiting graves, but visit them now.”

in another narration messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “whoever wants to visit a graveyard, let him do so, because it reminds us of the hereafter.” [muslim].

commentary: the visit to the graves is not only recommendable from a theological point of view but, in the light of the prophetic saying, it is also compulsory and binding. however, at the dawn of islam it was forbidden due to the apprehension that the muslims might relapse into some wrongdoing by harking back to the pre-islamic memory. but when the monotheistic belief took root in their minds and the apprehension of pagan echoings evaporated, the ban on visiting the graves was lifted. rather an emphasis was laid on such a visit, so that an overpowering thought of death might penetrate a believer’s mind as a deterrent force against the promptings of his animal self. the believers must remember death and remember that they will be dead sooner or later. it has been reported that `umar bin al-khattab(may allah be pleased with him) used to address himself thus: “death suffices to serve as an admonitor, o `umar!”

582. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her): reported whenever it was her turn to spend with messenger of allah (pbuh), he used to go to the baqi` (graveyard in al-madinah) at the last part of night and say, “may you be safe, o abode of the believing people. what you have been promised has come to you. you are tarried till tomorrow and certainly we shall follow you if allah wills. o allah, forgive the inmates of the baqi`-al-gharqad.” [muslim].

commentary: the example of messenger of allah (pbuh) shows that it is right to visit the graves even at night. but the visitor is required to pray the prophetic prayer there as it invokes divine blessing on and pardon to the dead. it may be emphasized here that to greet the dead is a prayer for them. it is not necessary that they should hear it and also respond to it. allah has the power to make them hear it, too. but ours should not be the belief that the dead do hear and reply.

the exact position is known to allah alone. we are only supposed to follow the example of messenger of allah (pbuh) and say the greeting and prayer as mentioned above.

583. buraidah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) used to teach them (i.e., the companions) whenever they came out to visit the graveyard to say: “as-salamu `alaikum ahlad-diyari minal-mu`minina wal-muslimina, wa inna in sha` allahu bikum lahiqun. as'alul-laha lana wa-lakumul-`afiyah (may you be safe, o inmates of the abodes of the believers and the muslims, and if allah pleases, we shall follow you, we pray to allah for well-being for ourselves and for you).”
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith has a provision for a believer to visit the graveyard and to pray for his dead relatives, because the prayer of the living benefits the departed souls.

584. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) passed by the graves at al-madinah. he turned his face towards them and said, “may you be granted safety, o inmates of the graves. may allah forgive us and you. you have preceded us, and we are to follow.”
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: imam at-tirmidhi considers it as a credible hadith and imam an-nawawi has also reduced it to writing without `ifs' and `buts'. however, shaikh al-albani calls it undependable from the viewpoint of the chain of reporters. for a detailed study, one may refer to ahkam al-jana'iz by al-albani, page 197.

Chapter 67: Abomination of longing for Death

585. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “none of you should wish for death. if he is righteous, perhaps he may add to (his) good works, and if he is a sinner, possibly he may repent (in case he is given a longer life).” [al-bukhari].

in muslim, abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported : messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “let none of you wish for death, nor he ask for it before it comes to him, because when he dies, his actions will be terminated; certainly the age of a (true) believer does not add but good.”

commentary: this hadith forbids a believer to wish for his death as the longevity of his age suits him by all means. the longer he lives, the greater degree of progress will he make in virtues pursuits. and in case he infringes upon the shari`ah rules, he may perhaps incline towards penitence. a believer should, therefore, consider his life as a boon and try his utmost to do good things.

586. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “let none of you wish for death on account of an affliction that befalls him. if he has no alternative, let him pray: `allahumma ahyine ma kanatil-hayatu khairan li, wa tawaffani idha kanatil-wafatu khairan li (o allah! give my life so long as the life is good for me, and take away my life if death is good for me)’. ” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here, too, a believer has been prevented from wishing for death. because it betrays that he is far from agreeing to what allah wills or has ordained. if at all his wishing becomes intense and indispensable under the pressure of circumstances, he should pray in the prophetic words mentioned in the hadith above.

587. qais bin abu hazim (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i went to visit khabbab bin aratt (may allah be pleased with him) during his illness.

he had been cauterized in seven places. he said: “our companions who have died have left (this world) without having enjoyed the pleasures of the world (in order to get a great full reward in the hereafter) while we have amassed wealth exceeding our needs for which there is no place to keep except in the earth. had messenger of allah (pbuh) not prohibited us from longing for death, i would have prayed for it.” then we visited him again and he was building a wall. he said: “there is a reward in store for a muslim in respect of everything on which he spends except for something he places in the earth (i.e., something exceeding our needs or essentials).”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith forbids a believer to wish for his death as the longevity of his age suits him by all means. the longer he lives, the greater degree of progress he will make in the pursuit of virtues. and in case he infringes upon the shari`ah rules, he may perhaps incline towards penitence. a believer should, therefore, consider his life as a boon and try his utmost to do good things .

Chapter 68: Leading an Abstemious Life and refraining from the Doubtful

allah, the exalted, says:

“...you counted it a little thing, while with allah it was very great.” (24:15)

“verily, your rubb is ever watchful (over them).” (89:14)

588. an-nu`man bin bashir (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “what is lawful is clear and what is unlawful is clear, but between them are certain doubtful things which many people do not know. so he who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and his honour blameless. but he who falls into doubtful things falls into that which is unlawful, just as a shepherd who grazes his cattle in the vicinity of a pasture declared prohibited (by the king); he is likely to stray into the pasture. mind you, every king has a protected pasture and allah’s involved limits is that which he has declared unlawful. verily, there is a piece of flesh in the body, if it is healthy, the whole body is healthy, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. verily, it is the heart.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: there are such meeting-points between what is permissible and what is not permissible in the matter of religion of which the majority of people are ignorant. if man abstains from them, it means that he is keeping his duty to allah. yet, if he is involved in them without caring for what is allowable or unallowable, he may be supposed to have outstepped the divine limits. businessmen and traders are particularly warned here to avoid things of dubious nature and are urged to adopt only that pattern which is lawful. another important point underlying this hadith concerns the heart. its purity or impurity directly affects the human conduct in a good or bad way. it is, therefore, absolutely necessary to cleanse the heart of all wiles and impurities, and this is not possible without sound faith and consciousness of allah.

589. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) found a dry date-fruit lying in the way and said, “had it not been for fear of being from charity i would have eaten it.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: as sadaqah and zakat were forbidden to messenger of allah (pbuh) and the members of his family, he avoided to eat the date-fruit he had found in the way because he was not sure about the allowability of its nature. it is a lesson for a muslim that he should stay away from a thing when he doubts its lawful aspect. the previous hadith also confirms this view. moreover, we come to know that the use of an insignificant thing found in the way is not forbidden. similarly, one is permitted to pick up an eatable thing - provided it is not dubious - and eat it because it involves both humility and regard for a blessing.

590. an-nawwas bin sam`an (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, **“piety is good manner, and sin is that which creates doubt and you do not like people to know of it.”**
[muslim].

commentary: islam lays much importance on courteous behaviour and also explains and stresses its different aspects. to meet people cheerfully, to avoid causing trouble to them, rather to try to make things convenient and comfortable to them, to do social service, to extend co-operation to others in good things and to be generous, and to like for others also that you like for yourself, are all forms of moral behaviour that are counted as virtues in islam. all that is bad and vicious is considered by islam as sinful. this hadith describes two signs of a sin. first, man should feel scruples in committing it. second, one does not like others being informed about it. the hadith further tells us that human nature leads man to correct conclusions and keeps him away from evils, provided it has not been deformed by the environment and bad company.

591. wabisah bin ma`bad (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i went to messenger of allah (pbuh) and he asked me, **“have you come to inquire about piety?”** i replied in the affirmative. then he said, **“ask your heart regarding it. piety is that which contents the soul and comforts the heart, and sin is that which causes doubts and perturbs the heart, even if people pronounce it lawful and give you verdicts on such matters again and again.”**
[ahmad and ad-darmi].

commentary: there are two points about this hadith. first, it is one of the miracles of messenger of allah (pbuh) who discovered the nature of the question before it was put to him.

second, man's heart is the biggest guide to him and he, therefore, should keep his heart illuminated with the light of faith so as to continue receiving guidance from it.

592. `uqbah bin al-harith (may allah be pleased with him) reported that he had married a daughter of abu ihab bin `aziz and a woman came to him and said she had suckled both `uqbah and the woman whom he had married, to which he replied: "i am not aware that you suckled me, and you did not inform me." so he (`uqbah) rode to messenger of allah (pbuh) in al-madinah and put the matter before him. the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "[how can you continue \(to be her husband\) after what you have been told?](#)" `uqbah (may allah be pleased with him) therefore divorced her and she married another man.
[al-bukhari].

commentary: opinions differ about the evidence of a woman. but it is so about financial matters and hudud ([punishments](#)) and qisas ([retaliation in punishment](#)). for example, regarding the first, the qur'an says that the evidence of two women is equal to that of one man. similarly, the `ulama' have not trusted the evidence of a woman about matters concerning hudud and qisas, rather they have considered in this connection, the evidence of man indispensable. however, they are all unanimous in accepting the evidence of even a single woman in matters of which men are uninformed. these, for instance, include the problems of a child's birth and its legitimacy and the weak points of women. and the argument is supported by this hadith. when the woman gave evidence that she had suckled both the husband and the wife and was the foster-mother of the two, they separated from each other. also, messenger of allah (pbuh) declared their wedlock untenable. the hadith urges us to dispense with what is doubtful in order to be on the safe side in matters of religion.

593. hasan bin `ali (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i have retained these words of messenger of allah (pbuh), "[leave what causes you doubt and turn to what does not cause you doubt.](#)"
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith, as also mentioned previously, urges a believer to give up what appears to him doubtful.

594. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him)

had a slave who brought him his earnings and abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) would eat from it. one day he brought him something and when abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) had eaten some of it, the slave asked him whether he knew where he had got that (food) from, abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) asked what it was, and he replied: **i acted as a soothsayer for a man in the pre-islamic period, and not being good at it, i deceived him; today he met me and he rewarded me for that soothsaying what you have eaten.** abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) put his hand in his mouth and vomited up all that he had eaten. [al-bukhari].

commentary: soothsaying was prevalent in the pre-islamic arab society. islam brought an end to it and declared its income unlawful. that was the reason when abu bakr (may allah be pleased with him) came to know that what he had eaten had been accrued to the slave from soothsaying, he vomited it up. the incident reflected his extreme continence and aversion to pagan customs and propensities.

595. nafi` (may allah be pleased with him) reported: `umar bin al-khattab (may allah be pleased with him) fixed the payment amounting to four thousand dirhams for each of the early emigrants, but for his son, he fixed only three thousand five hundred. he was asked: **“he is also an (early) emigrant, why have you fixed a lesser sum for him?”** he said: **“it was his father who took him along with him. he is not like one who emigrated by himself.”** [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith throws light on `umar’s fairness, fear of allah, uprightness and sense of custodianship. the annual allowance which he got fixed from the treasury for his son was five hundred dirhams less than that given to other muhajirun. his plea was that since the recipient had migrated to al-madinah accompanied by his parents, his grade should have been less as compared to those muhajirun who had emigrated voluntarily.

596. `atiyyah bin `urwah as-sa`di (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“no one will attain complete righteousness until he abandons (certain) unobjectionable (but doubtful) things so as to remain on his guard against something objectionable.”** [at-tirmidhi].

Chapter 69: Desirability of Seclusion at Times of Corruption

allah, the exalted, says:

“so flee to allah (from his torment to his mercy - islamic monotheism), verily, i (muhammad (pbuh)) am a plain warner to you from him.” (51:50)

597. sa`d bin abu waqqas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah loves a slave who is pious, free of all wants and the unnoticed.”
[muslim].

commentary: isolation, according to this hadith, is recommendable for the obedience and worship of allah. it is particularly approved when the prevalent corruption and social intercourse endanger religion, or its implementation looks no more feasible.

598. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: someone asked messenger of allah (pbuh): “who is the best man?” he (pbuh) answered, “a believer who strives in the cause of allah with his life and his wealth.” the man asked: “who is the next?” he said, “one who retires into a narrow valley and worships his rubb.”

another narration is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “one who fears allah and safeguards people against his own mischief.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here jihad is counted as the supreme virtue and next to it comes the superiority of a man who takes to seclusion with this intention that he will worship allah and keep away the evil of his animal self from the people.

599. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the best possession of a muslim will be a herd of sheep with which he retires to the top of a mountain or places where rain is expected to fall (pastures) so as to safeguard with his faith from tribulation.”
[al-bukhari].

commentary: at a certain period of history, says the hadith, the virus of moral corruption will spread among people so perilously and so widely that, while living amongst them, one will hardly be able to save his religion. in such circumstances, there will be no other alternative than to escape from cities to save religion. today, moral crisis faces the islamic countries. the result is that the grip of religion over people is loosening day by day, rather they are constantly suffering the loss of religious values and principles. no wonder the work of the establishment and practice of religion is becoming more and more trying for the religious-minded people.

600. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “every prophet has tended sheep”. he was asked: “and did you?” he replied, “yes, i tended them for a few carats for the makkans.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: the prophet (pbuh) used to graze the sheep of makkans for a few carats (a carat is one-twentieth, or a bit more, of a dinar). this practice was indeed a divine training for the prophets so that it might be easier for them to deal with humans and forbear afflictions which came to them from men. a shepherd indeed needs greater patience and forbearance to look after his herd. this practice proved useful to the prophets. moreover, this hadith is suggestive of the adoption of a lawful occupation, no matter how people may look askance at it. that was the reason why the prophets took such occupations.

601. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the best of people is a man who is holding his horse’s rein in the way of allah (in jihad) and is galloping towards the place wherever he hears a call for war or detects a note of danger; he goes on proceeding, seeking martyrdom or death wherever it is expected. and a man who retires with some sheep in a mountainside or a valley. he performs salat regularly and pays the zakat, continues worshipping his rubb, till death overtakes him. he does not interfere in the affairs of the people except for betterment.”

[muslim].

commentary: herein two types of men have been counted as the best of all. first, such man who remains engaged in the preparation for jihad, being ever-ready for it. second is the man who flees townships and takes shelters in a mountain or jungle, living on a few sheep; the motive behind his shift is the preservation and practice of his faith and religion.

Chapter 70: Excellence of mixing with People and attending their social activities

imam an-nawawi says: remember! mixing with people in the way i have mentioned earlier is most desirable. this was the way of messenger of allah (pbuh) and other prophets of allah, the righteous caliphs (may allah be pleased with them), the followers of the companions, scholars and pious people. the majority of the followers of the companions and their followers adopted it. imam ash-sha-fi`i, imam ahmad and the majority of other jurists followed it.

allah, the exalted, says:

“help you one another in al-birr and at-taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety).” (5:2)

the quranic verses on the subject are many and well-known.

Chapter 71: Modesty and Courtesy towards the Believers

allah, the exalted, says:

“and be kind and humble to the believers who follow you.” (26:215)

“o you who believe! whoever from among you turns back from his religion (islam), allah will bring a people whom he will love and they will love him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers.” (5:54)

“o mankind! we have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. verily, the most honourable of you with allah is that (believer) who has at-taqwa [he is one of the muttaqun (the pious)].” (49:13)

“so ascribe not purity to yourselves. he knows best him who fears allah and keeps his duty to him [i.e., those who are al-muttaqun (the pious)].” (53:32)

“and the men on al-a`raf (the wall) will call unto the men whom they would recognise by their marks, saying: `of what benefit to you were your great numbers (and hoards of wealth), and your arrogance (against faith)?’ are they those, of whom you swore that allah would never show them mercy. (behold! it has been said to them): `enter jannah, no fear shall be on you, nor shall you grieve.’” (7:48,49)

602. `iyad bin himar (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah has revealed to me that you should humble yourselves to one another. one should neither hold himself above another nor transgress against another.” [muslim].

commentary: to treat each other humbly, leniently and lovingly is understood as humility. one, under this principle, is also required not to despise anybody on the basis of wealth, social distinction and lineage. moreover, one should also not adopt an unkind attitude towards others. besides, if allah has bestowed honour on somebody, he is supposed to be grateful to him, instead of behaving disrespectfully towards people and subjecting them to unkindness and tyranny.

603. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “wealth does not diminish by giving sadaqah (charity). allah augments the honour of one who forgives; and one who serves another seeking the pleasure of allah, allah will exalt him in ranks.” [muslim].

commentary: apparently giving in sadaqah (charity) decreases wealth, but allah fairly compensates an almsgiver by increasing his wealth. otherwise, he is sure to receive the best recompense in the hereafter which will make good his loss. or, allah blesses the rest of his wealth in such a way that the sense of loss is removed from his mind. as for a lenient and humble attitude, it is sometimes mistaken by man for his humiliation. but messenger of allah (pbuh) calls such an impression as erroneous. indeed, humility increases his honour and dignity. and as regards the hereafter, the best reward is bound to accrue to him when he will be blessed with spiritual heights.

604. anas (may allah be pleased with him) passed by some children and greeted them (by saying as-salamu `alaikum to them). then he said: the prophet (pbuh) used to do the same. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: to greet (saying as-salamu `alaikum) small children is an excellent expression of humbleness. similarly, a believer is under obligation to greet his wife and children while entering his home, and this will be a sign of his humbleness as well. besides, he is also supposed to greet his subordinates, servants and other lowly people. escape from it is an indication of pride and arrogance and shows a deviation from the practice of the prophet (pbuh) which is enough to incur the displeasure of allah.

605. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a slave-girl of al-madinah would take hold of the hand of the prophet (pbuh) and take him wherever she desired. [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith throws light on the sublime courtesy and unique humbleness of messenger of allah (pbuh) as well as his passion to meet the wants of the needy. it provides all the muslims with a worth-emulating example.

the hadith does not mean that the slave-girl would actually touch the prophet's hands, but that he would show humbleness to all kinds of people, be they young or old, rich or poor, men or women.

606. al-aswad bin yazid (may allah be pleased with him) reported: `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) was asked: "what did messenger of allah (pbuh) used to do inside his house?" she answered: "he used to keep himself busy helping members of his family, and when it was the time for salat (the prayer), he would get up for prayer."

[al-bukhari].

commentary: here too, we are informed about the extreme humbleness of messenger of allah (pbuh). many a man deems his insult and indignity to extend his co-operation to woman in household affairs. this is against the practice of messenger of allah (pbuh). to co-operate with woman in doing domestic things is a sunnah and man should not feel complex in it. however, an excessive interest in domestic engagements which makes one indifferent to salat is not desirable. rather, one is supposed to give up all domestic engagements when it is time to offer salat and be ready for it.

607. tamim bin usaid (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i came to messenger of allah (pbuh) while he was delivering a khutbah and said: "o messenger of allah, a stranger (meaning himself) has come to inquire about his deen. he is quite ignorant about his deen." messenger of allah (pbuh) interrupted his khutbah and turned to me. then a chair was brought for him and he sat on it. he started instructing me what allah had taught him. then he resumed his khutbah and completed it.

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also mirrors, apart from the extreme humbleness of the prophet (pbuh), his affability and consolation for a traveler as well as the priority which he gave to faith and islamic teachings. moreover, it reveals that, during the delivery of sermon, if it is needed, the preacher can converse with somebody and also leave the pulpit temporarily.

608. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: when the messenger of allah (pbuh) finished eating his food, he would lick his three fingers (i.e., the forefinger, the middle finger and the thumb). he (pbuh) said, "if anyone of you drops a morsel, he should remove anything harmful from it and then eat it.

he should not leave it for shaitan.” he commanded us to clean out the dish saying, “you do not know in what portion of your food the blessing lies.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith also stresses humbleness, simplicity and regard for the blessings of allah. to be unwilling to pick up a fallen morsel and eat it and to keep from cleaning up the dish is the style of arrogant and wealthy people. it displays disregard for allah’s blessing. to eat the fallen morsel after cleaning it and to lick up the dish shows, apart from humbleness, regard for the divine gift. such an act pleases allah. in it there is another advantageous aspect. man never knows which is the blessed portion of food. when one licks up the dish, or even his fingers, picks up the fallen morsel and eats it after cleaning it, nothing will be wasted from the meal. in this way, the blessed portion of meal will automatically come to him and he will not remain deprived of it. moreover, the hadith tells us that allah’s blessing, in whatever small quantity it may be, must not be wasted. yet unfortunately, as we see today, food is wasted like anything in the feasts and marriage ceremonies. whereas there are countless people in the world who do not get enough to eat, and there are many areas where people simply starve. may allah guide us!

609. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “every prophet has tended sheep.” he was asked: “and did you?” he replied: “yes, i tended them for a few carats for the makkans.” [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned earlier, approving of secluded life in a peculiar situation. as the same has relevance with humbleness, it is repeated in this chapter as well. indeed, it is the quality of humble people that they earn their living by manual labour.

610. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said: “if i am invited to a meal consisting of a sheep’s foot or shoulder, i would respond and i would accept as a gift a shoulder or a foot of a sheep.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith brings to our knowledge the humbleness and simplicity of messenger of allah (pbuh).

it serves as an exemplar to us that we should accept the simple invitation of a poor man and even an ordinary gift. we must not reject the gift owing to its ordinariness and inadequacy.

611. anas bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) had a she-camel called al-`adba' which would not allow any other camel to surpass her. a bedouin came riding his camel which outstripped it. the muslims were much grieved at this. messenger of allah (pbuh) perceived it and said, "it is allah's way that he lowers whatever raises itself in the world."

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith underlines a principle of allah that he never keeps anything in the world on the rise eternally. every rising star has its eventual decline. individuals and nations apart, this law of nature also applies to animal life. in it is embedded divine wisdom. first, annihilation and fall is the fate of everything. second, lest power and growth should go to man's head, he is warned by being reduced to smallness that there exists a supreme one who holds sway over all creatures and can render the powerful weak and helpless. the bedouin camel-rider resented the companions by overtaking messenger of allah (pbuh), yet he himself did not express his resentment. rather the occasion caused him to explain the divine wisdom behind it. the hadith also shows the prophet's humility.

Chapter 72: Condemnation of Pride and Self-Conceit

allah, the exalted, says:

“that home of the hereafter (i.e., jannah), we shall assign to those who rebel not against the truth with pride and oppression in the land nor do mischief by committing crimes. and the good end is for the muttaqun (the pious and righteous persons).” (28:83)

“and walk not on earth with conceit and arrogance.” (17:37)

“and turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. verily, allah likes not any arrogant boaster.” (31:18)

“verily, qarun (korah) was of musa’s (moses) people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. and we gave him of the treasures, that of which the keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men. remember when his people said to him: `do not exult (with riches, being ungrateful to allah). verily, allah likes not those who exult (with riches, being ungrateful to allah...(up to)... so we caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place.” (28:76-81)

612. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “he who has, in his heart, an ant’s weight of arrogance will not enter jannah.” someone said: “a man likes to wear beautiful clothes and shoes?” messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah is beautiful, he loves beauty. arrogance means ridiculing and rejecting the truth and despising people.”

[muslim].

commentary: the hadith says that a man who has even an iota of pride in his heart will be barred from entering jannah. the hadith word used for the smallest amount means in arabic either the smallest ant or the particle which is radiated by sun-rays and seen through a wall-chink. obviously, such a particle has almost a non-existent amount, but even this much is disapproved by allah. if pride incites a man to deny the existence of allah and his revelation, he is sure to be thrown into hell. he also faces divine displeasure and the danger of infernal fire if mere consideration of riches, physical beauty, social and intellectual prominence and family status makes him proud and self-conceited and he looks down upon others, or persists in the denial of truth.

first he will receive punishment and only then will be admitted into jannah. a good dress, however, is not counted the sign of pride.

613. salamah bin al-akwa` (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man ate in the presence of messenger of allah (pbuh) with his left hand. he (pbuh) said, “eat with your right hand.” he said: “i cannot.” thereupon he (the prophet (pbuh)) said, “may you never be able to do that.” it was arrogance that prevented him from doing it, and he could not raise it (the right hand) up to his mouth afterwards.
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith occurred in chapter 16 concerning the observance of sunnah but is repeated here to identify pride and its detriment and to describe the bad end of the arrogant people as we see in it. see the commentary on hadith no. 160.

614. harithah bin wahab (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “shall i not inform you about the inmates of hell? it is every violent, impertinent and proud person.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: flouting at divine rules, niggardliness (to keep from spending in the way of allah) and haughtiness are condemnable habits, and those who indulge in them will be pushed into hell. may allah keep us in his shelter from it!

615. abu sa`id al-khudri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “there was a dispute between hell and jannah, and hell said: ‘the haughty and proud are in me.’ the jannah said: ‘in me are the weak and the humble.’ thereupon allah, the exalted, judged between them saying: ‘you the jannah are my mercy, and through you i shall show mercy to those whom i wish.’ (and addressing the hell) he said: ‘you are my punishment to punish whom i wish amongst my slaves, and each one of you will have its fill.’”
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith warns us against haughtiness and pride and urges us to observe modesty and humility. jannah and hell - two otherworldly phenomena - have been called as the manifestations of allah’s mercy and punishment. true, only the will of allah prevails everywhere but the decision to send a man either to jannah or to hell will not be taken capriciously.

rather set divine rules will be working behind it. allah, will place some people in jannah due to their good deeds; similarly he will place some people in hell due to their bad deeds. allah does not wrong anyone.

616. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[on the day of resurrection, allah will not look at him who trails his lower garment out of pride.](#)”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here allah’s refusal to see an arrogant man means the restraint of the flow of his grace towards him. instead of allah’s mercy, his wrath will smite the arrogant. the garment which man wears to cover the lower half of his body is called izar in arabic. hence pyjamas, trousers, shalwar and tahband will be taken as izar. messenger of allah (pbuh) has emphatically said that izar should remain above the ankle of men as its dragging down signifies arrogance. indeed it displays the attitude of the haughty whose grim fate can be seen in this hadith.

617. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “[there are three \(types of\) people to whom allah will not speak on the day of resurrection, nor will he purify them, nor look at them, and they will have a painful punishment. these are: an aged man who commits zina \(illicit sexual act\), a ruler who lies, and a proud poor person.](#)”

[muslim].

commentary: here “will not speak” means he will not say something which will please them, not to talk happily and willingly. adultery is forbidden to everybody, whether young or old. but it is more condemnable if an old man commits it, because to be guilty of such a detestable act in old age shows that the adulterer has become hardened in sin and his heart is free from the fear of allah. lying is forbidden to everybody. but it is particularly vicious in case of a king or head of state. since he possesses all powers and resources, he has little reason to tell a lie. hence, if in spite of all this he invents a lie, it will betray his vicious mind and lack of god-consciousness. similarly, all humans are prohibited from giving vent to pride and arrogance. but if a beggar or destitute, who has no reason to claim dignity and superiority, displays arrogance, it will be a convincing proof of his indifference to the fear of allah and shari`ah rules. from this point of view, his arrogance is more abominable and disgusting than that of a wealthy man.

618. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah, the exalted, says: `honour is my izar and pride is my cloak. whoever vies with me regarding one of them, shall be tormented.”

[muslim].

commentary: according to this hadith, power and superiority (honour), greatness and grandeur are divine attributes alone. if anybody tries to invest himself with these attributes or claims them, it means that he is audacious enough to claim godhood. allah says that it is the result of his sheer grace to a man if he enjoys these qualities in a restricted measure, and he is supposed to be obedient and grateful to him for that. in no manner does it behave him to trumpet his own grandeur and greatness. if someone out-steps his limits in this regard, he will get himself into hell. the hadith is a signal of warning to men that they must not boast of their power and behave arrogantly towards their fellow-humans.

619. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “while a man was walking, dressed in clothes admiring himself, his hair combed, walking haughtily when allah caused the earth to swallow him. now he will continue to go down in it (as a punishment) until the day of resurrection.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith warns us against self-praise and arrogance which may pervade our hearts by fine clothes and physical beauty. instead of adopting a proud attitude, we should be sensible enough to thank allah for these favours and confess our servitude to him.

620. salamah bin al-akwa` (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “man continues to display haughtiness and arrogance until he is recorded among the arrogant and will be therefore afflicted with what afflicts them.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: to adopt the habits and manners of good people is deemed to be desirable. but, on the contrary, to take to the bad ways of bad people is considered undesirable. a man will ultimately be counted among those people whom he will take as a model to emulate, because he is gradually fitted into their framework and assimilates all of their qualities. quite naturally then retribution will be administered to him accordingly.

Chapter 73: Good Conduct

allah, the exalted, says:

“and verily, you (o muhammad (pbuh)) are on an exalted (standard of) character.” (68:4)

“the jannah is prepared for those)... who repress anger, and who pardon men.” (3:134)

621. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) was the best of all the people in behaviour. [al-bukhari and muslim].

622. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i never felt any piece of velvet or silk softer than the palm of the messenger of allah (pbuh), nor did i smell any fragrance more pleasant than the smell of messenger of allah (pbuh). i served him for ten years, and he never said `uff' (an expression of disgust) to me. he never said `why did you do that?' for something i had done, nor did he ever say `why did you not do such and such' for something i had not done. [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith reflects the sublime morality of messenger of allah that he never found faults with the doings of his valet nor did he ever scold him during his ten-year-long service. to be sure, this is something unique in human history. may the ummah, too, adopt the refined way of the living of its prophet (pbuh).

623. sa`b bin jaththamah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i presented a wild ass to messenger of allah (pbuh) as a gift but he returned it to me. when he perceived signs of despair on my face, he said, “i have declined to accept it because i am in the state of ihram.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: as, in the state of ihram, hunting is not allowed to a pilgrim; similarly, the meat of the game, killed on his suggestion or instruction, is forbidden to him, too. for this reason, messenger of allah (pbuh) sent back the gift of the wild ass to his companion. the hadith further illustrates that if the recipient has any valid excuse for not accepting a gift, he should explain it so that the sender may not feel dejected.

it may be mentioned here that some ahadith allow us to eat the meat of a game killed by others, whereas this hadith shows it is not permissible. the orthodox `ulama', however, have attempted to reconcile the two seemingly incompatible sets of ahadith with each other. according to the first category of ahadith, a man, not in the state of ihram who kills a chase and gives a portion of it as a gift to someone who is in ihram, the gift will be permissible to the latter. as for the second category of ahadith, the former kills a game for the latter, or on his suggestion, the man in the state of ihram will be barred from eating it (as mentioned in fath al-bari). similarly, it will not be lawful if the game is sent alive to the man in the state of ihram with this intention that he should himself sacrifice it. the hadith under discussion depicts this very situation. imam bukhari, as we know, has consequently adduced from this hadith that if an unkilld game, like the wild donkey, is sent as a gift to a man in the state of ihram, he should not accept it.

624. nawwas bin sam`an (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i asked messenger of allah (pbuh) about virtue and sin, and he said, “**virtue is noble behaviour, and sin is that which creates doubt and you do not like people to know about it.**”
[muslim].

commentary: an important principle enshrined in this hadith says that courtesy is a virtue, because a refined mind cultivates good habits, performs good deeds, and shuns all that is bad and corrupt. also, a simple and understandable principle is laid down about sin. man feels the pricking of conscience over every bad deed and is also afraid of the reproach of fault-finders, provided he has not reached the lowest point of moral depravity. but a seared conscience is least disturbed even by a heinous and deadly sin or by public censure. we can understand it by the example of man's smelling sense. if it is not dead, man can feel a stink and repugnant odour. but a long association with a dung heap robs away one's smelling sense and feeling of refuse.

625. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) did not indulge in loose talk nor did he like to listen to it. he used to say, “**the best of you is the best among you in conduct.**”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith, apart from describing the refined behaviour and sublime morality of messenger of allah (pbuh), tells us that a person with the highest moral sense is in fact the best among people.

626. abud-darda (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “nothing will be heavier on the day of resurrection in the scale of the believer than good manners. allah hates one who utters foul or coarse language.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the most beneficial thing on the day of resurrection will be a courteous behaviour which will outweigh all good actions. but that will be witnessed in case of a believer as there is no question of weighing a non-believer’s good actions. allah himself says in the qur’an: “so their works are in vain, and on the day of resurrection, we shall assign no weight for them.” so will a morally depraved and nonsensical man stand unfavoured with allah, and this will be a sign of his frustration and disillusionment in the hereafter.

627. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) was asked about the deed which will be foremost to lead a man to jannah. he replied, “fear of allah and the good conduct.” then he was asked about indulgence which will admit a man to hell (fire) and he answered, “the tongue and the genitals.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this is also a very comprehensive hadith. fear of allah really links up a man to him, and moral refinement prevents him from falling short of his duties to people. to be sure, adherence to this two-fold practice will cause the entry of a lot of people to jannah. many a man, on the other hand, has a long, sharp and dangerous tongue and this causes him to pour out heretic utterances and indulge in backbiting, slandering and abusive and nonsensical talk. all this activity leads to hell. as for genitals, an unwary and unrestrained attitude incites one to indulge in immoral pursuits. in both these cases countless people will be led into hell. for this reason it is imperative for everybody to develop taqwa (consciousness of allah / fear of allah) and refined behaviour and shun the wickedness of tongue and genitals so that his life in the hereafter may not be ruined.

628. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the most perfect man in his faith among the believers is the one whose behaviour is most excellent; and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives.”

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith brings into light the corollary of faith and com-
plaisant manners. we may put it in this way that the degree of a man’s
excellent behaviour determines the degree of his faith. or the sublimity
of faith calls for the sublimity of morals. similarly, a man who is polite and
courteous to his wife will be considered as the best.

629. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i heard messen-
ger of allah (pbuh) saying: “a believer will attain by his good behaviour
the rank of one who prays during the night and observes fasting during
the day.”

[abu dawud].

commentary: the two practices are difficult. but those who manage to
keep them will be richly rewarded by allah. there is a third category of
men who fail to observe the above mentioned voluntary practices. yet
they are polite, and courteous in their behaviour towards others and by
virtue of this sociable quality, they will also be graded up in the two other
categories. and this highlights the significance and excellence of a polite
and pleasing behaviour.

630. abu umamah al-bahili (may allah be pleased with him) reported:
messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i guarantee a house in jannah for one
who gives up arguing, even if he is in the right; and i guarantee a home
in the middle of jannah for one who abandons lying even for the sake of
fun; and i guarantee a house in the highest part of jannah for one who
has good manners.”

[abu dawud].

commentary: withdrawal from one’s right in order to end a dispute is a
manly act of great merit. likewise, this hadith tells us that a man should
avoid telling a lie even in a light vein. if he gives great importance to the
rules of the shari`ah (islamic law) and the commandments of allah and
his prophet (pbuh), he will definitely refrain from telling a lie even in a chat
session or just for the sake of joke.

usually, people don't mind if one tells a lie in a jocular mood, rather some will perhaps approve it. yet, allah disapproves of even the harmless or trivial form of falsehood and commands his slaves to keep away from it. from all considerations, however, moral excellence carries immense weight. because no wrong or evil thing can be shunned without it. in other words, moral excellence surpasses all forms of goodness.

631. jabir (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, **“the dearest and nearest among you to me on the day of resurrection will be one who is the best of you in manners; and the most abhorrent among you to me and the farthest of you from me will be the pompous, the garrulous, and al-mutafaihiqun.”** the companions asked him: “o messenger of allah! we know about the pompous and the garrulous, but we do not know who al-mutafaihiqun are.” he replied: **“the arrogant people.”**

[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: this hadith lays emphasis on polite and polished behaviour. besides, it teaches us to refrain from unnecessary, incautious and insincere talk intended to influence others and assert superiority over them. but to talk less and in simple words is a good thing. on the other hand, to talk much, showing off cleverness with a tinge of affectation, is detestable.

Chapter 74: Clemency, Tolerance and Gentleness

allah, the exalted, says:

“...who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, allah loves al-muhsinin (the good-doers).” (3:134)

“show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e., don’t punish them).” (7:199)

“the good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e., allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. but none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient - and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of happiness in the hereafter, i.e., jannah and of a high moral character) in this world.” (41:34,35)

“and verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives that would truly be from the things recommended by allah.” (42:43)

632. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said to ashaj Abdul-Qais (may allah be pleased with him), “you possess two qualities that allah loves. these are clemency and tolerance.”

[muslim].

commentary: this hadith teaches us to adopt a patient, mild and discreet attitude towards others. moreover, there is a provision for praising somebody in his presence, provided there is no likelihood of his being conceited. the hadith also provides inspiration for the cultivation of good habits.

633. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah is forbearer and loves forbearance in all matters.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: mildness also brings human beings closer to one another, and on this count, allah likes it very much.

634. `aishah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “allah is forbearer and he loves forbearance, and rewards for forbearance while he does not reward severity, and does not give for any thing besides it (forbearance).”

[muslim]

commentary: mildness is the opposite of harshness. allah enjoins softness and dislikes stiffness in human relations. allah assures of reward for gentle behaviour in society, not for unkindness or anything like that. however, inflexibility is preferred to flexibility when there arises a question of religious matters and the limits set by allah.

635. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “whenever forbearance is added to something, it adorns it; and whenever it is withdrawn from something, it leaves it defective.”

[muslim].

commentary: to be soft-spoken is such a quality that by virtue of which a man is not only endeared to people but also to allah. and by being bereft of it, he not only becomes a contempt incarnate in the eyes of people but also with allah.

636. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a bedouin urinated in the mosque and some people rushed to beat him up. the prophet (pbuh) said: “leave him alone and pour a bucket of water over it. you have been sent to make things easy and not to make them difficult.”

[al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith brings into light the fact that leniency is also vitally needed in the sphere of education and discipline. this is particularly true in the case of ignorant and ill-bred people. this is so because if they are treated unkindly, they will become more indocile on account of their wild temperament and foolishness. a kind handling is indispensable for putting them to discipline, even if they make desperate blunders. this hadith is very beneficial with regard to the way of da`wah, guidance and practical education. another point this hadith discloses is that the flow of water can wipe out dirt and impurity, and make the place free from its effect.

637. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “make things easy and do not make them difficult, cheer the people up by conveying glad tidings to them and do not repulse (them).” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith informs us that preaching, sermons, religious discourses and moral advice all should concentrate on such things as may be helpful to people in being inclined towards gaining religious knowledge. likewise this aspect should also be kept in view in the exposition and interpretation of religion. moreover, the tone and mode of expression of religious leaders should not be repulsive and based on sectarian hatred, rather it should pull hearts to religion. in brief, preachers and `ulama' must be regardful of the central point of the cause to which they are dedicated.

638. jarir bin `abdullah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who is deprived of forbearance and gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all good.” [muslim].

639. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man asked the prophet (pbuh) to give him advice, and he (pbuh) said, “do not get angry.” the man repeated that several times and he (pbuh) replied (every time), “do not get angry.” [al-bukhari].

commentary: this hadith has already been quoted. yet the compiler has repeated it on account of its relevance with this chapter. it is to be noticed that an advice should be made as circumstances demand. when messenger of allah (pbuh) perceived by his insight that the visitor was a person of sharp and fiery temper, he repeatedly advised him to resist anger.

640. abu ya`la shaddad bin `aus (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “verily allah has prescribed ihsan (kindness) for everything. so when you kill, you must make the killing in the best manner; when you slaughter, make your slaughter in the best manner. let one of you sharpen his knife and give ease to his animal (in order to reduce his pain).” [muslim].

commentary: by killing is meant the killing of a harmful animal, or the killing of a murderer as retribution and the killing of the enemy in the battlefield. all these situations warrant killing but with a stress on moderation, thanks to islamic teachings. a believer is told not to let his passions of enmity go wild, and even an enemy or a criminal ought not to be put to a torturous death. in the pre-islamic period of ignorance it was a prevalent practice that the limbs of a victim were mutilated before he was finally killed. islam has forcefully forbidden this inhuman custom, stating that the victim should be beheaded with the one swing of sword. similarly, there are specific instructions regarding an animal's slaughter. first, the knife should be sharpened. second, the animal must not be slaughtered from its nape, because in both ways it will suffer pain. this shari`ah rule ensures quick death of the animal. in modern europe, an animal is slaughtered with one stroke of a cutting-machine. apparently this method seems to be easy and smooth, yet in this way the animal's blood doesn't flow out from its body completely. so the consumption of the meat of such a kill is injurious to human health. due to this reason, islam considers the discharge of blood as a prerequisite to halal (lawful). certainly, only the islamic way of slaughtering an animal is more sound, scientific and wholesome.

641. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: **whenever the prophet (pbuh) was given a choice between two matters, he would (always) choose the easier as long as it was not sinful to do so; but if it was sinful he was most strict in avoiding it. he never took revenge upon anybody for his own sake; but when allah's legal bindings were outraged, he would take revenge for allah's sake.**

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the two things between which messenger of allah (pbuh) would make his choice could be religious or worldly. for instance, if he were asked to award one of the two punishments to somebody, he would choose the milder one. and if he had the liberty of choice between two obligations, he would opt for the easier one. between war and peace he would always go for peace, provided it involved the interest of islam and muslims. moreover, in all matters he used to take the line of least resistance, in case it went without the disobedience of allah. in this hadith, a principle has been defined for muslims in general as well that they are free to take to an easy way but this must not entail a loophole in respect of the shari`ah. secondly, the most excellent character of messenger of allah (pbuh) also comes to our view that he never retaliated for personal reasons.

his extraordinary concern for the sanctity of islamic law is also displayed by the fact that he could never brook the transgression of allah's limits, and the transgressor was sure to be punished by him. the prophet's attitude also explains and delimits the sphere of morality that to let the violator of divine law go scot-free must not be counted as a sign of good manners. rather it reflects the lack of religious sensibility. not to take exception to lapses in mundane affairs surely speaks of moral excellence, but we are not allowed to dispense with the evasion of religious rules.

642. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "shall i not tell you whom the (hell) fire is forbidden to touch? it is forbidden to touch a man who is always accessible, having polite and tender nature."
[at-tirmidhii].

commentary: the hadith throws light on a kind bearing which is rooted in faith and saves man from hell-fire. the second lesson is that prior to discussing something important with somebody we should make him attentive and receptive, so that he may take interest and put faith in what we tell him.

Chapter 75: Forgiveness of the Ignorant

allah, the exalted, says:

“show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e., don’t punish them).” (7:199)

“so overlook (o muhammad (pbuh)), their faults with gracious forgiveness.” (15:85)

“let them pardon and forgive. do you not love that allah should forgive you?” (24:22)

“and who pardon men; verily, allah loves al-muhsinun (the good-doers)” (3:134)

“and verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives, that would truly be from the things recommended by allah.” (42:43)

643. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i asked the prophet (pbuh) “have you ever experienced a day harder than the day of the battle of uhud?” he replied, “indeed, i experienced them (dangers) at the hands of your people (i.e., the disbelievers from amongst the quraish tribe). the hardest treatment i met from them was on the day of `aqabah when i went to ibn `abd yalil bin `abd kulal (who was one of the chiefs of ta’if) with the purpose of inviting him to islam, but he made no response (to my call). so i departed with deep distress. i did not recover until i arrived at qarn ath-tha`alib. there, i raised my head and saw a cloud which had cast its shadow on me. i saw in it jibril (gabriel) (pbuh) who called me and said: `indeed, allah, the exalted, heard what your people said to you and the response they made to you. and he has sent you the angel in charge of the mountains to order him to do to them what you wish.’ then the angel of the mountains called me, greeted me and said: `o muhammad, allah listened to what your people had said to you. i am the angel of the mountains, and my rubb has sent me to you so that you may give me your orders. (i will carry out your orders). if you wish i will bring together the two mountains that stand opposite to each other at the extremities of makkah to crush them in between.” but messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “i rather hope that allah will raise from among their descendants people as will worship allah the one, and will not ascribe partners to him (in worship).”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: in the vicinity of al-madinah stands a mountain, called uhud, where the `battle of uhud' took place. it was in this battle that the prophet's face was wounded, one of his molars was broken and he fell into a pit dug by `amr ar-rahib. besides, his uncle, hamzah (may allah be pleased with him) was martyred and the disbelievers mutilated his body. `aqabah was a place at ta'if where messenger of allah (pbuh) rode up from makkah and met the worst experience. or, it could be that the incident occurred somewhere at mina where, during the hajj season, he urged the different clans to accept the message of islam so as to seek their help to establish the true religion. qarn ath-tha`alib is also the name of a place which is the miqat (transit-point where pilgrims assume the state of ihram) of the najd people.

this hadith also reflects the marvellous character of messenger of allah (pbuh) that he never rebuked the ignorant and those who caused him harm, nor did he ever avenge anybody on grounds of personal hostility. secondly, he would endure all forms of hardships in the way of allah with patience and endurance. he never became furious over his harassers, rather he prayed for their guidance. no doubt, the prophetic life-pattern perennially provides inspiration to preachers and religious instructors. the responsibility of preaching is not a bed of roses but a thorny path to tread on. it is not the welcome and applause which is meted out to him, but people's taunts, reproaches and insults are heaped on the preacher. consequently, patience, self-possession, self-control and tolerance are vital to braving trials and tribulations in the way of allah.

644. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) **never hit anything with his hand neither a servant nor a woman but of course, he did fight in the cause of allah. he never took revenge upon anyone for the wrong done to him, but of course, he exacted retribution for the sake of allah in case the injunctions of allah about unlawful acts were violated.**
[muslim].

commentary: for explanatory comments, the reader may refer to hadith no. 641.

645. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: **i was walking with messenger of allah (pbuh) who was wearing a najrani cloak with a very thick border when a bedouin happened to meet him. he took hold of the side of his cloak and drew it violently.**

i noticed that the violence of jerk had bruised the neck of messenger of allah (pbuh). the bedouin said: “o muhammad! give me out of allah’s wealth that you possess.” messenger of allah (pbuh) turned to him and smiled and directed that he should be given something.
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith also highlights the prophet’s sublime morality, patience and self-control. he smiled away the discourtesy of the bedouin and bade the offering of a gift to him.

646. ibn mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i can see the messenger of allah (pbuh) look like one of the prophets of allah whose people beat and made him bleed while he was wiping the blood from his face and supplicating: “o allah, forgive my people because they know not.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the `ulama’ say that by relating the painful incident of a prophet, messenger of allah (pbuh) in fact implied his own experience at the hands of his people. indeed, this expresses his extreme numbleness that he vaguely described his bitter self-experience without bringing into light the unthinking persecutors of his nation.

647. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the strong man is not the one who wrestles, but the strong man is in fact the one who controls himself in a fit of rage.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: people are usually impressed by the physical power and strength of somebody. but the real strength of a man lies in the fact that he should be able to wrestle with his passions in a fit of anger and avoid committing an act for which he may subsequently regret. this is a common observation that wild anger leads to many a wrongdoing of which man repents later on or sheds tears over the ruin resulting from it.

Chapter 76: Endurance of Afflictions

allah, the exalted, says:

“(those) who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, allah loves al-muhsin’in (the good-doers).” (3:134)

“and verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives, that would truly be from the things recommended by allah.” (42:43)

648. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man said to messenger of allah (pbuh): “i have relatives with whom i try to maintain good relationship but they sever relations with me; whom i treat kindly but they treat me badly, with whom i am gentle but they are rough to me.” he (pbuh) replied, “if you are as you have said, then it is as though you are feeding them hot ashes and you will not be without a supporter against them from allah, as long as you do so.”
[muslim].

commentary: also owing to its obvious relevance with this chapter this hadith has been mentioned here. the above-mentioned verses and this hadith impress on a believer that in order to win the pleasure of allah, he should be forgiving and tolerant with regard to the sufferings he experiences at the hands of people. both, good behaviour and the example of the prophet (pbuh), call for such an attitude.

Chapter 77: Indignation against the Transgression of Divine Laws

allah, the exalted, says:

“and whoever honours the sacred things of allah, then that is better for him with his rubb...” (22:30)

“if you help (in the cause of) allah, he will help you, and make your foothold firm.” (47:7)

649. abu mas`ud `uqbah bin `amr al-badri (may allah be pleased with him) reported: a man came to the prophet (pbuh) and said: “i join the morning salat late because of so-and-so who leads it and prolongs it.” (abu mas`ud said): i have never seen the prophet (pbuh) so angry while giving a speech as he was on that day. he (pbuh) said, “some of you create hatred among the people against faith. whoever leads salat (the prayer), should make it brief because the congregation includes old men and youngsters and those who have some urgent work to do.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: first, there is allowance for a genuine complaint regarding some public inconvenience. second, a believer is supposed to be passionately uncompromising on religious precepts. third, the imam should refrain from prolonging salat (prayer) and be considerate of the congregation standing behind him. but a brief recitation of the qur`an or prayer does not imply a disregard of the example of the prophet and the adjustment of different postures in salat. in no way should it be a hasty and heedless salat as unfortunately offered by a majority of men. they are scarcely regardful of the example of the prophet in offering salat. what a pity! fourth, one may be exempted from offering congregational salat for a valid religious excuse. fifth, the imam should eschew an attitude which may foment people’s aversion to worship.

650. `aishah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) returned once from a journey, and saw a curtain which i had hung along a platform with some pictures on it. the colour of his face changed. he tore it up and said, “o `aishah, the most tormented people on the day of resurrection are those who contend with allah in terms of creation.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: here, too, we are told that lapses in religious matters may be resented vehemently. the shari`ah condemns both the making of human portraits and their decoration in homes and, if displayed as sacred objects, they may be read as polytheistic manifestation. besides, orthodox `ulama' and researchers are of the opinion that making or keeping of any type of picture is forbidden and unlawful. the rule equally applies to a hand-made picture and a camera photograph, provided it is that of an animate object. yet, making or keeping pictures of inanimate objects, both of mineral and vegetable kingdoms, is permissible. however, one is at liberty to get oneself photographed in an unavoidable situation. for instance, photographs are indispensable to passports, identity cards and similar other necessities of modern times in which man is helpless and we can not assert that he is inclined to satisfy his taste or to get himself photographed as a token of permissibility. indeed, it is the requirement of international law. so, up to this extent he will not be called to account. yet, he cannot be justified in overstepping this limit.

651. `aishah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the quraish were much worried about the case of a makhzumiyah woman who had committed theft and wondered who should intercede for her with messenger of allah (pbuh) (so that she would not get punished for her crime). some said usamah bin zaid (may allah be pleased with him) was his beloved and so he may dare do so. so usamah(may allah be pleased with him) spoke to him about that matter and the prophet (pbuh) said to him, “do you intercede when one of the legal punishments ordained by allah has been violated?” then he got up and addressed the people saying, “the people before you were ruined because when a noble person amongst them committed theft, they would leave him, but if a weak person amongst them committed theft, they would execute the legal punishment on him. by allah, were fatimah, the daughter of muhammad, to commit the theft, i would have cut off her hand.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the example of allah's messenger (pbuh) clearly tells us that no intercession is allowed for a person who transgresses the limits set by allah. and if anybody has the audacity to do so, the deciding authority is presumed to be impervious to his solicitation. nor should the criminal's social status or family influence, if any, obstruct the administration of justice. the law and retribution rise above all discrimination and social hierarchy. any contravention in this regard is enough to incur divine wrath.

652. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) noticed spittle in the mosque in the direction of the qiblah. the signs of disgust were perceived on his face. then, he stood up and scraped it away with his own hand and said, “when you stand in salat, you hold communion with your rubb and he is between you and the qiblah. let no one therefore cast out his spittle in that direction, but only to his left or under his foot.” then he caught hold a corner of his sheet, spat into it and folded it up and said, “or he should do like this.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: worshippers are under obligation to observe certain manners in the mosque with the most important being abstinence from spitting towards qiblah (ka`bah). instead the method pointed out in the hadith may be put in effect right during salat (prayer). yet one, if not offering salat, can turn to the mosque’s washing-place where a channel exists for the outflow of unclean water, etc. obviously, it is a better substitute for a pocket-handkerchief or sheet which should be used when necessary. second, this hadith tells us that every effort should be made to keep the place of worship neat and clean, and if anyone finds some dirt in the mosque, he should immediately remove it.

Chapter 78: Obligation of Rulers to show Kindness

allah, the exalted, says:

“and be kind and humble to the believers who follow you.” (26:215)

“verily, allah enjoins al-`adl (justice) and al-ihsan (performing duties in a perfect manner), and giving (help) to kith and kin, and forbids al-fahsha' evil deeds and al-munkar (all that is prohibited) and al-baghy (oppression). he admonishes you, that you may take heed.” (16:90)

653. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “all of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards. the ruler is a guardian and responsible for his subjects; the man is a guardian and responsible for his family; the woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husbands house and his offspring; and so all of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith has already been mentioned in the chapter pertaining to the duties of a wife to her husband. its repetition in this chapter is meant to remind rulers that if they are negligent of the duties devolved upon their shoulders, they will be wrongdoers to allah and put to reckoning on the day of resurrection.

654. abu ya`la ma`qil bin yasar (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “any slave whom allah makes him in charge of subjects and he dies while he is not sincere to them, allah will make jannah unlawful for him.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

another narration is: allah's messenger (pbuh) said, “he who does not look after his subjects with goodwill and sincerity, will be deprived of the fragrance of jannah.”

a narration in muslim is: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “a ruler who, having control over the affairs of the muslims, does not strive diligently for their betterment and does not serve them sincerely, will not enter jannah with them.”

commentary: here the attention of rulers has been invited to their obligations. they are told that their designation is very important because they are responsible for tackling the problems and affairs of millions of people. if their single-minded devotion, determined efforts and heartfelt feelings of well-wishing will not go to solving these problems, they will be deemed guilty by allah. rulers are, therefore, warned, lest power should go to their head and make them unheedful of people's problems, rights and concerns. instead being fully conscious of their accountability to allah (swt) they are apt to make full efforts to provide justice and peace to people. by "forbid from entering jannah" means they will not enter it with the first successful people until they get punished for their wrongdoings. if however, they were treacherous to their subjects while regarding this injustice lawful, thus disobeying allah and his commands, they will stay in hell forever because this way they have made permissible and lawful what allah has forbidden.

655. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: i heard the messenger of allah (pbuh) supplicating in my house: "o allah! treat harshly those who rule over my ummah with harshness, and treat gently those who rule over my ummah with gentleness."
[muslim].

commentary: how fortunate is a ruler who establishes his claim to the special benediction of messenger of allah (pbuh) by providing justice to people! on the other hand, how unfortunate is that ruler who incurs the prophetic imprecations by doing injustice to people! this hadith is suggestive of a rulership based on justice and lays emphasis on refraining injustice and atrocity.

656. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "the banu isra'il were ruled by the prophets. when one prophet died, another succeeded him. there will be no prophet after me. caliphs will come after me, and they will be many." the companions said: "o messenger of allah, what do you command us to do?" he said, "fulfill the pledge of allegiance to which is sworn first (then swear allegiance to the others). concede to them their due rights and ask allah that which is due to you. allah will call them to account in respect of the subjects whom he had entrusted to them."
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: the political conduct of the prophets means that ruler-ship and government affairs were also assigned to them, that is, both religious and worldly affairs lay in their custody. there was no dichotomy between the two, they formed a single unit. this also characterized the period of the rightly-guided caliphs and the short spell that followed it in the history of islam. this explains why after the death of one prophet came another prophet and became his successor. second, the hadith also settles the issue of the finality of prophethood once for all. “no prophet will succeed me except the caliphs”, said the prophet (pbuh). in the case of many claimants to caliphate, he also gave a ruling, that is, people should primarily fulfill their allegiance pledged to the first caliph and keep away from caring for another claimant to caliphate. third, the prophet (pbuh) focused, on the lapses of rulers but without being suggestive of a rebellion and public demonstrations against them. instead he teaches us to obey them in the administrative sphere and also to turn to allah (swt) and seek his mercy and blessing as long as they rule by the law of allah.

657. `aidh bin `amr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i visited `ubaidullah bin ziyad and said to him: “dear son, i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “the worst of rulers are those who treat their subjects harshly. beware, lest you should be one of them.”” [al-bukhari].

commentary: there is a typical, brutish sheep-herder who severely drives his flock and flogs them mercilessly. as a result of which the timid animals get upon one another. in the hadith, this word has been brought in for a tyrant ruler who subjects people to oppression and treats them unkindly. it implies a strong warning and intimidation to cruel rulers.

658. abu maryam al-azdi (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i said to mu`awiyah (bin abu sufyan) (may allah be pleased with them): i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, “if allah invests to someone the affairs of the muslims and he (i.e., the ruler) ignores their rights, denies their access to him and neglects their needs, allah will not answer his prayer or realize his hopes and will act towards him with indifference on the day of resurrection.” so mu`awiyah appointed a person to keep a vigil on the necessities of the people and to fulfill them. [abu dawud and at-tirmidhi].

commentary: the hadith warns such a ruler who is heedless of the problems and affairs of the needy and who keeps them away from him. on the last day, allah, too, will be indifferent to him. indeed, a stern warning is given to such rulers who have no direct contact with the needy people and who keep their doors shut to them.

Chapter 79: The Just Ruler

allah, the exalted, says:

“verily, allah enjoins al-`adl (justice) and al-ihsan (performing duties in a perfect manner).” (16:90)

“and be equitable. verily! allah loves those who are the equitable.” (49:9)

659. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “seven are (the persons) whom allah will give protection with his shade* on the day when there will be no shade except his shade (i.e., on the day of resurrection), and they are: a just ruler; a youth who grew up with the worship of allah; a person whose heart is attached to the mosque; two persons who love and meet each other and depart from each other for the sake of allah; a man whom a beautiful and high ranking woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he (rejects this offer by saying): `i fear allah` a person who gives a charity and conceals it (to such an extent) that the left hand might not know what the right has given; and a person who remembers allah in solitude and his eyes well up.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

* the shade of allah to which this hadith refers to is the shade of his throne.

commentary: this hadith has already been described in the chapter about the excellence of the love of allah. here, it has been carried forward in view of its relevance with the just ruler’s excellence. refer to the commentary on hadith no. 379.

660. `abdullah bin `amr bin al-`as (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the just will be seated upon pulpits of light.” those who are fair with regards to their judgement and their family and those who are under them.”

[muslim].

commentary: how will be the likeness of the pulpits of light? although we are not aware of their reality, yet we are supposed to have faith in them. we must also believe that these people (just rulers) will be under the shade of the throne or the divine mercy, while people will be drenched in their sweat depending on their deeds.

the hadith throws light on the excellence of justice and the high rank of those who do justice.

661. `auf bin malik (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the best of your rulers are those whom you love and who love you, and those who supplicate allah in your favour and you supplicate allah in their favour. the worst of your rulers are those whom you hate and who hate you; and whom you curse and who curse you.” it was asked (by those who were present): “should not we oppose them?” he said, “no, as long as they establish salat; as long as they establish salat in your midst.”

[muslim].

commentary: the hadith identifies two categories of rulers. first, those rulers who are well-wishers of people and provide them with justice. these are the best rulers for whom people also pray. second, the worst rulers who are only concerned with their rule and interests and take no interest in providing justice to people and removing their difficulties. in fact, rulers are advised to adhere to justice, uprightness and equity as this can endear them to allah as well as to people. moreover, we are told that rebellion against rulers is disallowed till they commit a flagrant act of disbelief and stop abiding by the duties of islam, particularly salat (prayer).

662. `iyad bin himar (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “the people of jannah will be of three kinds: a just successful ruler, a man who shows mercy to his relatives, and a pious believer who has a large family and refrains from begging.”

[muslim].

commentary: all the three qualities mentioned in the hadith particularly characterize the men of faith and will cause their entry to jannah. every believer is expected to strive for being invested with these good qualities.

Chapter 80: When to Obey and Disobey Rulers

allah, the exalted, says:

“o you who believe! obey allah and obey the messenger (muhammad (pbuh)), and those of you (muslims) who are in authority.” (4:59)

663. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: the prophet (pbuh) said, “it is obligatory upon a muslim to listen (to the ruler) and obey whether he likes it or not, except when he is ordered to do a sinful thing; in such case, there is no obligation to listen or to obey.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith crystallizes the parameters of the muslim subjects' obedience to their muslim rulers. the honour of the latter is bound up with their surrender to the command of allah and his messenger (pbuh). otherwise, apart from the torment in the hereafter, they will also be subjected to humiliation in this world.

664. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: whenever we took a pledge of allegiance to messenger of allah (pbuh) to hear and obey, he (pbuh) would say to us, “as far as you are capable of.” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: obedience to a muslim ruler calls for two conditions: first, his command must not infringe upon the canonical sanctity; second, it ought not to outweigh people's limitations. in case, he fails to meet these two prerequisites, his obedience will also become non-obligatory. this hadith conveys a warning to rulers that they must not put people to a hardship unbearable to them.

665. ibn `umar (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “one who withdraws his hand from obedience (to the amir) will find no argument (in his defense) when he stands before allah on the day of resurrection; and one who dies without having sworn allegiance will die the death of one belonging to the days of ignorance.” [muslim].

another narration is: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “he who dies having defected from obedience (to the amir) and discards his association with the main body of the (muslim) community, dies the death of one belonging to the days of jahiliyyah.”

commentary: the hadith makes it clear that it is binding upon muslims to show obedience to the just muslim ruler and to join forces with the muslim community to give allegiance to him as long as he does not call to a sin.

666. anas (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “hear and obey even if an abyssinian slave whose head is like a raisin is placed in authority over you.”
[al-bukhari].

commentary: nobody pays respect to a slave, with a black complexion and small head at that. but the hadith brings such a man in focus to emphasize that obedience to a ruler is inescapable. the only condition is that his governance should be confined to the shari`ah framework without reference to his geographical, tribal and ethnic background.

667. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “it is obligatory upon you to listen and obey the orders of the ruler in prosperity and adversity, whether you are willing or unwilling, or when someone is given undue preference to you.”
[muslim].

commentary: obedience to a ruler is indispensable in view of the collective interests of a community. a believer has, therefore, been enjoined to obey the ruler in all circumstances rising above his personal interests, preferences and psychological urges. the ruler, however, must not be obeyed if he breaks the shari`ah rules.

668. `abdullah bin `amr (may allah be pleased with them) reported: we accompanied messenger of allah (pbuh) on a journey. we halted at a place to take a rest. some of us began to set right their tents, others began to graze their animals while others were engaged in competing with one another in archery when an announcer of messenger of allah (pbuh) announced that people should gather for salat. we gathered around the messenger of allah and he ((pbuh)) addressed us, saying, “every prophet before me was under obligation to guide his followers to what he knew was good for them and to warn the evil thing which he knew. as for this ummah, it will have sound state and in its early stage of existence; but the last phase of its existence, will be faced with trials and with things you do not recognize. there will be tremendous trials, one after the other, and to each the believer will say, `that is it`. whenever a trial arrives the believer will say: `this is going to bring about my destruction.

‘ when this passes, another calamity will approach and he will say: ‘this surely is going to be my end.’ whosoever wishes to be removed from the fire (hell) and admitted to jannah should die with faith in allah and the last day; and he should treat others as he wishes to be treated. he who swears allegiance to an imam, he should give him the pledge in ratification and the sincerity of his heart. he should obey him to the best of his capacity. if another man comes forward as a claimant (when one has already been installed), behead the second.”

[muslim].

commentary: here ‘its early stage’ means the period of the companions, of the successors (of the companions), and of the followers (of the successors). in another hadith, it has been called as the best era. in comparison with all the succeeding periods, this period is surpassingly good, peaceful and blessed. later would emerge, it was prophesized, mischief after mischief, each being worse than the preceding one. today, everybody sees the truth of this prophecy like the light of day. by predicting the emergence of mischief, messenger of allah (pbuh) wanted to warn his followers that they should keep themselves aloof from them. to them he further explained in advance the precautionary measures, that is, to keep faith in allah, to remain firm-footed in the belief in the hereafter and to deal with people fairly, attempting to be polite to them at the same time.

besides, prophecy has been made about the abundance of the power-hungry people with a remedial note. in the first instance believers are supposed to swear allegiance to the caliph, and by extending their cooperation to him they should kill another claimant to the caliphate because it is only in this way that the unity of the muslim ummah can be maintained, free of chaos and discord. yet, unfortunately, the power-orientated groups have found a plaything in the shape of democracy, turning peace and unity into a legend of the past. what a pity that despite all that they seek stability and progress! is it the miracle of time or the quirk of the vested interests that has reversed the whole scheme of things? there is little hope of the improvement of the muslim world’s affairs. indeed, it faces an ironical situation.

669. wa’il bin hujr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: salamah bin yazid al-ju’f (may allah be pleased with him) asked messenger of allah (pbuh): “o prophet of allah! tell us,

what you command us to do if there arises over us rulers who demand of us what is due to them and refuse us what is due to us.” messenger of allah (pbuh) turned away from him, but he repeated the same question. thereupon messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “listen to them and obey them. they are responsible for their obligations and you are accountable for yours.”
[muslim].

commentary: this hadith means that both the ruler and the ruled have their own respective obligations. if any of the two sides fails to play its due role, it will bear the brunt of its deficiency on the final day. yet, people are debarred from disobeying a ruler who neglects to do what is required of him. negligence is not rectifiable by negligence as it will make matters worse. to endure the high-handedness of a ruler in view of the overall national interest, is therefore, preferable to revolting against him. true, one cannot take the law into one’s own hands, yet there always remains room for improvement and positive criticism. to make use of it within limits and to make efforts for the enforcement of the canonical discipline will not be deemed as an uprising. indeed, this will be deemed, to some extent, binding on everybody.

670. `abdullah bin mas`ud (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “there will be discrimination after my death and there will be other matters that you will disapprove.” he was asked: “o messenger of allah! what do you command us to do when we are encountered with such happenings?” he answered, “give what is due from you and supplicate to allah for your rights.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: there are two aspects of this hadith. on the one hand, people are advised to put up patiently with the transgressive behaviour of rulers as well as their nepotism or monopolization of all the national resources. on the other hand, rulers are warned to ward off a capricious conduct of life, lest they should face the wrath of allah.

671. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “whosoever obeys me, obeys allah; and he who disobeys me, disobeys allah; and whosoever obeys the amir (leader), in fact, obeys me; and he who disobeys the amir, in fact, disobeys me.”
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith informs us that it is imperative that we obey the leader of the muslim community so long as he does not call to a sin, because doing so is in fact obedience to allah (swt).

672. ibn `abbas (may allah be pleased with them) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, "if a person notices in his ruler what he dislikes, he should show patience because he who departs from the (muslim) community a cubit, dies like those who died in the days of ignorance."
[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith urges us to bear patiently when a ruler makes a mistake so long as he does not call to a sin. it also warns us against disobedience to the ruler as this will cause mischief at the cost of the unity and common interests of the muslim community.

673. abu bakrah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i heard messenger of allah (pbuh) saying, "he who insults the rulers allah will insult him."
[at-tirmidhi].

commentary: to affront and degrade the ruler means to disobey him and to by-pass his orders. this impairs his power, honour and dignity. believers have been told to obey and support rulers for the sake of national interest and welfare, understanding that they desist from committing an overt disbelief and maintain congregation salat and other duties of religion. the political system of islam is totally incompatible with western democracy. the concept of government party and the opposition is alien to islam. all belong to one ummah with only one goal and pursue the same aims and objects of islamic guidelines!

Chapter 81: Undesirability of Aspiring for Rulership

allah, the exalted, says:

“that home of the hereafter (i.e., jannah), we shall assign to those who rebel not against the truth with pride and oppression in the land nor do mischief by committing crimes. and the good end is for the muttaqun (the pious and righteous persons).” (28:83)

674. `abdur-rahman bin samurah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: the messenger of allah (pbuh) said to me, “do not ask for position of authority. if you are granted this position without asking for it, you will be helped (by allah) in discharging its responsibilities; but if you are given it as a result of your request, you will be left alone as its captive. if you take an oath to do something and then find a better alternative, you should adopt the latter and expiate for your oath.”

[al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: by rulership is meant caliphate or any other rank affiliated to its hierarchy. yet, it is undesirable to be eager or to strive for such an extraordinary position as it entails a heavy responsibility and one may face a sufficient difficulty in being absolved from it. however, if a man gets it without solicitation, he should accept it. the other part of the hadith concerns swearing. somebody takes an oath to do something but he finds another work more rewarding and righteous. in such a situation he is advised to dissolve his oath and make expiation for it. thereafter, he will be free to avail the advantageous option. as for the expiation of breaking an oath, there are four options: to set free a slave, or to feed an average-quality food to ten needy persons, or to provide clothes to them; and the expiator who cannot afford all that, should observe fasting for three days.

675. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said to me, “o abu dharr, i see that you are weak and i like for you what i like for myself. do not rule over (even) two persons, and do not manage an orphan’s property.”

[muslim].

commentary: abu dharr al-ghifari (may allah be pleased with him) was one of the most ascetic companions who was little interested in mundane affairs. finding him weak to do responsible jobs,

messenger of allah (pbuh) gave him this advice. in fact, the one who takes interest in worldly affairs and understands them well can discharge the responsibilities appropriately. but a person who has aversion to worldly pursuits and keeps clear of them will be considered unfit in this regard.

676. abu dharr (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i said to messenger of allah (pbuh): “why do you not appoint me to an (official) position?” he (pbuh) patted me on the shoulder with his hand and said, “o abu dharr, you are a weak man and it is a trust and it will be a cause of disgrace and remorse on the day of resurrection except for the one who takes it up with a full sense of responsibility and fulfills what is entrusted to him (discharges its obligations efficiently).”

[muslim].

commentary: there are, according to this hadith, two conditions for putting people in official positions. the first is the relevant talent for the job, a man is put in charge of; and the second is his capacity for discharging responsibilities thereof. for example, a ruler should primarily possess the ability to maintain law and order and to establish justice; and secondly, he should be endowed with sufficient dynamism and vision to cope with new demands and situations. this basic principle applies to every official, whether in the capacity of governor, minister, advisor, financial administrator or a clerk. apart from the sense of job, ability and integrity, he should be fired with determination with regard to his work. an office is indeed an important trust, and to have it without meeting the said conditions is a sort of treachery .

677. abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “you will covet for getting a position of authority, but remember that it will be a cause of humiliation and remorse on the day of resurrection.”

[al-bukhari]

commentary: this hadith urges people, particularly the incapable ones, to shed off the ambition to achieve rulership and power. it is feared that owing to their lack of talent they will mismanage the task which will be assigned to them. this will render them guilty with allah. the prophet (pbuh) dissuades such people from accepting any government portfolio as in this way they will remain safe and trouble-free. yet, if a deserving person gets a job of high responsibility, he should do his utmost to do full justice to it, so that he may be spared remorse on the day of resurrection.

Chapter 82: Appointment of Pious Governors, Advisors and Judges

allah, the exalted, says:

“friends of that day will be foes one to another except al-muttaqun: (i.e., pious and righteous persons).” (43:67)

678. abu sa`id and abu hurairah (may allah be pleased with him) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “allah neither raised up any prophet nor did he authorize any person with ruling power but for whom there were two types of entourage: one enjoins upon him to do good and incites him to carry it out, and the other enjoins evil and goads him; and the protected (from the bad entourage) is the one whom allah protects.” [al-bukhari].

commentary: a ruler has been told here that taqwa (consciousness and fear of allah), honesty, integrity and ability are the prerequisites to choosing anybody as his aide or advisor. prior to their nomination, he should check up the reputation of his advisors. this precautionary measure will serve as a safeguard against the spread of corruption in society and serve the cause of goodness. secondly, a ruler should obey the commands of allah and his messenger (pbuh) because this discipline will not only keep him safe from making faults but will also serve as a shield against the machinations of wicked people.

679. `aishah (may allah be pleased with her) reported: messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “when allah desires good for a ruler, he appoints for him a sincere adviser who will remind him if he forgets and helps him if he remembers. when allah wishes for him the contrary, he appoints for him a bad adviser who will not remind him if he forgets, nor will he help him if he remembers.”

commentary: in the recruitment of good and scrupulous aides lies the blessing of allah to a ruler because such aides will prove helpful to him in making sound judgements, reaching right conclusions and guarding him against leaning towards evil ways. yet, if all of these aides are self-seekers, flatterers and corrupt, they will undoubtedly influence his decision-making in a bad way. and one can believe that the end of the ruler will be far from being desirable because history also supports this view. as for the hereafter, he will be hardly safe from the infernal torment.

Chapter 83: Prohibition of Appointing an Aspirant Person to a Public Office of Authority

680. abu musa ash`ari (may allah be pleased with him) reported: i called on the prophet (pbuh) with two of my cousins. one of them said to him: “o messenger of allah (pbuh), appoint me governor of some land over which allah has given you authority.” the other also requested for something of the same nature. messenger of allah (pbuh) said, “**by allah we do not appoint someone to this post who seeks it or someone who contends for it.**” [al-bukhari and muslim].

commentary: this hadith supports the theme presented in this chapter by imam an-nawawi, that is, a person pushing himself up for an office should be deprived of it. ambitious persons usually manage to get a high office for self-aggrandizement, damaging the interests of other people. a government should primarily aim at the welfare of people and not serve the interests of the privileged few or benefit the holders of key posts alone.



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