

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

Notes by Maulana Naeem Motala

Hadith 8

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عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ
أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ،
وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ؛

فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ
إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

Hadith 8 - The Sacredness of a Muslim

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar Radiyallahu Anhumata narrates: Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said,

"I have been commanded to fight / oppose / defend against the people [idolaters] until they testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad [Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam] is the Messenger of Allah, and until they establish the Salaah and pay the Zakaah.

And if they do that then they will have gained protection from me for their lives and property, unless [they commit acts that are punishable] in Islam, and their reckoning will be with Allah."

[Saheeh Buhkaari] [Saheeh Muslim]

We need to analyse the background of this Hadith and the context it was said, to understand this Hadith correctly.

As a result of the Arab polytheists breaking their treaty with the Muslims; murdering many people of Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam's allies; persecuting the Muslims for many years; breaking their oaths and pacts; causing bloodshed and showing open aggression and hostility against the Muslims... it was in this circumstance that Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentioned this Hadith, saying : "I have been commanded to fight against the people [idolaters] until they say Laa ilaaha ilallah", so that Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam could save his community from further harm.

Fighting was a policy of last resort, when all other means had failed.

The Muslims would first give Da`wah [invite] the non-Muslims and polytheists towards Islam in an excellent manner.

Efforts were made to stop the hostilities, for the enemy to put down their weapons and live peacefully under the Muslim rule, either by embracing Islam voluntarily, or, if they wished to remain on their own creeds and religions, they would have to pay Jizyah [a small amount of tax] to the Muslims.

However, if all this failed and the polytheist resort to fighting, that is when Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam would react to a combative aggression in the same way.

So, whilst inclining to absolute peace with the enemy, there were times when Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam and the Sahabah Radiyallahu Anhum had to combat the aggression of the enemy, when they insisted on fighting the Muslims.

The word أَقَاتَلَ mentioned in this Hadith means to “fight or oppose” and not the verb قَتَلَ [qatala] which means to “kill”.

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam was commanded to oppose and not kill. Also, this particular Arabic verb implies that it is not a one-sided action but a participation of both sides. In other words, when somebody attacks you first [with the intent to kill you], you oppose the person and defend yourself [fight back] in response to the opponent’s aggression.

Note: The word النَّاسِ in this Hadith, refers to only those [Mushrikeen of Makkah/Arab polytheists] who were waging war against the Muslims and not the Ahle-Kitaab [Jews and Christians].

Islam commanded the Muslims to be just to people of other faiths [e.g. Jews Christians, pagans].

Islam calls us to treat them kindly and win their hearts as long as they do not take up arms against Muslims.

In fact, Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta’ala mentions in the Noble Qur’aan:

Allah forbids you from not dealing kindly and justly with those who neither fight against you nor drive you out of your homes. For Allah loves those who are just.

[Surah Al-Mumtahinah 60:8]

And, Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam mentions in a Hadith:

“Whoever kills any person [despite having a peace covenant with this person], then this person [the Muslim] will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, though its smell is perceived from a distance of forty years”. *[Saheeh Bukhaari]*

It should be understood that the Qur’aan rejects force conversion to Islam. It was not obligatory for the polytheists to accept Islam in order to make peace with the Muslims. If they stopped their hostilities against the Muslims and sought refuge, then the Muslims were commanded to grant them protection and safe passage even if they did not accept Islam.

Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta’ala mentions in the Noble Qur’aan:

“You are not a dictator over them”. *[Surah Al-Ghaashiyah 88:22]*

In other words, you cannot force someone to accept Islam.

There are several examples in the Seerah of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam, when Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam stopped the Muslims from killing any enemy, who on the battlefield recites the Shahadah [Kalimah] and accepts Islam.

Hence, if any person embraces Islam, then the Muslims will have to treat him like any another Muslim [i.e. this person's life and property are protected and is sacred].

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam says:

“and their reckoning will be with Allah”.

The meaning is:

We are not responsible for their internal conditions, and we are only responsible for the external conditions of the person. Hence, if a person has affirmed his Shahadah [Kalimah] and shows himself as a Muslim [he observes his Salaah and discharges his Zakaah] then one has to regard him as a Muslim. It is left to the knowledge of Allah whether he is a Believer or disbeliever and whether he is sincere or not.