

Ramadan Immersion



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Chapter 5: Being Tolerant and Just

Hadith #1

- Aisha RA narrates this hadith and thus it comes from the household of the Prophet (ﷺ). It is an insight into his personal life.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) was very well known to be one who made decisions not just for himself but for others. He would advise people based on what they needed to hear not based on what they wanted to hear.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) would always choose the easier of two if it did not involve sin. For example, not fasting while traveling as opposed to fasting while traveling.
 - Allah said:

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

'Fast a' prescribed number of days. But whoever of you is ill or on a journey, then 'let them fast' an equal number of days 'after Ramadan'(2:184)

- The Prophet (ﷺ) would not come near a decision that involved something that was Haram or impermissible. He was always the one to choose what contains the ihsan; what was most beloved to Allah.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) would not take revenge unless someone is violating the rules set by Allah. Only then would he stand firm against them. For example, not holding any grudges against people even if they disgraced him.

- Allah said:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا
The 'true' servants of the Most Compassionate are those who walk on the earth humbly, and when the foolish address them 'improperly', they only respond with peace. (25:63)

- This is a reminder to respond to those who violate our rights in a peaceful manner and with dignity. Show them we are better by reminding them of the importance of respecting one another as human beings.
- This hadith shows us how to be tolerant. The Prophet (ﷺ) was a person that had principles and values, and he did not allow his environment or the statements of others to affect his values and morals that he lived by.
 - Differences in opinion within the Ahl al-Sunnah exist. We cannot cause sectarianism.
 - This refers to the first statement where he chose the easier of the two choices.
 - Sometimes, we find that the Prophet (ﷺ) did one thing one time in a scenario and he did something else in a similar scenario, or he might have done something completely different in another scenario that is similar. Thus, there are three similar scenarios that exist where he did something different.
 - This shows us as an ummah how broad our knowledge of Islam is, how deep and well-presented Islam is from Allah and how beautiful this deen is that there are multiple different views based on evidences of the life of the Prophet (ﷺ).
 - All of them are valid for us to emulate based on the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) and there is no need to argue amongst believers.
 - We should not divide the ummah. Being tolerant of valid differences has its place within our deen.

Hadith #2

- Aisha RA conveyed that the Prophet (ﷺ) never hit a female; whether a servant or a wife – any woman in general.
- This hadith shows how the Prophet (ﷺ) treated women around him; with respect, honor and dignity.
- Though the Prophet (ﷺ) got angry with his family at times, he would never resort to assaulting his wives. He never lost his cool and was able to control himself in times of anger and rage.
- This teaches us the importance of working on strengthening ourselves and our nafs, in order to control ourselves from doing anything that is wrong and Haram.
- In the time of Jahiliyyah, people used to disrespect the servants and treat them really badly. Hence, the Prophet (ﷺ) changed that and showed the importance of treating others justly, fairly and tolerantly.
- Many people today misapply and misunderstand the following verse in Surah an-Nisa:

وَالَّذِينَ تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَأَضْرِبُوهُنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنِ اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا
فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنِ اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

And if you sense ill-conduct from your women, advise them 'first', 'if they persist,' do not share their beds, 'but if they still persist,' then discipline them 'gently'. But if they change their ways, do not be unjust to them. Surely Allah is Most High, All-Great.

(4:34)

- The explanation to 'strike them' is given in detail in another Hadith. The Prophet (ﷺ) says strike them but without causing injury or leaving a mark. For example, tapping with a miswak.
 - It was narrated that: Sulaiman bin Amr bin Ahwas said: "My father told me that he was present at the Farewell Pilgrimage with the Messenger of Allah. He praised and glorified Allah, and reminded and exhorted (the people). Then he said:

"اسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّمَا هُنَّ عِنْدَكُمْ عَوَانٍ . لَيْسَ تَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ فَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبْرِحٍ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ لَكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ حَقًّا وَلِنِسَائِكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا فَأَمَّا حَقُّكُمْ عَلَى نِسَائِكُمْ فَلَا يُوطِئْنَ فُرُشَكُمْ مَنْ تَكْرَهُونَ وَلَا يَأْذَنَنَّ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لِمَنْ تَكْرَهُونَ إِلَّا وَحَقَّهُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تُحْسِنُوا إِلَيْهِنَّ فِي كِسْوَتِهِنَّ وَطَعَامِهِنَّ . "

'I enjoin good treatment of women, for they are prisoners with you, and you have no right to treat them otherwise, unless they commit clear indecency. If they do that, then forsake them in their beds and hit them, but without causing injury or leaving a mark. If they obey you, then do not seek means of annoyance against them. You have rights over your women and your women have rights over you. Your rights over your women are that they are not to allow anyone whom you dislike to tread on your bedding (furniture), nor allow anyone whom you dislike to enter your houses. And their right over you are that you should treat them kindly with regard to their clothing and food.' " (Sunan Ibn Majah)

- We understand the Qur'an in light of what the Prophet (ﷺ) did himself; he never struck any woman and we follow him as our best example.
- We learn that while Allah made certain things permissible, we are meant to do them in a manner that is respectful to His deen.

Hadith #3

- Aisha RA relayed in this Hadith when the Prophet (ﷺ) was informed about others, he would ask: "What is the matter with the people that they say such and such?", instead of "What is the matter with so and so that he says?"
- This shows us that the Prophet (ﷺ) was cautious of his surroundings. He never singled out a person or criticized them, to not shame them publicly.
- If there was an issue within the society, the Prophet (ﷺ) never said anything inappropriate about others. Instead, he would make a broad statement, to take the attention away from that one person.

- The Prophet (ﷺ) did not want to embarrass anyone in front of others. For example, at times if people were asking and they were in a group, he would ask everyone else to go back and sit further away and he would come closely and sit with the people that were asking a question from him.
- Imam Shafi'i would say, "Whoever advises his brother in private has truly counseled and honored him, but whoever advises him in public has exposed and disgraced him."
- This teaches us that we should never take away the rights of others.
- The default is to advise in private. However, an exception is in the case of a public figure or leader.
- For example, advising in public can be appropriate for leaders who are openly causing corruption or harm to the public. This is so that it is known what was said and what was done by the person, for them to be able to change themselves from any negative trait they might possess.
- There were many scholars of the past that advised rulers publicly. Hence, this proves that people in positions of power could be corrected and advised publicly from the mistakes that they lived by.

Hadith #4

- This is a Hadith transmitted by Aisha RA where the Prophet (ﷺ) relayed, "There are some bad people who are respected for fear of their tongues." Meaning, these people have such loose tongues they're so comfortable with insulting, disgracing etc. others with their tongues.
- If we encounter such people, it is better to just keep our distance from them and never engage with them. These are people whom the Muslim is not safe from their tongue.
- This Hadith should force us to reflect on the nature of our own relationships first.
- For example, ask ourselves:

- Do the people around us enjoy being around us and appreciate our company?
- Do people like us or stay silent in our presence because of our tongues?
- Are people hesitant to speak to us due to fear of being verbally assaulted?
- It is better to remain silent when we have nothing good to say or we know nothing good will come out of our conversation.
 - Abu Hurairah reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر، فليقل خيراً، أو ليصمت"

"He who believes in Allah and the Last Day must either speak good or remain silent."
(Muslim)

- Those who use their tongues often suffer from an inferiority complex. They themselves feel jealous or weak, or feel like they don't have what someone else has, or they are not as good as someone else. Hence, they feel comfortable putting others down and pointing out others' mistakes and belittling them in front of others. They feel if they run their tongue on someone else, then the other person will look bad and they will look good. However, the truth is, it usually backfires.
- For example, in gatherings, people feel comfortable in saying things about others and prove that they are something or someone. However, they are the weakest of the lot.
- This is a reminder that we must speak to people in a manner we would like to be spoken to.
 - Anas ibn Malik reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

"None of you will have faith until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."
(Al-Bukhari & Muslim)

- A large number of people will be in Jahannam because of what they produced with their tongues. Thus, if we have nothing good to say, it would be better to remain silent, as it would save us from the punishment of the Hereafter.
 - It was narrated by Mu'adh bin Jabal that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ):

وَهَلْ يَكُوبُ النَّاسُ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

Are people thrown onto their faces in Hell for anything other than the harvest of their tongues?" (Sunan Ibn Majah)

- If there is any evil and injustice committed towards us or others, we are allowed to stand up against it and change the situation.
 - Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri reported: Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

"من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره بيده ، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه، فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه وذلك أضعف الإيمان"

"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)

Hadith #5

- This Hadith is narrated by Anas ibn Malik. It shows us that Prophet (ﷺ) gave people his full attention whenever they came to him to seek advice.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) took care of the people and would go out of his way to help others; he would listen attentively to others, never withdrawing his head away and if they held his hand, he never withdrew it.
- This teaches us that the believer doesn't step away until the person they're helping is content. We should always try to have ihsan in our interactions and dealings with others.
 - Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

نَفْسٍ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا، نَفَسَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ يَسِّرَ عَلَى مُّغْسِرٍ، يَسِّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا، سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

"If anyone relieves a Muslim believer from one of the hardships of this worldly life, Allah will relieve him of one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. If anyone makes it easy for the one who is indebted to him (while finding it difficult to repay), Allah will make it easy for him in this worldly life and in the Hereafter, and if anyone conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah helps His slave as long as he helps his brother." (Muslim)

- For example, simply allowing an individual to pour their heart out without interruption can be considered a type of relief of hardship.
- It is inappropriate for the believer to just ignore someone who is talking to them and letting things off their chest.
- It is important to be there and listen to others. The Prophet (ﷺ) would listen first before speaking.
- Today, many of us don't allow people to speak. We want to immediately give advice to them or interject; we care more about what we think rather than how the other person feels.
 - Al-Bayhaqi reported: Hasan al-Basri said,

لِسَانُ الْعَاقِلِ مِنْ وَرَاءِ قَلْبِهِ فَإِذَا عَرَضَ لَهُ قَوْلٌ نَظَرَ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَالٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسَكَ وَلِسَانُ الْأَحْمَقِ أَمَامَ قَلْبِهِ فَإِذَا عَرَضَ لَهُ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِ أَوَّلُهُ

"The intelligent man has his tongue behind his heart. If he intends to say something, he consults his heart whether he should say it or be silent. The foolish man has his tongue in front of his heart. If he intends to say something, he lets his tongue speak first." (Shu'ab al-Iman)

- This teaches us we must be aware of not ignoring others or speaking up before even thinking about what we want to say or are currently saying.
- The way of the believer is to think things through and is always prepared and ready in difficult times and situations.