

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ILM UL MUKARRAM “DARSUL HADITH”

LESSONS FROM AHÂDEETH SHAREEF

commentary on

40 ahâdeeth | arba'een | of Imaam Nawawi

رحمة الله عليه

with emphasis on perfecting one's character

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Hadith One

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NIYYAH | SINCERITY OF INTENTION

عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَبِي حَفْصِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ

سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ

Narrated on the authority of Ameer al-Mu'mineen Abu Hafs 'Umar ibnul Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu, who said: I heard Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam say:

"Verily actions are only dependant on intentions, and everyone will get what he intended. Whosoever migrates with an intention for Allah and His Messenger, the migration will be for the sake of Allah and his Messenger. And whoever migrates for any worldly gain, then he will attain it, or to a woman then he will marry her, so his migration will be for the sake of whatever he migrated for."

[Saheeh Bukhaari] [Saheeh Muslim]

‘UMAR BIN AL-KHATTAAB | NARRATOR

This is the first Hadeeth of the Arba'een of Imaam Nawawi Rahmatullahi Alayh. It highlights the essence and importance of having a correct Niyyah (Intention).

Umar was his real name. He was the son of Khattaab, and therefore known as Umar ibnul Khattaab. The second of the four Rightly Guided Khulafaa, his Khilaafah lasted for 10 years, 6 months and 5 days after succeeding the Khilaafah of Hazrat Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq Radiallahu Anhu. His nobility earned him the title of Ameer al-Mu'mineen أمير المؤمنين (Leader of the Believers). He was previously called Khalifa-tu-Khalifa-ti-Rasulillah (Vicegerent of the Messenger of Allah) and was one of the ten companions, to be given the glad tidings of a promised Jannah in one sitting of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam.

Due to his courageous and strong personality, he was given the laqab (cognomen/nickname) Abu Hafs أبو حفص (hafs meaning lion in Arabic). Yet another title conferred to this honourable leader, was Al-Farooq الفاروق (The one who distinguishes between truth and falsehood). Born in 583 CE and breathed his last in 644 CE, he was a man of equality; good governance; justice; tolerance; wisdom; compassion and leadership, from the time he accepted Islam until his death.

Unbeknown to 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu, prior to embracing Islam, Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam made the following Du'aa to Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala :

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِزِّ الْإِسْلَامَ بِأَحَبِّ هَدَيْنِ الرَّجُلَيْنِ إِلَيْكَ بِأَبِي جَهْلٍ أَوْ بِعُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ

“O Allah! Strengthen Islam with whichever of these two men is more beloved to You Through Abu Jahl or through 'Umar bin al-Khattaab...” [Jami`at-Tirmidhi]

Consequently, in the sixth year of Nabuwwah (prophecy), Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala granted Islam and Imaan to 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu. After accepting Islam, 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu, publicly and fearlessly proclaimed his faith. His courage and bold actions strengthened and boosted the morale of the Muslims, who had until then, been forced to worship in the secrecy of Darul Arqam.

'Umar ibnul Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu had abundant knowledge and Tafaqquh (profound understanding) of Qur'aan and Sunnah. He was most humble and lived a life paired with, justice and truth, strength and courage, asceticism and piety.

Some distinct qualities that attest to the character of 'Umar Radiallahu Anhu, was that Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala made Haq (truth) flow from his tongue. Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala illuminated his heart with Firasah (Spiritual Foresight) and his sharp insight and contributions in furthering the cause of Islam was unparalleled.

He narrated 539 Ahadeeth of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam. On very many occasions, when Mashwarah (consultation) was made and different views were taken, whatever 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu advised, was exactly what Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala desired. Verses of the Noble Qur'aan were revealed according to suggestions of 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu.

When the mantle of Khilaafah had fallen on his shoulders, as Ameer al-Mu'mineen, he was so conscientious not to transgress the rights of individuals and he shed tears, day and night, saying : "As the Leader of the Believers ... if I will be 'just' with matters and affairs of the people, then too, my Hisaab Kitaab (reckoning) will be taken... and, if I 'oppress' them, then too, I will be punished".

He established the pillars of justice within his governance and his primary concern was always for the benefit of people, with special empathy and consideration for the weak, sick, orphans and the poor. Coupled with these sensibilities, was 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu's boldness and confidence that characterized his leadership, and made even Shaytaan fear him. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentioned in a Hadeeth :

مَا لَقِيكَ الشَّيْطَانُ قَطُّ سَالِكًا فَجًّا إِلَّا سَلَكَ فَجًّا غَيْرَ فَجِّكَ

... whenever Shaytaan sees you ('Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu) taking a path, he follows a path other than yours." [Saheeh Bukhaari]

AN AMAZING INCIDENT

Amongst the many Karaamaat (miracles) of 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu, was an amazing incident that stood out.

Once, an army had been despatched by 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu to one of the neighbouring countries, with the Ameer being a man named 'Saariyah' commanding the force. Whilst fighting the enemy (near a mountain), the Muslim army were being attacked, from in front of them and from behind them.

At the time, 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu, was in Madinah Munawwarah delivering the Khutbah on the day of Jumu'ah. Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala revealed the scene of the battlefield to him. It became manifest to him, that the enemy were defeating the Muslims, and that if they put the mountain behind them, they would fight on one front only. 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu began to cry out on the mimbar, "Saariyah, the mountain!" three times.

Saariyah, came a month later and mentioned that their army was being defeated and in that situation they heard a voice crying out from afar, "Saariyah, the mountain!" three times. Saariyah said, "We turned towards the mountain, and Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala gave us victory."

MARTYRDOM

Throughout his Khilaafah, 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu made Du'a to Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala :

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي شَهَادَةً فِي سَبِيلِكَ، وَاجْعَلْ مَوْتِي فِي بَدْرِ رَسُولِكَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

O Allah! Bless me with the death of a Martyr (in Your cause), and let my death be in the city of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam. [Saheeh Bukhaari]

Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala is indeed kind to whom He wishes and accepted these two requests from him. While standing in the dawn prayer (Fajr) one day, he was stabbed by Abu Lu'lu Al-Fayruz, who was a slave of Mugheerah bin Shu'bah. This Majusi (fire-worshipper), stabbed 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu three times, with a dagger of two poisonous blades. He fell down bleeding copiously.

Three days later, he succumbed to his wounds and left this world. He is buried in Madinah Munawwarah, in the Hujrah Mubarakah (house of Sayiddina Ayesha Radiallahu Anha), beside his blessed Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam, and his companion Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq Radiallahu Anhu.

It is mentioned : "The day 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu passed away, Madinah Munawwarah became dark ...". So much so, that a little child asked his father : "Has Qiyaamah begun?". The father replied : "No my son, Umar has just left this world ...".

This was a glimpse of the life of 'Umar bin al-Khattaab Radiallahu Anhu.

INNAMAL A'MAALU BINNIYAAT | إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

This is an extremely comprehensive, rich, and beneficial Hadith. Imam Bukhaari Rahmatullahi Alayh selected 'Innamal a'maalu binniyyaat' as his first hadith and introduction to the whole collection of Saheeh Bukhaari Shareef. And, this Hadith appears in 7 different places within various chapters of Saheeh Bukhaari.

In Arabic, the word 'Innama' إِنَّمَا is used for restriction (Hasr), meaning 'only'. In the first sentence of this Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam has explained to us that,

verily, 'actions are only judged by their intentions'. Our attention is immediately brought to the fact that our intentions need to be correct and 'pure'.

Therefore, the one who is seeking (Taalib), the one who is listening and also the one who is reading the book, corrects his intention solely for the pleasure of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala. It reminds the author of sincerity and also warns the reader that good and noble deeds inculcated by the Hadith found therein, will only bear fruit if there is sincerity attached to their intentions and would be worthless if the motive is not sincere.

THE HIJRAH

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam and the Sahaabah Radiallahu Anhum were often subjected to abuse and persecution by the Mushrikeen (polytheists) of Makkah Mukarammah. Many Muslims were killed and tortured; Sumayya bint Khabbab Radiallahu Anha was ripped apart with a spear place in the intimate parts of her body; Bilal ibn Rabah Radiallahu Anhu was placed on the intense heat of the desert sand and whipped and beaten ; and even Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam was not spared from such abuse with the entrails of a sacrificed camel thrown on him whilst praying at the Kaabah.

A time came, when Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala commanded Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam to leave the Land of Kuffar and journey to the Land of Imaan. After receiving divine direction, Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam stood on a hillock and he turned his face towards Makkah saying: "Oh Makkah I love you, had it not been for your people (the Mushrikeen), I would have never left you ...". The Muhaajiroon (muslim emigrants) along with their great sacrifices, secretly began leaving Makkah Mukarammah and embarked on Hijrah (migration) to Madinah Munawwarah. Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala had kept tremendous reward for those who made this Hijrah.

Amongst those who made the Hijrah, was one particular Sahaabi (Radiallahu Anhu), who wanted to marry a woman named Umm Qais, but she refused to marry him unless he would migrate from Makkah to Madinah. Therefore, he migrated in order to marry her. And, because his intention was not for Islam, nor for the sake of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala, he was only rewarded with a worldly thing. But, if he made the intention solely for Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala, his reward would have been much much greater.

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam and his Sahaabah Radiallahu Anhum were so sincere and kind, that they overlooked and concealed the mistakes of others, and therefore, the name of this particular Sahaabi (Radiallahu Anhu) was never mentioned.

NIYYAH | THE IMPORTANCE OF INTENTION

Ikhlaas إخلاص means 'to free something' ~ Ikhlaas (Sincerity) is the freeing of one's Niyyah (intention) from all impurities in order to gain closeness to Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala, exclusively for His pleasure. Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala mentions in the Noble Qur'aan that Ikhlaas and Niyyah (sincere intentions) is a precondition of acceptance of good deeds :

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion ... [Surah Al-Bayyinah 98:5]

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentioned in a Hadeeth :

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ

Verily, Allah does not look at your appearance or wealth but rather he looks to your hearts and deeds (actions). [Saheeh Muslim]

Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala is well aware of what is hidden in the hearts. Free your heart and free your intention from everybody else besides Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala. There must not be a speck of insincerity in our heart.

The nature of our intentions should be purely and solely for the pleasure of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala. Any action we do must be pleasing to Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala and Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam and in conformity of the Shariah.

A righteous man used to address himself and say : “Oh Nafs! Inculcate ‘sincerity’ within yourself and be pure, so that you may be freed and liberated from the fire”.

NIYYAT BETTER THAN ACTIONS | نية المؤمن خير من عمله

Actions depend on intentions. If the intention is good, and for sake of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala the action will also be good and acceptable, otherwise, if the intention is depraved, the action will also be depraved and rejected in the court of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala.

The excellence of Niyyat is such a thing that there is no pretence in it. Thus it is better than action, because in action there is a possibility of pretence of piety.

Whenever you do a good deed you should purify your intention beforehand. After that, if there remains any doubt it should be understood that this doubt is from Shaytaan and in this way he is obstructing from doing good deed.

From this, it is clear that the intention of a Mu`min (Believer) is better than his action.

IKHLAAS | SINCERITY

There are two important ingredients for the acceptance of any Amal (action) performed; adhering to the Sunnah and implementing Sincerity.

Sincerity (Ikhlāas) is characterised by actions done solely for the pleasure of the Creator, Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala, and not with the intention of pleasing creation, or showing off one's good deeds to win praise, or seeking admiration of others, ie : Riyaa (show and ostentation).

An Analogy discussed > The roots of a tree are hidden beneath the soil. The presence of roots give rise to the sprouting of branches, leaves and fruit. If the roots are destroyed, the entire tree will decay and become decomposed and will not flourish.

Similarly, the roots of the tree represent Ikhlāas ... Ikhlāas is the root of all our A'maal (deeds and actions).

One must conceal one's deeds (like the roots of a tree) to develop Ikhlaas. When Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala loves a person's action (done with Ikhlaas) then He will bring it to the attention of people without the person striving for it through show (Riya). In Deen we require this Ikhfaa (concealment) and must hide our deeds, and not do things for show and ostentation. Do all your worship in private and conceal it like you would conceal sins.

Yaqoob Alayhis Salaam said: "The sign of a sincere person is that he makes as much an effort at concealing his virtuous acts, as he would do for his evil deeds".

However, we should not let fear of Riya take us to the other extreme and prevent us from doing good deeds. There are also times when we have to perform deeds in public. The example given is of a person who is travelling, and the time for Salaah has set in. One is not going to hide and read one's Salaah. If one performs Salaah openly then disbelievers might see the beauty of Salaah and it will be an invitation towards Deen.

These deeds performed privately and in public (solely for the pleasure of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) together with Ikhlaas (the concealed 'roots') brings about the beauty of Islam.

“ ‘Ilm (knowledge) is the seed and Amal (actions) are the crops that grow.

And, the water is Ikhlaas (Sincerity)”

ACQUIRING IKHLAAS

When a person inculcates within him, the love of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala and his concern is exclusively to please Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala, then he will negate from his heart, everything besides Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala. In this way, Ikhlaas can be achieved.

On the Day of Qiyamah, we will be questioned by Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala and be held accountable for our deeds.

There are many Qur'aanic verses and Ahaadith that tell us about these events so that the believers will prepare themselves for the most important, final test and Al-Hisaab (accountability) with their strong Imaan and “sincere” righteous deeds.

On day of Qiyamah, a certain person will see so much of good deeds written for him that he definitely did not perform in this world, eg : extra Haj/ Zakaat etc ; but because he had a genuine and sincere intention, he will still be rewarded.

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal Rahmatullahi Alayh advised his son : “Make good sincere intentions....you will always be in (khair) blessings”.

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentioned in a very lengthy Hadeeth regarding three types of people who will be summoned before Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala on the Day of Resurrection. He spoke of a man who had died as a Martyr (Shaheed) ; a man who had acquired and imparted knowledge and read the Qur'an (Aalim and Qaari) ; and a generous man to whom Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala had given plenty of wealth. They will all be brought forward and questioned regarding their intentions of their good actions in the world. Allah will remind them of the favours He had bestowed upon them and the men will acknowledge them. However, due to doing the action for the sake of people and to seek their

admiration, the command will then be issued for these people to be dragged and thrown into Jahannum. [Saheeh Muslim]

There is a famous Hadith, in which Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentioned an incident with three people who remembered Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala and followed His commands when they were free from any troubles, and Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala saved them when they were in distress.

These three people were trapped in a cave, because a rock had covered the entrance, but, due to them performing sincere deeds in their life, Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala, relieved them from their distress and caused the rock to move aside, and they got out freely.

[Saheeh Bukhaari]

This Hadith highlights the importance of doing noble and virtuous deeds with sincerity. In every righteous deed, one should seek only the Pleasure of Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala. A deed which is performed without sincerity will not be accepted by Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala.

In another Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentioned : "There are seven whom Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala will shade in His Shade on the Day of Qiyamah.

1. A Just Ruler
2. A youth who grew up in the worship of Allah
3. A man whose heart is attached to the Musjid
4. Two men who love each other for Allah's sake, meeting for that and parting upon that
5. A man who is called by a woman of beauty and position but he says: 'I fear Allah'
6. A man who gives in charity and hides it, such that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives in charity.

[Saheeh Bukhaari]

The last person in this Hadith, describes the type of person who gives Sadaqah with his right hand and the left does not know, He goes to great lengths to protect himself from Riyaa (ie : doing deeds in order to earn the praise and recognition of people).

This sin (Riyaa) destroys all the rewards that lie in all righteous deeds. Therefore, great care has to be taken to ensure that one's intentions begin and remain pure whenever good actions are being done.

Ibn Al-Qayyim Rahmatullahi Alayh said : "Deeds without sincerity are like a traveller who carries 'sand and stones' in his leather bag instead of provisions (food and drink).

The carrying of it burdens him and it brings no benefit."

May Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala make us all to follow those, whose deeds are done in accordance with the Sunnah, deeds that are done sincerely for the sake of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala.

DUA FOR PROTECTION FROM MINOR SHIRK | RIYA

Riya (ostentation) is the doing of good actions for show, name, fame or recognition.

One should make the following Dua:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَشْرِكَ بِكَ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ

O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowingly associating partners with You, and I seek Your forgiveness for that which I do not know. [Al Adab ul-Mufrad]