

Sincerity and our Deeds

الأعمال و الإخلاص

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OUR DEEDS **and** **Sincerity**

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Table of Contents

Preface	
Deeds are but by Intentions	5
Importance of the Hadith	5
The occasion of the Hadith	6
Meaning of Niyyah (Intention) in Arabic	6
What is meant by deeds in the Hadith?	8
Good intentions do not justify bad Deeds	9
Intention and Acts of Worship	9
Niyyah (intention) and Ordinary Deeds	13
Mixed Intentions	13
Compliments of People	17
Awareness of Intentions	18
Purifying Intentions is the Hardest Task	18
Concept of Worship in Islam	20
Good Intentions Compensate the Inability	22
Do not Waste your Good Deeds	23
Benefits from the Hadith	24
Disease of Hypocrisy	24
Moslems Nowadays	25
Be wise	25
Moslems Duty	26
Islam and the Life of this World	32
Test Your Knowledge	34
References	36
Books of the Author	37
Respected Dear Readers	38

About the Author

The author of this book, Zeinab Hassan Ashry, is a computer engineer, who spent 12 years in Islamic studies in Dar Al-Qura'n in Kuwait. She is a well-known figure in the field of da'wah (preaching Islam) in Kuwait for English speaking ladies, Muslims and non-Muslims; she spent decades of her life in this field. She has been dedicating most of her time for spreading awareness about Islam. She teaches courses, gives lectures, writes books, articles, and is actively involved in Dawah activities among non-Muslims in Kuwait.

The author provides for the readers authentic Islamic information based on the Noble Quran, sound traditions of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), authentic Islamic books and references as well as the opinions of great respected Muslim scholars

Preface

I am deeply grateful to Almighty Allah for guiding me to start this series of Hadith studies. A selection of Prophet's traditions from Saheeh Al-Bukhari, the most authentic book after Quran, are explained in some detail emphasizing their effect in our life.

This series of Hadith studies is a humble attempt toward better understanding of Sunnah, its important role in our life and revival of Islamic heritage at large.

I thank Allah for offering me the chance to teach these selected traditions and share this knowledge with many of my sisters in IPC (Islam Presentation Committee, Kuwait).

I pray to Allah (Subhanahu Wata'la) from all my heart to accept this work and make it sincerely for His sake.

“Say : Truly, my prayers, my services of sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. There is no partners with him. This am I commanded, and I am the first of Moslems (of those who submit to His will)”

Deeds are but by Intentions

قال أمير المؤمنين عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه: سمعت رسول الله ﷺ يقول : **” إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى ، فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله ورسوله فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله، ومن كانت هجرته إلى دنيا يصيبها أو امرأة ينكحها فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه ”**
رواه البخاري

Ameer UI-Mu'meneen Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said that he heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying : “Deeds are but by intentions. And every man will get but what he intended. Thus he whose migration was for Allah and His messenger, his migration is for Allah and His messenger, and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or for a woman to marry, his migration is for which he migrated for.”

Importance of the Hadith

All scholars of Islam accepted this Hadith and agreed upon its authenticity. Al-Bukhari opened his book, As-Saheeh, by this Hadith and made it an introduction for the book indicating that any deed that is not intended for Allah's sake is ineffective and has no fruit both in this life and in the Hereafter.

This Hadith is one of the basics of the religion of Islam. Imam Ash-Shafe'e¹ said: “This Hadith represents one third of Islamic knowledge, and seventy chapters of Fiqh² depends upon it”

1 . The founder of Ash-Shafeiah school

2 . The science of deducing Islamic laws, rules, and regulations

The Occasion of the Hadith

At the beginning of Islam, the disbelievers of Mecca persecuted Moslems for many years. Although some Moslems migrated to Ethiopia, Moslems in general were enjoined to endure and keep patient. However, after Islam gained followers and support in Madinah, Moslems were permitted to migrate to Madinah so that they can practice their religion safely. The majority of the companions of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) left their home land, business, properties, and money behind in Mecca and migrated to Madinah. Many of them left their families behind as well. Those who migrated to support Allah and His messenger were promised great reward both in this life and in the Hereafter. They were given the title of “Al-Muhageroon” (the Immigrants) and their supporters in Madinah were given the title “Al-Ansar” (the Helpers).

A Bedouin proposed to a woman called Um-Qais but she refused to marry him unless he migrated to Madinah. Then he migrated and they got married. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked whether this man would get the same reward as Al-Muhageroon then his answer was this Hadith. This Bedouin was given the title “Muhajer Um-Qais” i.e., the one who migrated for Um-Qais.

Meaning of Niyyah (Intention) in Arabic

- 1) The wordy meaning of Niyyah (intention) in Arabic is to have something in mind.
- 2) According to Islamic terminology, Niyyah (intention) is the conscious inner motive that distinguishes the purpose behind the action, whether it is to please Allah (obeying Him, hoping for His reward, or fearing His punishment) or for any other sake.
- 3) Since motives generate the desire to act, it is common in Arabic to use the desire, hope, or wish as an alternative for Niyyah.

Niyyah in Quran

Quran refers to Niyyah in some verses as the desire or wish for something, or the hope to do something; examples are:

- **“Some of you desire this world and some of you desire the Hereafter”**
- **“You desired the benefits of this world but Allah desired the Hereafter”**
- **“Do not turn away from those who pray to their Lord in the morning and evening desiring His Face”**
- **“Those who spend their money desiring to please Allah”**
- **“He who hopes to meet with his Lord ”**

Niyyah in other Traditions

The following are some sayings of Prophet Mohammad that shed some light on the significance of Niyyah or intentions :

- **“People shall be gathered on the Day of Judgment according to their intentions”**
- **“Verily! People shall be resurrected according to their intentions”**
- **“You will never spend any thing desiring the reward of Allah but you will be reward for it, even of food you put in the mouth of your wife”.**
- **“And whose intention is the Hereafter, Allah will place his sufficiency in his heart, order his affairs, and his share in the life of this world, which Allah prescribed for him, will come to him submissively. And whose intention is only the life of this world,**

Allah will place poverty before his eyes, disorder his affairs, and he will get nothing in this world more than that which Allah prescribed for him.”

What is meant by deeds in the Hadith?

The Hadith does not specify certain kind of deeds. The Prophet (peace be upon him) meant all kinds of deeds, whether they are acts of worship such as prayers, fasting, ...etc., or ordinary deeds such as: eating, drinking, studying, teaching,...etc.

Deeds are but by intentions

The Hadith means that actions are judged according to the motivations behind them. The validity or goodness of actions depends upon the intentions associated them.

The reward or punishment of an action is not only determined by the nature of the action itself but also according to the intentions linked with it.

Therefore intention is the most important factor for our actions. And Allah Almighty looks first into our hearts to judge our actions. One can say the intention is the spirit of the action. The action is accepted or rejected according to what is in our hearts.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Allah does not look at your bodies, nor does He look at your appearance, but He looks at your hearts”³.

Again it is our motivation that makes a difference. The Muslim should be aware that wrong motivation behind a good action turns it into an evil deed.

3 . Narrated by Moslem

Good Intentions do not justify bad Deeds

However, good motivation behind a wrong action does not make it good, and does not justify it. In other words, the good intention is not a valid excuse for committing wrongful or sinful acts. However, if the person does this out of ignorance he might be exempted.

Intention and Acts of Worship

In Islam, Niyyah (intention) is part of every act of worship. The validity of the act of worship depends upon the sincerity of intention.

1. If the intention is sincerely for the sake of Allah, the act of worship is correct and accepted.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “On the Day of resurrection deeds will be presented to Allah. From them the deeds done sincerely for Allah’s sake will be separated and the rest will be thrown in the Fire of Hell”⁴

2. If the intention is not for the sake of Allah then the act of worship is incorrect and rejected. For example, if somebody prays just to please his parents, or for showing off, or for fame, with no intention to obey Allah, his prayer is corrupted and rejected and he will be punished for it because his intention was not for Allah.
3. If the intention backing the act of worship is to please Allah but mixed with other purposes then the act of worship is incorrect and will be rejected for Allah Al-Mighty ; for example if he intended to please a dead person beside Allah it will not be accepted from him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

4 . Narrated by Al-Bihaqqy

“Whosoever prays to show off is associating a partner with Allah. Whosoever fasts to show off, he is associating a partner with Allah. Whosoever gives a charity to show off he is associating a partner with Allah”⁵.

The *Hadith* emphasizes that the Muslim must be sincere, truthful, and honest in his acts of worship; he must make them all exclusively for the sake of Allah alone.

Sincerity is one of the conditions of accepting good deeds. The other condition is that the actions must be done in accordance with the Shariah as it will be explained in the fifth *hadith*.

This is impeded in the Testimony of Faith or the *Shahadah*

- “I bear witness that there is no god but Allah” is the *ikhlas* - ensuring that we do things for the sake of Allah and Allah alone.
- “I bear witness that Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah” - the Sunnah is the manifestation of the Quran - the Prophet, *sallallahu ‘alayhi wasallam*, is our example, our best model to follow. Following his Sunnah in our *ibadah*, *Akhlaq* (ethics), and *Muamalat* (dealings) ensures that we are acting in accordance with the Shariah.

Thus, the *shahadah* shows us the conditions for accepting a deed or performing an action: (a) it should be for the sake of Allah because He is the only One we worship, and (b) it should be in accordance with the Shariah.

5 . Narrated by Imam Ahmad

Conditions for Acceptance of Good Deeds

In the light of the following verse, **“Whosoever hopes for meeting with His Lord, let him do righteous work, and in the worship of his Lord set no one as partner”**, the scholars of Islam conclude that for any deed to be accepted by Allah and regarded as a good deed for us it must fulfill two conditions :

- 1) It must be good in itself (a righteous deed) not an evil deed.
- 2) The intentions behind it must be sincerely for pleasing Allah alone.

In other words, the deed must be free from any kind of defects. And it also must not be associated with any sort of Shirk. This means to exclude the worship of anything else, whether idols, or human beings, or forces of nature, or faculties of man, beside Allah.

“And every man will get but what he intended”

This phrase of the Hadith means that the share of every person from his actions depends upon what he has intended. If he intended evil he will get evil and if he intended good he will get good. Assume somebody does an action which is apparently good but he intended evil, he will get his deed rejected, or in other words he will receive no reward for it, and furthermore he will be punished for it.

“Thus he whose migration was for Allah and His messenger, his migration is for Allah and His messenger”

This is an example to confirm the previous meaning. Whosoever migrated from the land of disbelief, where it is not save for him to live and practice his religion, to the land of Islam, where he could practice his religion freely and safely, intending to support Allah and His messenger his migration will be accepted by Allah and he will get the reward of Al-Muhageroon.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said :

“..his migration is for Allah and His messenger..”

to emphasize that he will receive his full reward according to his intention. Quran states that those who migrated for Allah then died in their way they will get the full reward of Al-Muhageroon according to his intention.

“and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or for a woman to marry, his migration is for which he migrated for”

And he whoever migrated from the land of disbelief intending nothing but to achieve some worldly benefits or get married, his migration is for that which he migrated for. He will get no reward for his migration save that which he has intended.

In other words he will not get the great reward of Al-Muhageroon because he did not intend to migrate for the sake of supporting Allah and His messenger.

Since he intended only the life of this world, such as achieving some benefits or getting married he will get that which he intended but it will not be accepted from him as

a good deed and he will not be rewarded for this intention by more than the gains he earned in this world.

However, if he intended to achieve some worldly benefits or get married to keep himself away from evil, this will be accepted from him as a good deed and he will be rewarded for this intention in the Hereafter.

Niyah (intention) and Ordinary Deeds

On the other hand, any ordinary deed is regarded as an act of worship if the intention behind it is to obey and please Allah alone, and man will be rewarded for it as a good deed.

- The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“Allah will reward you for whatever you spend with the intention of gaining Allah’s pleasure even if it were a mouthful of food you put into your wife’s mouth.”**⁶
- Mua’aath Ibn Jabal (raa) used to say : **“I expect Allah (Subhanhu wa Taa’la) to reward for the time I spend in sleep as I expect Him to reward me for night prayer, because I sleep with the intention to strengthen myself for the night prayer”**

Mixed Intentions

We made it clear that in order for a deed to be accepted by Allah the intention behind it must be purely and sincerely for the sake of Allah alone.

However, if the intention is mixed with other aims and purposes rather than pleasing Allah (Subhanhu wa Taa’la), would the act be regarded as a good deed and accepted by Allah? There are two opinions in regard to this point:

⁶ . Narrated by Moslem

First opinion:

The act is not purely for Allah and it will be rejected no matter whether the other purpose mixed with it is hypocrisy or seeking some worldly benefits. There are many traditions that support this point of view:

- **The Prophet (peace be upon him) said :”Allah shall not accept a deed mixed with a weight of a mustard seed of hypocrisy”**
- **A man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) : “What do you think about a man who fights for both the reward of Allah and fame in this life ? The Prophet said :”Nothing for him”. Then he repeated his question three times. Every time the Prophet replied :”Nothing for him”. Then he said :”Allah accepts nothing (of deeds) save that which is intended purely for His Face”⁷**
- **A Bedouin asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): “A man fights for booty, a man fights for fame, and a man fights for pride, who is from among them fighting for Allah’s cause.?” The Prophet said :”It is he, who is fighting to make the word of Allah the higher”⁸**
- **The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “He who fights for Allah’s sake with no intention but getting a tethering rope, will get nothing but what he intended.”⁹**

⁷ . Narrated by Imam Ahmad

⁸ . Narrated by both Al-Bukhari and Moslem

⁹ . Narrated by Moslem

Second opinion:

This opinion distinguishes between the intention mixed with hypocrisy and the intention mixed with some worldly benefits beside obeying Allah.

(1) Intention mixed with hypocrisy or shirk (to please others beside Allah)

The intention for show, or name and fame or to please others beside Allah makes the deed invalid and rejected even if it is mixed with intention to please Allah. Moreover the person might be punished for hypocrisy (seeking pride and fame by carrying out acts of worship).

As it is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “The first man (whose case) will be decided on the Day of Judgment, will be a man who died as a martyr. He shall be brought for judgment. Allah will make him recount His blessings (i.e. the blessings which Allah had bestowed upon him) and he will recount them (and admit having enjoyed them in his life). (Then) will Allah say: What did you do (to requite these blessings)? He will say: I fought for You until I died as a martyr. Allah will say: You have told a lie. You fought so that you might be called a “brave warrior”. And you were called so. (Then) orders will be passed against him and he will be dragged with his face downward and cast into Hell.

Then there will be brought forward a man who acquired knowledge and imparted it (to others) and recited the Qur’an. He will be brought, Allah will make him recount His blessings and he will recount them (and admit having enjoyed them in

his lifetime). Then will Allah ask: What did you do (to requite these blessings)? He will say: I acquired knowledge and disseminated it and recited the Qur'an, seeking Your pleasure. Allah will say: You have told a lie. You acquired knowledge so that you might be called "a scholar", and you recited the Qur'an so that it might be said: "He is a Qari" and such has been said. Then orders will be passed against him and he shall be dragged with his face downward and cast into the Fire.

Then will be brought a man whom Allah had made very rich and had him granted every kind of wealth. He will be brought, Allah will make him recount His blessings and he will recount them and (admit having enjoyed them in his lifetime). Allah will (then) ask: What have you done (to requite these blessings)? He will say: I spent money in every cause in which You wished that it should be spent. Allah will say: You are lying. You did (so) that it might be said about (you): "He is a generous fellow", and so it was said. Then will Allah pass orders and he will be dragged with his face downward and thrown into Hell"¹⁰

In another tradition the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "When Allah gathers all people, the first and the last, for the Day of Judgment a caller will call: "Whoever did a deed associating a partner with Allah let him seek his reward from those whom he associated with Allah. Verily Allah is in need for no partners"¹¹

10 . Narrated by Moslem

11 . Narrated by Imam Ahmad and others.

(2) Intending some worldly benefits beside obeying Allah

He will be fully rewarded for his righteous deed with the following conditions :

- i- his main intention is to obey Allah,
- ii- his intention for those worldly benefits is secondary,
- iii- and those worldly benefits will not imperfect his acts of obedience toward Allah,

That is true because Allah (Subhanhu wa Taa'la) allowed Moslems to seek worldly benefits during the season of Hajj (pilgrimage) while performing the rites of pilgrimage:

"There is no harm in seeking some worldly benefits from your Lord (at the time of Hajj)"

However, his reward may be decreased if those worldly benefits imperfect his acts of obedience toward Allah.

Compliments of People do not reduce the Reward

The prophet (peace be upon him) was asked: "Would a man, who did good deeds purely for Allah, then people appreciated these deeds and praised him for them, get his full reward from Allah?" He said: "This is an immediate glad tidings for a believer"¹².

The prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized in this tradition that it is the intention that counts; so long as the intention is purely for Allah's sake nothing will corrupt the deed and the person will get his reward fully .

12 . Narrated by Moslem

Awareness of Intentions

Conscious motivations distinguish man from animal. This sort of motivations is influenced by our experiences in life such as: education, character, religious practice, social life, and culture,...etc.

Awareness of our motivations plays a great role in our life because it helps us recognize the purpose behind our actions, whether it is to please Allah, or it is something else; and this is a great step toward a better understanding of ourselves because it enables us to resolve the conflicting motivations in our hearts, clarify our attitudes, and reform our intentions.

Reforming our intentions is to purify them from mixed wrong intentions (such as : Shirk¹³, hypocrisy, fame, pride, arrogance, envy, hatred, revenge, anger, jealousy, selfishness, too much love of this world, wickedness, selfworship, ..etc.) and make them purely for Allah's sake alone.

Quran told us the story of a couple¹⁴ who were fasting and prepared a loaf of bread to break their fast. Then a poor man knocked their door asking for food. They gave him the loaf of bread in spite of their bad need for it and said: **“Verily we are feeding you for Allah’s sake we do not expect from you a reward or thanks”**¹⁵. Quran praised them and promised them great reward in the Gardens of Joy.

The Hardest Task

Reforming our intentions is one of the hardest tasks for a believer; it is the key of success both in this life and in the

13 . To associate partners with Allah

14 . Fatimah daughter of Prophet Mohaamad and her husband Ali May Allah be pleased with them.

15 . Surat Al-Insan, Chapter (76), Verse 9

Hereafter because it helps us control our conduct. It purifies our hearts, lightens up our way, and brings happiness, harmony, and peace to our life.

The prophet (peace be upon him) once said after returning from a battle :”We returned from the minor Jihad¹⁶ to the major Jihad, Jihad against ourselves”.

That is why it is said in Islam that the greatest Jihad is the struggle against the evil of ourselves. The prophet (peace be upon him) directed us to turn to Allah (Subhanhu wa Taa’la) seeking refuge in Him from the evils of ourselves and ask Him to help us purify our hearts from ill motives and desires because Allah (Subhanhu wa Taa’la) is our creator; He is well aware of the most hidden secrets of ourselves as Quran says:

“By a soul and by He (God) Who perfected it. And inspired it with what is wrong and what is right”¹⁷

Islamic scholars indicated that reforming intentions is a very hard task; it is the foremost holy struggle.

- **Sufian Ath-Thawry :”I found nothing harder than reforming my intentions because they keep changing”**
- **Yahia Ibn Katheer used to say: “Learning how to purify the intention behind a good deed is far important than the good deed itself”**
- **Dawood At-Ta’ee siad : “I see that all goodness in life is in nothing but good intentions”**

16 . Jihad means to exert an effort for God’s sake. Fighting is one form of Jihad.

17 . Surat Ash-Shams, Chapter (91), Verses: 7,8

In fact, a little deed with good intention is much better than mountains of good deeds with mixed intentions.

- **The prophet (peace be upon him) said :”Purify your faith, a little righteous deed will be sufficient for you”¹⁸**
- **A man of the tribe of Bani Saleem said:” Allah’s messenger came to me and said,: “If anybody comes on the Day of Resurrection who has said: “There is no god save Allah (La ilaha illal-lah)”, sincerely, with the intention to win Allah’s Pleasure, Allah will make the Hell-Fire forbidden for him.”¹⁹**

Concept of Worship in Islam

Correcting our tendencies, inclinations, intentions and keeping them above worldly desires elevates man’s worldly acts and makes them acts of worship. On the other hand corrupted intentions make acts of worship doom to failure and loss. If kernel is rotten, the beautiful outer skin will not be of any use.

The fact is that as long as man keeps himself obedient and loyal to Allah, all his acts and movements, his sleep, his waking, his rest, eating, drinking, the money that he spends, his job, ...etc. are counted as righteous deeds and acts of worship for him. Even when a man sleeps with his wife, if it is accompanied with the intention to guard their chastity and protect their faith, they will be rewarded for it as a righteous deed.

¹⁸ . Narrated by Al-Hakem

¹⁹ . Narrated by Moslem

- **The prophet (peace be upon him) said “Verily there is a charity in your private parts” They said :”O Prophet of Allah ! could one of us enjoy himself and yet be rewarded for it ? “ The Prophet said : “If he puts it in Haram, is it not a sin for him?” They answered : Yes. He said : “And if he puts it in Halal it is a righteous deed for him”**
- **The prophet (peace be upon him) said :”No body builds a building or plants a plant with no intention of oppression or aggression, but he will be continuously getting a reward form Allah so long as any of the creatures of Allah are benefiting from them.”²⁰**
- **The prophet (peace be upon him) said :”No Moslem lays a garden or plants a plant but he will continually receive a reward form Allah so long as a man or a bird eats from its fruit”²¹**

Also, whatever man spends to sustain his life and the life of his dependents: his wife, children, is nothing but a charity for him. The prophet (peace be upon him) said :

“Whatever you feed yourself is a charity for you, whatever you feed your child is a charity for you, whatever you feed your wife is a charity for you, whatever you feed your servant is a charity for you”²²

²⁰ . Narrated by Ahmad

²¹ . Narrated by Moslem

²² . Narrated by Imam Ahmad

Good Intentions Compensate the Inability

Sometime a man wants to do a righteous act, but he is unable to do it because of poverty, health problems, or lack of resources then Allah (Subhanhu wa Taa'la), who knows the secrets of the hearts, will reward him fully according to his intentions.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was preparing for a battle, then some poor people came to him complaining that they had no money and asking him to help them to prepare themselves to take part in Jihad. However when the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not find enough to give them they returned with broken hearts and tears in their eyes for not being able to fight for Allah's cause. And in them the following verses were revealed:

“Nor (is there a blame upon those) who came to you to be provided with mounts, and when you said :”I can find no mounts for you” they turned with tears in their eyes of grief that they had no resources wherewith to provide expenses”²³

Do you think this strong faith could be wasted and this burning desire for Jihad could just be lost ? Verily, no weight of an atom of good deed is wasted in the sight of Allah.

The prophet (peace be upon him) made it clear that their faith is appreciated and they are fully rewarded for their good intentions as if they were joining him. He said to those who accompanied him in Jihad :

“There are people whom we have left behind in Madinah, yet they are with us in whatever a place

23 . Surat At-Tawbah, Chapter (9), Verse 92

or a valley we may be. Their excuses prevented them from joining us”²⁴.

Because they were honest in their intentions they received the full reward of those who went for Jihad even though they did not leave Madinah.

Do not Waste your Good Deeds

As sincerity and honesty turn the good intention into a great achievement, hypocrisy and insincerity turn a righteous act into an evil deed that deserves a punishment. Such hypocrisy has been condemned in Quran :

“So woe for those who pray; those who are neglectful of their prayers, those who want but to be seen (of men), and refuse to supply even small needs”²⁵ In another verse : “Waste not your charity by reminders and injuries, like him who spends his wealth to be seen by men and believes not in Allah”²⁶

Sunnah emphasis that intentions alone could elevate man or degrade him:

- **The prophet (peace be upon him) said, : “The world has only four types of people:**
- **A man whom Allah provides with money and knowledge, in which he fears his Lord and joins the ties of kinship, acting in it with that which pleases Allah, this man is in the most excellent rank.**

24 . Narrated by Al-Bukhari

25 . Surat Al-Ma'un, Chapter (106), Verse 4:7

26 . Surat Al-Baqrah, Chapter (2), Verse

- **And a man whom Allah provides with knowledge but not with money, who says with a sincere intention that if he had money he would act as so and so does, their reward is equal.**
- **And a man whom Allah provides with money but not with knowledge, in which he acts with ignorance in a random manner, not fearing His Lord, or using it to join the ties of kinship, or dealing with it in a right way, this man is in the worst rank.**
- **And a man whom Allah provides with neither money nor knowledge, who says, with determination, that if he had money he would deal with it as so and so does and with this intention, the load of the sins they have to bear is equal.”²⁷**

Benefits from the Hadith

1. Deeds are judged according to the intentions behind them.
2. It is up to Allah to judge deeds because He alone is well aware of the intentions behind them.
3. Intentions mixed with hypocrisy and fame make acts of worship invalid.
4. Worldly acts are elevated to the rank of acts of worship if the intentions behind them are for good purpose and to win the pleasure of Allah.

Disease of Hypocrisy

Islam is against hypocrisy because it is a hidden disease; its evils are even hidden from the sight of the sinner himself.

²⁷ . Narrated by Imam Ahmad and others

Such hidden evils which take the form of acts of worship are very dangerous because they could not be easily recognized by people. The diseases that grow out of insincerity and hypocrisy are so many that they destroy faith and morals and eventually corrupt the entire society.

Moslems Nowadays

It is regrettable that many Moslems are suffering from diseases of insincerity and hypocrisy. Their life revolves around this world only. They consider this world the axis of their existence forgetting about the Hereafter. They care for nothing but worldly gains such as : wealth, money, bank accounts, big nice houses, good comfortable cars, traveling all over the world, ranks, promotion, good made cloths, and luxurious furniture. In short, they made their desires master their life and became wealth-worshippers, the self-worshippers, the slaves of positions, the slaves of dollar and dinar.

There is a big difference between those wise people who use the resources of the life of this world for pleasing Allah and those who sacrifice their religion for the sake of little gains in this life of this world. Those who purify their intentions will experience relief and comfort in this world and attain eternal blessing in the Hereafter. And those who have allowed their evil motivations to rule their life will bring destruction not only to themselves, but will also to the entire society.

Be wise

Moslems, men and women, should be intelligent and wise people who employ all their talents and efforts in the cause of higher objectives to please Allah. If they do so they will contribute to the progress and prosperity of themselves and their community.

Moslems Duty

We Moslems, should realize that deep sincerity is extremely necessary in all acts of life whether they are religious acts or ordinary acts. It is the duty of every person to carry out his responsibility in the best manner he can. Every one should do his best to make all his acts, interests, relationships and ambitions in the cause of Allah and prefer whatever is with Allah to the gains of the life of this world. And always remember that the Almighty Allah is displeased with the slaves of wealth and position.

Soldiers

Soldiers should keep their Jihad free from any impurities of worldly show because they attached their life to this sacred duty, compared to which medals, honors, salary,etc. have no value. They should give preference to whatever is with Allah and sacrifice their desires for pure devotion and sincere submission.

Employees

The employees in their offices are just like solders in the battlefield. They should purify all their work in the cause of Allah. If they are sincere and make their work in the interest of pleasing Allah they shall be rewarded for all their activities: their intellectual work, as well as their manual work, the time they spend in their job, as well as the time they spend to go to their job and come back home. And whatever effort they exert in their job, no matter how little it is, will be appreciated by Allah and turned into a good deed.

And then you will never see those lazy, inactive employees, who come late and leave early, and keep delaying their work

and complicating matters for people instead of serving them. You will find them in time with smiling faces and never leave before finishing their work.

Parents

Raising up children is one of the noblest task in life. Dedicate your children for Allah's service. This starts from the very beginning by asking Allah to protect you and the seed of your child from the devil.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, : “Whenever a man sleeps with his wife he should say :”O Allah keep the devil away from us and from our offspring”. If Allah grants them a child he will not be harmed by the devil”

The mother of Mary, peace be upon her, is a good example for every parent when she said :

“O My Lord ! I dedicated what is in my womb for your service. Do accept it from me for Verily ! You are all Hearer and all Knower”²⁸

Then Quran says :

“Then Her lord accepted her with full acceptance and made her a blessed child”

When you intend to bring up your children as righteous servants of Allah and implant in their hearts the love of Allah and His messenger, and guide them to fulfill their duties toward Allah and strive hard for His cause, nothing of your efforts will be wasted.

28 . Surat Al-Imran, Chapter (3), Verse :

If you are a mother then the hardships of pregnancy, pains of labor, the time you stay in hospital, every drop of milk you fed your baby, the food you prepare, the sleepless nights, the patience, the suffering, the hard times, the happy times, the time you study with them, all your wearies, even your the laughs your share with them, every fils you spend on them, all are righteous deeds that will make your scale heavy on the Day of Judgment.

The fruit of good parenting is not only confounded to the Next-world but Allah will bestow upon you immediate rewards in this life by blessing you children and making them the joy of your heart and the comfort of your eyes.

Teachers and Students

Unfortunately learning and teaching are undertaken nowadays mainly for worldly purposes such as earning wealth, fame, or pride. This limits the propagation of knowledge and utilizes it for evil purposes. The world received a great setback at the hands of those learned men who did not possess good moral characters, and were deprived of purity of purposes..

In Islam, knowledge is such a pure and high thing that on its basis Allah granted superiority to man over all the other creatures. That is why sincerity is extremely necessary when seeking knowledge. Knowledge should not be a means of earning money or worldly gains because this depreciates its value and wastes its great message and makes it a tool for mischief and corruption.

Islam severely disapproves attaining knowledge for pride, impressing others, or involving in debates and discussion.

- **The Prophet (peace be upon him) said : “Any one who has obtained some knowledge by which Allah’s pleasure is sought, but his purpose was merely to achieve some worldly benefits, then on the Day of Resurrection he will not smell the fragrance of Paradise”²⁹**
- **The Prophet (peace be upon him) said : “Do not attain knowledge in order to express pride before scholars nor to argue with the foolish, nor through it you try to dominate meetings. He who does so, his destination is Fire”³⁰**

Moslem teachers and students should show sincerity in the field of science, and give preference to high values and public interests over all other purposes.

They should realize that their work in the field of science is Jihad for them so long as they are honest, seekers of truth , avoiding mean purposes, and scarifying for the sake of science their money, time, and efforts and they will be able to raise the banner of Islam all over the world.

Business People

Sincerity in the field of business is necessary for the society to prosper. Business people should seek only Halal means for making money, avoid Haram means, and free themselves from selfishness, greed and cheating.

They should deal in their wealth with that which pleases Allah, spending their money only in Halal ways, joining the ties of kinship, serving their community, removing the suffering of the needy, providing humanitarians aids for those in stress, contributing in solving the various problems of the society.

29 . Narrated by Abu Dawood

30 . Narrated by Ibn Majah

They should beware of the diseases brought by wealth : pride, fame, arrogance, over-spending, aggression, oppression, overuse of power, exploiting the weak.. etc. They should also beware not to utilize their wealth for evil purposes and not to make wealth a tool for mischief and corruption.

In fact the wealth of sincere business people who possess good moral character, and purity of purposes is a great source of enrichment for themselves and their community, and a security against social dissension. That is why business people who are honest and sincere are in the highest rank with prophets and the righteous in the Paradise.

Physicians

Sincerity and honesty in the field of medicine are an absolute must; without them medicine loses its humanitarian side. In Islam, practicing medicine is so sacred that physicians are not supposed to take money for treating their patients³¹ because this depreciates their humanitarian mission and deprives those who are unable to pay from proper medical care.

Every physician is responsible in the sight of Allah for providing the best possible medical care for every one of his patients regardless of his race, color, or nationality and Allah will question him about this on the Day of Resurrection.

Physicians should realize the noble objectives behind practicing medicine and be honest in their medical evaluation and do their best to avoid misdiagnosing and wrong medical procedures. They should bear in mind that the main goal behind diagnosing and treating the patient is

³¹ . This opinion is supported by many traditions. Also teaching Quran should not be a means of earning money. Physicians should be paid by the state.

removing the suffering of the patient not just proving their skills or making money.

They should show deep concern to the patient as a human being not just a medical case and insure the most effective therapy to combat the discomfort and pain of the patient.

Every physician should provide full explanation and information about the disease, the treatment, and the possible side effects. He should listen to his patients and give enough time to discuss their health problems and answer their questions, taking into consideration the emotional needs of the patients. Such supportive, and reassuring attitude will take away the wearies of the patient and help him have endurance and maintain his courage during his illness and hasten his recovery.

He should provide extra care for terminally ill patient. Although he should show respect for such patient's life he should prepare them for death, and at the same time not to underestimate the value of the last days or hours in their life.

A Moslem physicians could not be competent physicians until they put all their qualifications and experience for the service of Allah and be a source of comfort and solace for their patients.

When they make it all for Allah's sake, every moment they spend in their work would be a source of satisfaction and joy for them in this life and a great investment for the Hereafter. Long years of hard studies, the training, on call nights, the late calls at night, long hours in hospitals, stress of work and all his activities are all means for a happy eternity in the Paradise.

Islam and the Life of this World

Salvation in Islam is attained by the virtue of self-discipline and good deeds.

The goal of the true Moslem is to earn as many good deeds in his life in this world as he can. This life is a bridge to the Hereafter; it is like a farm where the believers cultivate their good deeds and harvest the fruit in the Hereafter.

In the light of this study, it is clear that Islam makes it possible for man to fully enjoy his life in this world and yet be rewarded for all his deeds, whether they are acts of worship or ordinary deeds, so long as he is utilizing all his talents and resources for good purposes to please Allah.

This balanced attitude toward the life of this world prompted Moslems to develop their full capacity in striving for good deeds and achieving progress in all fields of this life.

However, as Islam spread and Moslems mixed with other cultures many Moslems, who did not fully understand this Islamic attitude toward life, were attracted by spirituality of other cultures. This gave rise to spiritual movements such as the Sufi movement that looks down upon the life of this world and calls for withdrawal from it. Sufis believe that nobody can please Allah and attain salvation until he discards all the pleasures of this life.

This was a clear deviation from the teachings of Prophet Mohammad and a mere distortion of Islam that eventually led to the declination of Moslems in all aspects of life.

Moslems can not restore their position and progress in all aspects of life unless they return back to the pure teachings of Islam and make sincerity dominate every corner in their life.

Sincerity is like a good tree that never stops producing fruit. When sincerity dominates our life it will purify our hearts from all diseases and help us lead a life of contentment and purity, resist the temptations for immoral practices, develop our full capacity for reforming ourselves, striving for good deeds, and progress in all avenues of life.

Test Your Knowledge

- Q1. What is meant by the intention (*Nayyiah*).
- Q2. On what the occasion the Hadith was mentioned?
- Q3. What does the Hadith mean?
- Q4. Explain the relationship between intentions and acts of worship.
- Q5. Explain the relationship between intentions and worldly deeds in the light of the Hadith.
- Q6. Would a good deed be accepted if the intentions behind it is mixed with fame or showing off?
- Q7. In the light of the Hadith, what do you think of a worldly deed done to please Allah?
- Q8. A person wants to do a righteous act, but he does not have the means to do it, would he be rewarded according to his intentions?
- Q9. Explain why the reward of a good deed may be multiplied from ten times to hundred of times.
- Q10. What are the conditions necessary for acceptance of Good Deeds?
- Q11. Do the complements of People do not reduce the reward of the believer?
- Q12. A person wants to do a righteous act, but he is unable to do it because of poverty, health problems, or lack of resources, would he be rewarded according to his intentions?
- Q12. What do you think of a man who does not have wealth but he is firmly determent at if gets wealthy he would spend his money in vicious manners?
- Q13. What would each of the following people would get out of his deed?

1. A person vowed for a righteous deed person.
2. A person donated for a deed person hoping that it will help curing his child.
3. A person, who does not usually pray but he believes in prayers, attended a meeting and prayed with the group.
4. A person joined a meeting for studying Quran in order to spy and collect information.
5. Somebody migrated for the sake of Allah and His messenger.
6. Somebody who migrated to achieve some worldly benefit or for a woman to marry.
7. Somebody migrated to achieve some worldly benefits or get married in order to keep himself away from evil.
8. Somebody fasted just to lose weight.
9. Somebody went for Hajj just to achieve some worldly benefits.
10. Somebody whose major intention was Hajj but at the same time he intended to trade at the time of Hajj.
11. A man fights the enemy of his country only to fulfill the duties of his job.
12. A man fights to protect his home land, money, or family.
13. A man who was fighting to make the word of Allah the higher.
14. Somebody acquired knowledge and spread it so that he might be called a scholar.
15. Somebody recited the Quran so that he might be called a recitor “Qari”.

16. A rich person donated money so that he might be known of being generous.
17. A teacher whose intention is to spread useful knowledge.
18. A teacher whose intention is only getting salary at the end of the month.
19. A doctor studied medicine to use it for human purposes.
20. A student who studies to attain knowledge and use it in pleasing Allah.
21. A student who studies only for the sake of the degree.
22. Somebody heard about a bad practice and he wished if he were witnessing it or able to take part in it.
23. Somebody heard about a bad practice and he disliked and disapproved it.
24. Somebody heard about a good practice and he wished if he were able to take part in it.
25. Somebody heard about a good practice and he disliked it and did not appreciate it.

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Respected Dear Readers

Please pray for forgiveness and mercy of Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, for the author, her parents, her family, all Muslims, particularly the misfortunate and the less privileged around the world.

I constantly pray to Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, to bring Muslims from darkness to light, to cover our faults and mistakes in this life, and forgive us for them in the Next life, to seal our work with the best good deeds, and let the best of our days be the day when we shall meet with Him, and make the best part of our lives the end of it.

I also pray to Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, from all my heart to accept this work and make it sincerely for His sake.

“Say : Truly, my prayers, my services of sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. There is no partners with him. This am I commanded, and I am the first of Moslems (of those who submit to His will)” (Quran 6- 162, 163)

And let the last of our prayers be All praises are due to Allah the Lord of all the worlds»

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