مواعظ الصحابة

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE SAHĀBAH

رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہم

Compiled by:
Sāliḥ Aḥmad Ash-Shāmī

Translated by:
Maulānā Mahomed Mahomedy

ZAM ZAM PUBLISHERS

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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the Lord of the worlds. May the choicest salutations and most perfect peace be on our master, Muḥammad, who was sent as a mercy to the worlds. Peace and salutations to his family and all his Companions *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

The generation of the Companions *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* is considered to be the peak of expression in human history. They are the ones whom Allāh *taʿālā* selected to be the companions of His Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the journey of bearing the message of guidance which emanated from the land of Makkah to carry goodness and guidance to all parts of the world. No generation in the past reached this rank, and no generation thereafter would ever reach such a position.

This is something which the Messenger of Allāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had firmly attested to when he said: "The best of generations is my generation, then those who come after them..." Allāh *taʿālā* affirms this by His words: "Allāh knows best where He places His message."

This is the generation which lived side by side with the verses of the Qur'ān as they were being revealed one after the other. It is a generation which lived side by side with the words, letters and every beat...it was present when the perspiration was flowing from the face of the

Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when he was receiving divine revelation.

This generation experienced the time of rejection and repulsion, and the time of torment and confinement. It then experienced the time of banishment and emigration because of one's beliefs. It then left behind its family, homeland and wealth so that it could commence with the phase of jihad in order to repulse the enmity [which was displayed towards Islam], and then to carry the light [of Islam] to the entire mankind.

All this was done in emulation of the Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* step by step. They obeyed his instructions and directives, abstained from what he prohibited, hearkened to his call, expressed joy at whatever caused him delight, and experienced grief over whatever caused him grief...they sacrificed their selves, families and wealth for him.

They were a unique people whose true value can only be ascertained by a true and genuine believer. And it is only a hypocrite who can belittle them.

They [the Ṣaḥābah] were given something which no other generation was ever given...their experiences, their knowledge and their understanding of matters are considered to be sources in the understanding of the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

This is why their statements are considered to be an important source for every Muslim. Their statements convey a person to that most superior era, enable him to inhale that wonderful fragrance, and breathe in that all-pervading aroma...he is able to see – with the eyes of his heart – the personalities behind those names who are still filling the ears and eyes since time immemorial.

It were these and many other reasons which propelled me to collect the statements and exhortations of the Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum*. Perhaps this will be a step towards returning to this religion and adhering to its teachings.

I hope Allāh *ta'ālā* returns the Muslims to their religion in an excellent manner, and He makes this and all our efforts solely for His sake. He is the only one to be asked. Salutations and peace to our master, Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, to his family, and his Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum*. Our final supplication is that all praise is due to Allāh alone, the Lord of the worlds.

1 Rabī' al-Awwal 1419 A.H.
Sālih Ahmad ash-Shāmī

A GOOD WORD

A good word has always been one of the active means in rectifying the ways of people and directing them towards the straight path. Many an evil doer or sinner may hear a good word which becomes the cause of his changing his ways and turning his direction, which then produces fruitful results.

Based on this, an *'ālim* (scholar) is an extension of prophet-hood among the creation, and it is on this basis that the *'ulamā'* are the inheritors of the Prophets. They are the guides of the *ummah* on the true path, and it is their lives and exhortations which become signposts on the road.[1]

This is with regard to the effect which a good word has on a person's conduct, and which was defined by Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* as follows:

"No believer gave a charity which was more beloved to Allāh *ta'ālā* than an exhortation with which he exhorts his people, and they then disperse after Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled them to benefit from it."

A good word has another effect which is no less than the previous effect: it is nourishment for the

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1 من مقدمة "مواعظ الإمام الحسن البصري" للمؤلف.

soul and the intellect. Just as the body needs nourishment to continue its tasks, the soul and intellect also need a different type of nourishment which can only be found in the treasures of a good word.

'Ali *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Keep these hearts in concentration by seeking rare words of wisdom for them because they become weary just as the bodies become fatigued."

The statements of the Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* emphasise and highlight this point. In fact, some of them consider listening to good words to be from among the desirable factors for one's existence in this world.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Were it not for three things, I would have desired to meet Allāh *ta'ālā*: (1) travelling to wage jihad in the cause of Allāh *ta'ālā*, (2) placing my face [in prostration] before Allāh *ta'ālā*, (3) sitting in the company of people who select good speech just as they select good fruit."

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Were it not for three things, I would not have desired living in this world: (1) placing my face in prostration before my Creator during the alternation of the night and day as a way of sending forth something for my life, (2) experiencing thirst because of the intense heat, (3) sitting in the company of people who seek good speech just as fruits are chosen."

The statement of 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* - and also of Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* - portrays to us the exact social scene in the era of the Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum*, viz. gathering around a table where words are dished out, selecting and choosing some of them just as people do when they gather around a table where fruits are served.

In fact, 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* feel that gathering for such provision makes life and living more desirable.

In this way, a good word plays its role in the fields of direction, rectification and guidance just as it plays its role in revitalising the intellect and soul.

It is because of these reasons that the thought occurred to me to collate these exhortations and words of wisdom, while adopting the statement of Ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "What an excellent assembly is the assembly in which wisdom is conveyed and in which mercy [of Allāh *ta'ālā*] is hoped for."

THE BOOK BEFORE YOU

The exhortations, words of wisdom and statements of the Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum* hold the chief position after the Book of Allāh [the Qur'ān] and the Sunnah of His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. This is because they are derived from the statements of the Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and they are the fruits from among the fruits of his training and lessons, and echoes of his exhortations.

The value and status of these exhortations are enhanced from this source. I do not know of any book having gathered them [in one book]. They are scattered in many books, and quoted as references on a particular subject when such a subject is studied and researched.

They are most likely to be found in the books of the Sunnah, the books of *raqā'iq* (statements which cause the hearts to soften) and *zuhd* (abstention), and books on morals and etiquette. A serious effort was required to collate all these statements and exhortations.

I was initially hesitant in taking up this task because of the effort, time and vast knowledge that is required for this. Whatever I present in this book are mere seeds for this task which I hope will be completed gradually. This is because the statements of the Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum* are far more than what is expected.

The statements of a Companion *radiyallāhu 'anhu* are by and large repeated in all or most of the books of biographies and other books which speak about him. This causes one having to spend a lot of time to gather a little information. But this repetition is not devoid of benefit. In fact, it contains tremendous benefit, viz. the ability to compare one text from several sources, and then to choose the text which is most complete and most authentic. Many of the books quote a part or section of an exhortation, while other books contain many errors in this regard.

It is necessary for me to list a few points which would assist the reader in obtaining answers to questions which would crop up in his mind while studying this book.

1. The sequence in which the Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum* are listed is as follows: I commenced with the 'Asharah Mubash-sharah (the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise), and at their head are the Khulafā' Rāshidīn in accordance with the unanimous sequence in which they came. As for the remaining Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum*, they are listed according to the earliest to have embraced Islam.

2. I did not provide the *sanad* (chain of narrations) in keeping with the practice of many of our *'ulamā'* who wrote on the subjects of *raqā'iq*, morals and words of

wisdoms, e.g. Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh*. In fact, this was also the practice of some of the Tābi'ūn (those who came after the Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum*). Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī *raḥimahullāh* related a Ḥadīth one day. A person said to him: "O Abū Sa'īd! From whom [did you hear it]?" He asked: "What are you going to do with 'from whom'? His exhortation has reached you and his evidence has been established against you."[1]

It seems - and Allāh knows best - that Imām al-Ḥasan used to differentiate one assembly from the other. He used to quote the *asānīd* (chains of narrators) in the assemblies of jurisprudence and Ḥadīth - as is related about him in the books of *Sunan* and *Tafsīr*. As for the assemblies of admonition, he would occasionally overlook the *asānīd* because the object of the admonition is to create an impact on the hearts and emotions. Such assemblies are not the same as the assemblies of studying and imparting knowledge. He considered taking admonition to be the object of the admonition.

Some of the latter scholars who are well-known for their demand for *asānīd* are known to have adopted a similar approach

[1] عيون الأخبار، ٢\١٣٧.

[when it came to admonition and exhortation]. The following is mentioned in *Kitāb al-Istiqāmah* of Imām Ibn Taymīyyah *raḥimahullāh*: "On the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *radiyallāhu 'anhu* that he wrote to Abū Mūsa al-Ash'arī: 'All good lies in being pleased [with the decree of Allāh]. If you are able to be pleased, well and good. If not, exercise patience.'"

Ibn Taymīyyah *raḥimahullāh* then comments on this: "This is a good statement even though its *sanad* is not known."[1]

And so, my not mentioning the *sanad* cannot be used as an excuse to criticize the book, more so because I provided the reference for each statement in the footnotes.

3. This collection is confined to the field of exhortations and words of wisdom. I did not quote statements which deal with injunctions.

4. I did not quote statements which contain the merits of a Companion *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* because it is not my object to present the biographies of the Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum*. If I mention anything

[1] الاستقامة، ٢\٨٤، ط١، جامعة الإسلام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية.

in this regard, it will be because it has some bearing on the exhortation.

5. In the footnotes, I provided a short biography of each Companion *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* whose exhortation is quoted.

6. I commenced the book with examples from the exhortations of the Messenger *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* because these are the basis. Authors set aside chapters for these exhortations under the titles of *ar-Raqā'iq* or *ar-Raqā'iq wa az-Zuhd*. Imām al-Bukhāri *raḥimahullāh* is from among such authors when he did this in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

   They are named such because each of them creates softness in the heart. Linguists say: *ar-riqqah – ar-raḥmah* (*riqqah* means mercy). From here you get the terms *raqīq al-qalb* (soft-hearted) and *qāsī al-qalb* (hard-hearted).

   The exhortations which I quote in the chapter on *Raqā'iq* will be confined to the *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and *ḥasan* (sound) Aḥādith. The source and number of each Ḥadīth will also be provided.

I hope Allāh *ta'ālā* accepts this work, and we beseech Him alone.

EXHORTATIONS OF RASŪLULLĀH *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*

Abū Wā'il narrates: "'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* used to exhort the people every Thursday, so a person said to him: 'O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān! I wish you could exhort us every day.' He replied: 'Listen! I dislike causing you to become fatigued, and so this is preventing me from that [i.e. from exhorting you every day]. I set aside a certain day for your exhortation just as Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to set aside a day for our exhortation out of fear that we might become fatigued.'"[1]

This Ḥadīth records one fact from the actions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* conveys it to us through his action and then emphasises it by his words.

He used to exhort the people every Thursday. In other words, once a week. He did not do more than this despite the listeners' request for more. He informed them that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to do this, and that he would like to adhere to his Sunnah. He then explains the wisdom behind it.

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1 أخرجه الشيخان (خ٧٠، م٢٨٢١).

The following points from the Ḥadīth are applicable to our discussion:

1. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to exhort the people but did not overdo it so that it does not cause fatigue to them.

2. These exhortations were different from the injunctions for which revelation used to be sent down, and which ought to be conveyed without any delay. This is especially so if the revelation was related to a specific time.

   This means that the subject of these exhortations was with regard to advising and reminding them of things which had already been established, matters related to etiquette and behaviour, or matters related to the Hereafter.

3. The Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* fulfilled their responsibility of exhorting the people after the demise of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was from among such Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum*.

4. The Companions *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* used to emulate all the actions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* both in their form and in the subject matter.

There are verses which emphasise the need for exhortation as mentioned in the Ḥadīth. One such verse is this: "And remind, because reminding benefits the believers." (Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 55)

Al-'Irbāḍ ibn Sāriyah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* relates to us the nature of the exhortations of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He portrays to us one of the scenes of his exhortations:

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* led us in ṣalāh one day. He then turned towards us and delivered a very comprehensive exhortation to us. Our hearts trembled by it and our eyes shed tears. We said: *'O Rasūlullāh! This seems to be the exhortation of a person bidding farewell. So advise us.' He said: 'I advise you to constantly fear Allāh, and to listen and obey even if an Abyssinian slave were to rule over you. Whoever remains alive from among you [after me], will witness many differences. You should therefore resort to my Sunnah and the way of the rightly guided caliphs. Adhere to it and hold on to it with the molars. Beware of introducing new things into the religion. Every new thing is an innovation, and every innovation is deviation."*[1]

There is no doubt whatsoever with regard to Rasūlullāh's *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* exhortations being conveyed to us. The majority

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[1] أخرجه أبو داؤد برقم (٤٦٠٧) والترمذي برقم (٢٦٧٦)، وقال حديث حسن صحيح.

of the Aḥādīth of *ar-raqā'iq* are the subject matter of these exhortations.

The remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* has angels who move around on the roads searching for the people of remembrance (*dhikr*) [those who engage in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*]. When they find people engaging in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*, they call out to each other saying: 'Come to the thing which you were searching for.' He said: 'They then cover them with their wings [piling up one above the other] until they reach the lowest heaven. Their Lord – who knows best about them – asks them: "What are My servants saying?" They reply: "They are glorifying You, speaking of Your greatness, praising You, and exalting You." Allāh *ta'ālā* asks: "Have they seen Me?" They reply: "No, by Allāh, they have not seen You." He asks: "What if they were to see Me?" They reply: "If they were to see You, they would be more ardent in their worship of You, more intense in Your exaltation, and they would glorify You more abundantly." He asks: "What are they asking for?" They reply: "They are asking You for Paradise." He asks: "Have they seen it?" They reply: "No, by Allāh, they have not seen it." He asks: "What if they were to see it?" They reply: "If they were to see it, they would be more desirous of it, their quest for it would be more intense, and their yearning for it would be greater." He asks: "From what are they seeking

refuge?" They reply: "They are seeking refuge from the Hell-fire." He asks: "Have they seen it?" They reply: "No, by Allāh, they have not seen it." He asks: "What if they were to see it?" They reply: "If they were to see it, they would flee from it more swiftly and their fear of it would be more intense." He says: "I make you witness to the fact that I have forgiven them." One of the angels says: "There is such and such person among them. He is not part of them. He merely came there for some work." Allāh *ta'ālā* replies: "They are such companions, that even the one sitting with them is not deprived."[1]

Supplication (*du'ā'*)

Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates from the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* who narrates from Allāh *ta'ālā* that He said: "O My servants! I have made oppression prohibited upon Myself and made it prohibited among your selves as well. So do not wrong each other. O My servants! All of you are astray except the one whom I guide. Therefore ask Me for guidance and I will guide you. O My servants! All of you are hungry except the one whom I feed. So ask Me to feed you and I will feed you. O My servants! All of you are naked except the one whom I clothe. So ask Me to clothe you and I will clothe you. O My servants! You commit sins by day and night, and I forgive all sins. Therefore seek forgiveness from

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[1] متفق عليه (ح٦٤٠٨، م٢٦٧٩).

Me and I will forgive you. O My servants! If you wish to harm Me, you will never be able to harm Me. And if you wish to benefit Me, you will never be able to benefit Me. O My servants! If all your past and future generations, and all the humans and jinn were to reach the level of the most righteous among you, it will not increase My sovereignty in any way. O My servants! If all your past and future generations, and all the humans and jinn were to reach the level of the most wicked among you, it will not decrease My sovereignty in any way. O My servants! If all your past and future generations, and all the humans and jinn were to all stand on a single field, and they were to ask Me [whatever they desired] and I gave to every person whatever he asked for, it will not decrease My treasures in any way except as when a needle is dipped in the ocean.[1] O My servants! It is your deeds which I store for you, and I will then give you your compensation in full. Therefore, whoever does good, should thank Allāh. And whoever does evil, he should blame none but himself [because evils are committed by the demands of his self]."[2]

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[1] The *'ulamā'* say that this is merely to facilitate our understanding. What it actually means is that the treasures of Allāh ﷻ are never ever decreased in any way. The needle is merely used as an example.

[2] أخرجه مسلم برقم (٢٥٧٧).

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: "I asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh! Inform me of a deed which will admit me into Paradise and keep me far away from the Hell-fire.' He replied: 'You have asked about a very serious matter. It is very easy for the person for whom Allāh *ta'ālā* makes it easy. Worship Allāh without ascribing any partners to Him, establish ṣalāh, give zakāh, fast in Ramaḍān and make the pilgrimage (ḥajj) to the House [Ka'bah'.'

He then asked: 'Should I not show you the doors of good? Fasting is a shield, charity extinguishes sins as water extinguishes fire, and ṣalāh of a person offered in the dark of the night.' He then recited this verse: 'Their sides remain away from their sleeping places, calling on their Lord with fear and longing. And they spend out of what We provided for them. So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them – a recompense for what they used to do.' (Sūrah as-Sajdah, 32: 16-17)

He then asked: 'Should I not inform you of the head of the matter, its pillar, and its peak?' I replied: 'Indeed, O Messenger of Allāh!' He said: 'The head of the matter is Islam. Its pillar is ṣalāh. And its peak is jihād.'

He then asked: 'Should I not inform you of the essential prerequisite of all this?' I replied: 'Indeed, O Messenger of Allāh!' He took hold of his tongue and said: 'Restrain this.' I asked: 'O

Messenger of Allāh! Will we be taken to task for what we speak?' He replied: 'May your mother be bereft of you.[1] The people will be cast into the Hell-fire on their faces – or on their noses - solely because of the earnings of their tongues.'"[2]

Al-Ḥārith al-Ash'arī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* ordered Yaḥyā ibn Zakarīyyā ﷺ to practise on five things and to order the Banū Isrā'īl to practise on them. He delayed a bit in carrying out this order so 'Īsā ﷺ said to him: 'Allāh *ta'ālā* ordered you to practise on five things and to order the Banū Isrā'īl to practise on them. Are you going to order them, or should I order them?'"

"Yaḥyā ﷺ replied: 'I fear that if you were to carry out this order before me, I might be absorbed by the earth or punished [in some other way].'"

"So he assembled the people in Bayt al-Maqdis. The musjid was filled to capacity so the people climbed onto the balconies. He then said: 'Allāh *ta'ālā* ordered me to practise on five things and to order you to practise on them."

"The first of them is: that you worship Allāh without ascribing any partner to Him. A person

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[1] This is not a curse against him. It is merely an expression to show surprise at his inattention.

[2] أخرجه الترمذي برقم (٢٦١٦) وابن ماجه برقم (٣٩٧٣).

who ascribes partners with Allāh *ta'ālā* is like a person who purchases a slave with his pure earnings – either with gold or silver – and says: 'This is my house and this is the work which you have to do for me. You must do the work and give the profits to me.' He began working and was giving the profits to someone other than his master. Now who from among you will accept his slave to be like that?'"

"Allāh *ta'ālā* orders you to establish ṣalāh. When you perform your ṣalāh, do not look around because Allāh *ta'ālā* directs His countenance towards His servant's face when the latter is in ṣalāh as long as he does not look around."

"I order you to keep fast. The similitude of fasting is like that of a person who is with a group of people, and he has with him a container of musk. Each of them is attracted to its fragrance. The fragrance which emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is purer in the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā* than the fragrance of musk."

"I order you to give charity. The similitude of charity is like that of a person who is captured by the enemy. They tie his hands to his neck and push him forward in order to chop off his neck. He says to them: 'I will pay you ransom – no matter how much you want – in order to free myself.' And so, he frees himself from them [by paying them whatever ransom they demand]."

"I order you to engage in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The similitude of that is like a person who is pursued by an enemy who is hastening in his pursuit. He eventually reaches a strongly fortified fort and protects himself from them. Similar is the case with a person – he cannot protect himself against Satan except through the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*."

The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: 'I am now ordering you to do five things which Allāh *ta'ālā* ordered me to do: to listen, to obey, to wage jihad, to emigrate (*hijrah*), and to adhere to the *jamā'ah* (the general body of Muslims). The person who separates himself from the *jamā'ah* even to the extent of one hand span, he has removed the noose of Islam from his neck unless he returns to it. The one who makes a call of the days of ignorance (*jāhilīyyah*) shall be from among those who are destined to the Hell-fire."

A person asked: "O Messenger of Allāh! Even if he establishes ṣalāh and keeps fast?"

He replied: "Even if he establishes ṣalāh and keeps fast. O servants of Allāh! Call in the name of Allāh *ta'ālā* who named you Muslims and believers."[1]

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[1] أخرجه أحمد (٤\ ١٣٠) والترمذي (٢٨٦٣).

Adhering to the Sunnah

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "My similitude and the similitude of what Allāh *ta'ālā* sent me with is like that of a person who went to some people and said: 'O people! I have seen the army with my very eyes, and I am the naked warner.[1] Try to save yourselves!' A group of his people obeyed him, departed in the first part of the night, proceeded immediately, and were thus saved. Another group of people did not listen to him and remained in their places. The army attacked them in the morning, destroyed them, and completely annihilated them. That is the similitude of the person who obeys me and follows whatever I came with, and the person who disobeys me and rejects the truth which I came with."[2]

Making the most of an opportunity

Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "There are two bounties by which many people are deceived: good health and free time."

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[1] When a person wanted to warn his people of some danger, he would remove his garment and signal to them if he was far from them. In this way, he would warn them of an impending danger. This was generally done by a person who was appointed as a scout or guard.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٤١٢، م٢٨٢٣).

This Ḥadīth directs our attention towards two bounties which Allāh *ta'ālā* bestows on man. Rarely does man value these bounties, and rarely does he benefit from them in the prescribed and correct manner. Man is suspended between good health and illness. He does not know the value of good health unless illness overtakes him, or he visits or sees people who are ill.

Illness is one of the major obstacles which prevents man from fulfilling deeds – irrespective of whether they are religious or worldly deeds. The period of good health is therefore a great bounty which an intelligent person must take benefit from by doing things which would benefit him in matters related to this world and matters related to the Hereafter. He must hastening in deriving benefit from it with as much as he can before illness overtakes him and comes as an obstacle to his goals. The person who wastes away his period of good health by falling into idleness and inactivity, and does not occupy himself with good, is most certainly a deceived person because he has sold away something valuable without obtaining anything in return.

The second bounty is free time. Free time refers to time which passes by you without your having anything to occupy you in that time. This time is extremely valuable and priceless. If man occupies his time in doing good, it will be in his share. But if he leaves it to pass by without occupying himself with anything – and this is what is known as killing time – or he occupies himself in futile

activity, then such a person is truly deceived. Time is actually life, and so, it is the most valuable thing which he owns. He should therefore spend it in nothing except something which is more valuable than it, viz. that which would be his capital in the Hereafter on the scale of good deeds.

Ibn Hubayrah *raḥimahullāh* records the value of time as follows:

والوقت أنفس ما عنيت بحفظه – وأراك أسهل ما عليك يضيع

"Time is the most valuable thing which you can pay attention to in safeguarding. Yet I see that it is the easiest thing for you to waste."

Our pious predecessors *raḥimahumullāh* were fully aware of the value of time. They explained this to the people and urged them to take maximum benefit from it. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī *raḥimahullāh* said: "O man! You are merely made up of days. As each day passes, a part of you departs." He said: "I met people who were more desirous over their lives than their dirhams and dīnārs." He – *raḥimahullāh* – goes even further in explaining the value of time and calling towards deriving benefit from it in a letter which he wrote to the caliph, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *raḥimahullāh*. He says: "There is no price and no equal for whatever of life is left. If the entire world was accumulated, it will not equal a single day which remains in a person's life."

"You should therefore not sell "today" and do not exchange it for anything of the world without first obtaining its price. There should be no dead person who considers that which is in your hand to be more valuable than your own self. And that is what belongs to you."

"By Allāh, if a person who is buried in his grave was told: "We are making this entire world from beginning to end for your children after you. They will enjoy it after you depart. When you were alive, your entire concern was devoted to them. Will this be more beloved to you, or a day in which you can come into this world and do something for yourself?" He would choose the latter. If he were given a choice between "today" and anything else, he would choose "today". He would do this out of desire for it and attaching value to it."

"In fact, if he was given the choice of just a single hour [and the entire world], he would choose the single hour for himself. If he were told that several times of what was described to him are to be offered to others, he would still say he wants that single hour, and others can have whatever else you offer to them."

We conclude the explanation of this Ḥadīth and this second bounty [i.e. free time] with this fine picture of the value of time which Imam al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī *raḥimahullāh* painted. This bounty of "free time" has to be spent in doing good and deriving benefit from it. It should not be left free

and allowed to be wasted away. If a person allows this to happen, he will be really deceived.

Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to a person while exhorting him: "Value five things before five things overtake you: (1) your youth before your old age, (2) your good health before your illness, (3) your prosperity before your poverty, (4) your free time before your preoccupation, (5) your life before your death."[1]

This world

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "This world is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the unbeliever."[2]

Jābir ibn 'Abdillāh *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* passed by the market-place with people on either side of him. He passed by a dead kid of a goat which had small ears. He held it by its ear and asked: "Which of you would like to purchase this for one dirham?" The Companions ﷺ replied: "We would not want to take it in exchange for anything. What can we do with it?" He asked: "Would you like to have it for free?" The Companions replied: "By Allāh, even if it was

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1أخرجه الحاكم (٤\٣٠٦) وصححه. ووافقه الذهبي.

2أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٩٥٦.

alive, it would have been defective because of its small ears. How can we even like it now that it is dead?" He said: "By Allāh, the world is more insignificant in the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā* than this kid is to you."[1]

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: "The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* held me by my shoulder and said: 'Live in this world as though you are a stranger or one who is crossing a road.'"[2]

Zayd ibn Thābit *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying: "When a person makes this world his sole concern, Allāh *ta'ālā* causes his affairs to be scattered, causes him to see his poverty before his very eyes, and he shall obtain nothing of this world except what was destined for him. When a person makes the Hereafter his sole concern, Allāh *ta'ālā* brings together all his affairs, provides him with prosperity in his heart [contentment], and the world comes before him while it holds no importance to him."[3]

Greed for this world

Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa*

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[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٩٥٧.

[2] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٤١٦.

[3] أخرجه ابن ماجه برقم ٤١٠٥، وقال في الزوائد: إسناده صحيح، رجاله ثقات.

sallam saying: "If man owned two valleys of wealth he would have sought a third valley. Nothing but soil will fill the belly of man. Allāh *ta'ālā* accepts the repentance of the one who repents to Him."[1]

Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "As man gets older, two things increase with him: love for wealth and a desire for long life."[2]

Al-Miswar ibn Makhramah narrates: Abū 'Ubaydah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* came with wealth from Bahrain and the Anṣār heard about the arrival of Abū 'Ubaydah *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. They therefore came to offer the *fajr ṣalāh* with the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. When the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* completed the ṣalāh, he turned around and the Anṣār came in front of him. The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* smiled when he saw them and said: 'I assume you heard that Abū 'Ubaydah brought something?' They replied: 'Indeed, O Messenger of Allāh.' He said: 'Glad tidings to you and have hopes for what would cause you happiness. By Allāh, I do not fear poverty on you. Rather, I fear the world being laid out before you as it was for those who were before you. You would then compete with each

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[1] متفق عليه (خ٦٤٣٦، م١٠٤٩).

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٤٢١، م١٠٤٧).

other in acquiring it as they competed with each other. It would then destroy you as it had destroyed them."[1]

Do not trivialize the bounty of Allāh ta'ālā

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Look at those who are below you [in worldly possessions] and do not look at those who are above you. It is more likely you will not trivialize the bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* on you."[2]

The similitude of this world in the Hereafter

Mustawrid *radiyallāhu 'anhu* – the comrade of the Banū Fahr - narrates that the Messenger of Allâh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "By Allâh, the similitude of this world in comparison to the Hereafter is like one of you dipping this finger of his – and he pointed to the index finger - in the ocean and then looking at how much water attaches itself on his finger."[3]

In other words, just as the water that attaches itself onto the finger is very little when compared to the rest of the ocean, in like manner the life of this world is very short when compared to the Hereafter.

[1] متفق عليه (خ٣١٥٨، م٢٩٦١).

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٤٩٠، م٢٩٦٣) واللفظ لمسلم.

[3] اخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٨٥٨.

Hastening towards repentance

Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* extends His hand at night so that the one who committed sins during the day may turn in repentance to Him. He extends His hand in the day so that the one who committed sins during the night may turn in repentance to Him. This shall continue until the sun rises from where it sets [i.e. the west, before the Final Hour]."[1]

Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* is more pleased by the repentance of His servant than one of you who was on his camel in a deserted land. The camel slipped away from him together with his food and drink which were loaded on it. He becomes despondent of finding it and goes to a tree and lies down in its shade, having no hope of finding it. While he is lying down, he suddenly sees his camel standing before him. He holds it by its reins and exclaims out of extreme joy: 'O Allāh! You are my servant and I am Your Lord.' He errs because of his extreme joy [at finding his camel]."[2]

[1] اخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٧٥٩.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٣٠٩، م٢٧٤٧) واللفظ لمسلم.

The best way of seeking forgiveness

Shaddād ibn Aus *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "The best way of seeking forgiveness is for a person to say:

أَللّٰهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّيْ، لاَ إِلٰهَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِيْ وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ، أَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ، وَأَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِذَنْبِيْ فَاغْفِرْ لِيْ، فَإِنَّهُ لاَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ.

"O Allāh! You are my Lord. There is none worthy of worship except You. You created me and I am Your servant. I shall remain on Your covenant and promise as much as I can. I seek refuge in You from the evil which I committed. I acknowledge Your bounties on me, and I confess my sins. Forgive me, then, surely none forgives sins except You."

"The one who says the above words with full conviction during the day and passes away before the night shall be from the people of Paradise. The one who says them with full conviction at night and passes away before the next morning shall be from the people of Paradise."[1]

Wealth

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Affluence is not based on an abundance of possessions. Rather, true affluence is contentment of the heart."[1]

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked: "Which of you loves the wealth of his inheritor more than his own wealth?" The Companions ﷺ replied: "O Messenger of Allāh! There is none among us who does not love his own wealth." He said: "His own wealth is what he sent forward [spent in good causes], and the wealth of his inheritors is what he held back."[2][3]

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "The slave of the dīnār,[4] dirham, velvet, and striped sheet[5] is destroyed. When he is given anything, he is pleased. When he is not given, he is displeased."[6]

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[1] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٣٠٦.

[1] متفق عليه (خ٦٤٤٦، م١٠٥١).

[2] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٤٤٢.

[3] This means that the wealth which a person spends while he is alive and spends it for good causes is his real wealth. This is because he has stored it with Allāh ﷻ. As for the wealth which he leaves behind, it goes to his inheritors.

[4] That is, a person who is extremely desirous in accumulating wealth and protecting it. It is as though he is enslaved to his wealth.

[5] Velvet and striped sheet are just two examples of wealth which enslave a person.

[6] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٢٨٨٦.

Types of charity

Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Your smiling face to your brother is a charity in your favour. Commanding good and prohibiting evil is a charity in your favour. Giving directions to a person who has lost the way is a charity in your favour. Removing a rock, thorn and bone from the path is a charity in your favour. Pouring from your bucket into your brother's utensil is a charity in your favour."[1]

Lofty matters

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "O Abū Hurayrah! Become abstinent and you will be the most ardent of people. Become content and you will be the most grateful of people. Love for people what you love for yourself and you will be a true believer. Be a good neighbour to your neighbours and you will be a true Muslim. Reduce your laughter because excessive laughter kills the heart."[2]

Perfection of īmān

Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "The one who loves for the sake of Allāh,

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[1] أخرجه الترمذي برقم ١٩٥٦.

[2] أخرجه ابن ماجه برقم ٤٢١٧.

abhors for the sake of Allāh, gives for the sake of Allāh and refuses for the sake of Allāh has certainly sought to perfect his īmān."[1]

Hastening with deeds

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Hasten with good deeds before there comes a time when there will be trials and tribulations following one after another like a dark night.[2] A person will be a believer in the morning and will become an unbeliever in the evening. He will be a believer in the evening and become an unbeliever in the morning. He will sell his religion for paltry worldly effects."[3]

All situations are to the advantage of a believer

Suhayb *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "How excellent the situation of a believer is! All his situations are to his advantage.[4] This is enjoyed by none but a believer. When he experiences occasions of happiness and he is

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[1] أخرجه أبو داؤد برقم ٤٦٨١.

[2] This urges us to hasten towards good deeds before the arrival of trials and tribulations when the religion becomes a commodity that is sold for paltry gains.

[3] أخرجه مسلم برقم ١١٨، والترمذي برقم ٢١٩٥.

[4] This means that a believer is always between two excellent conditions, viz. gratefulness and patience. He is rewarded when he is grateful, and rewarded when he is patient.

grateful over them, it is to his advantage. When he experiences occasions of distress and he is patient over them, it is to his advantage."[1]

Allāh *ta'ālā* loves meeting such a person

'Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* loves meeting the person who loves to meet Him, and dislikes meeting the person who dislikes to meet Him." 'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* or one of his other wives asked: "O Messenger of Allāh! Surely all of us dislike death." He replied: "That is not what it means. Rather, when death comes to a believer and he is given the glad tidings of Allāh's mercy and pleasure, there is nothing more beloved to him than what is before him. He thus desires to meet Allāh and Allāh also likes to meet such a person. As for the unbeliever, when death comes to him and he is given the tidings of the punishment and wrath of Allāh, there is nothing more abhorrent to him than what is before him. He dislikes meeting Allāh. And Allāh also dislikes meeting such a person."[2]

Glad tidings to the strangers

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Islam commenced as a stranger and shall return as a stranger – just as it had commenced. So glad tidings to the strangers."[1]

The one who reaches sixty years of age

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* excuses a person whose life He lengthened till he reaches sixty years of age."[2]

Actions alone remain

Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Three things accompany the deceased [to his grave]: his family, his wealth, and his deeds. Two things return and one remains with him. His family and wealth return, and his deeds remain with him."[3]

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Man says: 'This is my wealth, this is my wealth.' However, his wealth is only these three things: what he ate and digested, what he wore and wore out, or gave in charity and thereby stored it [for the Hereafter]. Apart from these

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[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٩٩٩.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٥٠٧، م٢٦٨٣) واللفظ للبخاري.

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[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ١٤٥.

[2] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٤١٩.

[3] متفق عليه (خ٦٥١٤، م٢٩٦٠).

three, he himself will depart [from this world] and leave [everything else] for the people."[1]

You will laugh little

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Abū al-Qāsim *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [i.e. the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] said: "I take an oath by the Being in whose control is the life of Muḥammad, if you only knew what I know, you will cry a lot and laugh little."[2]

Speech

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "He who believes in Allāh and the Last Day must speak good or else remain silent."[3]

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that he heard the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying: "A person utters a word without pondering over whether it is good or not and thereby slips into the Hell-fire to a depth that is equal to the distance between east and west."[4]

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa*

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[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٩٥٩.

[2] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٦٣٧.

[3] متفق عليه (خ٦٠١٨، م٤٧).

[4] متفق عليه (خ٦٤٧٧، م٢٩٨٨).

sallam said: "It is sufficient for a person to be considered a liar when he goes on narrating whatever he hears."[1]

Fear and hope

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "If a believer were to come to know of the punishment of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, he would have no hope for His Paradise. If an unbeliever were to come to know of the mercy of Allāh *ta'ālā*, he would not despair of His Paradise."[2]

Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* went to a youngster when he was on the throes of death. He asked him: "How are you feeling?" He replied: "O Messenger of Allāh! I have hope in Allāh and I fear my sins." The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "When these two qualities are collectively found in the heart of a person, Allāh *ta'ālā* most certainly gives him what he hopes for and provides him with protection against what he fears."[3]

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[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٥.

[2] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٧٥٥.

[3] أخرجه الترمذي برقم ٩٨٣، وابن ماجه ٤٢٦١.

One shall be questioned about bounties

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates: "The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* came out one day or one night, when he saw Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He asked them: 'What has caused you two to come out of your homes at this hour?' They replied: 'Hunger, O Messenger of Allāh!' He said: 'I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, the very thing which forced you out of your homes has forced me out of my house as well.' They walked with him till they came to the house of an Anṣārī person, but he was not at home. When the man's wife saw the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, she said: 'Welcome.' The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked her: 'Where is such and such [referring to her husband]?' She replied: 'He went to bring sweet drinking water for us.' The Anṣārī man came soon after that. He looked at the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his two companions and said: 'All praise is due to Allāh. Today, no one has more honourable guests than me.' He went and brought them a branch which had green, ripe and fully ripe dates, and said: You may eat these.' He then took a slaughtering knife. The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to him: 'Do not slaughter a milk-providing animal.' He slaughtered a goat for them. They ate of the goat, from the branch of dates, and drank the water [which he had brought]. When their hunger was satiated and their thirst was quenched, the

Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*: 'I take an oath by the Being in whose control is my life, you will most certainly be questioned on the day of Resurrection about these bounties.[1] Hunger forced you out of your homes and you only returned after acquiring these bounties.'"[2]

If you do not commit sins

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "I take an oath by the Being in whose control is my life, if you do not sin, Allāh *taʿālā* will take you away and bring another nation which will commit sins. They will seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā* and He will forgive them."[3]

Adhering to the fear of Allāh

Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates: "The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to me: 'Fear Allāh wherever you may be. Follow an evil deed with a good deed – the latter

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[1] To be questioned about these bounties on the day of Resurrection means that these bounties will be enumerated before the person. It does not mean that the person will be rebuked and punished for enjoying these bounties. The Anṣārī to whom they went was Abū al-Haytham ibn at-Tayyihān ﷺ, as clearly mentioned in the narration of Tirmidhī and others.

[2] أخرجه مالك ومسلم برقم ٢٠٣٨.

[3] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٧٤٩.

will wipe off the former. And interact with people with good conduct.'"[1]

Many a dishevelled person

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "There is many a dishevelled, dusty person who is driven away from the doors. If he were to take an oath in the name of Allāh *ta'ālā*, He will fulfil it for him."[2]

Two sets of eyes

Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying: "There are two sets of eyes which the Hell-fire will not touch: the eye which cried out of the fear of Allāh *ta'ālā* and the eye which remained awake at night keeping guard in the cause of Allāh."[3]

Hoping for death

Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "No one should hope for death because of a calamity which has afflicted him. If he really has to hope for it, he should say: 'O Allāh! Permit me to live as

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[1] أخرجه الترمذي برقم ١٩٨٧، وقال: حديث حسن صحيح.

[2] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٦٢٢.

[3] أخرجه الترمذي برقم ١٦٣٩.

long as living will be to my advantage. Cause me to die if dying will be to my advantage."[1]

Scarcity of righteous people

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: "I heard the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying: 'People are like one camel among 100 – it is almost impossible for you to find one that is easily subdued and worthy of being ridden."[2]

Magnificent deeds

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* shall say on the day of Resurrection: 'O man! I fell ill but you did not visit Me.' He will reply: 'O my Lord! How could I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds?' Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: 'Did you not know that a certain servant of Mine had fallen ill, but you did not visit him? Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me with him? O man! I asked you for food but you did not give it to Me.' He will reply: 'O my Lord! How could I feed You when You are the Lord of the worlds?' Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: 'Do you not remember that a certain servant of Mine asked you for food but you did not give him? Did you not know that had you fed him you would have received [the reward

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[1] متفق عليه (خ٥٦٧١، م٢٦٨٠).

[2] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٤٩٨.

thereof] from Me? O man! I asked you for a drink but you did not give Me.' He will reply: 'O my Lord! How could I give You a drink when You are the Lord of the worlds?' Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: 'A certain servant of Mine asked you for a drink but you did not give him. Did you not know that had you given him a drink, you would have received [the reward thereof] from Me?'"[1]

Abū Mālik al-Ash'arī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Purity is half of faith.[2] Praising Allāh [by saying *al-Ḥamdulillāh*] fills the scale. Glorifying and praising Allāh [by saying *Sub-hā nallāh* and *al-Ḥamdulillāh*] both fill – or the reward fills – all the space between the heavens and the earth. Ṣalāh is a light [which illuminates the way for the person who is constant in offering it]. Charity is a proof [of the person's faith, and evidence of his love for Allāh and His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*]. Patience is an illumination [by which Allāh *ta'ālā* illuminates the straight path for the person]. The Qur'ān is an evidence for you or against you.[3] Every person departs in the morning and sells his soul.[4] He

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[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٥٦٩.

[2] Purity includes purity of the body [physical purity] and purity of the soul from evil qualities and characteristics. This is why it is half of faith.

[3] It shall be an evidence in your favour if you recited it and practised on it. If not, it will be an evidence against you.

[4] There are those who sell their souls for the sake of Allāh ﷻ by obedience to him. In so doing, they free them from the

either frees it [from the punishment] or destroys it [by deprivation on the day of Resurrection and being distanced from the bounties of Paradise]."[1]

The sun shall rise from the west

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "The Final Hour will only take place when the sun rises from its place of setting [the west]. When it rises from the west and people see it, they will all embrace īmān. It is at that time when the īmān of a person who did not have īmān before this or did not earn any good with his īmān will not avail him in any way. The Final Hour will most certainly take place [even if people are busy engaging in the following]: (1) two people have spread out their fabric between them, they neither completed the transaction nor did they fold the fabric as yet, (2) a person has just milked his camel and is returning with its milk, and is unable to drink it, (3) a person is busy sealing the holes in his well and is unable to draw its water, (4) a person has raised a morsel of food to his mouth and is unable to eat it."[2]

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punishment. There are those who sell their souls to Satan by following his dictates and thereby destroyed their selves.

[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٢٣.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٥٠٦، م١٥٧).

In the grave

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "When any of you dies, his abode is presented to him in the morning and evening. He is either made to see the Hell-fire or Paradise and is told: 'This is going to be your abode.' This will continue until he is sent to it."[1]

The situation will be far more serious

'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "The people will be resurrected while they are barefoot, naked and uncircumcised." 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* said: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh! Will the men and women look at each other [while they are naked]?!'" He replied: "The situation will be far more serious for them to worry about that."[2]

Love

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Messenger of Allāh *ta'ālā* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* will say on the day of Resurrection: 'Where are those who loved each other because of My greatness? Today I shall shade them under My

[1] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٥١٥.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٦٥٢٧، م٢٨٥٩).

shade – the day when there will be no shade except the shade provided by Me.'"[1]

Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that a person asked the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* about the Final Hour saying: "When is the Final Hour?"

He asked: "What have you prepared for it?"

He replied: "Nothing except for the fact that I love Allāh *ta'ālā* and His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*."

He said: "You will be with those whom you loved."

Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "We never rejoiced over anything as much as we rejoiced over the Prophet's *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* reply: 'You will be with those whom you loved.'"

Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "I love the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and I hope to be with them by virtue of my love for them even though I did not do deeds like theirs."[2]

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*

[1] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٥٦٦.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٣٦٨٨، م٢٦٣٩).

said: "There are servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* who are neither Prophets nor martyrs, yet the Prophets and martyrs will be jealous of them on the day of Resurrection because of the lofty status which they enjoy with Allāh *ta'ālā*."

The Companions ﷺ asked: "O Messenger of Allāh! Tell us who they are?"

He replied: "They are people who loved each other because of their relationship with Allāh *ta'ālā*. Their love for each other was neither because of family ties between them nor because of wealth which they gave to each other. By Allāh, their faces shall be filled with light, and they will be sitting on light. They will not fear when people are overtaken by fear, and they will not grieve when people are overtaken by grief."

He then recited this verse:

"Remember! Those who are the friends of Allāh – neither is there fear on them nor will they grieve." (Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 62)[1]

[1] أخرجه أبو داؤد برقم ٣٥٢٧.

ABŪ BAKR
raḍiyallāhu 'anhu

His life in a few lines

He is 'Abdullāh ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Āmir ibn 'Amr ibn Ka'b ibn Sa'd ibn Taym. He is from the Banū Taym tribe which is from the Quraysh.

He was born two and half years after the Year of the Elephants. He is thus just over two years younger than the Messenger of Allāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

He was a companion of the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* even before he was commissioned as a Prophet. He was the first male to embrace Islam.

He remained in the companionship of the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* throughout his stay in Makkah. He accompanied him on the emigration (*hijrah*), remained with him in the cave, and joined him in all the battles until his demise. He is one of those who was given the glad tidings of Paradise in this world.

He became the caliph after the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The Muslims gave him the title of *Khalīfatu Rasūlillāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* (the deputy/caliph of the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

He put an end to the apostasy and the conquests commenced during his era.

The first compilation of the Qur'ān was completed during his era.

He passed away on a Tuesday night on 22 Jumādā al-Ākhirah 13 A.H. He was sixty three years old at the time and his caliphate lasted for two years, three months and ten days.

The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "If I were to take a bosom friend from my *ummah* I would have taken Abū Bakr. However, it is the brotherhood and love of Islam [which transcends everything]."

Humility

He addressed the people after his appointment to the caliphate. He praised and glorified Allāh *taʿālā* and said:

"O people! I have been appointed over you although I am not the best among you.[1] However, the Qur'ān came down and the Prophet *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* showed the Sunnah. He taught us and we learnt from him. Know that the best intelligence is piety and the worst stupidity is

[1] Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī *raḥimahullāh* said: "By Allāh, he was the best of them without any doubt. However, a true believer curtails and humbles himself. In other words, he lowers himself out of humility." (*Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*, 14050).

immorality. The strongest among you in my sight is the one who is weak until I fulfil his right. The weakest among you in my sight is the one who is strong until I compel him to fulfil his right. O people! I am merely a follower and I am not an innovator. If I do good, help me. But if I deviate, correct me."[1]

Take stock of your self

Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said in one of his sermons:

"Take stock of your selves before you are brought to account for your deeds. When any nation abandons waging jihad in the cause of Allāh *taʿālā*, He most certainly inflicts them with poverty. When immorality [and licentiousness] spreads in a community, Allāh *taʿālā* most certainly imposes a general calamity upon them."[2]

Warning

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said in one of his sermons:

Listen! By Allāh, I am not the best among you. I disliked this position of mine and I hoped there would be someone among you who would fulfil this responsibility for me. Do you think I will

[1] الطبقات الكبرى لابن سعد ٣\٩٧ طبعة دار إحياء التراث العربي.

[2] كنز العمال برقم ١٤١١٤.

impose the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* on you and not uphold it my self? The Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was protected by divine revelation and he had an angel with him. As for me, I have a devil who takes possession of me. So if I become angry, remain aloof from me lest I harm your hair and skin. Listen! Be wary of me..."[1] [2]

Fundamentals and principles

When death approached Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, he called for 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and said to him:

"Fear Allāh, O 'Umar! Know that certain deeds have to be done for Allāh *ta'ālā* during the day which He does not accept when they are done by night. And there are certain deeds which have to be done at night which He does not accept when they are done by day."[3]

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[1] كنز العمال برقم ١٤١١٨.

[2] Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī *raḥimahullāh* said with regard to this sermon: "By Allāh, no one ever delivered a sermon like this after him."

[3] This advice contains certain fundamentals and principles which arrange man's life in a manner which would lead to his salvation in this world and in the Hereafter. The first of these is to fulfil each deed at its appointed time – either during the day or at night. This must be done in a manner whereby no deed is procrastinated or delayed from its

"Furthermore, Allāh *ta'ālā* does not accept an optional deed until the obligatory deed is fulfilled."[1]

"Those whose scale of deeds will be heavy on the day of Resurrection shall be so because they followed the truth in this world and considered it to be serious. Therefore, when the truth is placed in the scale tomorrow, it will most certainly be heavy."

"As for those whose scale of deeds will be light on the day of Resurrection, it will be so because they followed falsehood in this world and considered it to be trivial. Therefore, when falsehood is placed in the scale tomorrow, it will most certainly be light."[2]

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appointed time. Procrastination leads to work piling up, resulting in total failure in completing it.

[1] This is also a fundamental in arranging one's duties and obligations. When there are many deeds to be fulfilled, the obligatory deeds must be given preference over the optional. This is the principle of "first things first" which many Muslims are ignorant of. Feeding the poor and needy takes precedence over an optional ḥajj. Providing for one's family takes precedence over charity...and so on.

[2] Man should look at the deeds which he is doing in this world and rectify them because they are going to be placed in his scale on the day of Resurrection, and he will be taken to account on the basis of these deeds. He should therefore assess his deeds before they are placed in the scale of Allāh ﷻ on the day of Resurrection.

"When Allāh *ta'ālā* described the inhabitants of Paradise, He spoke about their most virtuous deeds and the fact that He overlooked their evils. When I think of these people, I think to myself: 'I fear I will not be able to join them.'"

"When Allāh *ta'ālā* described the inmates of the Hell-fire, He spoke about their vilest deeds and rejected their good deeds. When I think of these people, I think to myself: 'I hope I am not placed with them." A person has to possess the qualities of yearning and fear. He must neither place too much hope in Allāh's mercy, nor must he be despondent of Allāh's mercy."[1]

"If you remember and uphold this advice of mine, there will be nothing of the unseen more beloved to you than death - which is bound to come to you. If you disregard this advice of mine, there will be nothing of the unseen more detestable to you than death - and you will not be able to escape it."[2]

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[1] Man must be suspended between yearning and fear. He must not be so overpowered by fear that he becomes totally despondent. He must not be so overpowered by feeling secure that it leads him to lethargy and then having hopes in Allāh's mercy.
If man adheres to these fundamentals, he will never feel threatened by death. This is because he has made sufficient preparations for it.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٢\٤٥، تهذيب حلية الأولياء، للمولف ١١\٦٠، طبع المكب الإسلامي.

Becoming conceited by the attractions of this world

'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* said: "One day I wore a new armour which belonged to me. I began looking at it and I became conceited by it."

"Abū Bakr said: 'What are you looking at? Allāh *ta'ālā* is not looking at you!!'"

"I asked: 'And why is that?'"

"He said: 'Don't you know that when a person becomes conceited by the attractions of this world his Lord detests him until he gives up that beautification?'"

She said: "And so, I removed the armour and gave it in charity."

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Perhaps that will be an expiation for you."[1]

Dīnārs at the time of death

Ḥabīb ibn Ḍamurah said:

"Death approached one of the sons of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, and the boy began staring at a pillow. When he passed away, some people said to Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: 'We saw your son staring at a pillow.'"

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١١\٦٠.

"They raised him from the pillow and found five dīnārs under it. Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* struck his one hand onto his other hand and said: *'Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rājiʿūn* (to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return), I do not think your skin would suffice for this.'"[1]

Appointing the people of Badr to positions of authority

Someone said to Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "O deputy of the Messenger of Allāh! Why do you not appoint the people of Badr [to positions of authority]?"

He replied: "I am aware of their lofty rank [and suitability for such positions] but I do not want to soil them with this world."[2]

A tree which provides support

Al-Ḥasan said: "Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I wish I was a tree which provides support and which is then eaten."[3]

Danger of the tongue

'Umar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* went to visit Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and saw him holding his

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٠.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٦١.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص ١٣٩.

tongue. 'Umar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Stop that. May Allāh *taʿālā* forgive you."

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "This [tongue] led me to various [sinful] situations."[1]

No, and may Allāh protect you

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* passed by a person who had a garment with him. Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked him:

"Are you selling this garment?"

He replied: لا عافاك الله!! – may Allāh not protect you.

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "You were taught to say [the following]. If only you remembered. Say: لا، وعافاك الله – no, and may Allāh protect you."[2]

The early stages of Islam

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Glad tidings to the person who passed away in *an-nānāt*."

Someone asked him: "What is *an-nānāt*?"

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[1] البيان والتبيين ١\١٩٤، وصفة الصفوة ١\١٣٢.

[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٢٦١.

He replied: "The early stages of Islam."[1]

Modesty before Allāh

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O assembly of Muslims! Remain bashful before Allāh. I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, I cover myself with my garment when I go out into the field in order to relieve myself. I do this out of bashfulness for my Lord."[2]

When kings deviate

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon and after praising Allāh *ta'ālā* and sending salutations to His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, he said:

"Listen! The most wretched people in this world and in the Hereafter are the kings."

On hearing this, the people raised their heads. So he said:

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٥٨، والبيان والتبين ٣\١٥١.

This means: glad tidings to the person who passes away in the early stages of Islam before it could spread and its followers increased in number. Allāh ﷻ Himself distinguished those who spent before the conquest of Makkah and those who spent after its conquest.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٥٨.

"O people! What is it with you? You are very quick to criticize. From among kings there is he who when he becomes a king, Allāh *ta'ālā* causes him to abstain from whatever he owns and desirous of what others own. Allāh shortens his life by half and fills his heart with dread. He thus becomes jealous over little things, becomes enraged when others have a lot, becomes despondent of happiness, and the pleasure of conjugal relations is severed from him. He does not take any admonition and is not satisfied with reliance. He is thus like a counterfeit dirham, a deceitful mirage. He is outwardly cheerful, but grieving from within."

"When his heart stops beating, his life becomes extinguished and his shadow departs [i.e. he dies], Allāh *ta'ālā* takes him through a severe reckoning and pardons him very little, unless for the person who believed in Allāh, and ruled by His Book [the Qur'ān] and the Sunnah of His Prophet."

"Listen! It is the poor people who are shown mercy."

"Listen! Today you are on the caliphate of prophet-hood and at a crossroad. After me, you shall see stern and transgressing kings, an *ummah* that is disintegrated, and blood that is shed."

"If there was an outburst of falsehood, a wandering about of the people of truth, its traces

will be wiped out, humanity will die for it, trials and tribulations will be revived by it, and the *sunan* (plural of Sunnah) will die because of it. In such a situation, you must adhere to the *masājid* (plural of musjid), seek counsel from the Qur'ān, hold on firmly to obedience, and do not distance yourself from the *jamā'ah* (the main body of Muslims). Settlement of a matter must be done after mutual consultation, and conclusion [of a transaction] after mutual consideration."

"Which of your land is Kharshanah (a place near Malta which was under the Romans)? The furthest extent of that land will be laid open for you just as its nearest point was laid open for you."[1]

You will be given life

Abū Bakr as-Siddīq *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said to Khālid ibn al-Walīd *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

"Flee from honour and honour will follow you. Be extremely desirous of death and you will be given life."[2]

The consequence of vulgarity

A person said to Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "By Allāh I will swear you in such a way that it [my swearing] will go into your grave with you."

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\٤٣، والعقد الفريد ٤\٥٦.

[2] العقد الفريد ١\٣٤.

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "It will go with you and not with me."[1]

Emotions are inherited

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Love and hatred are both possessed as an inheritance."[2]

The conclusion of sermons

This used to be the final supplication (*du'ā'*) of Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* in his sermons:

"O Allāh! Make the concluding part of my life the best part of my life, the best part of my deeds the concluding part of them, and the best of my days the day when I meet You."[3]

Abstention

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "We used to keep away from seventy doors of the lawful (*halāl*) out of fear that we might fall into one door of the unlawful (*harām*)."[4]

A look of reflection

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\١٢٤.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\١٥٧.

[3] العقد الفريد ٣\٢١.

[4] العقد الفريد ٣\١٨٤.

"Where are those with striking and handsome faces – those who are conceited by their youthfulness? Where are the kings who built cities and fortified them with orchards? Where are those who used to be victorious on the battlefields? Time perished with them and they went into the pitch darkness of the graves. Hasten to save yourself, hasten to save yourself."[1]

Warning against this world

'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn 'Auf *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates:

"I went to visit Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* when he was on his death-bed. I offered *salām* (Islamic greeting) to him, and he said:

'I saw the attractions of this world approaching, but they have not fully approached as yet. But they are definitely coming nearer. You people will resort to curtains made of silk and pillows made of silk brocade. You will be pained by the woollen beds of Azerbaijan as though you were sleeping on a bed of thorns. By Allāh, if any one of you were to step forward and have his head chopped off without any due cause, it would be better for him than to swim in the abundance of this world.'"[2]

[1] صفة الصفوة ١\١٣٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٥٨.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٥٨، والعقد الفريد ٤\٢٥٤.

That in which there is no good

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Do you not know that you are departing in the morning and returning in the evening for an appointed time? There is no good in a statement in which the pleasure of Allāh *ta'ālā* is not sought. There is no good in wealth which is not spent for the cause of Allāh *ta'ālā*. There is no good in a person whose forbearance is overpowered by his ignorance. There is no good in a person who fears the criticism of critics in matters concerned with Allāh *ta'ālā*."[1]

Reminding about the Hereafter

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon and said:

"I advise you to fear Allāh *ta'ālā* for your poverty and deprivation. I advise you to praise Him in a manner that is due to Him. And I advise you to seek His forgiveness for He is certainly most forgiving."

"You should realize that the more devoted you remain to Allāh *ta'ālā*, the more obedient you will be to your Lord, and the more of your rights you will be safeguarding."

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٦.

"You should pay your obligatory charities [e.g. zakāh] during the days when you are enjoying prosperity and give them voluntarily and optionally among yourselves. If you do this, you will delay falling into debt when you are going through days of poverty and need."

"O servants of Allāh! Ponder over the people who were before you - where they were yesterday and where they are today? Where are the kings who tilled the earth and populated it? They are forgotten and thoughts about them are also forgotten. Today they are as if they never existed."

"So these are their houses fallen into ruin because of their denial." (Sūrah an-Naml, 27: 52)

They are in the pitch darkness of the graves.

"Do you perceive even a feeble sound of any one of them or hear even a whisper of them?" (Sūrah Maryam, 19: 98)

"Where are those whom you knew of your companions and brothers? They reached the abode for which they had sent forth [either evil deeds or good deeds]. And so, they are either in torment or enjoying good fortune. Allāh *ta'ālā* has no family ties with any of His creation whereby He could give that person some good, and turn evil away from him. This can only be achieved through obedience to Him and following His orders."

"There is no goodness in any good if it leads you to the Hell-fire. And there is no evil in any evil if it leads you to Paradise. I now conclude this sermon of mine, and I seek forgiveness from Allāh *ta'ālā* for me and you."[1]

Do not look down on anyone

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"No one should look down on any Muslim. Surely the most insignificant of Muslims is great in the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā*."[2]

The blood and honour of Muslims

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Fear Allāh by obedience to Him, and obey Allāh *ta'ālā* by fearing Him."

"Ensure your hands abstain from the blood of Muslims, your stomach abstains from their wealth, and your tongue abstains from their honour and dignity."[3]

Soft-heartedness

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٥٨.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٣٧.

[3] رسالة المسترشدين للمحاسبي، ص٤٦.

"The person who would like Allāh *ta'ālā* to protect him from the fire of Hell on the day of Resurrection should be merciful and soft-hearted towards the believers."[1]

Adopting the expression of a crying person

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The one who is able to cry [before Allāh *ta'ālā*] should do so. The one who is unable to cry should adopt the expression of a crying person."[2]

Ask Allāh ta'ālā for well-being

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* stood on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He was overcome by crying three times and this caused him to grasp for breath. He then said:

"O people! Ask Allāh *ta'ālā* for well-being because no one was given better conviction which comes after well-being, nor worse doubt which comes after unbelief."

"Adhere to truthfulness because it leads towards obedience - and they both will be in Paradise. Abstain from dishonesty because it leads to

[1] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني، ص٤٨.

[2] المرجع قبله، ص١٧٨.

immorality - and they both will be in the Hell-fire."[1]

Reward for the believers

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A Muslim is rewarded for every single thing: even for a misfortune [which befalls him], when his sandal strap breaks, and even when an item which he thought was in his sleeve – he looks for it, cannot find it, removes his garment and then finds it in his pocket."[2]

Beware of boasting

The following is from a sermon of Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

"O People! I advise you to fear Allāh in every matter and under every situation. Adhere to the truth in both your likes and your dislikes. There is no good in anything apart from honesty in speech. The person who lies becomes immoral, and the one who becomes immoral is bound to be destroyed."

"Beware of boasting. What is there to be boastful about for a creation that was created from soil and shall return to the soil – who is living today and will be dead tomorrow?!"

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد، ص١٣٥.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد، ص١٣٦.

"Continue doing good and consider yourself from among those who are dead."

"When you encounter any difficulty, refer knowledge of it to Allāh *ta'ālā*."

"Send forth good for yourselves and you will find it present before you. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

"The day when every person shall find whatever good he has done presented before him, and whatever evil he has done. He will wish that there is, between it and himself, a great distance. Allāh warns you of Himself, and Allāh is very kind to His servants." (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 30)

"O servants of Allāh! Fear Allāh and be constantly conscious of Him. Take a lesson from those who passed away before you. You should know that there is no escape from meeting your Lord and being recompensed for all your deeds – the minor and major deeds – except for what Allāh *ta'ālā* forgives. Surely He is all-forgiving, all merciful."

"Protect yourselves, protect yourselves, and seek help from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. There is no power except from Allāh *ta'ālā*."

Honour and conviction

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"We found honour in *taqwā* (piety and fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*),[1] wealth in conviction,[2] and dignity in humility."[3]

Deeds for the Hereafter

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon saying:

"I advise you to fear Allāh *ta'ālā* and to praise Him in a manner that is due to Him."

"I advise you to intermingle yearning with fear, and learn to persist when beseeching Allāh *ta'ālā*. Allāh *ta'ālā* praised Zakarīyyā ﷺ and his family members saying:

"We heard his supplication and bestowed to him Yaḥyā, and We made sound for him his wife [for childbearing]. They used to hasten in doing good deeds and they used to call to Us with hope and fear. And they were humble before Us." (Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 90)

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[1] Allāh ﷻ says: "The most honourable of you in the sight of Allāh ﷻ is the one who is most pious."

[2] The person who believes that sustenance is destined and decided by Allāh ﷻ is the one who is truly wealthy.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين، ٤\١٤٤.

"O servants of Allāh! You should know that Allāh *ta'ālā* mortgaged your lives for His rights, took your covenants for that, and purchased from you the little which is fleeting [this fleeting world] for the abundant which is everlasting [the Hereafter]."

"This Book of Allāh *ta'ālā* [the Qur'ān] is such that its astounding facts never cease, and whose light will never be extinguished. You should therefore affirm His words, seek the advice of the Qur'ān and practise on its advice, and seek light from it for the dark day [the day of Resurrection]."

"Surely Allāh *ta'ālā* created you for His worship, and appointed the noble scribes[1] over you – they know whatever you do."

"O servants of Allāh! You should know that you depart in the morning and return in the evening for an appointed time whose knowledge is hidden from you. Try to pass your time while you are engrossed in deeds for the sake of Allāh *ta'ālā*. You will never be able to do this without Allāh's *ta'ālā* help."

"You should hasten with your deeds immediately – before your appointed time draws to an end, and it casts you to face the consequences of your evil deeds. There were people who spent their

[1] The two scribes (*kirāman kātibīn*) who are appointed to record the deeds of man.

lives for others and forgot about their own selves.[1] I prohibit you from being like them."

"Adhere to revelation, adhere to revelation [i.e. the Qur'ān] and save yourselves, save yourselves. Surely there is an ardent seeker behind you [i.e. death], and he comes very swiftly."[2]

Salāh and zakāh

Abu Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"By Allāh I will wage jihad against the person who distinguishes between salāh and zakāh [i.e. he performs salāh but refuses to pay zakāh]. Surely zakāh is a due which is owed for one's wealth."[3]

Sufficing with the minimum

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* went to Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* while he had lost his spirit. He said: "O deputy of the Messenger of Allāh! Advise me."

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him: "Allāh *ta'ālā* is going to open up the world to you, so do not take of it except what is sufficient to fulfil your basic needs. The person who performs the *fajr salāh* remains under the protection of Allāh

[1] In other words, they spent their time for the rectification and reformation of others, but forgot about their own selves.

2تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٥٨، والعقد الفريد ٤\٥٨.

3سيرة الخلفاء للذهبي، ص٣٩.

ta'ālā. Do not damage this protection of Allāh *ta'ālā* by disobeying Him. If not, Allāh *ta'ālā* will cast you face down in the Hell-fire."

The doctor

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* fell ill and some people went to visit him. They said to him: "Should we call a doctor for you?"

He replied: "The doctor has already seen me."

They asked: "What did he say to you?"

He replied: "He [Allāh *ta'ālā*] said: 'I do as I will.'"[1]

The dirham

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Your Islam is for your Hereafter and your dirham is for your livelihood. There is no good in a man without a dirham."[2]

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد، ص ١٤٠.
[2] كنز العمال ٣\٧٣٢.

Detesting one's self

Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person detests his self for the sake of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Allāh *ta'ālā* will keep him secure from His own detestation."[1]

[1] كنز العمال ٣\٧٨٥.

'UMAR IBN AL-KHAṬṬĀB
radiyallāhu 'anhu

His life in a few lines

He is 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ibn Nufayl ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā ibn Riyāḥ ibn Quraẓ ibn Razāḥ ibn 'Adīyy ibn Ka'b ibn Lu'ayy, from the Quraysh tribe.

He was born thirteen years after the Year of the Elephants.

He embraced Islam a few days after Ḥamzah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*. This was after a few Muslims had departed for Abyssinia during their first emigration in the fifth year of prophet-hood.

He remained in the company of the Messenger of Allāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* until he passed away and took part in all the battles. The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* gave him the title of al-Fārūq (the one who distinguishes and differentiates truth from falsehood). He is one of the 'Asharah Mubash-sharah who were given the glad tidings of Paradise in this world.

Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* nominated him to the caliphate after him. He thus took over the reigns of caliphate after his demise, and was given the title of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (the leader of the believers).

The great conquests took place during his era.

This is one of the supplications which he used to make: "O Allāh! I ask You for martyrdom in Your cause and death in the city of Your Messenger *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.*" Allāh *ta'ālā* accepted his supplication.

Abū Lu'lu' al-Majūsī struck him in the *fajr ṣalāh* on Wednesday 26th Dhū al-Ḥijjah 23 A.H. and he passed away three days later. He was buried in the Prophet's *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* room on Sunday, the 1st of Muḥarram 24 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

The Messenger of Allāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "There were those in the nations before you who were inspired [by Allāh]. If there is any such person in my *ummah*, it is 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb."

Be wary of bounties

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to 'Utbah ibn Ghazwān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*, his governor in Basra, saying:

"You have now become a leader – whatever you say will be listened to, and whatever order you issue will be carried out."

"What a great bounty this is provided it does not elevate you beyond your true worth and does not cause you to transgress on those who are under you."

"Be more wary of bounties than what you are of calamities. Be on your guard against doing something which cannot be undone or committing a mistake which cannot be rectified. May peace be on you."[1]

His advice to his son

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to his son, 'Abdullāh *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, when he absented himself:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* protects the one who fears Him, suffices for the one who places his trust in Him, gives more to the one who is grateful to Him, and recompenses the one who gives in His name."

"You should therefore make piety (*taqwā*) the building of your heart and the polisher of your eyesight."

"No deed of a person is accepted if it is not accompanied with an intention. There is no good in a person who does not possess the quality of fear [of Allāh *ta'ālā*]. No person should own any new [clothes] if he does not own any worn-out [clothes]."[2]

[1] العقد الفريد، ٣\١١١.

[2] العقد الفريد، ٣\١١٤.

Supplication

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to terminate his sermon with the following supplication:

أَللّٰهُمَّ لاَ تَدَعْنِيْ فِيْ غَمْرَةٍ، وَلاَ تَأْخُذْنِيْ فِيْ غِرَّةٍ، وَلاَ تَجْعَلْنِيْ مَعَ الْغَافِلِيْنَ.

"O Allāh! Do not leave me in abundance, do not catch me unawares, and do not place me among the heedless."[1]

Solitude

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Surely in solitude there is peace from evil companionship." Or he said: "from evil characteristics and mannerisms."[2]

Trials and tribulations

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"We were tested with adversity and we exercised patience. We were tested with prosperity but we were unable to exercise patience."[3]

Those who advise

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

[1] العقد الفريد، ٣\١٨٤.

[2] الزهد الكبير للبيهقي برقم ١١٨.

[3] حاشية رسالة المسترشدين، ص٥٢.

"There is no good in a people who do not advise, and there is no good in a people who do not like those who advise."[1]

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* passed away

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Every day an announcement is made: 'Such and such person has passed away.' A day will definitely come when an announcement will be made: "Umar has passed away.'"[2]

Supplication for sincerity

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to say the following in his supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَمَلِيْ كُلَّهُ صَالِحًا، وَاجْعَلْهُ لِوَجْهِكَ خَالِصًا، وَلَا تَجْعَلْ لِأَحَدٍ فِيْهِ شَيْئًا.

"O Allāh! Make my deed righteous in its entirety, make it solely for Your pleasure, and do not make anyone a partner in it."[3]

Refer to the Sunnah

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Refer all acts of ignorance to the Sunnah[1]."[2]

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[1] رسالة المسترشدين، ص٧١.

[2] حاشية رسالة المسترشدين، ص١١١.

[3] الاستقامة لابن تيمية، ٢\٢٢٩.

Take stock of yourself

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to one of his governors saying:

"Take stock of yourself before the severe reckoning [on the day of Reckoning]. Surely the one who takes stock of his self at the time of prosperity before the severe reckoning shall return pleased and jubilant. As for the person who has been deceived by his life and preoccupied by his desires, his return shall be one of remorse and regret. Remember this admonition so that you may desist from what you are prohibited from."[3]

He will not be deprived of acceptance

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The one who is inspired to supplicate (make *du'ā'*) will not be deprived of a response. Allāh *ta'ālā* said:

"Call to me so that I may respond to your call." (Sūrah al-Mu'min/Ghāfir, 40: 60)

"The one who is inspired to show gratitude will not be deprived of receiving more, because Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

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[1] In other words, weigh them against the Sunnah.

[2] الاستقامة، ١\٥.

[3] الزهد الكبير للبيهقي برقم ٤٦٢.

"If you are grateful I will give you more." (Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 7)

"The one who is inspired to seek forgiveness will not be deprived of acceptance [by Allāh *taʿālā*] because He says:

"Seek forgiveness from Allāh, surely Allāh is most forgiving, most merciful." (Sūrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 20)[1]

The head of what is good

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Everything has a head, and the head of good is hastening to do it."[2]

People are of three categories

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"People are of three categories: (1) A person who looks into matters before they occur, and executes them the moment they originate. (2) A person who relies on others, and does not look [into anything]. If anything happens to him, he consults people of intelligence and accepts their advice. (3) A person who is confused and confounded. He neither consults a person who

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٨٨.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٨٩.

could advise him, nor does he follow the advice of a person who guides him."[1]

I am not a cheat

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I am not a cheat, and a cheat will not be able to deceive me."[2]

Pronouncing a person's credibility

A person said to 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Such and such person is an honest man."

'Umar asked: "Did you go on a journey with him?"

He replied: "No."

'Umar asked: "Did you have any dealing with him?'

He replied: "No."

'Umar asked: "Did you ever entrust anything to him?"

He replied: "No."

'Umar said: "You have no knowledge whatsoever about him. I think you [merely] saw him lowering

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٩٩.

[2] العقد الفريد ١\٥٣.

and raising his head in the musjid [and came to this opinion about him]."[1]

Women are of three categories

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Women are of three categories: (1) A woman who is easy-going, chaste and submissive. She will support her family by her way of living, but she will not impose her way of living on her family. (2) A woman who is protective of her children. (3) A woman who is of bad character. Allāh *ta'ālā* casts her on whichever of His servants He wills."[2]

Walking swiftly

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to walk swiftly. He used to say: "It enables you to fulfil your needs quickly, and is furthest away from pride and haughtiness."[3]

Pleasure

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"All good is found in pleasure. If you are able to please, then do it. If not, exercise patience."[4]

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[1] ذكر السخاوي نقلا عن "المجالسة" انظر الأسرار المرفوعة للقاري، هامش الخبر ٢٢٧.

[2] العقد الفريد ٦\١٢٠.

[3] الرسالة القشيرية ص ١٤٦.

[4] الرسالة القشيرية ص ١٩٦.

Were it not for the Resurrection

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who fears Allāh will never give vent to his anger. The one is conscious of Allāh will never do whatever he likes. Were it not for the day of Resurrection, you will see something different from what you are seeing."[1]

I am not worried

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I am not worried about the condition in which I get up in the morning – whether it is a condition which I like or dislike. This is because I do not know whether good has been placed in what I like or what I dislike."[2]

Living in close proximity

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

"Order relatives to visit each other, but not to live in close proximity to each other."[3]

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[1] رسالة المسترشدين للمحاسبي ص٥٠.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص ٣٦٤.

[3] العقد الفريد ٢\١٦٤.

Assumption and conviction

A Bedouin said to 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Give me a camel for myself and *suhaym*."

'Umar said: "I ask you in Allāh's name, O Bedouin! Is this *suhaym* a receptacle [for carrying water]?"

He replied: "Yes."

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "If a person's assumption does not benefit him, his conviction will not benefit him."[1]

Seeking sustenance

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You should not sit back from seeking sustenance and then say: 'O Allāh! Give me sustenance', when you know that the skies neither rain down gold nor silver. Allāh *ta'ālā* provides sustenance to people through each other."[2] He then read this verse:

"Then when the salāh is ended, disperse into the land and seek the bounty of Allāh. And remember Allāh abundantly so that you may prosper." (Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 10)

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\٢٨٣.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\٣٢٥.

The measure of a man is his wealth

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The measure of a man is his wealth, his honour lies in his religiosity, and his respect lies in his character."[1]

Going to kings and rulers

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person goes to kings, he departs from there while he is angry with Allāh *ta'ālā*."[2]

Beware of ingratitude

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon and said:

"All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* who honoured us with Islam, privileged us with *īmān*, and showered His mercy on us through His Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Allāh *ta'ālā* guided us through him from deviation, brought us together from different groups, reconciled our hearts, helped us against our enemies, gave us authority in the land, and made us brothers who have love for each other through him."

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\٣٢٦.

[2] This means he disregards Allāh's bounties and favours on him when he sees the life of opulence and luxury of the kings.

العقد الفريد ٣\١٥٩.

"So praise Allāh *ta'ālā* for this favour, ask Him for more in this regard, and for the ability to thank Him for it. Allāh *ta'ālā* most certainly fulfilled His promise of helping you against those who oppose you."

"Beware of committing sins and being ungrateful. When any nation showed ingratitude for a favour and did not repent [from sins], Allāh *ta'ālā* most certainly snatched its honour and dignity away, and gave power to its enemies over it."[1]

Abstaining from sin is best

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Restrain these souls from their desires because they are constantly in search [for the fulfilment of desires]. If you do not restrain them, they will drag you to a terrible end. The consequence of truth [Islam] is praiseworthy, while the consequence of falsehood is disastrous. Abstaining from sin is better than treating it with repentance. Many a gaze gave rise to passion, and a single moment's passion caused a lengthy grief."[2]

Matters are of three types

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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[1] العقد الفريد ٤\٥٩.

[2] البيان التبيين ٣\١٣٨.

"Matters are of three types:

1. A matter which is clearly proper; so follow it.
2. A matter which is clearly harmful; so keep away from it.
3. A matter which you are unsure about; so refer it to Allāh *ta'ālā*."[1]

Seek Allāh through your actions

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon, and said:

"O people! I experienced a time when I thought whoever was reading the Qur'ān was doing it for Allāh *ta'ālā* and the rewards which He has for it. But now it seems to me that some people are reading the Qur'ān for the sake of rewards from people. Listen! Seek Allāh *ta'ālā* through your recitation, and seek Him through your actions. We used to know and recognize you when revelation used to come down and when the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was among us. Revelation has ended and the Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* has departed. I will now know you by what I say to you: Listen! The person who displays good to us, we will think good of him and we will praise him for it. The person who displays evil to us, we will think bad

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[1] العقد الفريد ٤\٤٠٥.

of him and we will express our abhorrence to him."[1]

The responsibility of governors

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I appoint my governors to teach you your *Dīn* and the Sunnah. I do not appoint them to beat your backs and take your wealth. Listen! Anyone who is doubtful in this regard [has any complaint in this regard], must raise the issue to me. I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, I will most certainly exact retribution from the governor on your behalf."

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *radiyallāhu 'anhu* stood up and said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! What if you appoint a governor who then disciplines one of your subjects by beating him, will you exact retribution from him?"

He replied: "Yes. I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is 'Umar's life, I will most certainly exact retribution from him, because I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* offering himself for retribution."[2]

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٣٨.

[2] العقد الفريد ٤\٦٠.

The honour of Muslims

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to his governors thus:

"Do not permit any unbeliever to take any service from any Muslim."[1]

An impediment

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Rest is an impediment. Beware of being overweight because it is an impediment."[2]

Worse than a donkey

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If you have *Dīn*, you have esteem.

If you have intelligence, you have a foundation.

If you have character, you have a sense of honour.

If not, you are worse than a donkey."[3]

Something to be feared

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

[1] العقد الفريد ٤\٤٠٥.

[2] البيان التبيين ٣\٢٣.

[3] العقد الفريد ٢\١٠٢.

"The things which I fear most for you are: greed which is acted upon, desires which are followed, and a person's self-conceit."[1]

An injurious word

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If you hear a word which injures you, lower yourself so that it by-passes you."[2]

The leader of his people

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb *radiyallāhu 'anhu* asked a man: "Who is the leader of your people?"

He replied: "I am."

'Umar said: "You are lying. If you were really their leader, you would not have said it."[3]

Sense of honour

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A sense of honour is of two types: an outward sense of honour, and an internal sense of honour.

1جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٧٣.

2العقد الفريد ٢\١٣٠.

3العقد الفريد ٢\١٣٤.

An outward sense of honour lies in pure clothes.[1] An internal sense of honour lies in chastity."[2]

If only I was...

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If only I was a sheep for my family. They would have fattened me as much as they liked. When I became the fattest I could ever be, a few beloved friends and relatives would visit them, they would roast some parts of me, and make other parts of me into biltong. They would then eat me and expel me as stool. I wish I was not a human."[3]

'Umar's fear

When 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was stabbed, he said:

"By Allāh, had I possessed gold equal to the entire earth, I would have given it as compensation from Allāh's punishment even before I see it."[4]

The accountability of a ruler

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

[1] This actually refers to purity from sins.

2عيون الأخبار ١\٢٩٦، والعقد الفريد ٢\١٣٨.

3تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٧٢.

4تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٧٢.

"If a lost sheep were to die on the banks of the Euphrates river, I think Allāh *ta'ālā* will question me about it on the day of Resurrection."[1]

Hope and fear

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If a caller from the heavens were to call out and say: 'O people! Every single one of you except for one person is to enter Paradise', I fear I may be that one person. And if he calls out: 'O people! Every single one of you except for one person is to enter the Hell-fire, I will hope I am that one person."[2]

The caliph takes a loan

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb *radiyallāhu 'anhu* sent a message to 'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn 'Auf *radiyallāhu 'anhu* asking him for a loan of 4000 dirhams. So 'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn 'Auf *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said to the messenger: "Tell him to take it from the Bayt al-Māl (Islamic treasury), and he must then return it [to the Bayt al-Māl]."

When the messenger returned to 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and conveyed the message to him, he felt quite hurt by what he said. When 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* met him, he said: "You are the one who said: 'He must take it from the

[1] مذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٧٣.

Bayt al-Māl?' If I died before I returned it, you people will say: 'The Amīr al-Mu'minīn took it, write it off.' And I will then be taken to task for it on the day of Resurrection. No, I actually wanted to take it from a miserly and greedy person like you so that when I die, you could take it from my wealth."[1]

Help is from Allāh *ta'ālā*

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I will most certainly remove Khālid ibn al-Walīd and al-Muthannā – Muthannā ibn Shaybān – so that they realize that it is Allāh *ta'ālā* who helps His servants, and it is not them two whom He was helping."[2]

Wrong pronunciation

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* passed by some people who were practising archery. One of them said [to another]: أَسْبَتَ (you got the target). So 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Incorrect pronunciation is worse than shooting off the target." (the correct word is أَصَبْتَ)[3]

[1] طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٤٨.
[2] طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٥١.
[3] طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٥١.

Disciplining the self

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* carried a waterskin over his neck, and when someone asked him the reason for his action, he replied: "My self (*nafs*) caused me to become self-conceited, so I decided to subdue it."[1]

The caliph's family and their adherence to orders

Whenever 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* prohibited the people from a matter, he would go to his family and say to them:

"You have heard my prohibition. If I ever come to know any of you committing what I prohibited, I will most certainly mete out a double punishment on you."[2]

Allāh *ta'ālā* has special servants

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* has special servants who kill falsehood by remaining away from it, who revive the truth by making mention of it. When they are urged to do [good], they show desire to do it. When they are warned against [evil], they become fearful [of committing it]. They fear [Allāh *ta'ālā*] and do not consider themselves to be safe [from His punishment]. They have absolute conviction

[1] سير الخلفاء الراشدين للذهبي ص٨٣.
[2] طبقات ابن سعد ١٥٤\٣.

in the unseen, and so, their conviction is unwavering. Fear [of Allāh *ta'ālā*] has made them devoted, and so, they would stay away from what is going to be severed from them [world and what it contains] in favour of what is going to remain with them [their good deeds]. Life is a bounty for them, and death is an honour for them."[1]

Take stock of your selves

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Take stock of your selves before an account is taken from you. Weigh yourselves [your deeds] before you are weighed. If you take stock of yourself today, it will be easy for you in the accounting [of deeds] tomorrow [on the day of Recompense]. Prepare yourselves for the great presentation:

"On that day, you will be brought forward – no secret of yours will remain concealed." (Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah, 69: 18)[2]

The death of the heart

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who laughs too much, loses his awe and respect.

[1] حلية الأولياء ٥٥\١.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٩.

The person who jokes [too much], is not taken seriously.

The person who does a particular thing a lot is known by it.

The person who talks too much will err excessively. The one who errs excessively will have less shame. The person who has less shame will have less piety. The person who has less piety, his heart will die."[1]

Recognizing evil

Someone said to 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Such and such person does not know evil."

He replied: "He is more likely to commit it."[2]

His advice to the caliph who comes after him

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I advise you to fear Allāh *ta'ālā*, to be extremely cautious of Him, to fear His wrath, and for Him to find you in any doubt."

"I advise you to fear Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to the people, but do not fear the people in carrying out Allāh's orders."

[1] صفة الصفوة ١\١٤٩.
[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٩٩.

"I advise you to execute justice among the subjects, to free yourself to fulfil their needs, and do not give preference to the wealthy over the poor. This - *inshā Allāh* - will give you peace of heart, reduce your load [of responsibilities], and will be best for your Hereafter. In this way, you will be able to reach the one [Allāh] who knows your secrets and who comes as a barrier between you and your heart."

"I order you to be firm in matters concerning Allāh *ta'ālā*, His limits, and in matters concerning His disobedience. This must be applied to both – people who are distant and those who are close. When implementing this, do not let leniency overtake you until you exact revenge equal to the sanctity of Allāh which was violated."

"Treat all people equally, and do not bother on whom a duty is incumbent. Do not let the criticism of anyone prevent you from carrying out Allāh's orders. Beware of favouritism and partiality in matters which Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed you over."[1]

Read the Qur'ān

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Read the Qur'ān, you will be recognized by it. Practise on it, you will be of its people."

[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\٤٦.

"A person will not realize his due right if he is obeyed in an act of disobedience to Allāh."

"A person who stands up for his right or admonishes a senior person will not have his lifespan shortened nor his sustenance taken away from him."[1]

An occupation

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"An occupation which provides a livelihood is better than begging from people."

Someone mentioned to 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* about how some Qurayshī youngsters were wasting their wealth, so he said: "Their lack of an occupation weighs more heavily on me than their poverty." (In other words, their not having an occupation will cause me more concern than seeing them in poverty).[2]

The honour of Islam

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You were the most despicable people, but Allāh *ta'ālā* honoured you through His Messenger *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. As long as you seek

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الياد والتبيين ٢\٧٠.

الياد والتبيين ٢\٨١.

honour from anyone else, Allāh *ta'ālā* will disgrace you."[1]

Sincerity of intention

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person's intention is pure and clean, Allāh *ta'ālā* suffices him for all his dealings with people. When a person embellishes himself for people while his heart is different from what he is portraying, Allāh *ta'ālā* will disgrace him."[2]

Your world

Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullāh* said:

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* passed by a rubbish dump, so he paused by it. His companions were discomforted from standing by the rubbish dump, so he said:

"This is your world for which you are extremely greedy."[3]

Patience

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"We found patience to be the best part of our life."[1]

1حلية الأولياء ١\٤٧.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٥٠.

3الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٧.

Sitting in the company of those who repent

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Sit in the company of those who repent because they have the softest hearts."[2]

Vessels of knowledge

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Become vessels of the Qur'ān, fountains of knowledge, and ask Allāh *ta'ālā* for sustenance for one day at a time; it will not harm you if He does not give you too much sustenance."[3]

What about showing consideration?

A person intended divorcing his wife, so 'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* asked him: "Why do you want to divorce her?" The man replied: "I do not love her." 'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said: "Do you think every house is built on love? What about showing consideration [to the wife] and saving one's self from blame and shame [in the case of divorcing her just because you do not love her]?"[4]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٦.
[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٧١.
[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٩.
[4] البيان والتبين ٢\٨٩.

Teach your children

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* wrote the following instruction and sent it to the different cities:

"Teach your children swimming and horsemanship, and quote idioms and good poetry to them."[1]

Wholesome speech

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Were it not for three things, I would have wanted to meet Allāh *ta'ālā* [passed away] by now.

1. Travelling in the cause of Allāh *ta'ālā* [waging jihad].
2. Placing my forehead [in prostration] for Allāh *ta'ālā*.
3. Sitting in the company of people who select wholesome speech just as they select the best dates."[2]

Learn grammar

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Learn grammar just as you learn the Sunnah and compulsory duties."[1]

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[1] البيان والتبين ٢\١٨٠.
[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٧١.

Patience and gratitude

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"If patience and gratitude were two camels, I would not have bothered which one I rode."[2]

One of his letters to Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu anhu*

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* wrote a letter to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī *radiyallāhu anhu* saying:

"People are normally averse to their ruler, I seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from such aversion afflicting me. Beware of blind ignorance, bearing malice, following desires, and giving preference to this material world."

"Establish the *hudūd* even if it is for an hour in a day."

"When two issues are presented to you; and one is for Allāh *ta'ālā* while the other is for this world, give preference to your share for the Hereafter over your share for this world because the world will come to an end, while the Hereafter is eternal."

"Be in the constant fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*."

البيان والتبيين ٢\٢١٩.
البيان والتبيين ٣\١٢٦.

"Visit the Muslims who have fallen ill, attend their funerals, leave your door open [to the public], and see to their affairs by yourself because you are part of them except for the fact that Allāh *ta'ālā* has placed the heaviest responsibility on your shoulders."

"Remember, a governor has to return to Allāh *ta'ālā*. When a governor strays, his subjects also stray. The most wretched person is the one who causes his subjects to become wretched. Was salām."[1]

Identifying a friend and a foe

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Do not speak about matters which do not concern you. Recognize your enemy."

"Be on your guard with your friend, except for the one who is trustworthy. And there is no trustworthy person except the one who fears Allāh *ta'ālā*. Do not walk with an immoral person; he will teach you some of his immorality. Do not share your secrets with him."

"Do not consult anyone in your matters except for those who fear Allāh *ta'ālā*."[2]

البيان والتبيين ٢\٢٩٣.
صفة الصفوة ١\١٤٩.

Two types of seekers

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"People can be divided into two types of seekers:

A seeker who seeks this world. Reject and shun him outright. He may obtain what he sought of the world and be destroyed by what he got from it. And he may not get anything which he sought from it, and he may be destroyed by what he missed.

A seeker who seeks the Hereafter. If you see one who seeks the Hereafter, compete with him [in seeking the Hereafter]."[1]

Do not become neglectful of your self

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Do not allow people to cause you to become neglectful of your self because you are responsible for your affairs, and not them."

"Do not spend the day heedlessly because whatever you do is recorded."

"When you commit a wrong, follow it with a good deed because I have not seen anything more

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٣٨.

desirous and more swift in catching up than a new good deed for an old sin."[1]

The well-being of this *ummah*

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The well-being of this *ummah* lies solely in softness without being weak, and firmness without severity."[2]

Make *du'ā'* which is known

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* heard a man saying the following in his *du'ā'* (supplication):

"O Allāh! Include me among those who are the least in number."

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* asked him: "What *du'ā'* is this?"

The man replied: "I heard Allāh *ta'ālā* saying:

"and they are few of them." (Sūrah Sād, 38: 24)

And I also heard Him saying:

"There are few of My servants who are grateful." (Sūrah Saba', 34: 13)

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٤٣.

[2] البيان التبين ٣\٢٥٥.

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "You must make *du'ā'* which is known [and easily recognized]."[1]

Du'ā' in *jāhilīyyah* (pre-Islamic times)

Some Ṣaḥābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* said to 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "How is it that when people in *jāhilīyyah* times were oppressed and they made *du'ā'*, it was accepted. But when we make *du'ā'* it is not accepted even if we are oppressed?"

He replied: "That was the only way of reprimand for them.[2] Now that Allāh *ta'ālā* sent down promises and warnings, the penal laws (*ḥudūd*), retribution and retaliation, He caused them to rely on all these things."[3]

Do you buy whatever you desire!?

Jābir ibn 'Abdillāh *radiyallāhu 'anhu* passed by 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* while the former was carrying some meat with him. So he asked him: "What is this you are carrying, O Jābir?"

He replied: "It is meat. I felt like eating it so I bought it."

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Do you always buy whatever you desire? Do you not fear being included among the people of this verse:

1البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٧٨.

2 This means: Allāh's way of reprimanding the oppressor was to accept the *du'ā'* of the oppressed.

3البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٧٩.

"You wasted all your pleasures in the worldly life." (Sūrah al-Aḥqāf, 46: 20)[1]

Destruction to the ruler on earth

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Destruction to the ruler on earth from the Ruler in the Heavens on the day when he will have to meet Him. Except for the ruler who leads with justice, passes judgement according to the truth, does not pass judgement according to his whims, on the basis of family ties, out of desire, nor out of fear. And he makes the Book of Allāh [the Qur'ān] his mirror before his eyes."[2]

Learn the *farā'iḍ*

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

Learn the *farā'iḍ* (compulsory duties/laws of inheritance) and the *sunan* (plural of Sunnah) just as you learn the Qur'ān."[3]

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٣. وفي الكنز ٣\٧١٧ فقال عمر: أما يريد أحدكم ان يطوي بطنه لجاره وابن عمه فأين تذهب هذه الآية...

It is stated in *al-Kanz* that 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said [to Jābir *radiyallāhu 'anhu*]: "Do you not want to starve your stomach for your neighbour and cousin? Have you forgotten this verse..."

2الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٥.

3جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٤٢.

Bear the harm of what is temporary

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I pondered over life and realized that when I desired the world, I caused harm to the Hereafter. And when I desired the Hereafter, I caused harm to the world [I suffered worldly harm]. If such is the case, bear the harm of what is temporary [i.e. the world]."[1]

Ascetics

Ash-Shafā' bint 'Abdillāh saw a few youngsters who were walking at a casual pace and speaking slowly. So she asked them: "What is this?"

They replied: "We are ascetics."

She said: "By Allāh, when 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to speak, he would ensure he was heard. When he walked, he walked swiftly. When he beat [a person], he ensured it caused pain. And he was a genuine ascetic."[2]

Treatment for ailments of the *nafs*

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* gathered the people one day and climbed the pulpit. He praised and thanked Allāh *ta'ālā* and said:

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٥.

2طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٥٤.

"O people! I remember a time when I had no food which people were eating. I had maternal aunts from the Banū Makhzūm for whom I used to bring sweet drinking water. In return for this, they would give me small amounts of raisins."

He then descended from the pulpit.

Someone asked him: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! What was your purpose for saying this?"

He replied: "I found some pride in my self, so I wanted to subdue it."[1]

The gift of faults

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The most beloved person in my sight is the one who brings my faults to my notice."[2]

Lineage and actions

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"By Allāh, whatever virtue we acquired in this world, and whatever reward we hope for from Allāh *ta'ālā* in the Hereafter for our deeds are solely through Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He is the source of our honour. His people are the most honourable of the Arabs, then those

1طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٥٦.

2طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٥٦.

who are closest to them, then those who are closest to them."

"The Arabs became honourable by virtue of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* even though some of us meet his lineage through several generations."

"By Allāh, if the non-Arabs come with [good] deeds, and we come with no [good] deeds, they will be closer than us to Muḥammad on the day of Resurrection. Thus, a person should not look at ties of kinship. He should rather work for the reward which is with Allāh *taʿālā*. A person's lineage will not take him forward if he falls short in his actions."[1]

The one who is knowledgeable with his tongue

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The thing which I fear most for this *ummah* is a person who is knowledgeable with his tongue, but ignorant in his heart."[2]

An *ʿālim* who loves this world

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If you see an *ʿālim* who loves this world, you must be suspicious of him with regard to his *Dīn*

1طبقات ابن سعد ١٣\١٥٧.

2تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٦.

because every lover becomes engrossed in what he loves."[1]

Humility in ṣalāh

Whenever ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* saw anyone bending his head in ṣalāh, he would strike him with a whip and say to him: "Woe to you! Humility is in the heart."[2]

The robe of knowledge

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O people! Ensure you seek knowledge because Allāh *taʿālā* clothes it to the one whom He loves. When a person seeks a chapter of knowledge, Allāh *taʿālā* clothes him with its robe. If he commits a sin, He reprimands him. If he commits another sin, He reprimands him. If he commits another sin, He reprimands him so that He does not have to take away that robe from him even if he continues committing that sin until he dies."[3]

1تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٦.

2تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٧.

3جامع بيان العلم وفضله، لابن عبد البر ١\٧٠.

Despair is wealth

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You should know that greed is poverty, and despair is wealth. When a person despairs of obtaining a thing, he becomes independent of it."[1]

A poor person

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person who finds a dry piece of bread every night which he eats is not a poor person. A poor person is one who does not find anything."[2]

The slip-ups of the tongue

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person has nine good qualities and a single bad quality. The one bad quality overpowers the nine. You should therefore be on your guard against the slip-ups of the tongue."[3]

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٦.

2تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص ٨٣.

3تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٣٥.

Seclusion

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"Set aside a time for seclusion [when you are in solitude from everyone]."[1]

Leadership and intelligence

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* said:

"There is no Islam without a *jamā'ah* (collective group). There is no *jamā'ah* without *imārah* (leadership, a leader). There is no *imārah* without obedience [to the leader]."

"Listen! When a person is appointed as a leader by his people on the basis of intelligence, it will be best for him. When a person is appointed as a leader by his people without intelligence, it will be a cause of destruction for him and for whoever follows him."

'Umar *radiyallāhu anhu* also said:

"Develop understanding and acumen before you become leaders."[2]

1تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٥٤.

2جامع بيان العلم ١\٧٤، ١٠٣.

Deliberation

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Deliberation in every matter is good, except for matters related to the Hereafter."[1]

A sign of honesty

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A sign of honesty is repentance, and acknowledgement of your sin for the sake of Allāh. A sign of sincerity in your action is casting aside your conceit. A sign of the genuineness of gratitude is acknowledgement of your shortcoming."[2]

Excusing one's self from praise

When people used to speak in praise of 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, he used to say:

"O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from the evil of what they are saying, and I ask You to forgive me what they do not know [about me]."[3]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٨.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٦٥.

[3] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص ١٦٧.

Sharp intellects

Ibn al-Mājishūn said:

"When 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* faced any complex issue, he would summon the youngsters and consult them, seeking their sharp intellects."[1]

The requirements of knowledge

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Study knowledge. Learn tranquillity and forbearance for knowledge. Humble yourself to those whom you teach, and those whom you teach must humble themselves before you. Do not be tyrannical *'ulamā'* because your knowledge will not remain with your ignorance."[2]

Piety

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to address himself:

"O Ibn al-Khattāb! You will most certainly have to fear Allāh *ta'ālā* or else He will punish you, and then not bother about you."

He used to say:

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٠٢.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٩.

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٨.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٦٥.

[3] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص ١٦٧.

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٠٢.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٤٩.

"When a person fears Allāh *taʿālā*, he will not carry out every desire of his *nafs*."[1]

They accumulate but do not spend

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not go to those who accumulate of the world and do not spend it in the cause of Allāh *taʿālā* because it earns His wrath. Furthermore, it may cause you to disregard the bounties which you have when you see their possessions."[2]

Humility

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When a servant humbles himself for Allāh's sake, He elevates him with His wisdom. And it is said to him: 'Get up, Allāh will elevate you.' Such a person is insignificant to his self, but great in the eyes of people."[3]

Extravagance

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* went to his son, ʿAbdullāh *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*, and saw them eating meat. So he asked:

"What is this meat for?"

[1] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٨٧.
[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٩٤.
[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٥٣.

His son replied: "I felt like eating meat."

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Do you always eat whatever you desire!? When a person eats whatever he desires, it is sufficient to consider him extravagant."[1]

Dīn entails abstinence

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"*Dīn* does not entail humming [engaging in *dhikr*] in the latter part of the night. Rather, *Dīn* entails abstinence."[2]

A man is gauged by his trustworthiness

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not look at the fasting and ṣalāh of a person. Rather, look at the honesty of his speech when he speaks, his trustworthiness when he is entrusted, and his abstinence when the material things of this world come to him."[3]

Sufficing with the basics

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person who seeks independence through Allāh *taʿālā* shall experience sufficiency. The

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٣.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٥.
[3] الزهد الكبير برقم ٨٦٧.

person who directs himself to anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* will become blind [to Allāh's bounties]."

"If a person is not satisfied with the little of the world which he has, a lot of what he accumulates will not benefit him."

"So suffice with the barest minimum, impose abstinence on your self, desist from malice because its accounting tomorrow [on the day of Resurrection] will be very long."[1]

Encouragement towards work

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"We will praise those of you who work, and disparage those of you who do not work."[2]

Do not be dependent on people

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O assembly of readers! Raise your heads and do not display more humility than what is in your hearts."

"Hasten towards good deeds, and do not become dependent on people because the path is clear."[3]

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[1] الزهد الكبير برقم ١٠٣.
[2] حلية الأولياء ٧\٧١.
[3] حلية الأولياء ٧\٧١.

Asceticism

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

"You will not acquire the actions of the Hereafter with anything more superior than asceticism in this world. And beware of mixing good character with evil character."[1]

Tranquillity for knowledge

"Study knowledge. Learn tranquillity and forbearance for knowledge. Humble yourself to those whom you teach, and those whom you teach must humble themselves before you. Do not be tyrannical *'ulamā'* because your knowledge will not remain with your ignorance."[2]

The peak of humility

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The peak of humility is [in the following]: (1) You must be the first to offer *salām* to the Muslims whom you meet. (2) You must be happy to sit in the unreserved places of an assembly. (3) You must dislike to be described with righteousness and piety."[3]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٢.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٩٩.
[3] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص١٤٠.

The assemblies of knowledge

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person leaves his house while having the burden of sins as huge as the mountains of Tihāmah. When he listens to knowledge [which is being imparted], he becomes fearful and retracts from his sins. [In so doing], he returns home without a single sin against him."

"So do not remain aloof from the assemblies of the *'ulamā'*. Allāh *ta'ālā* did not create any piece of land on the surface of the earth which is more honourable in His sight than the assemblies of the *'ulamā'*."[1]

Deeds of openness

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said to a man: "Adhere to doing deeds of openness."

The man asked: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! What are deeds of openness?"

He replied: "Your deeds which, if they are exposed, you will not be ashamed of them.[2]

Honour through Islam

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص٣٤٥.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١١٣.

"We are a nation whom Allāh *ta'ālā* honoured through Islam. So we should not seek honour in anything else."[1]

Bounties during calamities

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Whenever I suffered any tribulation, Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed me with four bounties in it:

1. It was not in my *Dīn*.
2. It was not worse than what it was.
3. I was not deprived of accepting it [and being pleased with it].
4. I hoped for reward for it."[2]

Encouragement towards work

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O assembly of poor people! Raise your heads and take up a trade because the way is clear. Do not become dependent on people."[3]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٢٠٣.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٣٩٤.

[3] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٥٤.

A partnership for Allāh's sake

Abū Sāliḥ, the freed slave of 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu,* said: "'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* used to order three of us to become partners: one would obtain the goods, the second would sell, and the third would wage jihād in the cause of Allāh."

Abū Sāliḥ was seen as a guard on the coast, so he said: "We are three partners, and it is now my turn to wage jihād."[1]

Wear coarse clothing

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Wear coarse clothing, and beware of adopting the clothes of the non-Arabs: of Kisrā and Caesar [the Persians and Romans]."[2]

Being pleased with wealth and poverty

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I do not worry whether I get up in the morning as a wealthy person or a poor man because I do not know which of the two is better for me."[3]

The most superior deeds

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٥٤.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\١٠٣.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\١٤٨.

"The most superior deeds are: (1) fulfilling whatever Allāh *ta'ālā* made compulsory, (2) abstaining from whatever Allāh *ta'ālā* prohibited, (3) having a true intention for whatever [reward] is with Allāh *ta'ālā*."[1]

Intelligence in transactions

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who has not acquired intelligence in *Dīn* should not trade in our markets."[2]

Abstinence

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"We used to abstain from nine tenths of the *ḥalāl* (lawful) out of fear that we might fall into something which is doubtful or into something which is *ḥarām* (unlawful)."[3]

Goodness in matters

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The goodness of your repentance lies in acknowledging your sin. The goodness of your action lies in casting aside your conceit. The

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٦٧.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص٣٥٨.

[3] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص٣٧٠.

goodness of your gratitude lies in acknowledging your shortcoming."[1]

Humility is in the heart

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* saw a man bending his neck, so he said to him:

"O you who are bending your neck! Straighten your neck. Humility is not in the necks, it is in the hearts."[2]

Anything which hurts you is a calamity

The sandal strap of 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* snapped, so he said: "*Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn* (to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return)." He then said:

"Anything which hurts you is a calamity [and we have been instructed by Allāh *ta'ālā* to say *Innā lillāhi...* when we are afflicted by any calamity]."[3]

Rejoicing over worldly beauty

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O Allāh! We can do nothing but rejoice over whatever You beautified for us. O Allāh! I ask You to enable me to spend it in its rightful place."[1]

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص٣٨٠.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٨٤.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٦٦.

Advice to a commander

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote a letter to 'Utbah ibn Ghazwān *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. The following is a part of what the letter contained:

"Fear Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to the responsibility which has been placed on you. Beware of pride overtaking you and thereby causing you to demoralize and abase your brothers. You were in the company of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and you became honourable after you were downtrodden, and you became strong after you were weak. You have now become an *amīr* (leader) who wields authority, and a ruler who is obeyed. When you say something, people listen to you. When you issue an order, it is carried out."

"What a great favour it will be provided it does not elevate you more than your worth, and does not cause you to disregard those who are under you."

"Be on your guard from bounties just as you have to be on guard against sins. In fact, bounties are more frightening in my sight because they would delude you gradually and cause you to fall in a way which would cast you into the Hell-fire. I seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* for you and for myself from this."

"People hastened towards Allāh *ta'ālā* when the world was presented to them, but then they

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[1] أخرجه البخاري تعليقا قبل ٦٤٤١.

desired the world. You should rather desire Allāh *ta'ālā* and not the world. Beware of doing the same things which caused the downfall of the wrongdoers and oppressors."[1]

Conditions of employment

Whenever 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* appointed a person to a job, he wrote an agreement for him, and brought a group of the Muhājirūn (Emigrants) as witnesses. He made these conditions on him:

1. He will not ride a work horse.
2. He will not eat refined foods.
3. He will not wear fine clothing.
4. He will not shut his door from the needy.

If the person did any of the above, he would be eligible for punishment.[2]

His advice to the caliph after him

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I advise the caliph after me to fear Allāh *ta'ālā*.

I advise him to uphold the rights of the first Muhājirūn and to recognize their sanctity.

[1] الفاروق وأسرته لمحمود شاكر ص٥٨٧ نقلا عن الطبري.

[2] البداية والنهاية ٧\١٤٨.

I advise him to be good to the residents of the cities because they are the support of Islam, the wrath of the enemy, and the collectors of revenue. He must only take their excess wealth after obtaining their approval.

As for the Ansār (Helpers) who were abiding in this abode [Madīnah] and adopted *īmān* – I advise him to accept the one who does good from among them, and to overlook the one who does wrong."

I advise him to be good to the Bedouins because they are the origins of the Arabs and the core of Islam. He must take their excess wealth and return it to the poor among them.

I advise him to fulfil the responsibility which he owes to Allāh *ta'ālā* and His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* by fulfilling their covenants. He must not make them bear more than their capacity and he must fight [on their behalf] those who are behind them."[1]

What is harmful to you

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:'

"Stay away from whatever is harmful to you. Adhere to a righteous friend, but rarely will you

[1] طبقات ابن سعد ٣\١٨١.

find such a person. Consult – in your matters – those who fear Allāh *ta'ālā*."[1]

Do not procrastinate

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* thus:

"The power to do work lies in not deferring today's work for tomorrow. If you do this, several tasks will catch up with you and you will not know which one to do. In so doing, you will be wasting away everything. If you are given a choice between two matters, and one is for this world and the other is for the Hereafter, choose the one that is for the Hereafter over the one which is for this world because the world will perish while the Hereafter will remain."

"Be forever vigilant of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Learn the Book of Allāh because it is the fountainhead of knowledge and the spring of the hearts."[2]

Three types of women and three types of men

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Men are of three types, and women are of three types. As for the women, they are:

[1] كنز العمال ١٦\١٥٧ برقم ٤٤١٩٦.

[2] كنز العمال ١٦\١٥٩ برقم ٤٤٢٠٥.

1. A woman who is chaste, submissive, easy going, loving, and fertile. She will support her family by her way of living, but she will not impose her way of living on her family. You will find very few women of this category.

2. A woman who is like a vessel. She can do nothing except produce children.

3. A woman who is of bad character. Allāh *ta'ālā* casts her on whichever of His servants He wills, and removes her whenever He wills.

As for the men, they are:

1. A man who is chaste, easy going and soft. He is a decision maker and a person whose counsel is sought. When any matter comes to him, he will deliberate over it and make his decision appropriately.

2. A man who has no opinion. When a matter descends on him, he consults decision makers and people of good counsel. He then acts on their opinions and counsel.

3. A man who is confused and cut off from everyone. He can neither come to a correct

decision, nor does he follow the advice of a guide.[1]

Bravery and cowardice are natural instincts

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The nobility of a person lies in his piety, religiosity and esteem. His manliness lies in his character."

"Bravery and cowardice are natural instincts in man. A brave man will fight in defence of the one whom he knows and the one whom he does not know. Whereas a coward will even flee from his father and mother."

"Esteem is in wealth."

"Nobility is in piety."

"I am no better than a Persian, Nabatean, nor a non-Arab except on the basis of piety."[2]

Wisdom

'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Wisdom does not come with old age, rather, it is a bestowal of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills."[1]

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٣ برقم ٤٤٣٧٣.

[2] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٤ برقم ٤٤٣٧٧.

Words of wisdom

Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib *rahimahullāh* said: "'Umar ibn al-Khattāb *radiyallāhu 'anhu* laid down eighteen words of wisdom for the people. They are:

1. The best punishment to a person who disobeys Allāh *ta'ālā* in his treatment of you is to obey Allāh *ta'ālā* in your treatment of the person.

2. Think the best of your brother's affair until you receive overwhelming information about him.

3. Do not think evil of any statement made by a Muslim as long as you can find a good meaning to it.

4. The person who presents himself for accusations [by doing things which are blameworthy] should not blame those who think evil of him.

5. The person who conceals his secret will have good in his control.

6. Remain in the constant company of honest friends, and you will remain under their protection. They are embellishments during

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٥ برقم ٤٤٣٨١.

times of prosperity, and means of preparedness at times of adversity.

7. Adhere firmly to honesty even if it kills you.

8. Do not get involved in matters which do not concern you.

9. Do not ask about what is not present because what is present is sufficient to keep you occupied from bothering about what is not present.

10. Do not ask for the fulfilment of your need from a person who does not want you to succeed in fulfilling it.

11. Do not treat false oaths with disdain, or else Allāh *taʿālā* will destroy you.

12. Do not accompany immoral people to learn their immorality.

13. Remain aloof from your enemy.

14. Beware of your friend except the one who is trustworthy. And the only trustworthy person is the one who fears Allāh *taʿālā*.

15. Humble yourself when you are by a grave.

16. Lower yourself when you carry out an act of obedience [do not feel proud about it].

17. Seek protection at the time of sinning.

18. Consult those who fear Allāh *taʿālā* in all your affairs. Allāh *taʿālā* says: "From among His servants, it is those who have understanding that fear Allāh." (Sūrah Fāṭir, 35: 28)[1]

It is a full meal

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not acidify flour because it is a full meal."[2]

Patience or gratitude

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard a man saying: "O Allāh! I seek to spend my life and my wealth for Your cause."

So 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Man should rather remain silent. If he is put through a test, he must be patient. And if he is bestowed with well-being, he must be grateful."[3]

A bounty of Allāh

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* passed by a man who was suffering from leprosy, he was blind, deaf and dumb. So he asked those who were with him:

1كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٢ برقم ٤٤٣٧٢.

2كنز العمال ٣\٧١٥ برقم ٨٥٥١.

3كنز العمال ٣\٧٥١ برقم ٨٦٥٢.

"Do you see any of Allāh's favours on this man?"

They replied: "No."

He said: "Indeed. Don't you see he can pass urine without any hardship and difficulty? His urine passes through easily. This is indeed a favour and bounty of Allāh *taʿālā*."[1]

When Allāh loves a servant

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"O Saʿd! When Allāh loves a servant, He makes him beloved to His creation. You can gauge your position in Allāh's sight by seeing what position you hold among people. Thus, you are in the sight of Allāh as you are in the sight of people."[2]

Obedience to Allāh with regard to a person who disobeys Him

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The best punishment to a person who disobeys Allāh *taʿālā* in his treatment of you is to obey Allāh *taʿālā* in your treatment of the person."[3]

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[1] كنز العمال ٣\٧٥١ برقم ٨٦٥٤.

[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٢٦١، العقد الفريد ٢\١٥٥.

[3] البيان والتبيين ١\٢٦١.

Say: I do not know

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked a man about something, so he replied: "Allāh knows best."

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "We would be most unfortunate if we did not know that Allāh knows best. If any of you does not know the answer to something which he is asked, he must say: I do not know."[1]

Draw out tears

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Draw out excessive tears through pondering and reflecting."[2]

The bravest person

'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

The bravest person is the one who is generous to the one from whom he does not hope for any reward.

The most forbearing person is the one who pardons despite having the power to exact revenge.

The most miserly person is the one who is miserly with Islam.

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[1] البيان والتبيين ١\٢٦١.

[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٢٩٧.

The weakest person is the one who is unable to make *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

How to identify people

Kharshah ibn Abḥur said:

A man testified before ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. So he said to him: "I do not know you, and my not knowing you will not harm you. So bring someone who knows you."

A person who was present there said: "I know him."

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "What do you know about him?"

He replied: "As a just and virtuous man."

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "Is he your closest neighbour whereby you know how he spends his nights and days, his goings and comings?"

He replied: "No."

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "Did you deal with him in any dīnārs and dirhams through which you could gauge his piety?"

He replied: "No."

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٦ برقم ٤٤٣٨٤.

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "Did you go on any journey with him whereby you could gauge his excellent character?"

He replied: "No."

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "You do not know him." He then addressed the man and said: "Bring me someone who knows you."[1]

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[1] كشف الخفاء للعجلوني عند خبر: السفر يسفر عن أخلاق الرجال.

ʿUTHMĀN IBN ʿAFFĀN
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

His life in a few lines

He is ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ ibn Umayyah ibn ʿAbd Shams, Abū ʿAbdillāh al-Qurashī al-Umawī.

He is one of the earliest Muslims and one of the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise.

He undertook both emigrations [to Abyssinia and Madīnah] and was the first to emigrate with his family.

He is the husband of two daughters. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* got him married to his daughter, Ruqayyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā*. She fell ill just before the battle of Badr. So Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked him to remain behind with her so that he could tend to her. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* allotted a share of the booty to him and he received the reward of participating in Badr [although he did not take part in it]. When Ruqayyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* passed away, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* got him married to Umm Kulthūm *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā*. This is why he is given the title of Dhun Nūrayn (the possessor of two lights).

He provided provisions for Jaysh al-ʿUsrah.

He purchased Bi'r Rūmah (a well) and dedicated it for the free use of the Muslims.

When Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* spoke about extending the Musjid [an-Nabawī], 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* bought the adjoining land and attached it to the Musjid.

He renovated the Musjid an-Nabawī during his caliphate.

He brought the people together onto one recitation of the Qur'ān.

He took over the caliphate after ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

He was martyred on 18 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 35 A.H. His caliphate lasted for twelve days short of twelve years. He was eighty two years old at the time.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said with regard to him: "Should I not feel shy of a person when the angels are shy of him?" (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*)

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said with regard to him on the occasion of Jaysh al-ʿUsrah: "Uthmān will not be harmed by whatever he does after this day." (Aḥmad, Tirmidhī)

Piety

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon:

"O people! Fear Allāh *taʿālā* because the fear of Allāh *taʿālā* is a boon. The most intelligent person is the one who subjugates his self, works for what is to come after death, and draws from Allāh's light to help him in the darkness of the grave. A person should fear Allāh *taʿālā* resurrecting him as a blind person [blind to the truth] while he was able to see."

"Know that if Allāh is on a person's side, he has nothing to fear. But if Allāh is against him, who else can he have hope in?"[1]

Preparing for death

Mujāhid *raḥimahullāh* said: 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon:

"O man! You should know that the angel of death who has been appointed over you never leaves you and goes to someone else ever since you came into this world. It is as if he left someone else to come to you and he sought you. You should therefore be on your guard, be prepared for him, and do not be unmindful of him because he is never unmindful of you."

"O man! You should know that if you become unmindful of your self and you do not prepare for it, no one else is going to prepare himself for it. Meeting Allāh *taʿālā* is inevitable. You should take

[1] البداية والنهاية ٧\٢٣٤.

control of your self and do not leave it to anyone else."[1]

How a Muslim looks at this world

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon:

"Allāh *taʿālā* gave you this world so that you may seek the Hereafter through it. He did not give it to you for you to become inclined to it. The Hereafter is eternal. Do not allow the temporary abode to make you reckless and do not let it preoccupy you from the eternal abode. Give preference to the eternal over the temporary. The world is certainly to come to an end, and the destination is certainly to Allāh *taʿālā*."

"Fear Allāh *taʿālā* because fearing Him is a shield against His torment and a means of proximity to Him."

"Beware of the changes in time which Allāh *taʿālā* brings about, cling to the main body of Muslims, and do not fall into partisanship. [Allāh says]:

"Remember the bounty of Allāh upon you when you were enemies of one another, then He cast love in your hearts, now you became brothers by His grace. You were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it. In this way Allāh expounds His verses to you so that you may be guided. There should be among you a group that

[1] البداية والنهاية ٧\٢٣٤.

continually invites towards good, and continually commands good deeds, and forbids evil. And it is they who have reached their goal." (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 103-104)[1]

'Uthmān's raḍiyallāhu 'anhu fear

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If I were made to stand between Paradise and Hell and I did not know to which of the two I am going to be sent, I would rather be reduced to ash before I know to which I am going to be sent."[2]

Looking at the Qur'ān

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I dislike a day coming to me in which I did not look at Allāh's covenant, i.e. the Qur'ān."[3]

A thing which disappears altogether cannot return

Someone asked 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "What stopped you from drinking alcohol during *jāhilīyyah* (pre-Islamic times) when there would have been no blame against you at the time?"

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٧\٢٣٤.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٧٨.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٥٩.

He replied: "I saw it taking away one's intellect completely. And I have not seen anything which disappears completely, returning completely."[1]

The calamity of this *ummah*

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is a calamity for every *ummah*, and a malady for every bounty. The calamity for this *ummah* are the fault-finders and critics. They will display before you what you like, while they will conceal what you dislike. The common people are like ostriches; they will follow the first person [to come to them, without checking his credentials]."[2]

Righteous progeny

When 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* arrived with the news of the conquest of Africa, 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* asked him to address the people. When he completed his speech, 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:[3]

"O people! Get the women married to those who are from their father's and brother's families. I have not seen any son of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq[4]

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[1] العقد الفريد ٦\٣٥٣.

[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٣٧٧.

[3] 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said this out of admiration for 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*.

[4] 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr's mother was Asmā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā*, the daughter of Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*.

radiyallāhu 'anhu having more similarity to him than this [man - 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr]."[1]

The abode of deception

The following is a part of one of 'Uthmān's *radiyallāhu 'anhu* sermons:

"You are in an abode which is constantly changing and moving, and you are living the remainder of your lives. So hasten the remaining portion of your lives with the best which you can do. Death will certainly come to you in the morning or evening. Listen! The world is enwrapped in deception.

"O people! Continue being conscious of your Sustainer and fear the day when no father will be of any avail to his child and no child will be of any avail to his father in any way. Surely the promise of Allāh is true. Let not, then, the life of this world deceive you. And let not the deceitful one deceive you in the name of Allāh." (Sūrah Luqmān, 31: 33)

Take admonition from those who have passed on, then become determined, and do not be heedless. Surely Allāh is not heedless of you. Where are the sons and brothers of the world who lived and inhabited the earth, and were able to enjoy it for a long time? Did the earth not swallow them up?

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[1] البيان والتبيين ١\٤٠٦ و ٢\٩٥.

Cast aside the world as Allāh cast it aside, and seek the Hereafter. Allāh *ta'ālā* sets forth a parable for this world and the abode which is better than it. He says:

"Set forth for them the parable of the worldly life: like water which We sent down from the sky on account of which the vegetation of the earth comes forth mingled with it. The following morning it is reduced to bits flying about in the air. Allāh has power over everything. Wealth and sons are an adornment in the worldly life. Good deeds of lasting merit are better with your Sustainer as a recompense and better as a source of hope." (Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 45-46)[1]

The world is unreliable

'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The world is green and lush, and it has been made appealing to people. Many of them are inclined to it. You should neither incline to it nor rely on it because it cannot be relied upon. You should know that it only leaves the one who leaves it."[2]

Increasing in doing good

'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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[1] تاريخ الطبري ٤\٢٤٣.

[2] تاريخ الطبري ٤\٤٢٢.

"The person who does not increase in doing good one day after the other is actually wilfully preparing for the Hell-fire."[1]

The desire of a sinner

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"An adulteress desires all women to have committed adultery."[2]

A secret

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person conceals a secret, Allāh *ta'ālā* most certainly exposes it on the person facial expressions and the unintentional utterances of his tongue."[3]

If the hearts were pure

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If your hearts were pure, you would not have been satisfied with the Speech of Allāh [the Qur'ān, you would desire reading it all the time]. I dislike a day and night coming to me without having looked into the Qur'ān."[4]

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٢٣ برقم ٤٤٢٥٠.

[2] الاستقامة ٢\٢٥٧.

[3] الاستقامة ١\٣٥٥.

[4] حلية الأولياء ٧\٣٠٠.

Food

Shurahbīl ibn Muslim said:

"'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* used to feed the people with food which is normally eaten by the wealthy and affluent, while he himself would go to his house and eat figs and vinegar."[1]

The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter

When 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* stood at a grave side, he would cry until his beard became wet. Someone asked him: "When Paradise and Hell are mentioned, you do not cry. Yet you cry at this!?"

He said: "Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: 'The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter. If a person passes this stage, what is to come after will be easier. If he does not pass this stage, what is to come after will be more difficult.'"[2]

The cloak of a person's actions

'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

If a man were to go into the deepest recesses of a house and devote himself to doing an act there, people will soon speak about it. Whenever a person does an action, Allāh *ta'ālā* clothes him with the cloak of his action [makes it to be

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٠.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٠.

known] irrespective of whether it is a good action or an evil action."[1]

Enjoining good

'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Enjoin good and prohibit evil before there comes to you a time when evil people are given authority over you. [When that time comes], the good people will supplicate against them [the evil ones in authority] but their supplications will not be answered."[2]

[1] كنز العمال ٣\٦٧٤ برقم ٨٤٢٦.

[2] كنز العمال ٣\٦٨٢ برقم ٨٤٥١.

'ALĪ IBN ABĪ TĀLIB
radiyallāhu 'anhu

His life in a few lines

He is 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, a paternal cousin of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.*

He embraced Islam when he was still a child.

He slept on Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* bed on the night of his emigration.

He took part in all the battles except for Tabūk because Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* asked him to remain behind to take care of his family.

He is one of the ten Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* who were given the glad tidings of Paradise.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* got him married to his daughter, Fātimah *radiyallāhu 'anhā.*

He is the fourth of the *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidīn.*

He carried the flag on the conquest of Khaybar.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* sent him with the beginning section of Sūrah Barā'ah [Sūrah Taubah] to read it to the people when Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* went as the leader of the hajj.

known] irrespective of whether it is a good action or an evil action."[1]

Enjoining good

'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Enjoin good and prohibit evil before there comes to you a time when evil people are given authority over you. [When that time comes], the good people will supplicate against them [the evil ones in authority] but their supplications will not be answered."[2]

[1] كنز العمال ٣\٦٧٤ برقم ٨٤٢٦.

[2] كنز العمال ٣\٦٨٢ برقم ٨٤٥١.

'ALĪ IBN ABĪ ṬĀLIB
radiyallāhu 'anhu

His life in a few lines

He is 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, a paternal cousin of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.*

He embraced Islam when he was still a child.

He slept on Rasūlullāh's *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* bed on the night of his emigration.

He took part in all the battles except for Tabūk because Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* asked him to remain behind to take care of his family.

He is one of the ten Ṣaḥābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* who were given the glad tidings of Paradise.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* got him married to his daughter, Fāṭimah *radiyallāhu 'anhā.*

He is the fourth of the *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidīn.*

He carried the flag on the conquest of Khaybar.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* sent him with the beginning section of Sūrah Barā'ah [Sūrah Taubah] to read it to the people when Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* went as the leader of the ḥajj.

Ibn Muljam stabbed him on Friday 17th of Ramaḍān 40 A.H. and he passed away soon thereafter. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

When Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked him to remain behind on the occasion of Tabūk, ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to him: "Are you going to leave me behind with the women and children!?" Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "Does it not please you to be for me as Hārūn *ʿalayhis salām* was for Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām*? However, there is to be no Prophet after me." (*Bukhārī, Muslim*)

The Companions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

Abū Arākah said: I performed the *fajr ṣalāh* with ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. [After completing the ṣalāh], he turned to his right and remained seated in his place until the sun rose to the extent of a spear. He seemed to be very worried and in pain. He then said:

"I saw the Companions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and I do not see anyone similar to them today. When they used to get up in the morning, they used to be dishevelled, dusty, and pale. Their foreheads were like the knees of a goat [their foreheads had the marks of excessive prostration]. They spent the night in prostration and standing before Allāh *taʿālā* for His pleasure, reciting the Qur'ān, and giving a

rest to their feet and foreheads.[1] When they engaged in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, they would swing from side to side as a tree swings on a windy day. By Allāh, their eyes would flow with tears to the extent of causing their clothes to become wet."

"By Allāh, it seems as if the people[2] spent the night in heedlessness."

He then got up. He was never seen laughing with his mouth open until Ibn Muljam struck him.[3]

The lights of guidance

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Glad tidings to every unknown person. He knows the people but they do not know him. Allāh *taʿālā* knows him with His pleasure. Such people are the lights of guidance through whom Allāh *taʿālā* removes every dark tribulation. Allāh *taʿālā* shall admit them into His mercy. These people are not those who go around publicising everything, nor are they the uncouth show offs."[4]

The rights of an *ʿālim*

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] They would give a rest to their feet by going into prostration, and a rest to their foreheads by standing up.
[2] He is referring to his generation of people, i.e. the Tābiʿīn.
3 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٢ وصفة الصفوة ١\١٧٣.
4 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٣ وصفة الصفوة ١\١٧٠.

"The following are some of the rights of an *ʿālim*: When you go to him, you must offer *salām* specifically to him, and then to those who are present with him. You must sit in front of him. You must neither point at him with your fingers, nor make signs towards him with your eyes. You should not say to him: 'Such and such person said something contrary to what you said.' You should not hold his garment **nor** should you persist in asking him questions. He is like a date palm which is filled with ripe dates, and from which something or the other will continue falling upon you."[1]

A description of this world

Someone asked ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Describe the world to us."

He said: "What can I say about an abode whose beginning is a distress and end is destruction, whose lawful has to be accounted for ar.d whose unlawful would earn punishment, the person who is independent of it is put through tribulations, and the person who hankers after it is left in grief."[2]

Those who truly fear Allāh

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٧٦.
[2] العقد الفريد ٣\١٣٠.

"Listen! Allāh *taʿālā* has devoted and sincere servants. It is as though they have seen the people of Paradise enjoying themselves in it, and the inmates of Hell being punished in it. One is safe from their evils, their hearts are in constant worry, their souls are pure and chaste, and their needs are very little."

"They exercise patience for a few days [of this world] so that they may earn eternal rest and comfort."

"They spend their nights lining their feet in ṣalāh with tears flowing on their cheeks, calling on and beseeching their Lord saying: 'O our Lord! O our Lord!' asking Him to free their hearts."

"And by day, they are *'ulamā'*, forbearing people, obedient and righteous. They look like spears,[1] and when any person looks at them, he says: 'These people are sick', whereas they are not sick. [Or a person] says: 'They are terrorized.' Whereas fear [of Allāh *taʿālā*] has terrorized them."[2]

I hope and I fear

ʿAli *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked a man: "What are you doing?"

He replied: "I hope and I fear."

[1] He compares them to spears because they are so thin.
[2] العقد الفريد ٣\١٣٦ والبداية والنهاية ٨\٧.

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "When a person hopes for something, he seeks its. And when a person fears something, he flees from it."[1]

Seeking forgiveness

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I am astonished at the person who is destroyed whereas salvation was with him."

Someone asked him: "What is the salvation?"

He replied: "Seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*)."[2]

Actions during days of hope

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The world has turned around and announced its departure. The Hereafter has come forward and is on the verge of arriving. Today is the day for the horse to be made lean, and tomorrow is the day of the race."

"Listen! You are in the days of hope, and after it is death. The person who is devoted during the days of his hope before the arrival of his death will benefit from his actions and his death will not harm him."

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[1] العقد الفريد ٣\١٣٧.

[2] العقد الفريد ٣\١٨٣.

"As for the one who was lacking during the days of his hope, his actions would have gone to waste and his death will be to his detriment."

"Listen! Do deeds for Allāh *taʿālā* out of desire for Him just as you do them out of His fear."

"Listen! I have not seen anything like Paradise for which its seeker remains asleep [i.e. he seeks it but does not strive for it]. And I have not seen anything like Hell from which its fleer remains asleep [i.e. he does not want to be cast into it, but he does not do anything to save himself from it]."

"Listen! The person who does not benefit from the truth will be harmed by falsehood. The person who does not remain straight with guidance will go astray through deviation."

"Listen! You have been ordered to depart [towards the Hereafter] and you have been shown your provisions. The things which I fear the most for you are: following your desires, and having long hopes."[1]

Enthusiasm without action

ʿAli *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not be like the person who is not grateful for what he gets and desires more from what remains. He prohibits but does not desist himself.

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\٥٢ والعقد الفريد ٤\٦٥.

He orders people to do what he himself does not do. He loves the righteous but does not do deeds like theirs. He dislikes sinners but is part of them. He dislikes death because of his many sins, yet he does not give them up throughout his life."[1]

The most superior worship

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The most superior worship is silence and waiting for salvation."[2]

The middle way

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon. After praising and thanking Allāh *taʿālā*, he said:

"A person should watch and safeguard his own self. The person who concerns himself about watching others will become preoccupied from striving for Paradise, and the Hell-fire will be before him."

"A person who strives shall be saved. A seeker has hope [of salvation]. A person who falls short [of both] shall go to the Hell-fire. These are three categories of people."

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\١٠١.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٢\١٦٥.

"There are two other categories: (1) an angel who flies with his wings, (2) a Prophet whose hands are held by Allāh. There is no sixth category."

"The right and left are deviated paths. The middle way is the main path – it is the path of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. And on it are the footsteps of prophet-hood."

"Allāh *taʿālā* treated this *ummah* with two medicines, the whip and the sword.[1] The *imām* (leader of the Islamic state) cannot be lenient in these two."

"Keep your houses covered [with curtains and other forms of concealment], reconcile among yourselves, and keep repentance ahead of you."[2]

Humility and pride

A person went beyond the limits in praising ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*, so he said to him:

"I am less than what you say, and more than what is in your self."[3]

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[1] The punishment for breaking the *ḥudūd* laws is either killing or chopping off – and this is by the sword. Or it is whipping, and this is by the whip.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٢\٥٠ والعقد الفريد ٤\٦٢.

[3] البيان والتبيين ٢\٧٧.

The opinion of a senior person

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The opinion of a senior person is more beloved to us than the vigour of a youth."[1]

Do not disparage the world

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard a man speaking ill of the world, so he said to him:

"The world is an honest abode for the person who trusts it, an abode of salvation for the person who understands it, and an abode of independence for the person who takes provision from it."

"The world is the place where Allāh's revelation (*waḥy*) descended, it is the place of prayer for His angels, and the musjid (place of prostration) for His Prophets."

"The world is a place of trade for Allāh's *auliyā'* (close friends) – they profited in this world from His mercy and earned Paradise in it."

"So who can criticize it when it has announced its detachment and proclaimed its separation!?"

"So O you who are disparaging this world and justifying himself! When did the world deceive you? Or when did it do something to you which earned your criticism? Is it by your fathers falling

[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\١٤ والعقد الفريد ٢\٩٦.

in the battlefields, or the resting places of your mothers in the ground?"

"How many did you make ill with your hands, and how many did you make sick with your palms? Who are you going to seek for his cure, and to which doctor are you going to describe his condition? Your medicine will not help him tomorrow, your crying will not be of any use to him, your affection will not save him, and your plea on his behalf will not be accepted."[1]

Do not go to pains to obtain what you do not have

A person invited ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* for a meal, so he said:

"We will accept your invitation provided you do not go to pains to obtain what you do not have, and you do not keep away from us what you have."[2]

Accept wisdom

ʿAli *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Accept wisdom from wherever it comes to you. Wisdom is found in the chest of a hypocrite. It moves around restlessly in his chest until it

[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\١٩٠ والبداية والنهاية ٨\٨.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٢\١٩٧..

comes out and settles down by the person who is eligible for it."[1]

Allāh's mercy

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O people! By Allāh, if you were to yearn like a grief-stricken woman, beseeched Allāh *taʿālā* like a pigeon, raised your voices in supplication like ascetic monks, and then spent your wealth and children for Allāh's sake seeking His proximity, desiring an elevation of your rank in His sight, or the forgiveness of your sins which are recorded by His scribes; then the many rewards which I hope for you would be little, and I would fear His painful punishment on you."

"By Allāh, by Allāh, by Allāh! If your eyes were to tear out of His fear and out of yearning for Him, and then you inhabited this world – this world which is temporary – and you were to spend all your efforts for His great favours which He showered on you by guiding you to Islam, you would not be eligible for His Paradise. Time is not existing by virtue of your deeds. Rather, it is by His mercy that you are shown mercy. The just among you shall proceed to His Paradise. May Allāh *taʿālā* make me and you among His repentant worshippers."[2]

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\٢٨٥.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٣.

What Allāh approves of

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to one of His Prophets saying: 'When the people of a house, abode or village are in a condition which I approve of, and they turn to a condition which I disapprove of, I will certainly convert what they love into what they dislike. When the people of a house, abode or village are in a condition which I disapprove of, and they turn to a condition which I approve of, I will certainly convert what they dislike into what they like."[1]

Remain in the centre

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Remain in the centre of people, and walk to one side."[2]

Recognizing the truth

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The truth cannot be recognized from people. Recognize the truth and you will recognize its people."[3]

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\١٧١.

[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٢٥٦.

[3] البيان والتبيين ٣\٢١١.

Greeting grave dwellers

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* passed by a graveyard, so he said:

"Peace be on you dwellers of desolate abodes and deserted resting places – of believing men and women, and Muslim men and women. You have preceded us, we are to follow you, and we will catch up with you soon."

"O Allāh! Forgive us and them. Pardon us and them through Your pardon."

"All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for making the earth a protection for the living on its surface in their homes, and for the dead in its belly."

"All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* who created you, who will revive you on it [earth], and raise you from it."

"Glad tidings to the one who remembers the abode which he has to return to, who prepares for the accounting of deeds, and is content with what is sufficient."[1]

If the dead could speak

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* entered a graveyard and said:

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٤٨.

O dwellers of these graves! O you who are being tried! O you who are in a desolate place! What can you tell us?

This is what we can tell you:

Your houses have been inhabited [by others].
Your wealth has been distributed.
Your wives have remarried.

This is what we can tell you. Now what can you tell us?

He then said:

I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life. If they were permitted to speak, they would say: 'The best provision [for the Hereafter] is taqwā (piety and fear of Allāh).'"[1]

Supplication and hope

This is one of the duʿā's which ʿAlī raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu used to make:

'O Allāh! My sins cannot harm You, and Your mercy to me cannot reduce You in any way. So pardon me what cannot harm You [my sins] and bestow me what cannot reduce You in any way [Your mercy]."[2]

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٥٥ وكنز العمال ٣\٦٩٧.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٧٤.

A jurist

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Listen! A jurist (*faqīh*), a genuine jurist is the one who does not make people despondent of Allāh's mercy, does not make them feel safe from His punishment, does not give them any concession in disobedience to Allāh *taʿālā*, and does not cast aside the Qur'ān by having an inclination to anything else."

"There is no good in worship which is not accompanied with knowledge. There is no good in knowledge which is not accompanied with understanding. There is no good in recitation which is not accompanied with reflection."[1]

Be concerned about what comes after death

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "I did not benefit from the words of any person after Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as much as I benefited from the words of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib in a letter which he wrote to me. He wrote to me saying:

"A person is disheartened when he misses what he was not supposed to acquire. He is pleased when he gets what he was not supposed to miss. Now let your happiness be over what you acquire for the Hereafter, and let your sorrow be over

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٣ وصفة الصفوة ١\١٧٠. وأخرجه الدارمي برقم ٢٩٧.

what you missed out of the Hereafter. As for whatever you get of this world, do not be too overjoyed by it. And what you do not get of this world, do not be overcome by grief over it. Let your main concern be for what is to come after death."[1]

I cannot discipline you by corrupting myself

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I carried the whip of ʿUmar to you to strike you with it so that you may desist, but you are refusing. I even used a cane but you are not desisting. I see you now want the sword, but I cannot discipline you by corrupting myself [by using a sword on you]."[2]

Become the children of the Hereafter

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon in Kūfah and said in it:

"O people! The things which I fear most for you are high hopes and following of desires. High hopes cause a person to forget the Hereafter. Following desires diverts a person from the truth."

"Listen! The world has turned around and is going back, and the Hereafter is approaching.

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\١٧١.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٣\٣٠١.

Both have children; you should be the children of the Hereafter and not children of this world. Today is the time for action and there is no accounting [of deeds]. Tomorrow will be the accounting [of deeds], and there will be no action."[1]

Intermingle with people verbally

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Intermingle with people verbally and physically, but separate yourself from them with your hearts and actions. A person shall receive what he earned, and on the day of Resurrection, he will be with those whom he loved."[2]

Acceptance of deeds

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Be more particular about the acceptance of your deeds than the actual deeds themselves. No deed is little when it is accompanied by *taqwā*, how can an accepted deed ever be considered to be little!?"[3]

Make the best of an opportunity

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٢ والزهد الكبير برقم ٤٦٣.
[2] الزهد الكبير برقم ١٨٩.
[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨١ وكنز العمال ٣\٦٩٧.

"Make the best of these opportunities because they pass like clouds. Do not look for traces after having missed the opportunity of seeing your actual quest."[1]

Where is Allāh?

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was asked: "Where was our Allāh before He created the heavens and the earth?"

He replied: "How can you assume a place [for Allāh *taʿālā*] when He was existing when there was no place?"[2]

Goodness

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Goodness does not lie in your having a lot of wealth and children. Goodness lies in your having a lot of good deeds, in being very forbearing, and in hastening to the worship of your Allāh. When you do good, thank and praise Allāh *taʿālā*. When you commit a wrong, seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā*."

"There is no good in this world except for one of two people:

[1] العقد الفريد ١\٥٣.
[2] العقد الفريد ٢\٨٥.

1. A person who commits a sin and atones for it through repentance.

2. A person who hastens in doing good deeds.[1]

Remember five things

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Remember five things from me. If you were to mount your camels in their quest, you would emaciate them from the continuous journeys which you would have to undertake.

1. A person should hope from none except Allāh.

2. A person should fear nothing but his sins.

3. An ignorant person should not feel ashamed to ask what he does not know.

4. An *'ālim* should not feel ashamed to say: "I do not know", when he is asked about something which he does not know.

5. Remember that patience is part of *īmān* as important as the head is to the body. And there is no good in a body which does not

[1] الزهد الكبير برقم ٧٠٨ والحلية ١\٧٥.

have a head. There is no *īmān* in the person who has no patience."[1]

Encouragement to work

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who lives off the hands of others [by begging] is like a person who plants a tree on a land which belongs to someone else."[2]

Intelligence and ignorance

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is no wealth which brings back more returns than intelligence, and there is no poverty which is more harmful than ignorance."[3]

His admonition to Kumayl ibn Ziyād

Kumayl ibn Ziyād[4] said: 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib took me by my hands and took me towards one section of the desert. When we reached the desert, he sat down, took a breath and said:

O Kumayl ibn Ziyād! The hearts are like vessels and the best hearts are those which store

[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٢ وصفة الصفوة ١\١٧١ جامع بيان العلم ١\١٠٨.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٧١.

[3] العقد الفريد ٢\١٠٦.

[4] He was one of the companions of 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* who was killed by Ḥajjāj.

knowledge the most. Remember what I am saying to you.

People can be divided into three categories:

1. An *ʿālim rabbānī* (an *ʿālim* who is fully conscious of Allāh *taʿālā*).

2. A student who is on the path of salvation.

3. The riffraff who follow every Tom, Dick and Harry. They are swayed by every wind. They neither illuminate themselves with the light of knowledge, nor do they seek refuge in a firm support [Allāh].

Knowledge is better than wealth because it will safeguard you, whereas you have to safeguard wealth. Knowledge increases with action, while wealth decreases when it is spent. Knowledge is the authority, while wealth is under an authority. The effects of wealth disappear when wealth disappears. Whereas love for an *ʿālim* is an obligation which can be fulfilled through it.

Knowledge earns an *ʿālim* obedience while he is alive, and people speak good about him after his death.

Those who hoarded wealth died even while they were alive. Whereas *ʿulamā'* remain forever – they may have departed [from this world], but their lessons are present in the hearts.

Oh, how sad! There is over here – he pointed to his chest – bearers of knowledge (*ʿulamā'*) who cannot be trusted. They use the *Din* as a tool to acquire this world. They use Allāh's favours on His servants to display their authority, and His proofs in His Book. Or you get those who oppose those who are on the truth. Such a person has no insight, and the first uncertainty to creep into his heart causes him to become doubtful. He is neither on this side nor on that side. Or you get the one who is desirous of pleasures, tightly bound to desires. Or you get the one who is fully engrossed with accumulating wealth and hoarding it. They have nothing whatsoever to do with inviting towards the *Dīn*. In fact, they have a closer resemblance to dumb grazing animals.

This is how knowledge dies with the death of those who bear it. By Allāh, this is how it will happen. The world will not be deprived of a person who stands up for Allāh with absolute proofs so that the proofs and evidences of Allāh are not disproved. Such *ʿulamā'* are very few in number, but of the highest value in Allāh's sight. Allāh *taʿālā* safeguards His proofs through them so that they may convey them and embed them in the hearts of those who are like them. Knowledge reached the essence of the matter through them. They softened of it [knowledge] what the opulent considered to be rugged. They made familiar what the ignorant considered dreadful. They inhabited the world with the bodies of its souls to the highest abodes. They are the true deputies of

Allāh *taʿālā* in His land, and the callers to His *Dīn*. Oh if only I could see them!

I seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā* for myself and for you. You may now get up if you wish."[1]

Pure hearts

Nauf al-Bakālī said:

I saw ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṯālib *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* coming out and looking at the stars. He said:

"O Nauf! Are you sleeping or are you awake?"

I replied: "I am awake, O Amīr al-Mu'minīn!"

He said: "O Nauf! Glad tidings to those who are abstinent in this world, who are desirous of the Hereafter. They are people who made this earth a carpet, its soil a bed, its water a perfume, and the Qur'ān and *duʿā'* as inner and outer garments. In so doing, they considered the world as it was considered by al-Masīḥ [ʿIsā] *ʿalayhis salām*."

"O Nauf! Allāh *taʿālā* addressed ʿIsā saying: 'Instruct the Banī Isrā'īl not to enter any of My houses [*masājid*] except with pure hearts, lowered gazes, and pure hands. This is because I will not accept from any of them or from any of My creation who has any darkness [darkness of sin] in him."

تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٥ وصفة الصفوة ١\١٧٢.

"O Nauf! Do not be a poet, a sergeant, a policeman, a tax collector, nor a tithe collector. Dā'ūd *ʿalayhis salām* stood up at night and said: 'This is a time when anyone who supplicates to Allāh *taʿālā*, his supplication will certainly be accepted unless he is a sergeant, policeman, tax collector, tithe collector, a *ṭunbur* (a long necked stringed instrument resembling a mandolin) player or a drum player."[1]

Fountains of knowledge

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Become fountains of knowledge, glowing lights of the night, wearing worn-out clothes, and having pure hearts. You will be recognized by these qualities in the heavens [by the angels], and you will be remembered by those on earth [by people]."[2]

Piety is a safeguard

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

O servants of Allāh! I advise you with *taqwā* because it is a protection against every deviation and the path to every salvation.

It is as though the souls have left the bodies and the graves have attached themselves to them.

1تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٥.

2تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٣.

Every person among you will welcome a new day without another being subtracted from his lifespan.

I warn you of the *duʿā'* of a servant to his Almighty and all-powerful Allāh. The day when all traces of him [in this world] will be wiped off, his houses will be left deserted, and his children will become orphans. He will then end up in a hole in the ground, his cheek will be soiled, he will neither have a pillow nor a bed.

I ask the Being who promised us Paradise if we obey Him to protect us from His wrath, to keep us away from His torment, and to bestow us with His mercy.

The most eloquent speech is the Book of Allāh.[1]

A messenger who does not knock on the door

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O you who are engrossed in amusement and deceived by his self. It is as though I can see the messenger of your Lord coming to you. He will not knock on your door, you will not be given any cover to conceal yourself, he will not accept anything in exchange from you, he will not take any guarantee from you, he will not show any consideration to you out of mercy for your juniors, and he will not let you go out of respect

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[1] العقد الفريد ٤\٦٥.

for your elders. He will convey you to a dark pit whose sides are desolate and terrifying. He will do to you as he did to past nations and bygone times.

Where is the person who strove and worked hard, who accumulated and counted [the riches which he accumulated], who built and fortified whatever he built, who decorated and upholstered, who was not content with little, and could not enjoy the many things which he possessed?

Where is the one who commandeered the armies and despatched the troops?

They have been reduced to dead bodies beneath the ground. You are also going to drink from their cup and tread their path.[1]

Patience

ʿAli *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Patience is a steed which does not stumble."[2]

Give rest to the hearts

ʿAli *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Keep these hearts in concentration by seeking rare words of wisdom for them because they

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[1] العقد الفريد ٤\٦٤.

[2] الرسالة القشيرية ص١٨٥.

become weary just as the bodies become fatigued."

"The *nafs* is affected by love, clings to comfort, is inclined towards amusement, orders one towards evil, accommodates laziness, desirous of rest, and flees from work. If you compel it, you will straighten it. If you let it free, you will destroy it."[1]

The leaders of people

"The generous ones are the leaders of people in this world. The pious ones are the leaders of people in the Hereafter."[2]

A calamity is a test

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O man! Do not rejoice over wealth, do not grieve over poverty, do not worry over calamity, and do not rejoice over prosperity and ease. This is because gold is tested by fire, and a righteous servant is tested by calamity. You will not acquire what you want unless you cast aside what you desire. You will not reach what you hope for unless you are patient over what you dislike. Spend all your efforts in fulfilling whatever has been made incumbent on you."[3]

1العقد الفريد ٦\٣٩٣.

2الرسالة القشيرية ص١٠٨.

3رسالة المسترشدين للمحاسبي ص٥١.

Be an advisor to your self

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O man! Be an adviser to your self with regard to your wealth and act with it in a manner which you want [others] to act with it after you pass away."[1]

How quick the two will meet!

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If you have turned around and death is coming towards you, how quick the two will meet!"[2]

Abstinence

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Abstinence in its entirety lies between two words in the Qur'ān:

"So that you may not grieve over what has missed you nor be boastful over what He has given you." (Sūrah al-Ḥadīd, 57: 23)

The person who does not grieve over the past and is not boastful over what is to come has held on to abstinence from both sides."[3]

1حاشية رسالة المسترشدين ص٧٦.

2حاشية رسالة المسترشدين ص١١١ عن نهج البلاغة.

3حاشية رسالة المسترشدين ص١٦١.

What should an *ʿālim* speak about

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Speak to people about what they understand. Do you want Allāh *taʿālā* and His Messenger *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to be rejected?"[1]

An inevitable journey

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You are certain to die, you will be resurrected after death, you will be presented with your deeds, and you will be recompensed for them."

"So do not let this worldly life deceive you. It is an abode which is encompassed by calamity, it is known to be temporary, and is described as being treacherous. Whatever is in it is bound to perish, and the people in it experience ups and downs."

"Its conditions do not remain the same, and its inhabitants are never safe from its evil. While its inhabitants are enjoying prosperity and happiness, they are suddenly cast into calamity and deception."

"Conditions are constantly changing and moments are always moving. Life in this world is despicable and comfort in it does not continue forever. Its inhabitants are targets which the

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[1] أخرجه البخاري معلقا في باب ٤٩ من كتاب العلم.

world shoots with its arrows, and breaks them with death. Each person's death is decreed, and each person shall receive his full share in it."

"O servants of Allāh! You and the attractions of the world which you are enjoying are the same as those who have passed on. They had longer lives than you, they were more powerful than you, they inhabited their abodes more than you, and they left behind more traces. Their wealth and riches have become stagnant after they had been vibrant, their bodies have been reduced to bits, their abodes are deserted, and their traces are wiped out."

"Their fortified castles and laid out cushions have been replaced with rocks and stones in graves which are made on deserted fields, whose buildings are strengthened with soil. They are very close to each other, but their inhabitants feel like strangers among people who are lonely and occupied. They do not experience comfort with inhabitants, nor do they interact with each other as neighbours and brothers interact with each other. This, despite the fact that their neighbours are so close to them and their abodes are so near each other."

"How can there be contact between them when severe decomposition has pounded them to dust, and rocks and soil are above them? So they have become dead after they were alive, and are reduced to soil after they had been enjoying a comfortable life."

"Their beloveds had to bear the loss of their departure, they inhabited the soil and departed, and they will not be returning."

"Their return is impossible, their return is impossible.

"Never! It is merely a word which he utters. Behind them is a veil till a day when they shall be raised." (Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 100)

"It is as though you have also become decomposed like them, you are also living a life of solitude in the abode of rest, you have been mortgaged in that resting place, and the place of safekeeping [grave] has embraced you. What will you do when matters come to an end, when the graves are opened, and whatever is in the chests is exposed?"

"You have been made to stand for the accounting of deeds before the Grand King [Allāh *taʿālā*], and so, your hearts are fluttering out of fear over your past sins. All the veils have been lifted from you, and all your faults and secrets have been made bare. It is at this point that:

"every soul will be rewarded with what it earned." (Sūrah al-Mu'min/al-Ghāfir, 40: 17)

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

'so that He may requite the evil doers for what they did and reward those who did good with ultimate good." (Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 31)

He says further:

"The book of records will be placed [before them]. You will then see the sinners afraid of what is written therein, and they will say: 'Woe to us! What is it with this book that it does not leave out anything small or big without having enumerated it?' They will find whatever they did placed before them. Your Sustainer will not wrong anyone." (Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 49)

May Allāh *taʿālā* make me and you among those who practise on His Book and follow His *auliyā'* (close friends) so that He settles me and you in the permanent abode [of Paradise] by His grace, surely He is worthy of all praise, glorious."[1]

His letter to his son, Muḥammad

'Ali *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to his son, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah:

Acquire true understanding of *Dīn* and make yourself accustomed to patience over hardships. Place your trust for all matters in Allāh *taʿālā*. If you do that, you will be entrusting them to a strongly fortified cave and powerful defence.

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1 صفة الصفوة ١\١٦٩-١٧٠ والإحياء ٣\٣٧٩.

Beg solely from Allāh *taʿālā* because bestowing and depriving are solely in His hands.

Always turn to Him for goodness in all matters.

The one who spends his day and night in His worship shall be conveyed to Him even if he is not moving. This is because Allāh *taʿālā* has decreed the destruction of this world and for the Hereafter to be inhabited. If you are able to be totally abstinent in this world, do it.

If you do not accept my advice to you, then know with certainty that you will never reach your goals and you will not live beyond your appointed time because you are treading the path of those before you.

Honour your self by keeping away from every despicable act even if it drives you towards desires. This is because whatever you do for your self will never be replaced. Beware of greed hastening you forward, and saying to yourself: 'I will retract when I am held back.' This is what destroyed those who were before you.

Withhold your tongue because what you lose out from remaining silent is less and easier than what you would obtain had you spoken.

Safeguard what is in your chest by controlling your tongue. Good planning with equity will last longer than a lot which is accompanied with corruption.

Working while living a chaste life is better than wealth which is accompanied by immorality.

A person guards his secret the best, and he may well do things which harm him.

Beware of relying on hopes and wishes because these are the possessions of the foolish, and they will hold you back from the Hereafter and from doing what is best.

A righteous companion is from among the good things of this world. Remain in the company of good people and you will become part of them. Stay aloof from evil people and you will remain far from them.

Do not allow evil thoughts to have the better of you because they will never allow you to reconcile with a friend.

Kindle your heart with etiquette just as fire is kindled with firewood.

Remember: it is ignoble to be ungrateful for a bounty, and unfortunate to be in the company of a foolish person.

Prohibiting the unlawful is an act of honour. The person who is forbearing will lead, and the person who makes an effort to understand will increase his understanding.

Be sincere in giving advice to your brother irrespective of whether it is good or bad.[1]

Do not separate from your brother merely on the basis of doubts, and do not sever ties from him without a reprimand.

Do not recompense a person who brings joy to you by causing him grief.

Sustenance is of two types: sustenance which you seek, and sustenance which seeks you. If you do not go to it, it will come to you.

O my son! Remember: You own nothing of this world except what you set right for your Hereafter. So spend the best of your wealth and do not hoard what does not belong to you. If you are distressed over what slips out of your hands, you should rather be distressed over what did not reach you.

Many a time, a person with eyesight misses his goal, while a blind person sees his rectitude.

A person who follows a middle [balanced] path will not be destroyed. And a person who is abstinent will never experience poverty.

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[1] Advice cannot be bad, but the occasion of advice may entail asking the person to refrain from something which is bad.

Time is treacherous to the person who trusts it, and disgraces the one who honours it.

The peak of *Dīn* is conviction (*yaqīn*), and the best statement is the one which is backed by action.

Ask about who your travelling companion is going to be before you can ask about the path. Ask about who your neighbour is going to be before you look for a house.

Be forbearing to your friend when he does anything to distress you, and accept the apology of the one who apologizes to you.

Defer evil as much as you can because you can hasten it if you wish.

Do not allow your friend to be more desirous of severing ties with you than your desire to maintain ties with him. And do not allow him to cause you more harm than the good you desire for him.

Do not give a woman control over a matter which surpasses her ability. A woman is a sweet basil and not one to be responsible for affairs. This will extend her condition and is more relaxing for her. Lower her gaze by lowering your own gaze, and restrain her by observing *hijāb* yourself. Honour her relatives through whom she gains confidence. If she becomes insolent, she will become wearisome to you.

I ask Allāh *taʿālā* to inspire you with gratitude and rectitude, to give you the strength to do every type of good, and to avert every danger from you through His mercy. May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allāh *taʿālā* be on you.[1]

Man's strength lies with his clan

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The clan of a man is better for him than the man for the clan. If he extends one hand in their defence, they extend several hands in his defence. This is in addition to their love, protection and help. A man will get angry for another man solely on the basis of his lineage.

I will read to you some verses of the Qur'ān in this regard. Allāh *taʿālā* says with regard to Lūṭ *ʿalayhis salām*:

"He said: "If only I had the strength to resist you or that I could take refuge in a powerful support." (Sūrah Hūd, 11: 80)

The "powerful support" which he is referring to is a clan, and he had no clan [in the town where he was].

I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, Allāh *taʿālā* did not send a Prophet after Lūṭ *ʿalayhis salām* without giving

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[1] العقد الفريد ١\١١٥.

him authority among his people, and without having the support of his clan.

Allāh *taʿālā* then speaks about Shuʿayb *ʿalayhis salām* when his people said to him:

"We see that you are a weak person among us. Were it not for your family, we would have certainly stoned you [to death]." (Sūrah Hūd, 11: 91)

He was blind. By Allāh, they feared nothing but his clan.[1]

The best of this *ummah*

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The best of this *ummah* is here: the group which is united – the extremist returns to them, and the succeeding generation attaches itself to them."[2]

Asking anyone apart from Allāh

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* saw a man begging in ʿArafāt. So he struck him on his head with his whip and said:

"Woe to you! How can you ask anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* on a day like this!?"[3]

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\١٩٥.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\١٩٩.

[3] العقد الفريد ٢\٣٣٦.

Words of wisdom

'Alī *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

The one who is forbearing shall lead, and the one who leads, benefits.

The one who is shy is deprived, and the one who is afraid loses out.

The one who seeks leadership has to exercise patience over administration and management.

The one who is vigilant over his own faults is blind to the faults of others.

The one who unsheathes the sword of rebellion shall be killed by it. The one who digs a hole for his brother shall fall into it himself.

The one who forgets his own mistakes considers the mistakes of others to be very serious.

The one who exposes the concealed sins of others shall have the concealed sins of his own house exposed.

The one who treats matters with disdain shall be destroyed.

The one who plunges headlong into dangers is bound to drown.

The one who is self-opinionated shall go astray. The one who considers his intellect to be sufficient is bound to err.

The one who is oppressive towards people becomes despicable in their sight.

The one who engrosses himself excessively in work is bound to become weary.

The one who joins mean people becomes mean in the sight of others. The one who sits in the company of *'ulamā'* is accorded respect.

The one who goes to evil places shall have suspicions levelled against him.

The one who has good character shall have ease in all his affairs.

The one whose speech is good shall have awe before him.

The one who fears Allāh *ta'ālā* is successful.

The one who is led by ignorance shall leave the path of equity and justice.

The one who is mindful of his death shall have few hopes.

'Alī *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* then quoted these couplets:

Cover the faults of your brother, and conceal his sins. Be patient over the false accusations of a

foolish person, and the mishaps of time. Refrain from giving a reply [to accusations] out of courtesy, and leave the one who wronged you to be taken to task by the One [Allāh] who is bound to take him to task."[1]

Distances

Someone asked ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "What is the distance between the east and the west?"

He replied: "The time it takes the sun to move in one day."

He was asked: "What is the distance between the heavens and earth?"

He replied: "The time it takes for a *duʿā'* to be accepted."[2]

Soft in speech

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When a person is soft and lenient in speech, love for him [by people] is inevitable."[3]

The recompense of forbearance

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\٢٤٣.
[2] العقد الفريد ٢\١١٨.
[3] العقد الفريد ٢\١٢٧.

"The first recompense a forbearing person earns for his forbearance is that people support him against the ignorant."[1]

Do not separate from your brother

Do not separate from your brother merely on the basis of doubts, and do not sever ties from him without a reprimand.[2]

A person of bad character

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A jealous person enjoys no rest, a weary person enjoys no brotherhood, and a person of bad character has no one to love him."[3]

Nobility

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"None but a donkey refuses nobility."[4]

His letter to his son, Ḥasan

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to his son Ḥasan *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

O my son! The turning away of the world from me, the approach of the Hereafter to me, and the

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\١٢٩.
[2] العقد الفريد ٢\١٥٢.
[3] العقد الفريد ٢\١٥٨.
[4] العقد الفريد ٢\٢٤٩.

defiance of time against me have made me disinterested in others and caused me to pay attention to what is ahead of me.

But when I became concerned about myself, and not about people, my thoughts proved to be correct, turned me away from my desires, and made clear to me that I should worry about my own self. My thoughts thus conveyed me to seriousness without being tainted by any play and amusement, and towards truth which is not tarnished by falsehood.

O my son! I consider you to be part of me. In fact, you are the whole of me. So much so, that if anything were to afflict you, it would afflict me. If death were to come to you, it would come to me. That is when I felt I should be concerned about you just as I am concerned about my self.

O my son! I wrote this letter to you to express to you through it, that whether I live or die, I advise you to fear Allāh *taʿālā*, to inhabit your heart with His remembrance, and to hold on to His rope. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

"Hold fast to the rope of Allāh altogether and do not sow dissension. Remember the bounty of Allāh upon you when you were enemies of one another, then He cast love in your hearts, now you became brothers by His grace." (Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 103)

My son! Hold on to the rope of Allāh *taʿālā* and you will find no rope stronger than it.

Revive your heart through admonition, illuminate it with wisdom, kill it with abstinence, subdue it with death, strengthen it by remaining independent of people, warn it of the calamities of time and the ups and downs of days and nights, and present to it the stories of past peoples. Walk through their abodes and their relics, see what they did and where they settled. You will find that they moved from the abode of deception and settled in the abode of desolation. My son! In a short while you will become one of them.

So sell your world for the sake of your Hereafter, but do not sell your Hereafter for the sake of your world.

Abstain from making statements on subjects which you have no knowledge and on matters which you are not responsible for.

Enjoin good with your hand and tongue, prohibit evil with your hand and tongue, and remain aloof from the one who commits evil.

Bear adversities for the sake of the truth, and do not let the criticism of anyone stop you from doing what you are doing for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Remember my advice and do not disregard it. There is no good in knowledge which does not benefit.

You cannot do without a good resting place [in the Hereafter] together with sufficient provision to convey you to it. If you can find a poor person to carry your provision for you and who will then give it to you in the Hereafter, then consider him to be a great boon.[1] An insurmountable obstacle lies ahead of you. None will be able to cross it except those who have the lightest load. So search for the best ways and ensure you earn the best reward.

Remember: no wealth can equal Paradise, and there is no poverty worse than the Hell-fire.

May Allāh's peace, mercy and blessings be on you.[2]

People of knowledge

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Seek knowledge and you will be recognized by it. Practise on it and you will be of its people. There will come a time when ninety percent of people will reject the truth. None will be saved from such a time except those who are unknown and

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[1] In other words, spend on the poor and you will be rewarded for it in the Hereafter.

[2] العقد الفريد ٣\١١٤.

unheard of [who remain anonymous]. They are the *imāms* of guidance and the lamps of knowledge."[1]

Three categories of people

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"People can be divided into three categories: (1) An *ʿālim rabbānī* (an *ʿālim* who is fully conscious of Allāh *taʿālā*). (2) A student who is on the path of salvation. (3) The riffraff who follow every Tom, Dick and Harry. They are swayed by every wind."[2]

Two inseparables

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I linked fear with failure, and shyness with deprivation."[3][4]

Admonition at a grave

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad narrates from his father from his grandfather who said: ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* attended a funeral. When the deceased was

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٢.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص٣٣٨.

[3] A person who is fearful of facing difficulties will not succeed, and this will lead to his failure. Modesty which is overpowered by shyness [where the person is too shy to ask] will lead to his deprivation.

[4] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٠٩.

placed in his grave, his family began weeping and crying. So he asked them:

"What are you crying for? By Allāh, if they were to see what their deceased is seeing, it would cause them to forget about their deceased relative. Death most certainly returns to them again and again until it leaves not one of them."

He then stood up and said:

"O servants of Allāh! I advise you to fear Allāh who set forth parables for you, laid down an appointed time for your death, gave you ears which remember what discomforts them, eyes to see what is concealed from them, and hearts to understand what baffles them."

"Allāh *ta'ālā* neither created you in vain nor did He disregard you completely. Instead, He honoured you with countless favours, aided you with the most copious streams, and set aside rewards for you in prosperity and calamity."

"So fear Allāh *ta'ālā*, O servants of Allāh! Be serious in your quest, hasten with good deeds the thing [death] which severs all desires and puts an end to all pleasures. Surely the bounties of this world are temporary, and one is not safe from its misfortunes. It is a deception which comes as a barrier [to the Hereafter]."

"O servants of Allāh! Take admonition from warnings, draw lessons from signs, restrain

yourselves when you are warned, and take benefit from exhortations."

"The claws of death are on the verge of clinging to you, the abode of soil [grave] has embraced you, and the absolute matters – the blowing of the trumpet, the rising from the graves, being driven towards the field of resurrection, and standing before [Allāh *ta'ālā*] for the accounting of deeds - have come upon you suddenly. All this is encompassed by the all-powerful and all-mighty Allāh *ta'ālā*. Every soul has a herder who herds it forward towards the field of resurrection, and a witness who testifies against it.

"The earth will shine with the light of its Lord, the register [of deeds] will be placed, the Prophets and witnesses will be presented, and judgement will be passed on them with equity, and they will not be wronged." (Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 69)

"The lands will tremble on that day, a caller will call out, it will be a day of meeting, when the shank will be exposed, the sun will be in eclipse, wild animals will be assembled, secrets will be exposed, the wretched ones will be destroyed, and the hearts will tremble."

"An assault from Allāh *ta'ālā* will descend on the inmates of Hell, the Hell-fire will appear with a roar and thunder, and with fury and threats. Its fire will be kindled, its heat will intensify, and its hot wind will be spurred on. Its sighs of pain will not cease, and its massive chain links will not

break. The inmates of Hell will have angels who will give them the 'glad tidings' of scalding water and going headlong into the flames of the fire. They will be veiled away from Allāh *taʿālā*, kept away from His *auliyā'* (friends), and they will be proceeding towards the fire."

"O servants of Allāh! Fear Allāh like a person who is on his guard, who is watchful, and is restraining himself. In so doing, he is spurred on in his quest [for Paradise], he saves himself [from the Hell-fire] by fleeing from it, he sends forward [good deeds] for the Hereafter, and gains felicity with his provisions [of good deeds]."

"Allāh is sufficient as an exacter of revenge and a helper. The book [of deeds] is sufficient as a disputant, Paradise is sufficient as a reward, and the Hell-fire is sufficient as a torment and punishment. I seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā* for my self and for you."[1]

Consolation

When ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* consoled any people, he would say:

"If you are going to become worried, it is your relatives who deserve your concern. If you exercise patience, there is certainly a recompense from Allāh *taʿālā* for everything that is taken away. The worst calamity which the Muslims

[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٨٤، وصفة الصفوة ١\١٧١.

suffered was when Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* passed away. You received a great reward."[1]

He used to say:

"Remain patient. A resolute person exercises patience immediately, while a terrified person has to eventually return to patience."[2]

Knowledge and wealth

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Knowledge is better than wealth. You have to safeguard wealth while knowledge safeguards you. Wealth gets used up when it is spent, while knowledge increases when it is spent [passed on to others]. Knowledge is the ruler, while wealth is ruled. The treasurers of wealth are dead even when they are alive, while the *'ulamā'* remain for as long as time remains. They may not be present, but their teachings are found in the hearts of people."[3]

Predestination

A man asked ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "What do you have to say about predestination?"

[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\٢٨٥.

[2] العقد الفريد ٣\٢٦٦.

[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٦٨.

He replied: "Woe to you! Tell me about Allāh's mercy, was it before man's obedience?"

The man: "Yes."

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "This man is now a Muslim, whereas he was an unbeliever just now [when he asked the question about predestination]."

The man: "Is it not by the first will with which Allāh willed me into existence that I stand, sit, hold, stretch out my hand?"

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "You are after the will [of Allāh]. Let me ask you three questions, and if you reply in the negative to any one of them, you will be an unbeliever. If you reply in the affirmative, you will be as you are."

The people who were present stretched out their necks to listen to what he says.

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Tell me about yourself. Did Allāh *taʿālā* create you as you willed or as He willed?"

The man: "He created me as He willed."

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Did Allāh *taʿālā* create you when you willed or when He willed?"

The man: "He created me when He willed."

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "On the day of Resurrection you will go to Him with what you will or with what He wills?"

The man: "With what He wills."

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Go, you have no will of your own."[1]

Those who lag behind in jihād

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon, and the following is a part of it:

"Jihād is one of the gates of Paradise. The person who abandons jihād out of disinterest, Allāh *taʿālā* will cause him to wear the garment of humiliation, cover him with miseries, impose disgrace and degradation upon him, and deprive him of justice. By Allāh, when a nation was attacked in its very homes, it was certainly abased."

"I am astonished at how serious they [the enemy] are despite being on falsehood, and how spineless you are despite being on truth. Disgrace to you when you became a target that is shot at and a booty which is snatched away. You are attacked and you do not retaliate!? Battle is waged against you and you do not respond!? Allāh is being disobeyed and you are pleased with it!?..."

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\٢٠٥.

"O you who only look like men but are not real men! O you who have the brains of children, and the intelligence of [women] who tend to the decorated canopies in weddings..."

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ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered another sermon on the same theme. He said:

"O people who are together physically, but whose desires are different. Your speech would weaken solid rocks [you speak very confidently and bravely], but your actions [are so cowardly] that they cause your enemies to want to attack you."

"When you are sitting in your assemblies, you say: 'We will do this and we will do that.' But when the time comes to fight, you say: 'I am adopting a neutral position [I am not going to fight].' You do not take the call of the one who is calling you seriously, while the heart of your enemy is not resting [they are anxious to go to battle against you]. You are acting like sick people, while they are displaying their bravery."

"You asked me to delay the battle, like a person trying to defer a long debt for an even longer time. It is not possible for a despicable person to repulse an injustice, and the truth can only be achieved through earnestness."

"Is there any other place which you can defend? Is there any other leader after me whom you are going to join in battle?"

"By Allāh, the person whom you deceive [must be really foolish] to be deceived by you. And the person who gains your support will get the support of a defeated sword [you will not be able to benefit him in any way]."

The value of a person

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The value of every person lies in what he excels in."

He also said:

"People are devoted to those who excel, and the value of every person lies in what he excels in. So speak on matters of knowledge and your value will become manifest."[1]

For his own self

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"No person really wrongs another, and no person really harms another because Allāh *taʿālā* says:

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1 جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١/١١٩.

"Whoever did good, it is for his own self. Whoever did evil, it is to his own detriment." (Sūrah Ḥā Mīm Sajdah/Fussilat, 41: 46)[1]

Good fortune

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The good fortune of a person lies in five things:

1. His wife must be in agreement with him.
2. His children must be obedient.
3. His brothers must be pious.
4. His neighbours must be righteous.
5. His sustenance must be in the place where he lives."[2]

The obliteration of knowledge

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Visit each other and discuss Ḥadīth. If you do not do this, your knowledge will be obliterated."[3]

Rare words of wisdom

"Keep these hearts in concentration by seeking rare words of wisdom for them because they

[1] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص٣٣.
[2] تنبيه المغترين ص٤٤.
[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٢١.

become weary just as the bodies become fatigued."[1]

The person who has a family ought to carry it

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* purchased dates for one dirham and carried them in a blanket. So some people said to him: "We will carry it for you, O Amīr al-Mu'minīn!"

He replied: "No, the person who has a family ought to carry it himself."[2]

The most knowledgeable person

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person who has most knowledge of Allāh *taʿālā* is the one who has the most respect for the people of *Lā ilāha illallāh*."[3]

Mortgaged by my actions

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to cry and say:

"The animals, birds and fish are relaxing [without any worry] while I am mortgaged by my actions."[4]

[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٢٦.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٥.
[3] تنبيه الغافلين للشعراني ص٤٧.
[4] تنبيه الغافلين للشعراني ص٥٠.

On the path

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"If you wish to join your two companions [Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*], you must patch your clothes, mend your shoes, curtail your hopes and desires, and eat less than your fill."[1]

Seeking wisdom

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Knowledge is the lost item of a believer, so take it even if it be from the hands of the polytheists. No one should disdain accepting wisdom from the person who heard it."

He also said:

"Wisdom is the lost item of a believer; he seeks it even from the hands of the police."[2]

Patching one's *kurtah*

Someone asked ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Why do you patch your *kurtah*?"

He replied: "The heart is humbled and a believer may emulate this practice."[1]

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين للشعراني ص٨٥.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٢١.

The best Muslim

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The best Muslim is the one who helps his fellow Muslims and is of benefit to them."[2]

Act of kindness

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do good even to the person who does not appreciate it because it will be heavier in the scale [of deeds on the day of Resurrection] than the appreciation you receive for it."[3]

The position of a Muslim towards the end of time

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There will come a time when Muslims will only be able to govern through killing and force. A wealthy person will maintain himself solely through arrogance and miserliness. And the companionship of people will only be maintained by following desires."

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٣.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٤٠.

[3] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٤٠.

"Allāh *taʿālā* will bestow the reward of fifty *ṣiddīqīn* to the person who experiences such a time, exercises patience, and safeguards his self.[1]

He also said:

"We have heard that a believer will enjoy no peace towards the end of time unless he remains an anonymous person among people."[2]

Mutual discussion of knowledge

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"What an excellent person is the one who asks a question, derives benefit [from the answer], and those who are seated with him also benefit."[3]

Tyrannical *ʿulamā'*

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Acquire knowledge and adorn it with tranquillity and forbearance. Humble yourself before those from whom you learn, and before those whom you

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[1] Plural of *ṣiddīq* – translated as "truthful". This is the highest position after prophet-hood. Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was given the title of *ṣiddīq* by Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٥٤.

[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٣٧.

teach. Do not be tyrannical *'ulamā'* because your evil will wipe off your good."[1]

Seeking forgiveness

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I am astonished at the person who is despondent when the salvation is with him."

Someone asked: "What is the salvation?"

He replied: "Abundant seeking of forgiveness."[2]

The paucity of those who disapprove evil

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There will come a time when those who disapprove evil will be less than 10% of the people. The 10% will also disappear and there will be no one left who will disapprove evil."[3]

Etiquette of a person seeking knowledge

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

Some of the rights of an *ʿālim* are:

1. Do not ask him excessive questions.
2. Do not be harsh when replying to him.

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٧٠.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٥٩.

[3] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٦٣.

3. Do not insist on him when he is feeling weary.
4. Do not take hold of his garment when he gets up.
5. Do not expose his secret.
6. Do not backbite about anyone in his presence.
7. Do not look for his faults.
8. Accept his apology if he errs.
9. It is your duty to accord him respect and revere him for Allāh's sake as long as he upholds the orders of Allāh *taʿālā*.
10. Do not sit in front of him.
11. If he has a need, you must be the first among those who are present to serve him."[1]

The laughter of an *ʿālim*

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Acquire knowledge. Once you have acquired it, protect it. Do not mix it with laughter nor with play or else the heart will reject it. When an *ʿālim* laughs just once, he discards a part of knowledge."[2]

Disinterest in knowledge

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٥٦.
[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٧٠.

"People have become disinterested in seeking knowledge after seeing how little those who acquired knowledge benefit from their knowledge."[1]

Knowledge and practice

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O *ʿulamā*'! Practise on your knowledge because a true *ʿālim* is one who acquires knowledge and then practises on it, whose actions are in conformity with his knowledge."

"There will be people who will bear knowledge but it will not go beyond their collarbones. Their inner actions will contradict their outer actions, and their actions will be in conflict with their knowledge. They will sit in circles and boast over each other to the extent that a person will become angry at his companion for leaving him and sitting in the company of another. The actions of such people do not ascend from their assemblies to Allāh *taʿālā*.[2]

Allāh knows best

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"It is so cooling to the heart."

[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٩٧.
[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٩.

Someone asked him: "What is that?"

He replied: "When you do not know about a thing, you say: 'Allāh knows best.'"[1]

Beware of following people

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Beware of following people because a person does a deed of the people of Paradise, he then turns around and does a deed of the inmates of Hell. He passes away [in this state] and becomes of the inmates of Hell. A person does a deed of the inmates of Hell, he then turns around and does a deed of the people of Paradise. He passes away and becomes of the people of Paradise."

"If you have to emulate people, emulate those who have passed away, not those who are alive."[2]

Tillage

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Tillage is of two types: (1) The tillage of this world is wealth and piety. (2) The tillage of the Hereafter are the eternal good deeds. Allāh *ta'ālā* does combine the two for some people."[3]

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١٦.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١٣٩.

[3] البداية والنهاية ٨\٩. وفي كنز العمال: فحرث الدنيا المال والبنون. ١٦\٢٠٦.

Seeking Paradise

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who possesses six qualities would have left no other thing by which he could quest Paradise, and by which he could flee from Hell. They are:

1. He recognizes Allāh *ta'ālā* and obeys him.
2. He recognizes Satan and disobeys him.
3. He recognizes the truth and follows it.
4. He recognizes falsehood and keeps away from it.
5. He recognizes this world and casts it aside.
6. He recognizes the Hereafter and seeks it.[1]

The signs of ostentation

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There are three signs of a show off:

1. He is lethargic when he is alone.
2. He is energetic when he is among people.
3. He does more deeds when he is praised, and less when he is criticized."[2]

Clothing

'Alī ibn Ja'far al-Warrāq said to 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٨٣، والإحياء ٣\٣٧٢.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٨٤.

"Wear good clothes because they are the beauty of men. It is through clothes that they are honoured and accorded respect. Give up humility in your clothes because Allāh *taʿālā* knows fully well what you conceal [Allāh *taʿālā* knows what lies beneath the clothes]. Your worn out clothes will not take you closer to Allāh *taʿālā* while you are a sinful criminal. Your splendid clothes will not harm you if you fear Allāh *taʿālā* and abstain from His prohibitions."[1]

Carrying needs

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A great person will not lose his greatness as long as he carries something to his family."[2]

The intelligent ones are poor

Someone asked ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "How is it the intelligent ones are poor?"

He replied: "The intellect of a person is calculated against his sustenance."[3]

Despondency is the most serious sin

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to a person whose fear led him to despondency because of his many sins:

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\١٢.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٥٨.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٨٠.

"Your losing hope in Allāh's mercy is more serious than your sins."

The world is an immediate presentation

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon. The following is a part of what he said:

"Listen, O people! This world is nothing but something which is presented to a person at present - the obedient and the sinner eat from it. On the other hand, the Hereafter is a true promise in which an all-powerful king [Allāh *taʿālā*] will rule."

"Listen! Satan promises you destitution and orders you to immorality, whereas 'Allāh promises you His forgiveness and bounty. And Allāh is extremely bountiful, all-knowing." (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 268)

"O people! Do good while you are alive, and you will be safeguarded in what is to follow. Allāh promised Paradise to the one who obeys Him, and threatens with the Hell-fire to the one who disobeys Him. It is a fire whose flames do not subside, whose prisoner is not freed, and the one who is broken in it does not regain his strength. Its heat is intense, its pit is deep, and its water is pus. The thing which I fear the most for you is the following of desires and having high hopes. Following desires diverts a person from the truth,

and having high hopes causes him to forget the Hereafter."[1]

Examples of the hearts

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* has a vessel on earth, it is the heart. The most beloved heart in His sight is the heart which is softest, purest, and hardest."

He then explained this as follows:

"Hardest in matters of *Dīn*, purest in conviction, and softest with one's fellow brethren."[2]

Lust and Paradise

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who desires Paradise severs himself from lust in this world."[3]

The one who ought to be humble

Someone said the following couplets to 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

"The one who is sure to die ought to be humble. The minimum food for survival should suffice a person. A person gets up in the morning with

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\٨.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\١٢١.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\١٩٤.

worries and greed which are beyond description. Yet, whatever our Master does is excellent and beautiful. His sustenance will not miss us. O man! You will soon go to a people whose speech is silence [i.e. the deceased ones in the graves]."[1]

A seeker and the one who is sought

'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon. The following is a part of what he said:

"I advise you to fear Allāh *ta'ālā* and to cast aside this world which casts you aside, even if you do not want to cast it aside. This is the same world which wears out your bodies while you want to renew them. The similitude of you and the world is like a group of travellers who followed a path, and they feel they have already traversed it, they come to knowledge and they feel they have already acquired it."

"Many a person continues on his path until he reaches his goal. Many a person thinks he has one more day in this world but death comes upon him suddenly and separates him from it."

"Do not be terrified by the suffering and miseries of this world because they will soon end. Do not rejoice over its possessions and bounties because they are bound to terminate."

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\١٢.

"I am astonished at the person who seeks the world while death seeks him, and the one who is heedless of death while death is not heedless of him."[1]

Relief is near

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When the hearts enfold people, when the wide chests become constricted, when hardships become embedded and difficulties become firmly implanted in them, and you see no way in which the adversity can be removed, and the plans of a resourceful person are of no benefit; then when you have lost all hope, there comes to you the help of the One who is close to you and who responds to your calls. When all difficulties come to an end, they convey one to relief which will arrive very soon."[2]

The harm of governors keeping away from their populace

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The governors' keeping away from their populace is a sign of constriction and ignorance about affairs [of the people]. Their keeping away will cut off from them knowledge of what they kept away from. When this happens, the seniors will become

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٣٨٠.

[2] البداية والنهاية ٨\١١.

weak, the juniors will assume seniority, good will be disliked, evil will be liked, and the truth will become tainted with falsehood."

The governor is merely a human, he does not know what affairs the people conceal from him, and there are no signs on them from which he can distinguish the truth from lies."[1]

Look at what he said

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not look at who said, but look at what he said."[2]

Eternal brotherhood

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Every brotherhood will end except the one which was based on no greed."[3]

Sins and Allāh's mercy

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If a person commits a sin and Allāh *taʿālā* conceals it in this world, then Allāh *taʿālā* is too kind and affectionate to expose it in the Hereafter."

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\٩.

[2] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٩ برقم ٤٤٣٩٧.

[3] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٩ برقم ٤٤٣٩٨.

"If a person commits a sin and is punished for it in this world, Allāh *taʿālā* is too just to punish His servant a second time in the Hereafter."[1]

A balance between fear and hope

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to one of his children:

"O my son! Fear Allāh *taʿālā* in such a manner that you think if you were to go to Him with the good deeds of all the people of this world, He will not accept them from you. And have such hope in Him that you think if you were to go to Him with the evil deeds of all the people of this world, He will forgive you."[2]

Four special times

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"An intelligent person ought to have four special times during the day: (1) a time in which he engages in private conversation with Allāh *taʿālā*, (2) a time in which he takes stock of his self, (3) a time in which he goes to the *'ulamā'* who give him insight and advise him on his religious and worldly matters, (4) a time in which he gives vent to his self (*nafs*) to fulfil its lawful pleasures."

Considering a due to be fulfilled

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٤٣٤.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\١٥.

"By Allāh, a noble person will never consider his due to be less."

The appointed time is a shield

A person said to ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Be on your guard because there is someone who intends killing you."

He replied: "Every person has two angels who protect him against things which he does not have the power to defend himself. But once his destined time arrives, they allow it to come. A person's appointed time is thus a strong shield."[1]

Course clothing

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was reprimanded for his course clothing, so he said: "It is more humbling and more likely that a Muslim will emulate this."

He also said:

"Allāh *taʿālā* ordered the leaders of guidance to be like the lowest of people so that the wealthy may emulate them, and the poor may not scorn their own poverty."[2]

Emulating the clothing of others

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] In other words, it is a protection which safeguards man from being afflicted by anything which would kill him if his appointed time has not arrived as yet.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\١٠٢.

"The person who adopts the clothing of a nation is part of them."[1]

Death and what follows it

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon. He praised and thanked Allāh *taʿālā* and spoke about death. He said:

"O servants of Allāh! There is no escape from death. If you wait for it, it will seize you. If you flee from it, it will catch up with you. So seek salvation, seek salvation. Hasten! Hasten!"

"There is behind you a seeker who is swift: it is the grave. Beware of its pressure, darkness and desolation. Listen! The grave is either a pit of Hell or a garden of Paradise. Listen! It calls out three times every day: 'I am a place of darkness, I am a place of insects, I am a place of desolation.'"

"Listen! After it is a day which would turn young people grey, and intoxicate the seniors.

"every suckling mother will forget her suckling, and every pregnant woman will deliver her burden, and you will see the people intoxicated yet they are not intoxicated, but the punishment of Allāh is severe." (Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 2)

"Listen! After it there is something which is much more severe: it is a fire whose heat is intense,

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\١٠٣.

whose pit is deep, whose rods are of iron, whose water is pus, and whose guard is Mālik – he has no mercy in him for Allāh's sake."

He cried and the Muslims who were around him also cried. He then said:

"Listen! After it is Paradise whose width is equal to the heavens and earth, prepared for the pious. May Allāh *taʿālā* safeguard me and you from the painful punishment."[1]

Giving up enjoining good

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The first thing with regard to jihād which you will be overpowered with is jihād with your hands, then jihād with your tongues, and then jihād with your hearts. Once the heart does not recognize good and does not disapprove evil, it will be turned upside down."[2]

Hastening towards noble character

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I am astonished at a Muslim man to whom his Muslim brother comes for a need but he does not see any good for his self. If he does not hope for reward and does not fear punishment, he should

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\٨.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\١١.

at least hasten towards noble character because it is one of the things which would direct him to the path of salvation."[1]

Enjoining good

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The most superior deeds are: enjoining good, prohibiting evil, and hating a flagrant sinner. The person who enjoins good has actually strengthened a believer, and the one who prohibits evil has actually disgraced a hypocrite."[2]

Intelligence in transactions

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If a trader is not a *faqīh* (well versed with the rules and regulations of trade), he will drown in usury [interest], then drown in it, and continue drowning in it."[3]

The abstinent ones

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The abstinent people in this world made the earth a carpet, the soil a bed, and water a perfume. Listen! The person who yearns the Hereafter extricates himself from all desires. The

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٧١.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين ص٦٥.

[3] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٥٧.

person who fears the Hell-fire desists from all prohibitions. The person who seeks Paradise hastens towards good deeds. The person who is abstinent in this world disregards all calamities."[1]

Four plus four points

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his son, al-Ḥasan, *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"O my son! Remember four plus four points. As long as you have them with you, whatever you do will not harm you."

He said: "O my father! What are they?"

He replied: "Intelligence is the most valuable wealth. Stupidity is the worst poverty. Self-conceit is the most terrifying desolation. Good character is the most honourable form of nobility."

Al-Ḥasan *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "O my father, these are four points, now teach me the other four."

He said: "Beware of befriending a foolish person because he will want to benefit you but will harm you instead. Beware of befriending a liar because he will cause you to attract a distant person and alienate a close person from you. Beware of befriending a miser because he will distance himself from you at a time when you need him

[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\٧.

the most. Beware of befriending an immoral person because he will sell you for the most paltry sum."[1]

Hope without action

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* delivered a sermon saying:

"O people! Do not be a person who hopes for the Hereafter without doing any deeds [for it], and delays repentance because of high hopes. He speaks in this world like an abstinent person but does deeds like one who is desirous [of this world]. When he is given of this world, he is not satiated, and when he is deprived of it, he is not content. He is not grateful for what he receives and desires for more in what remains. He commands [others] but does not practise himself. He prohibits but does not desist himself. He [claims to] love the righteous but does not do deeds like them. He [claims to] detest the wrongdoers while he is with them. His self overpowers him in his assumptions, but he does not overpower it on what he is convinced about."

"When he is wealthy, he is tried by his wealth [into committing evil]. When he falls ill, he becomes grieved. When he becomes poor, he becomes despondent and broken. He is thus dangling between sins and bounties."

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٦ برقم ٤٤٣٨٨.

"When he experiences well-being, he does not express thanks. When he is put through tribulation, he does not exercise patience. It is as though everyone except him is warned about death, and someone else is being threatened and reprimanded."

"O the targets of this world! O you who are mortgaged items of death! O you who are vessels for illnesses! O you who are the booty of days! O you who are burdens of time! O you who are the fruits of time! O you who are the flowers of the ups and downs of time! O you who are dumb when proofs are presented! O you who are submerged by tribulations! O you who are prevented from taking admonition! I am stating a fact: The person who is triumphant does so solely by recognizing his self. The person who is destroyed does so solely by what his own hands earned. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

"O believers! Save yourselves and your family from a fire..." (Sūrah at-Taḥrīm, 66: 6)

"May Allāh *taʿālā* make me and you among those who hear an admonition and accept it, who are called towards action, and they do it."[1]

Calamity and patience

'Ali *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٠٥ برقم ٤٤٢٢٩.

"The person who pretends to be poor becomes poor, the person who is given a long life is put through tribulation, the person who does not prepare for a calamity cannot exercise patience when he experiences a calamity, the person who is given authority becomes monopolizing, the person who does not consult will regret."[1]

Islam in name

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There will soon come a time when nothing of Islam will remain except its name, and nothing of the Qur'ān will remain except its customs."[2]

Congratulations on life after death

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* received news about the death of one of his companions. He then received information that he did not really die. So he wrote to him saying:

"I commence in the name of Allāh, the most beneficent, the most merciful."

"We received information which alarmed your friends. We then received information denying the first information. This really made us happy. But this happiness will soon come to an end because

[1] كنز العمال ١٦\١٩٧.
[2] كنز العمال ١٦\١٩٧.

it will be followed by an affirmation of the first information [because death is bound to come]."

"Now can you be a like a person who saw death and witnessed what is after it, and therefore asked to be returned?! He thus complies with its wishes, is prepared, and welcomes it [the arrival of death]. He conveys his beloved wealth to the abode of his Hereafter, and does not consider any other wealth to be his wealth."

"The night and day are continuously decreasing life-spans, finishing wealth, and completing the lives. They accompanied the ʿĀd and the Thamūd, and many nations between them. They went to their Sustainer and were presented with their deeds before Him. The night and day are fresh and new, the passage of time has not worn them out, they are just as prepared for the future as they had been with the past."

"You are just like your brothers [who passed on]. You are like a body whose strength has dissolved, just the last spark of life remains, waiting for the caller to summon him."

"Seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from being admonished and still displaying shortcomings in this regard."[1]

[1] كنز العمال ١٦\١٩٩ برقم ٤٤٢٢١.

Misfortunes

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Being a good neighbour does not mean you must not harm your neighbour, rather it entails exercising patience over your neighbour's harms."

He said: "The best wealth is the one which protects a person on the day when he will be presented [before Allāh *taʿālā*]."

He said: "Everything has a misfortune: the misfortune of knowledge is forgetfulness, the misfortune of worship is ostentation, the misfortune of intelligence is conceit, the misfortune of nobility is pride, the misfortune of wittiness is arrogance, the misfortune of generosity is extravagance, the misfortune of modesty is weakness, the misfortune of forbearance is humiliation, and the misfortune of suffering is obscenity."[1]

The one who is near and the one who is distant

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person near to you is the one who was brought close to you out of love even though he may be genealogically far from you. The person distant from you is the one who was taken far

[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٠٤ برقم ٤٤٢٢٦.

away from you because of enmity even though he may be genealogically close to you. Listen! There is nothing closer to the body than the hand. But when the hand becomes decayed, it is cut. Once it is cut, it is amputated."[1]

The companionship of the pious

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his son, al-Ḥasan *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"O my son! The peak of *Dīn* lies in remaining in the company of the pious. The perfection of sincerity lies in abstaining from all that is prohibited. The best word is the one which is backed by action. Accept the apology of the one who apologizes to you, and accept pardon from people. Obey your brother even if he disobeys you. Maintain ties with him even if he distances you from himself."[2]

Forbearance

ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Forbearance is an embellishment, loyalty is respectfulness, hastiness is foolishness, travelling weakens a person, sitting in the company of ignoble people is a disgrace, and intermingling

[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٨ برقم ٤٤٣٩٢.

[2] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٩ برقم ٤٤٣٩٩.

with flagrant sinners causes doubts [in one's integrity and character]."[1]

A description of this world

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was asked about this world, so he said: "Should I give you a long or short reply?"

The person said: "A short reply."

He said: "You will have to give an account for the lawful, and you will be punished for the unlawful. So stay away from the lawful because of the lengthy accounting which you will have to give. And stay away from the unlawful because of the lengthy punishment which you will have to suffer."[2]

This world is a corpse

ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"This world is a corpse. The person who desires it will have to bear intermingling with dogs."[3]

Do not leave behind any inheritance

Al-Ḥasan *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* relates: My father said to me:

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[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٦٩ برقم ٤٤٤٠٠.

[2] كنز العمال ٣\٧١٩ برقم ٨٥٦٦.

[3] كنز العمال ٣\٧١٩ برقم ٨٥٦٤.

"O my son! Do not leave behind anything of this world because you will be leaving it behind for one of two persons:

(1) A person who uses it in the obedience of Allāh *taʿālā*. He will be fortunate with what you were unfortunate [because you did not spend it as he did].

(2) A person who uses it in the disobedience of Allāh *taʿālā*. In such a case, you will be assisting him in doing this.

Neither of these two deserve your preference over your own self."[1]

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[1] كنز العمال ٣\٧٢١ برقم ٨٥٧٢.

ABŪ ʿUBAYDAH IBN AL-JARRĀḤ
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

I know what you intend

ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Abū ʿUbaydah[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* when a plague took place:

"A matter has presented itself to me and I cannot do without you in seeing to it. So come quickly to me."

When he read the letter, he said:

"I know very well what the Amīr al-Mu'minīn intends. He wants to keep longer a person who is not destined to remain longer." He wrote the following reply to ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"I know what you intend, so free me from your decision. I am among the Muslim soldiers and I cannot see myself turning away from them."

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[1] He is Abū ʿUbaydah, ʿĀmir ibn ʿAbdillāh ibn al-Jarrāḥ al-Fihrī al-Qurashī. He was given the title of *Amīn hādhihil ummah* (the trustworthy person of this *ummah*). He was one of the ten Companions who was given the glad tidings of Paradise. He embraced Islam at the hands of Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* during the early stages of Islam. He was a man of many merits. He passed away in the plague of ʿAmawās in 18 A.H. at the age of fifty eight years. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

When ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* read his reply, he began crying. Someone asked him: "Has Abū ʿUbaydah passed away?"

He replied: "No. But it is as if he has."[1]

Jeopardy

Abū ʿUbaydah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Jeopardy is when a person commits a sin and does not do a good deed after it until he dies."[2]

The effect of good deeds

Abū ʿUbaydah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Many a person whitens his clothes but soils his religion. Many a person honours his self but is actually disgracing it."

"Ward off old evils with new good deeds. If any of you were to commit as many evils as would fill the area between himself and the heavens, and then he does one good deed, it may well surpass his evils to the extent of burying them completely."[3]

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1 سير أعلام النبلاء ١\١٨.

2 إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٢١.

3 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٠٠.

In his skin

Abū ʿUbaydah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If I know of any person – whether fair or dark complexioned, a free person or a slave, an ineloquent person or an eloquent person – who is superior to me as regards piety (*taqwā*), I would most certainly love to be in his skin."[1]

Like a sparrow

Abū ʿUbaydah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A believer's heart is like a sparrow which flutters countless times in a day."[2]

I wish...

Abū ʿUbaydah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I wish I was a sheep whom my family slaughtered, then ate my meat and made my broth into a curry."[3]

Taking stock of one's self

Abū ʿUbaydah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* led some people in ṣalāh on one occasion. When he completed the ṣalāh, he turned around and said:

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٣٠.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٠٠.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٣٠.

"Satan was with me just now and he made me feel as if I enjoy superiority over others. I will never lead [people in ṣalāh] again."[1]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٩٨.

TALḤAH IBN ʿUBAYDILLĀH
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

Consultation

Talḥah[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not consult a miser with regard to a grant. Do not consult a coward with regard to war. And do not consult a young man with regard to [marrying] a young woman."[2]

Intermingling with people

Talḥah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] He is Talḥah ibn ʿUbaydillāh ibn ʿUthmān al-Qurashī at-Taymī, Abū Muḥammad. He is one of those who was given the glad tidings of Paradise. He embraced Islam during the early stages at the hands of Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He took part in all the battles except for Badr because Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had sent him to make inquiries about the Quraysh together with Saʿīd ibn Zayd. But both received a share of the booty and the reward [of participating in Badr]. He shielded Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with his hand during the battle of Uḥud, and it became paralysed as a result. He is known as Talḥah al-Khayr and Talḥah al-Fayyāḍ because of his generosity and big-heartedness. He was one of the council of six [who were appointed by ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to appoint the next caliph]. He was martyred in the battle of Jamal in 36 A.H. at the age of sixty years. Others say that he was over sixty years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

[2] كنز العمال ٣\٧٩٠ برقم ٨٧٧٣.

"The person who does not want people to know his faults should remain in his house because when a person intermingles with people, his *Dīn* is taken away from him without his even perceiving it.[1]

Generosity and miserliness

Talḥah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"We experience with our wealth what misers experience, but we impose patience on ourselves."[2]

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[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٥٤.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٣٣.

What this means is that a generous person also experiences the desire to hold back his wealth, as is the case with a miser. But a generous person imposes on his self, suppresses his urge to hold back, spends his wealth, and imposes patience on his self. Talḥah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was one of the most generous persons of his time.

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AZ-ZUBAYR IBN AL-ʿAWWĀM
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

The evidence of the Sunnah

Az-Zubayr[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his son:

"Do not dispute with the people with the Qur'ān, because you cannot convince them. You should rather resort to the Sunnah."[2]

Concealed deeds

Az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If any of you is able to have a concealed good deed, he should do so."[3]

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[1] He is az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām ibn Khuwaylid al-Asdī al-Qurashī. His mother is Ṣafīyyah bint 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the paternal aunt of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He embraced Islam in the early stages when he was fifteen years old. He undertook both emigrations, and participated in all the battles. He was given the title of *Ḥawārī Rasūlillāh* (the special disciple of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*). He is one of the those who was give the glad tidings of Paradise. He took part in the battle of Yarmūk. He was one of the council of six [who were appointed by 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to appoint the next caliph].
Ibn Jarmūz killed him treacherously in 36 A.H. when he was over sixty years old. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٢٥٩.
Because the Sunnah clarifies and explains the Qur'ān.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٩.

Advising his son to pay his debts

When the battle of Jamal approached, az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* began advising his son, 'Abdullāh, about his debts. He said to him:

"O my son! If you are unable to pay any of my debts, you must seek the assistance of my master."

'Abdullāh relates: "By Allāh, I did not know who he was referring to. So I asked him: 'O my father! Who is your master?'"

He replied: "Allāh."

'Abdullāh relates: "By Allāh, whenever I experienced any difficulty in paying his debts, I would say: 'O Master of az-Zubayr! Fulfil his debt on his behalf.' And Allāh *taʿālā* would provide the means for its fulfilment on his behalf."[1]

Self-respect and an apology

Asmā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* used to carry date seeds from the property of az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* which was about four kilometres from Madīnah. She used to bring these dates to feed his horses. She relates:

"I returned one day with the dates on my head. I met Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with

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[1] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٣١٢٩.

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[1] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٣١٢٩.

a group of Anṣār. He called me and said: 'Come, come.' He said this so that he could carry me behind him [on his steed]. But I felt shy to travel with the men, and I thought of az-Zubayr's self-respect [jealousy] which surpassed everyone else's. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* realized that I was feeling shy, so he continued on his way. I came to az-Zubayr and related the incident to him. He said:

'By Allāh, your carrying the dates weighed heavier on me[1] than your riding with him."[2]

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[1] This shows his self-respect and high-mindedness. He knew it was not her responsibility to carry the dates but she volunteered to help him because of the difficult conditions under which the Muslims were living in those days. It weighed heavily on him when the other Muslims saw her shabbily dressed and carrying dates on her head. So this statement of his is actually an acknowledgement of her virtue and an effort to set her mind at rest. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with both of them.

[2] متفق عليه (خ٥٢٢٤، م٢١٨٢).

ʿABD AR-RAḤMĀN IBN ʿAUF *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*

Prosperity and poverty

ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAuf[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When we were with Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, we were put through the tribulation of poverty and hardships, but we exercised patience. After he departed, we were tested with prosperity but we could not exercise patience over it."[2]

The reason behind his affluence

Someone asked ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAuf *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "What is the reason behind your affluence?"

He replied: "Three things: (1) I never refused any profit, (2) whenever an animal was sought from

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[1] He is ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAuf az-Zuhrī al-Qurashī. He is one of the early adherents to Islam, he undertook both emigrations and participated in all the battles. He is one of those who was given the glad tidings of Paradise. He was one of the council of six [who were appointed by ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to appoint the next caliph]. He gave half his wealth in charity on more than one occasion. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* offered the second *rak'at* of the *fajr ṣalāh* behind him [i.e. he was the *imām*] on one of his journeys. He passed away in 32 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

[2] أخرجه الترمذي برقم ٢٤٦٤.

me, I did not delay selling it, (3) I never sold on credit."[1]

Humility

People could not distinguish 'Abd ar-Raḥmān when he was among his slaves because he did not adopt a physical appearance different from theirs.[2]

Fearing the hastening of luxuries

'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Auf *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was presented his food one day, so he said:

"Muṣ'ab ibn 'Umayr who was better than me was killed. There was nothing except a sheet to enshroud him. Ḥamzah or someone else who was better than me was killed. There was nothing except a sheet to enshroud him. I fear that the good things have been given to us in this worldly life [and we will have no share of them in the Hereafter]." After saying this, he began to cry.[3]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\١٤٨.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٥٧.
[3] أخرجه البخاري برقم ١٢٧٤.

SA'D IBN ABĪ WAQQĀṢ
raḍiyallāhu 'anhu

Sa'd's advice to his son

Sa'd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to his son:

"O my son! I do not think you will meet anyone after me who will give you better advice than me. When you intend performing ṣalāh, perform an excellent *wuḍū'*, and then perform a ṣalāh which you consider to be the last ṣalāh of your life. Beware of greed because it brings about immediate poverty. Impose despair on yourself because it will bring independence to you. Beware of statements and actions for which you will have to apologize. Do what you feel is best."[1]

Staying aloof from disputes

Someone asked Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Will you not engage in battle, after all, you were from the council of six and you are more eligible for this post [of caliph]?"

He replied: "I will not fight until you bring me a sword which has two eyes, a tongue and two lips, and which can distinguish a believer from an unbeliever. I already participated in jihād and I know what jihād is."[2]

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢٧.
[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٩٥.

It did not reach our religion

There was some ill-feeling between Khālid and Sa'd. A person went to Sa'd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and began speaking ill of Khālid before him. So Sa'd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him:

"Keep quiet! The dispute between us did not reach our religion."[1]

Pride

Sa'd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to his son:

"O my son! Beware of pride. Let your knowledge of what you were and where you are heading to help you to abandon it. How can you have pride when you know of the drop of semen from which you were created, the womb in which you were cast, and the food by which you were nourished!?"[2]

Contentment

Sa'd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to his son:

"O my son! If you want to seek affluence, seek it through contentment because it is a wealth which does not get finished. Beware of greed because it will bring about immediate poverty. Impose despair upon yourself because when you despair

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\١٨٩.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\١٨٥.

of attaining something, Allāh *ta'ālā* will make you independent of it."[1]

Make *du'ā'* which is established

Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* heard one of his nephews saying the *talbiyah* and saying in it: *Labbayk yā dhal-ma'ārij* (here I am, O the one of the ways of ascent)[2]."

So he said to him:

"We know that Allāh *ta'ālā* is the one of the ways of ascent. But this is not how we said the *talbiyah* in the time of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. We used to say: *'Labbayk, Allāhummah labbayk.'"*[3]

Clearing the path at the time of tribulations

Sa'd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked to join in during the days of Mu'āwiyah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* [referring to the conflict between Mu'āwiyah and 'Ali *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā*]. So he said:

"I will only join if you give me a sword which has two eyes that can see, and a tongue which can speak. It must be able to show me an unbeliever

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[1] العقد الفريد ٣\١٦٤.

[2] This refers to the souls of the angels and believers which traverse all the stages of the heavens and eventually climb towards the proximity of Allāh *ta'ālā*. (refer to Sūrah al-Ma'ārij for details).

[3] العقد الفريد ٤\١٩٩.

whom I would kill, and a believer whom I would desist killing."

He also said: "The similitude of me and you is like some people who were travelling on a clear path when they were overcome by a sandstorm. They lost their way and became confused. Some of them said: 'The path is to the right.' They turned to the right, wandered about and got lost.' Others said: 'The path is to the left.' They turned to the left, wandered about and got lost. Others seated their camels and waited until the sandstorm passed. The path became clear to them and they proceeded."[1]

The decree of Allāh is best

Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* went to Makkah. He had lost his eyesight [before this]. [When he arrived in Makkah], people began rushing to him, each one asking him to make *du'ā'* for him, and he would make *du'ā'* for each person. He was a person whose *du'ā'* used to be accepted.

'Abdullāh ibn as-Sā'ib relates: "I was a young man and I also went to him. I introduced myself to him and he recognized me. He said: 'You are the *qāri'* of the people of Makkah?' I replied: 'Yes.'"

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٣٣٤-٣٣٤.

He then related a story, the end of which is: "I said to him: 'O uncle! You are making du'ā' for the people, why don't you make du'ā' for yourself for Allāh ta'ālā to restore your eyesight?'"

'He smiled and said: 'O son! I consider Allāh's decree to be better than my eyesight.'"[1]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٤٨.

SAʿĪD IBN ZAYD
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

The merit of the Saḥābah

Saʿīd ibn Zayd[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard a person vilifying the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*, so he said:

"A single one from among them participating in a battle with Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and getting his face dusty in the process is better than your entire life's deeds even if you

[1] He is Saʿīd ibn Zayd ibn ʿAmr ibn Nufayl al-Qurashī al-ʿAdawīy. He is one of the ten who was given the glad tidings of Paradise. He embraced Islam before ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He was related to ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* as follows: he was his paternal cousin, he was married to ʿUmar's sister, Fāṭimah, and his sister, ʿĀtikah, was married to ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He participated in all the battles except for Badr because Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had sent him and Ṭalḥaḥ *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* to make inquiries about the Quraysh. But Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* allotted a share of the booty for them and the reward [of participating in Badr]. He took part in the siege of Damascus and its conquer. Abū ʿUbayd appointed him as its governor. He was thus the first governor of Damascus. ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* did not include him in the council of six because of his close family ties with him. He passed away in 51 A.H. in Kūfah. Some scholars say that he passed away in Madīnah. He was over 70 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

were to get a life-span as long as Nūḥ *ʿalayhis salām.*"[1]

[1] أخرجه أبو داؤد برقم ٤٦٥٠.

ABŪ DHARR AL-GHIFĀRĪ
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

Provision for the lengthy journey

Sufyān ath-Thaurī *raḥimahullāh* said: Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* stood near the Ka'bah and said:

"O people! I am Jundub al-Ghifārī. Come to a brother who is kind and desires your well-being."

On hearing this, people assembled around him. When they all gathered, he said:

"Tell me, when any of you decides to go on a journey, will he not take provisions which will keep him going and convey him to his destination?"

[1] His name is Jundub ibn Junādah. He embraced Islam in Makkah during the early stages. He was the fourth or fifth person to embrace Islam. He then returned to the land of his people and remained there until Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* emigrated to Madīnah. He emigrated after the battle of the Trench and remained close to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* all the time – when he was at home and when he was on journey. He settled down in Shām until a dispute arose between him and Muʿāwiyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. So 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked him to come to Madīnah. He then settled down in Rabadhah and remained there until his death in 32 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

The people replied: "He will certainly do this." He said: "The journey to the Hereafter is a very long journey. You should therefore take provisions which will be of benefit to you." The people asked: "What are they?" He said: "Perform one ḥajj in preparation for the major events, fast on a hot day in preparation for the day of Resurrection, perform two rakʿats of ṣalāh in the darkness of the night in preparation for the solitude of the grave. Speak good things and remain silent from evil statements. Give in charity in preparation for the major day in which you will stand before Allāh *taʿālā*. Hopefully, you will gain salvation from its severity. Divide your worldly life into two assemblies: (1) in search for *ḥalāl* sustenance, (2) in your quest for the Hereafter. A third assembly will be harmful. Do not intend such an aṣṣembly. Divide your wealth in two: (1) spend one portion on your family and children, (2) make the second a provision for the Hereafter. Any third type will be harmful to you; it will not benefit you, so do not seek it.' He then said at the top of his voice: 'An intense greed which you will never acquire has destroyed you.'"[1]

Solitude

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Remaining in solitude is better than an evil companion, and a righteous companion is better than solitude."[1]

Love for Islam and Muslims

Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Love Islam and Muslims, love the poor, and love the stranger with all your heart."

"Enter into the worries of this world and come out of them with patience."

"Do not consider a person to be safe when he is on good. He may well return to evil and die on evil."

"Do not lose hope in a person who is on evil. He may well return to good and die on good."

"Whatever you know of yourself [your own evils] should cause you to desist from bothering about [the evils] of people."[2]

Partners in wealth

Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There are three partners in one's wealth:

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٢٦١.

[2] الزهد الكبير للبيهقي برقم ٣٦٥.

(1) Destiny. It will not consult you when it wants to take away the good or bad wealth, whether it is by destruction or death.

(2) The inheritor. He is waiting for you to die. He will then take it away while you are despicable [in his eyes].

(3) You are the third partner. Try not to be the weakest of the three because Allāh *taʿālā* says: 'You will never attain piety until you spend of what you love.'[1] Listen, these camels are from among the wealth which I love. So I preferred sending them forward for my self [by giving them in Allāh's cause]."[2]

How excellent these detested things are

Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"They are born to die, they inhabit [homes] which are going to be destroyed, they covet what is going to perish, and they leave what is going to remain. How excellent these detested things are: death and poverty."[3]

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[1] Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 92.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٨، وصفة الصفوة ١\٣٠١.

[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٨.

The doors of the rulers

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not enter the doors of the rulers because they will take away of your *Dīn*[1] far more than what you acquire of their worldly possessions."[2]

A short *duʿā'*

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A short *duʿā'* with piety suffices as much as a little salt suffices food."[3]

A person possessing little will be admired

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said.

"There will come a time when a person of little wealth and family will be admired just as a person with a big family is admired today."[4]

A righteous companion

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A righteous companion is better than solitude, and solitude is better than an evil companion. A person who directs you towards good is better than a person who remains silent. A person who

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[1] Your *Dīnī* loss will be far more than your worldly gain.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٢٢٤.

[3] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٠٢، حلية ١\١٦٤، زهد أحمد ص١٨٢.

[4] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٩.

remains silent is better than a person who directs you towards evil. Entrusting your wealth to a trustworthy person is better than placing it in a locked bag. And placing it in a locked bag is better than having suspicious thoughts [about an unreliable person in whose care you gave your wealth]."[1]

If only you knew

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"By Allāh, if only you knew what I know, you would not engage in conjugal relations with your wives, and you would not get rest on your beds. By Allāh, I wish that when Allāh *taʿālā* created me, He created me into a tree which grows strong and whose fruit is eaten."[2]

Severe accounting of deeds

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person owning two dirhams will be taken to account more severely than the person owning one dirham."[3]

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٠٣.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٩.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٨٤.

My soul is my steed

A person saw Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* trying to make a house, so he asked him: "What are you trying to do, O Abū Dharr?" He replied:

"I am seeking a place in which I can sleep. This soul of mine is my steed, if I am not kind to it, it will not convey me [to my destination]."[1]

The large number of people

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Can you see how the number of people has increased!? There is no good in them except the person who is pious or repentant."[2]

A message

Nāfi' aṭ Ṭāhī relates: "I passed by Abū Dharr, so he asked me: 'From where are you?' I replied: 'I am from Iraq.' He asked: 'Do you know 'Abdullāh ibn 'Āmir?' I replied: 'Yes.' He said:

'He used to study with me and remain in my company. He then sought leadership. When you go to Basra, you must go in front of him so he sees you. He will ask you: 'What do you want?' Say to him: 'I want to speak to you in private.' Then say to him: 'I have been sent to you as a messenger from Abū Dharr. He conveys *salām* to

[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٤٠.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٩.

you and says: 'We eat dates and drink water, and we are living as you are living.'"

'When I went [to Basra], I stood in front of him until he saw me. He asked me: 'What do you want?' I replied: 'I want to speak to you in private.' I then said: 'I have been sent as a messenger to you from Abū Dharr - when I said this, his heart trembled – he conveys *salām* to you and says: 'We eat dates and drink water, and we are living as you are living.'"

"[On hearing this], he loosened his lower garment, covered his head in his pocket, and cried until he filled his pocket with crying."[1]

I fear more

Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah – the governor of Shām – sent 300 dīnārs to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* with a message: "Use it to fulfil your needs."

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

'Take it back to him, could he not find anyone more deceived in Allāh's sight than me?"

'All we need is a shade to shield us, a few goats which come to us in the evening, and a slave

[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٠٢.

woman who is charitable to us with her services. I am fearful of having anything more."[1]

The bridge of Hell

Abū Asmā' ar-Raḥbī said: "I went to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* in Rabadhah. There was a black shabby-looking woman with him. She was neither wearing any coloured clothes nor did she have any effect of perfume on her." He said:

"Do you know what this black woman is asking me to do? She wants me to go to Iraq. If I go to Iraq, the people will incline me towards their material world."

"Whereas my bosom friend [Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] said to me: 'Beyond the bridge of Hell is a slippery path. We will be more likely to be saved from it if we carry a light burden as opposed to carrying a heavy burden.'"[2]

I will never conceal knowledge

A man came to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and said: "The alms collectors of 'Uthmān are committing excesses against us. Can we conceal of our wealth an amount which is equal to their excesses against us?"

1صفة الصفوة ١\٣٠٣.

2تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٦.

he replied: "No. Hold your wealth and say [to them]: Take what is rightfully yours and leave what is not your right.' Whatever extra they take will be placed in your scale on the day of resurrection."

A youngster from the Quraysh was standing near him, and he said: "Did the Amīr al-Mu'minīn not prohibit you from issuing *fatāwā* (plural of *fatwā*)?"

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* replied: "Are you a guardian over me? I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, if you were to place a sword here [he pointed to his neck], and I feel I could utter a word which I heard from Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* before you cut me, I would definitely say it."[1]

Two different eras

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Previously, people were leaves without any thorns. Now they have become thorns without any leaves."[2]

We obey Allāh with regard to him

A person swore Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* so he said to him: "O you! Do not drown by swearing

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1تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٦.

2البيان والتبيين ٢\١٩٧.

us. You should rather leave a place for reconciliation because we will not say in return to a person who disobeys Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to us with anything more than obeying Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to him."[1]

Where are your possessions?

A man went to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and began looking around in his house. He then said to him! O Abū Dharr! "Where are your possessions?"

He replied: "We have a house to which we direct our righteous possessions."

The man said: "You have to have possessions as long as you are living here [in this world]."

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "The owner of the house [Allāh *ta'ālā*] does not permit us to keep anything in it."[2]

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[1] In other words, if he disobeys Allāh *ta'ālā* in his treatment of us, we will respond by obeying Allāh *ta'ālā* in our treatment to him.

العقد الفريد ٢\١٢٤.

[2] What he means is that he sends his "possessions" to the Hereafter because it is the abode which he is really heading towards. As for this world, it is not a permanent place. When a person lives in a temporary abode, he does not have many possessions because he is going to leave it soon.

صفة الصفوة ١\٣٠٣.

It will enslave me

'Uthmān ibn 'Affān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* sent some wealth to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* together with a slave for him. He said to the slave: "If he accepts it from you, you are free."

When the slave went with the wealth to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*, he did not accept it. The slave said to him: "O master! My freedom lies in your accepting this wealth."

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Your freedom may lie in it, but it entails my enslavement."[1]

The day of poverty

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Do you know when will be the day of my poverty? It will be the day when I am placed in my grave."[2]

The good and the bad

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I know people as a veterinarian knows animals. The good people are those who are abstinent. The

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[1] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٤٧.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٣٠٨.

evil ones are those who take of this world more than what suffices him."[1]

My wish

Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I wish I was a tree which grows strong. I wish I was not created."[2]

Making knowledge one's pillow

A man came to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and said: "I want to study but I fear I will waste it and not practise on it."

He said: "It is better for you to make knowledge your pillow [the thing which you rely on] than making ignorance your pillow."[3]

An insurmountable obstacle

Umm Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* complained to Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* about her livelihood. So he said to her:

"O Umm Dharr! There is an insurmountable obstacle before us [the day of Resurrection]. The person who is light [having few worldly

[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٦٩.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٨٢.
[3] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٣٨.

possessions] will pass it easier than the one who is heavy [having many worldly possessions]."[1]

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٨٥.

'ABDULLĀH IBN MAS'ŪD
raḍiyallāhu 'anhu

Accepted deeds

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I would rather know that Allāh *ta'ālā* accepted a deed of mine than having the entire earth filled with gold."[2]

The feast provided by Allāh

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"This Qur'ān is a feast provided by Allāh *ta'ālā*, so whoever is able to learn something from it, he should do so. The house which is most deprived of good is the one in which there is no part of the Qur'ān. A house which has no part of the Qur'ān is like a deserted house which has no inhabitants."

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[1] He is 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd ibn Ghāfil al-Hudhalī, Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān. He is one of the early adherents to Islam. He undertook the second emigration to Abyssinia, returned to Makkah, and then emigrated to Madīnah. He took part in the battle of Badr and the battles after it. He remained in the close companionship of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and was responsible for his shoes. He was an erudite imām, the jurist of this *ummah*, and from among the distinguished *'ulamā'*. He narrated a lot of knowledge. He passed away in Madīnah in 32 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

[2] كنز العمال ٣\٦٩٨ برقم ٨٥٠٠.

"Satan leaves a house in which Sūrah al-Baqarah is heard."

He said:

"These hearts are vessels, so occupy them with the Qur'ān and do not occupy them with anything else."[1]

Knowledge and practice

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Learn knowledge. Then once you have learnt it, practise on it."

He said:

"Destruction to the one who does not know. Had Allāh *ta'ālā* willed, He would have taught him."

"Seven times destruction to the one who knows but does not practise."[2]

Flattery

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person leaves his house while he has his *Dīn* with him. He then returns without having anything with him. He goes to a man – who can neither profit nor loss him or himself in any way –

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١١٩.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١١٩.

takes an oath in Allāh's name and flatters him with numerous qualities. He returns without having any of his needs fulfilled,[1] and Allāh *ta'ālā* is angry with him."[2]

How excellent these detested things are

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"How excellent these detestable things are: death and poverty."

"O servants of Allāh! One either experiences affluence or poverty, and I am not worried about which of the two I am tested with. If it is affluence, it at least gives me an opportunity to show kindness to the poor. If it is poverty, I get an opportunity to exercise patience."[3]

The essence of *īmān*

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person cannot reach the essence of *īmān* until he reaches its peak. And he cannot reach the peak of *īmān* until poverty is more desirous to him than affluence, humility is more desirous to him than honour, and the person who praises him and the one who criticizes him are equal in his eyes."

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[1] In other words, his flattery did not help him in any way and he was not given anything by the person.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٩.

[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٠.

The companions of 'Abdullāh explained the above as follows:

"Until poverty in the lawful is more beloved to him than affluence in the unlawful, humility in the obedience of Allāh *ta'ālā* is more beloved to him than honour acquired from disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*, and the person who praises him and the one who criticizes him in matters of the truth are equal in his eyes."[1]

Affluence

Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Be pleased with what Allāh *ta'ālā* allotted to you and you will be the wealthiest person. Abstain from what Allāh *ta'ālā* made unlawful to you and you will be the most abstentious person. Carry out what Allāh *ta'ālā* made compulsory on you and you will be the most ardent worshipper. Do not complain about the one who is more merciful to you to the one who has no mercy for you. Seek assistance from Allāh *ta'ālā* and you will be from among His choicest servants."[2]

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٩.

[2] رسالة المسترشدين ص٥٣-٥٥.

As you sow so shall you reap

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You are passing the days and nights, your life-spans are shortening, your deeds are recorded, and death will come suddenly."

"The person who sows good may well reap enthusiasm. The person who sows evil may well reap remorse."

"Every planter shall reap similar to what he sowed. The person who is slow will not be able to get his harvest any earlier. The person who is greedy will only get what was destined for him. The person who receives good should know that it is Allāh *ta'ālā* who gave him. The one who is protected against evil should know that it is Allāh *ta'ālā* who protected him."

"The pious ones are the leaders."

"The jurists are guides, and sitting in their assemblies increases [one in knowledge and cognizance]."[1]

Humility

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* abases the person who tries to elevate himself in order to display his greatness.

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠١.

Allāh *ta'ālā* elevates the person who lowers himself out of humility. The person who is a show off in this world, Allāh *ta'ālā* will make a display of him on the day of Resurrection.[1]

Futile talk

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I warn you of your futile talks. A person should confine himself to speaking to the extent that it fulfils his need."[2]

The hearts and kindness

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The hearts are intrinsically made to love those who are kind to them."[3]

Acceptance [of Allāh's decree]

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I do not worry about what condition I see my family in when I return to them – whether it is good, bad or harmful. I never got up in the morning in a condition in which I hoped I was experiencing some other condition."[4]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٨.

[2] حاشية رسالة المسترشدين ص١١٧ نقلا عن الإحياء.

[3] رسالة المسترشدين ص١٨٠.

[4] صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٤.

The choicest ones of this world have departed

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The choicest ones of this world have departed, and the filthy ones have remained. So now, death is a gift for every Muslim."[1]

Holding on to *Dīn*

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I take an oath in the name of the Allāh *ta'ālā* apart from whom there is none worthy of worship, if a person gets up in the morning while holding on to Islam and spends the evening while holding on to Islam, then anything which afflicts him of this world will not harm him."[2]

The peak of *īmān*

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

Īmān ends at abstention. The best part of *Dīn* is when a person is never devoid of the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The person who is pleased with whatever Allāh *ta'ālā* sent from the heavens to the earth will enter Paradise – if Allāh *ta'ālā* wills. If a person truly desires Paradise, he

1 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٠.
2 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٠.

should not fear the criticism of critics for the sake of Allāh *ta'ālā*."[1]

Three qualities for entry into Paradise

Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

If the following three qualities are found in a person, he will enter Paradise:

(1) When he knows Allāh's right over him, he does not delay in carrying it out.

(2) His good deeds in public are the same as they are in privacy.

(3) Whatever deeds he accumulated, they are good and he can hope for their reward."[2]

Those in close proximity to Allāh

A person said in the presence of 'Abdullāh: "I would not like to be of those of the right side. I would rather be of those who are the *muqarrabīn* (those in close proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā*)."

Abdullāh *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "But there is a man here who wishes he is not resurrected after he dies." He was referring to himself.[3]

1 الزهد الكبير برقم ٨٢٦.
2 البيان والتبيين ٣\١٨٢.
3 الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٩٨.

Between Paradise and the Hell-fire

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If I were made to stand between Paradise and the Hell-fire, and I was told: 'We give you the option to choose whichever of the two you want, or you can be reduced to ash", I would prefer being reduced to ash."[1]

Before knowledge is raised

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Acquire knowledge before it is raised."[2]

Doing good to a deceased

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Among the good acts which a living person can do for a person who has passed away is to maintain ties with those whom his father maintained ties."[3]

1تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢١.
2العقد الفريد ٢\٨٣.
3العقد الفريد ٢\١٥٧.

The key to unbelief

Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is never unbelief after prophet-hood, but the key to unbelief is rejection of predestination (*qadr*)."[1]

Moderation in the Sunnah

Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Moderation in the Sunnah is better than *ijtihād* (independent judgement) in *bid'ah* (innovation)."[2]

***Desire* results in grief**

Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The truth is weighty and wholesome. Falsehood is light and contaminated. Many a desire results in lengthy grief."[3]

Abstinence

Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Beware of the malice of the hearts. When you experience any such emotion in your heart, cast it aside."[4]

1العقد الفريد ٢\٢٠٧.
2الإستقامة ١\٢٥٥.
3صفة الصفوة ١\٢٢٠.
4حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٥.

Recognition of good

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who does not enjoin good and does not prohibit evil is destroyed."

He said: "In fact, the person whose heart does not recognize good and does not disapprove of evil is destroyed."[1]

Du'ā' for expansion

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O Allāh! Give me expansion in this world and make me abstinent in it. Do not conceal it from me while making me desirous of it."[2]

Singing and hypocrisy

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Singing sprouts hypocrisy in the heart just as water causes plants to sprout."[3]

What the intellects can comprehend

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person speaks to people about something which their intellects cannot

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1تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٢.
2العقد الفريد ٣\١٨٢.
3الإستقامة ١\٣٠٨.

comprehend, it most certainly becomes a tribulation for some of them."[1]

The illness of the hearts

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You see an unbeliever having the healthiest body but the sickest heart. You meet a believer having the healthiest heart but the sickest body. O servants of Allāh! If your hearts become sick and your bodies are healthy, you will be more despicable in Allāh's sight than dung beetles."[2]

The departure of righteous people

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The righteous people will depart [from this world], and confused people will remain – people who do not recognize what is good, and do not disapprove of evil."[3]

Seeking forgiveness

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There are two verses in the Qur'ān which if a person who commits a sin, reads them and seeks forgiveness from Allāh *ta'ālā*, He will certainly forgive him. [They are]:

1الإستقامة ١\١٦٠، ومقدمة صحيح الإمام مسلم.
2تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٢، وصفة الصفوة ١\١٢٨.
3تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٢.

"Those who, when they commit an open sin or commit an evil to themselves, they remember Allāh and seek forgiveness for their sins. And who is there that forgives sins except Allāh? And they do not persist in what they have done while they know." (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 135)

"Whoever commits a sin or wrongs himself and thereafter seeks forgiveness from Allāh, he shall find Allāh forgiving, merciful."[1] (Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 110)

Knowledge is obtained through learning

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person is not born an *'ālim*; knowledge is obtained through learning."[2]

Let your house suffice you

A person said to 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Advise me."

He replied: "Let your house suffice you [remain confined to your house], withhold your tongue, and cry when you think of your sins."[3]

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[1] العقد الفريد ٣\١٨٥.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\٧٣.

[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٢.

Conviction and contentment

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

Conviction entails some of the following:

(1) You must not please people by earning Allāh's wrath.

(2) You must not thank anyone for Allāh's sustenance.

(3) You must not blame anyone for anything which Allāh *ta'ālā* did not give you.

This is because Allāh's sustenance is not brought by the greed of a greedy person, nor repulsed by the hating of a hateful person. Allāh *ta'ālā* – by virtue of His equity, order, justice and knowledge – has placed joy and happiness in conviction and contentment. And He placed worry and grief in doubt and anger."[1]

Satan and the assemblies of *dhikr*

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Satan encircles those who are in an assembly of *dhikr* in order to corrupt them but he is unable to sow discord among them. He then goes to an assembly where worldly matters are discussed. He sows discord among them until they fight each

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٧.

other. Those who are engaged in *dhikr* go to them, separate them, and they disperse."[1]

O believers!

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You must try to be the one who is addressed. Whenever you hear Allāh *ta'ālā* saying: *"Yā ayyuhal ladhīna āmanū* (O believers!)", then listen to it attentively because He is either ordering you to do a good or prohibiting you from an evil."[2]

The one who reprimands his self

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"People are very good in giving speeches. But the person whose words coincide with his actions is the one who has really got his share of good. As for the one whose words do not coincide with his actions, he is the one who ought to reprimand his self."[3]

Damage to this world

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who seeks this world causes damage to his Hereafter. The person who seeks the Hereafter, causes damage to his worldly life. O

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٩٦.

2تهذيب الحلية ١\١١٩.

3صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٧، وجامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٩.

people! You should rather cause damage to something which is temporary for something which is eternal."[1]

The length of a speech

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Speak to people for as long as they stare at you with their eyes, listen to you with their ears, and watch you with their eyes. Once you see any laxity in them, stop your speech."[2]

Contentment and acceptance

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"It is better for you to bite onto a burning ember until it becomes extinguished than your saying to a decree of Allāh *ta'ālā*: 'If only this did not happen.'"[3]

Equity

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If a person would like to be equitable from his self, he must go to people who like to establish equity."[4]

1تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٤.

2البيان والتبيين ١\١٠٤.

3حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٢٤.

4صفة الصفوة ١\٢٢٠.

Facts and words of wisdom

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

The most truthful speech is the Book of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The most firm bond is a statement of piety.

The best *millah* (community) is the *millah* of Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām*.

The best Sunnah is the Sunnah of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

The best way is the way of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*.

The most honourable speech is the *dhikr* of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The best of stories is the Qur'ān.

The best matters are those with the best consequences. The worst matters are those which are innovated.

That which his little and sufficient is better than what is plentiful but causes heedlessness.

A soul which you rescue is better than leadership which you cannot control.

The worst excuse is the one which is offered at the time of death.

The worst remorse is the remorse on the day of Resurrection.

The worst deviation is the one which comes after guidance.

The best wealth is the wealth [contentment] of the soul.

The best provision is *taqwā* (piety).

The best which is cast into the heart is conviction.

Doubt is a part of *kufr* (unbelief).

The worst blindness is blindness of the heart.

Alcohol is the basis for every evil.

Women are the traps of Satan.

Youth is a part of lunacy.

Wailing [over the deceased] is a practice of *jāhilīyyah* (pre-Islamic era).

There are some people who only attend the *jumu'ah ṣalāh* at its final time, and only remember Allāh *ta'ālā* when they have to.

The most serious mistake is lying.

Being vulgar and abusive to a believer is a flagrant sin, killing him is an act of *kufr*, and the

sanctity of his wealth is like the sanctity of his blood [life].

Allāh *ta'ālā* shall pardon the one who pardons others. Allāh *ta'ālā* shall reward the one who suppresses his anger. Allāh *ta'ālā* shall forgive the one who forgives others.

Allāh *ta'ālā* will give replacement to the person who exercises patience over a calamity.

The worst form of earning is the earning of interest [usury].

The worst food is devouring the wealth of an orphan.

A fortunate person is the one who is admonished by looking at others. An unfortunate person is the one who was unfortunate while in his mother's womb.

An amount with which his soul is content is sufficient for a person. He is surely to go to a place which is just four hand spans [the grave].

An order must be carried out to its end. The peak of an act is its end.

The worst narrations are the false narrations [rumours].

The most honourable death is the death of martyrs.

The person who recognizes a calamity will exercise patience over it. The person who does not recognize it will renounce it.

Allāh *ta'ālā* will abase the person who acts proud.

The person who assumes control of the world, it will outlive him.

The person who obeys Satan disobeys Allāh *ta'ālā*. And Allāh *ta'ālā* shall punish the person who disobeys Him.[1]

The fountains of knowledge

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Become fountains of knowledge, lamps of guidance, adherents to houses, lights of the night, spirited of heart, and clothed in worn out garments. You must be well-known to those in the heavens, but unknown to those on earth."[2]

The comfort of a believer

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is no comfort for a believer before meeting Allāh *ta'ālā*. The person who finds comfort in

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٨، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٢٤.

2 صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٨.

meeting Allāh *ta'ālā* is as though he already acquired it."[1]

Forgetting knowledge

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I consider the reason a person forgets knowledge which he had known is because of a sin which he committed."[2]

Enthusiasm of the hearts

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The hearts experience a desire and enthusiasm. They also experience laxity and disinterest. Make the best of the opportunity when they are desirous and enthusiastic, and leave them when they are lax and disinterested."[3]

Whatever a person has is a loan

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Everyone of you gets up in the morning as a guest, and his wealth as a loan. A guest has to depart, and a loan has to be paid back to its owners."[4]

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٣.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٨.
[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٢.
[4] صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٩، والزهد الكبير برقم ٥٧٩.

Comprehensive words

A person came to 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and said: "O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān! Teach me some words which are comprehensive and beneficial."

He said: "Worship Allāh *ta'ālā* and do not ascribe any partner with Him. Go with the Qur'ān wherever it goes [practise on whatever it says]. If a person presents the truth to you, accept it from him even if he is a distant and detestable person to you. If a person presents falsehood to you, fling it back at him even if he is a close and beloved person to you."[1]

The prison of the tongue

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Calamity is dependent on what you utter."[2]

A man's heart is attached to his treasure

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If any one you is able to place his treasure in the heavens where moths cannot eat it and thieves cannot steal it, he must do that because a man's heart is attached to his treasure."[3]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٤، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٢١.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٢.
[3] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٢٠.

You keep more fasts

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You keep more fasts, perform longer ṣalāhs, and strive more than the Companions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Yet they were better than you!"

The people asked: "Why is that, O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān?"

He replied: "They were more abstinent of this world and more desirous of the Hereafter."[1]

Emulating the dead

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You should not follow a person with regard to your *Dīn* in the sense of believing when he believes and disbelieving when he disbelieves. If you really have to emulate someone, emulate those who have passed away because a living person may well be put through tribulation."[2]

Intermingle with people

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Intermingle with people but distance yourself from them in matters which displease Allāh

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٢٣.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٢٣.

ta'ālā. Join them in whatever they like as long as your *Dīn* is not injured."[1]

Patience and conviction

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Patience is half of *īmān*, and conviction is *īmān* in its entirety."[2]

The bearer of the Qur'ān

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who has the Qur'ān in his bosom must be recognized at night when people are asleep, and during the day when people are not fasting. He must be recognized by his sorrow when people are happy, and by his crying when people are laughing. He must be recognized by his silence when people are engaged in futile conversations. He must be recognized by his humble temperament when people are vexing their pride."

"The bearer of the Qur'ān ought to be one who is constantly crying, concerned, wise, forbearing, knowledgeable, and silent."

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[1] الزهد الكبير برقم ١٨٨.

[2] الزهد الكبير برقم ٩٨٥.

"The bearer of the Qur'ān should not be stern and strict, heedless, boisterous, yelling, and sharp-tongued."[1]

An idle man

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I dislike seeing an idle person – who is neither occupied in matters of this world nor in matters of the Hereafter."[2]

Knocking the door

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"As long as you are in ṣalāh, you are knocking the door of the King. And the one who knocks the door of the King will have it opened to him."[3]

A corpse at night

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I do not want to see any of you behaving like a dead corpse at night, and like a *quṭrub* by day." (A *quṭrub* is a large black ant which spends the entire day collecting seeds, but has very little time to eat them).[4]

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٢.

2الزهد الكبير للبيهقي برقم ٧٧٥.

3صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٨.

4حلية الأولياء ١\١٣٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١١٩.

Knowledge entails fear of Allāh

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Knowledge is not based on excessive narration, rather it entails fear [of Allāh *ta'ālā*]."[1]

He said:

"The fear of Allāh is sufficient to render a person knowledgeable. Arrogance before Allāh is sufficient to render a person ignorant."[2]

They are two

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"They are just two: the way and the speech.

The most superior speech is the speech of Allāh [Qur'ān]. The most superior way is the way of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The worst of matters are those which are newly introduced [in Islam], and every newly introduced matter is a *bid'ah* (innovation)."

"Do not think you have a lot of time, and do not allow wishes to make you heedless. Surely every thing which is to come is near. And what is far is not going to come."

1حلية الأولياء ١\١٣١، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١١٩.

2إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٢٠٢.

Listen! An unfortunate person is the one who was unfortunate while in his mother's womb. A fortunate person is the one who is admonished by looking at others."

"Listen! Killing a Muslim is an act of *kufr*, and being vulgar to him is a flagrant sin. It is not permissible for a Muslim to sever ties from his brother for more than three days. He must greet him when he meets him, accept his invitation when he invites him, and visit him when he falls ill."

"Listen! False narrations are the worst narrations. Neither joking nor seriousness are acceptable in lying. A man may not promise his child something and then not give it to him [because this is also a lie]. Listen! Lies leads to immorality, and immorality leads to the Hell-fire."

"Truth leads towards obedience and obedience leads to Paradise. Listen! A truthful person is referred to as 'an honest and righteous person', while an immoral person is referred to as 'a liar and depraved person'."

"Listen! Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* related to us that a person speaks the truth until he is recorded by Allāh *taʿālā* as a *ṣiddīq* (a trustworthy person), and he lies until he is recorded by Allāh *taʿālā* as a liar."

"Listen! Do you want to know what is lying and slandering?"

He was asked: "What is it?"

He replied: "It entails carrying tales which sow discord among people."[1]

Supporting an oppressor

Abdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person who supports an oppressor in his oppression or provides him with proof with which he forfeits the right of a Muslim has certainly earned the wrath of Allāh *taʿālā*."[2]

A description of the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*

Abdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The Companions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* wore more coarse clothing than you but their hearts were softer. There will come a time when people will wear fine clothing but their hearts will be coarse and hard."[3]

Where should one's treasure be stored?

Abdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was asked about who an intelligent person is. He replied:

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1 صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٥، وأخرجه ابن ماجه مرفوعا برقم ٤٦.

2 تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص٣٣.

3 تنبيه المغترين ص٨٥.

"He is the one who stores his wealth in a place where moths cannot eat it and thieves cannot have access to it." That is, with Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

The position of knowledge

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Acquire knowledge before it is raised, and it will be raised by the death of those who convey knowledge [the *ʿulamā'*]. By Allāh, people who were killed in Allāh's cause as martyrs will desire to be resurrected as *ʿulamā'* when they see the honour which is bestowed to the *ʿulamā'*. No one was born an *ʿālim*; knowledge is acquired through learning."[2]

The Qur'ān was revealed so that it may be practised upon

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The Qur'ān was revealed so that it may be practised upon. But you consider mere study of it to be practice. There will come a time when people will master it like spears, they are not the best of you. An *ʿālim* who does not practise [on his knowledge] is like a sick person prescribing medication, and like a hungry person describing delicious foods which he cannot have. Allāh *taʿālā*

[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٣٧.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٥.

says: 'Woe to you for all that you attribute.' (Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 18)[1]

Love of a companion

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When you remain in a person's company, do not ask him about his love for you. Rather, look at how your heart feels for him because his feelings for you are exactly the same as yours for him."[2]

Death is behind him

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I am astonished at a person who laughs when the Hell-fire is behind him, and at a happy person when death is behind him."[3]

The gift of death

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The choicest ones of this world have departed, and the filthy ones have remained. So now, death is a gift for every Muslim."[4]

[1] إحياء علو الدين ١\٨٥.
[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص٢٥.
[3] تنبيه المغترين ص٢٦.
[4] تنبيه المغترين ص٢٧.

"He is the one who stores his wealth in a place where moths cannot eat it and thieves cannot have access to it." That is, with Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

The position of knowledge

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Acquire knowledge before it is raised, and it will be raised by the death of those who convey knowledge [the *ʿulamā'*]. By Allāh, people who were killed in Allāh's cause as martyrs will desire to be resurrected as *ʿulamā'* when they see the honour which is bestowed to the *ʿulamā'*. No one was born an *ʿālim*; knowledge is acquired through learning."[2]

The Qur'ān was revealed so that it may be practised upon

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The Qur'ān was revealed so that it may be practised upon. But you consider mere study of it to be practice. There will come a time when people will master it like spears, they are not the best of you. An *ʿālim* who does not practise [on his knowledge] is like a sick person prescribing medication, and like a hungry person describing delicious foods which he cannot have. Allāh *taʿālā* says: 'Woe to you for all that you attribute.' (Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 18)[1]

Love of a companion

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When you remain in a person's company, do not ask him about his love for you. Rather, look at how your heart feels for him because his feelings for you are exactly the same as yours for him."[2]

Death is behind him

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I am astonished at a person who laughs when the Hell-fire is behind him, and at a happy person when death is behind him."[3]

The gift of death

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The choicest ones of this world have departed, and the filthy ones have remained. So now, death is a gift for every Muslim."[4]

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[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٣٧.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٥.

[1] إحياء علو الدين ١\٨٥.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص٢٥.

[3] تنبيه المغترين ص٢٦.

[4] تنبيه المغترين ص٢٧.

Knowledge not for Allāh's sake

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There will come a time when the sweetness of the hearts will become salty. When such a time comes, neither the *ʿālim* nor the student will benefit from knowledge. The hearts of their *ʿulamā'* will be like salt pans [which are unsuitable for agriculture] – rain will fall on these lands but there will be no sweetness in them. This will happen when the hearts of the *ʿulamā'* become inclined towards love of the world and giving preference to it over the Hereafter. At such a time, Allāh *taʿālā* will snatch away the fountains of wisdom, and the lamps of guidance will be extinguished from their hearts. When you meet an *ʿālim*, he will inform you verbally that he fears Allāh *taʿālā*, whereas immorality will be clearly visible from his actions. The tongues will be very fertile on that day [making verbal claims], but the hearts will be barren and infertile."

"I take an oath in the name of Allāh *taʿālā* apart from whom there is none worthy of worship, all this occurred solely because the teachers did not teach for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*, and the students did not study for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*."[1]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٨٤.

Issuing *fatāwā*

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person who issues *fatwā* to the people on every issue which they ask him is certainly mad."

He also said: "The shield of an *ʿālim* is the statement: *'Lā adrī* – I do not know.' If the arrow misses him, it will strike his adversary."[1]

Differences in eras

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Good guidance in the latter days is better than carrying out many actions."

He also said: "At present you are in an era in which the best of you is the one who hastens in matters. There will come a time wherein the best of you will be the one who remains cautious and careful because of many doubts."

He also said: "At present you are in an era in which whims and fancies are subservient to knowledge. There will come a time when knowledge will be subservient to whims and fancies."[2]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٩١.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٠٥.

An *ʿālim*, a student, and an ignoramus

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You should go in the morning either as an *ʿālim* or a student, and not between the two because between the two is an ignoramus (*jāhil*). The angels spread out their wings for the one who leaves in the morning in quest of knowledge. They do this to demonstrate their pleasure at what he is doing."[1]

Wisdom and mercy

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"What an excellent assembly is the one in which wisdom is spread and in which mercy is hoped for."[2]

Going to a ruler

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person goes to the ruler while his *Dīn* is intact, but when he leaves, he has lost his *Dīn*."

Someone asked him: "Why is that?'

He replied: "Because he pleases the ruler by earning Allāh's wrath."[1]

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٣٥.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٦٠.

Death is better

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Death is best for every soul, irrespective of whether it is an obedient soul or an immoral soul. If it is an obedient soul, Allāh *taʿālā* says with regard to it: 'What Allāh has in store is best for the obedient.'[2] If it is an immoral soul, Allāh *taʿālā* says with regard to it: 'We give them respite so that they may increase in their sin, and for them is a humiliating punishment.'[3]"[4]

Imprisoning the tongue

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I take an oath in the name of Allāh apart from whom there is none worthy of worship, there is nothing more in need of a lengthy imprisonment than the tongue."

He also said: "O tongue! Speak good and you will gain. Abstain from speaking evil and you will be safe [from harm] before there comes a time when you will have to regret."[5]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٢٢٤.

[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 198.

[3] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 178.

[4] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص٢٥.

[5] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٢٥١، ٢٥٢.

A little which suffices you

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"An angel announces every single day: 'O man! A little which suffices you is better than a lot which causes you to transgress [the laws of Allāh *taʿālā*]."[1]

Humility and arrogance

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person who lowers himself out of humility, Allāh *taʿālā* will elevate him on the day of Resurrection. The person who elevates himself out of arrogance, Allāh *taʿālā* will abase him on the day of Resurrection."[2]

That is his share

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard a man saying: "I read Sūrah al-Baqarah last night." So he said: "That is his share of it."[3] (This means: his share of it is his informing people of his action, it entails ostentation which obliterates one's good deeds).

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٤.
[2] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٤٣.
[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٩٨.

Despair and self-conceit

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Destruction lies in two things: despair and self-conceit."[1]

The students of knowledge

When ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to see youngsters seeking knowledge, he would say: "Welcome to the fountains of wisdom, the lamps of the darkness – they are wearing worn-out garments, they have energetic hearts, they confine themselves to their houses, and they are the pride of every tribe."[2]

Knowledge is a ṣalāh

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A *faqīh* (jurist) is always in ṣalāh."

Some people asked: "How is he in ṣalāh?"

He replied: "The remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* is on his heart and tongue."[3]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٧٦.
[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٦٢.
[3] جامعا بيان العلم وفضله ١\٦٣.

Īmān is made of two halves

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"*Īmān* is made of two halves: half of it is patience, and the other half is gratitude."[1]

Points about ḥajj

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"In the latter eras, there will be many pilgrims performing ḥajj without any real reason, travelling will be easy for them, and sustenance will be laid out to them. They will return deprived and dispossessed. A person's camel will tumble with him among the sands and wastelands, while his neighbour will be entrapped at his side, not even bothering about him."[2]

The door of repentance is never shut

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Paradise has eight doors, each of which are open and shut, except for the door of repentance. An angel is appointed to guard this door, and it is never shut."[3]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٣١٦.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٢٢٥.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٢٤٩.

Three absolute facts, and one more

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There are three points which are absolute facts:

1. When Allāh *taʿālā* befriends someone in this world, He will never befriend someone else on the day of Resurrection.

2. The person who has a share of Islam can never be compared to the one who has no share of Islam.

3. A person will be with the one he loved.

There is a fourth point, and I will be correct in taking an oath on it: When Allāh *taʿālā* conceals a person's sin in this world, He will most certainly conceal it in the Hereafter."[1]

The doors of the rulers

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There are trials and tribulations at the doors of the rulers like the kneeling places of camels. I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, whatever you acquire of their material world, they will acquire an equal amount or double of it of your *Dīn*."[2]

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٤٦.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٢٠٢.

Receiving knowledge from seniors

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"People will always remain on righteousness as long as knowledge comes to them from the Companions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and their elders. When knowledge comes from their juniors, they will be destroyed."

He also said:

"You will always remain on righteousness as long as knowledge remains among your elders. Once it goes to the juniors, they will consider the elders to be foolish."[1]

A sign of Allāh's love

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person should not ask about his self except through the Qur'ān. If he loves the Qur'ān, he loves Allāh *taʿālā*. If he does not love the Qur'ān, he does not love Allāh *taʿālā*."[2]

Protection of knowledge

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Had the *'ulamā'* safeguarded knowledge and conveyed it to its rightful recipients, they would

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٩٢.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٢٧.

have led the people of their time through it. But *they* conveyed it to the materialistic people of this *world* so that they could get something of their *worldly* possessions. In so doing, they have become despicable in their eyes."[1]

Acceptance and *īmān*

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I would rather place an ember in my mouth which would burn as much as it likes and leave behind as much as it likes than saying with regard to something which took place: 'I wish it did not happen', or with regard to something which did not take place: 'I wish it happened'."[2]

Poverty and affluence are two steeds

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Poverty and affluence are two steeds and I do not worry about which of the two I have to ride. If it is poverty, I will exercise patience. If it is affluence, I will spend [in Allāh's cause]."[3]

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٦٥.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٤٣.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٤٧.

The best speech

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The best speech is the Book of Allāh, the best way is the way of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the worst matters are those which are newly innovated, the thing [Resurrection] which you have been promised is certainly going to come and you will not be able to escape it."[1]

Accepting evil

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person keeps away from evil but he has to bear its burden similar to the person who commits it."

He was asked: "How is that?"

He replied: "When he hears about it, he accepts it."[2]

He also said:

"If a person sees an evil which he cannot change, he will be absolved from accountability provided Allāh *taʿālā* knows that he does not approve of it."[3]

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٢٢١.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٥٠.

[3] تنبيه الغافلين ص٧١.

The disappearance of jurists

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The next era will always be worse than the previous one. I am not referring to one leader being better than the other, or one year of drought being worse than another year. Rather, I am referring to your jurists departing from this world. You will not find anyone to replace them, and such people will come who will analyze matters on the basis of their opinions."[1]

Allāh has a need in it

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The similitude of man is like an item which is thrown between Allāh and Satan. If Allāh has any need for it, He will take it away from Satan. If He does not have any need for it, He will allow Satan to take it."[2]

An abode for a person who has no abode

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The world is an abode for a person who has no abode, and wealth for a person who has no

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١٦٥.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٩٤.

wealth. The person who has no intellect accumulates for this world."[1]

The hearts are vessels

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"These hearts are vessels, so occupy them with the Qur'ān and do not occupy them with anything else."[2]

Appearance of righteous people

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Be particular about adopting the appearance of righteous people."[3]

Manners

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Every teacher of manners would like his manners to be adopted. The mannerisms of Allāh *taʿālā* are the Qur'ān."[4]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٠.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠١.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠١.

[4] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٣.

ʿAMMĀR IBN YĀSIR
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

He has combined the qualities of *īmān*

ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If a person possesses three qualities, he would have combined the qualities of *īmān*. They are: (1) Justice from within his self. (2) Offering *salām* in abundance to an *ʿālim*. (3) Spending [in Allāh's cause] despite stinginess."[2]

Death suffices as an admonisher

ʿAmmār *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Death suffices as an admonisher, conviction is sufficient to provide contentment, and worship is sufficient to keep one preoccupied."[3]

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[1] ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was one of the early adherents to Islam. His parents also accepted Islam during the early stages and they died under persecution in Makkah. ʿAmmār *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* emigrated to Madīnah and took part in all the battles. He was among ʿAlī's *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* supporters in the dispute between him and Muʿāwiyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He was martyred in the battle of Ṣiffīn in 37 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had said to him: "A rebellious group will kill you." He was 93 years old at the time of his demise.

[2] أخرجه البخاري تعليقا في كتاب الإيمان، باب (٢٠).

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢١٩.

reaching its pit. By Allāh, it will still be filled. Are you astonished at this!?

We have been informed that the distance between one leaf of a door and the other leaf is a distance of a journey of forty years, yet there will come a time when it will be filled with a crowd of people.

I was one of seven people with Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when we had no food except leaves of trees. The corners of our mouths became ulcerated. I took a sheet, tore it in half and gave one half to Saʿd ibn Mālik.[1] I used one half as a lower garment, and he used the other half as a lower garment. Now, almost every one of us has become a governor over one of the cities.

I seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from considering myself to be great while I am insignificant in Allāh's eyes.

There was always succession in prophet-hood. This continued [until the demise of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*], and it ended in kingship. You will see and experience rulers and governors after us.[2]

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[1] He is Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

[2] أخرجه مسلم برقم ٢٩٦٧.

ABŪ MŪSĀ AL-ASHʿARĪ
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

Speaking without knowledge

Abū Mūsā[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When Allāh *taʿālā* teaches something to a person, he must teach it to others. He must not speak about things which he does not have knowledge about or else he will be from among the pretenders and will slink out of *Dīn*."[2]

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[1] His actual name is ʿAbdullāh ibn Qays. He embraced Islam in Makkah during the early stages and returned to his people. He remained there for some time, and eventually came to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with a group of Ashʿarīyyīn (people of his tribe) at about the same time when Jaʿfar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and his companions came from Abyssinia. They all met Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* at Khaybar. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* appointed Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* as a zakāh assessor over parts of Yemen. He was an excellent reader of the Qur'ān. ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed him as a zakāh assessor over Basra, and then ʿUthmān appointed him for the same job over Kūfah. He was one of the arbiters at Ṣiffīn but then withdrew from both parties. He passed away in 42 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

[2] طبقات ابن سعد ٤\٣٧٣.

Leadership and kingship

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Leadership is established after consultation. Kingship is established by the sword."[1]

This world

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Everything about this world causes anguish, or it is a tribulation."[2]

Striving before death

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* strove severely before his death. So someone said to him: "Why don't you take it easy and be kind to yourself?"

He said: "When a horse is given rein [to move fast] and it approaches its destination, it spends all its energies [to reach its goal as quickly as possible]. The time of my life is even less than that."[3]

This world has been hastened for them

Anas ibn Mālik *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates: Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to me: "O Anas! What is causing the people to be so slow in matters of the Hereafter?"

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[1] طبقات ابن سعد ٤\٣٧٥.
[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٦٠.
[3] سير أعلام النبلاء ٢\٣٩٣.

I replied: "Desires and Satan."

He said: "No. By Allāh, it is because the world has been hastened for them and the Hereafter has been deferred. If they were to see the Hereafter, they will neither transgress nor will they incline towards this world."[1]

The dirham and dīnār

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"This dirham and dīnār have destroyed those who were before you, and I think it will certainly destroy you as well."[2]

Cry!

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* addressed the people of Basra saying:

"O people! Cry [to Allāh *taʿālā*]. If you cannot cry, then adopt the appearance of a crying person. The people of the Hell-fire will cry until their tears run dry. They will then cry tears of blood to such an extent that ships will be able to sail in their blood."[3]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٧.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٧.
[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٧.

The fluttering of the heart

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The heart is known as a *qalb* because it is in constant motion. This heart is like a feather on an open field – the winds sway it upside down as they like."[1]

The one who causes dissent

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Only the child of a prostitute will strive to cause dissent among people. He destroys his self, his brother, and the one to whom he conveys his rumours."[2]

The limits of Islam

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Everything has a limit, and the limits of Islam are: abstinence, humility, gratitude, and patience."

"Abstinence is the peak of all matters."

"Humility earns freedom from pride."

"Patience earns salvation from the Hell-fire."

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٨، والحلية ١\٢٦١.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٣٣.

"Gratitude earns Paradise."[1]

The person with the piece of bread

When death approached Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*, he said:

"O my sons! You must remember the person with the piece of bread."

He said: "There was a man who worshipped in a monastery for seventy years. He only came out of it for one day."

"Satan caused him to be attracted to a woman, and he remained with her for seven days. He then realized his folly and left in repentance. For every step he took, he prayed and went into prostration [as part of his repentance]."

"By nightfall, he reached a shop in which there were twelve poor people. Fatigue overtook him and he fell between two of the men. There was a monk who used to send bread every night to these poor men, and each one would receive one piece. The person who was responsible to bring the bread arrived, and gave each of them one piece of bread."

"He passed by the man who had left [the woman] in repentance. He thought he was a poor man as well, so he gave him a piece of bread as well. The

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٧١.

person who did not get a piece of bread said: 'Why are you not giving me my piece of bread?' He replied: 'Do you think I withheld it from you? Ask around and see if anyone received two pieces.' They all replied: 'No.'"

"He said: 'Do you think I withheld it from you? By Allāh, I will not give you anything tonight.'"

"The repentant man took the piece of bread which he received and handed it over to the person who did not receive. The repentant man then died by the next morning."

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"His seventy years of worship was weighed against the seven nights. The seven nights outweighed the seventy years. The seven nights were then weighed against the piece of bread. The piece of bread outweighed the seven nights."

Abū Mūsā *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O my sons! You must remember the person with the piece of bread."[1]

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[1] الحلية حلية الأولياء ١/٢٠١.

The moral of this story is that a small action – returning a piece of bread to its rightful owner – was weightier than his worship of seventy years.

HUDHAYFAH IBN AL-YAMĀN
raḍiyallāhu 'anhu

Purchasing a part of *Dīn* with another part

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I purchase some of my *Dīn* with some of it out of fear I may lose all of it."

He said: "Every Ṣaḥābī purchased some of his *Dīn* with some of it."

Someone asked him: "Even you?"

He replied: "By Allāh, even me. I go to one of them – and every single person has good qualities and

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[1] Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān al-'Abasī *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* is from among the senior Ṣaḥābah. His father had killed someone so he fled to Madīnah and became a confederate of the Banū 'Abd al-Ash-hal. His people referred to him as al-Yamān because he became a confederate of the al-Yamāniyyah.
He and his father embraced Islam and wanted to take part in the battle of Badr, but the polytheists stopped them. They then took part in the battle of Uḥud and al-Yamān was martyred in it. Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* took part in the battle of Khandaq and other battles which followed.
He is known as the one who was a confidant of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* because he had knowledge of the hypocrites and tribulations. He passed away in Madā'in in 36 A.H. at an old age. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

evil qualities – and mention his good qualities and cast aside his other [evil] qualities."[1]

Words without action

Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked about hypocrisy, so he said:

"It entails your speaking about Islam but not practising on it."[2]

Being particular about *halāl*

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who sells alcohol is like one who consumes it. The person who keeps pigs is like the one who consumes them. Investigate the income of your slaves and see where they are obtaining it from because flesh which has been sustained with *harām* will not enter Paradise."[3]

Accounting of deeds

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is accounting of deeds in the grave, and accounting of deeds on the day of Resurrection. The person who is taken to account on the day of Resurrection will be punished."[1]

Steadfastness of *'ulamā'*

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O assembly of scholars! Follow the path because if you follow it, you will surpass everyone else with a great distance. And if you turn to the right or left, you will go very far astray."[2]

Leaders who have no weight

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There will certainly come leaders over you who - on the day of Resurrection - will not even weigh the weight of barley husk in Allāh's sight."[3]

Do not injure your *Dīn*

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Be sincere with a believer, and you may intermingle with an unbeliever as long as it does not damage your *Dīn* in any way."[4]

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1 سير أعلام النبلاء ٢\٣٦٨.
2 سير أعلام النبلاء ٢\٣٦٢.
3 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٧.

1 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٨.
2 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٧.
3 تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٧.
4 حلية الأولياء ١\٢٨٠.

The living dead

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was asked about the living dead, so he said:

"He is the one who does not prohibit evil – neither physically, verbally, nor with his heart [by thinking of it as evil]."[1]

Hypocrisy

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The hypocrites of today are worse than those of the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In those days, they used to conceal their hypocrisy, but today they display it openly."

He also said:

"Hypocrisy has disappeared, there is no hypocrisy. There is only *kufr* after *īmān*."

He also said:

"In the time of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, a person would utter a statement just once and become a hypocrite because of it. But today I hear you making the same statement four times in one assembly."[2]

1إحياء علوم الدين ٣\١٢.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٢٧٩-٢٨٠.

The absence of humility

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Humility is the first thing which you will find lacking in your *Dīn*, and salāh is the last thing which you will find lacking in your *Dīn*."[1]

Become accustomed to patience

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Become accustomed to patience because a calamity may well befall you. Listen! You will be afflicted with a calamity which is worse than what we were afflicted with when we were with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."[2]

Fear of hypocrisy

A man said to Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu:* "I fear that I am a hypocrite."

So he said: "If you were really a hypocrite, you would not have feared it."[3]

The race is tomorrow

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The final hour has approached and the moon has split. Listen! The moon has split. Listen! The

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1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢٤.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٢٨٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٠٨.

3البيان والتبيين ٢\١٤٠.

world has announced its departure. Listen! Today the racecourse is prepared, and the race is tomorrow."[1]

Hearts are tested at times of tribulation

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A tribulation is presented to the hearts. If a heart is inclined to it, a black dot will be marked on it. If a heart rejects it, a white dot will be marked on it. If anyone would like to test whether a tribulation has afflicted him or not, he must look whether he considers the unlawful to be lawful or vice versa. If he does, then tribulation has certainly afflicted him."[2]

Warning against tribulations

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Beware of tribulations, none of you should wait in anticipation for it. By Allāh, when a person waits in anticipation for it, it wipes out all traces of him just as flood waters wipe out all traces of people. When you see tribulations, remain confined to your homes, break your swords, and cut off your bow-strings."[3]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١/٢٨١.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١/٣١٠.
[3] حلية الأولياء ١/٢٧٣.

...then good is not enjoined

...udhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

...There will come a time when the best among you ...will be the one who does not enjoin good and does ...not prohibit evil."[1]

...Your beloved has come in poverty

...Sa'd the freed slave of Ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu* ...'anhu said: "One of the people who visited ...Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* when he was on his ...death-bed related to me that he said:

...Were it not for the fact that I consider this day to ...be my last in this world and the first of the ...hereafter, I would not have spoken about it.'

...O Allāh! You know that I preferred poverty to ...affluence, lowness to honour, and death to life. ...Your beloved has come to you in poverty. The one ...who regrets is not successful.'

...He then passed away. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased ...with him."[2]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١/٢٨٠.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١/٣١٢.

Moderation

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The best of you are not those who cast aside the world for the Hereafter, nor those who cast aside the Hereafter for this world. Rather, the best are those who derive benefit from both."[1]

Desire for seclusion

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"By Allāh, I wish I had a person who would be responsible for my wealth so that I could lock my door and no one would come to me until I meet Allāh *ta'ālā*."[2]

What they see and what they know

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The thing which I fear most for this *ummah* is when they give preference to what they see over what they know, and they go astray without even perceiving it."[3]

الذهب حلية الأولياء ١/٢٠٦، وكنز العمال ٣/٧٣٢.

أصفة الصفوة ١/٣١٢.

الذهب حلية الأولياء ١/٢٠٦.

the changing of the heart

ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person enters a place wherein it was incumbent on him to speak for Allāh's sake but he does not speak. In such a case, his heart will never return to its original state."[1]

a dislike for enjoining good

ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There will come a time when the assemblies of people will be like a dead donkey, and a dead donkey will be more liked to them than sitting in the company of a believer who enjoins them with good and prohibits them from evil."[2]

The hearts

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Hearts are of four categories:

1. A heart which has a covering over it. This is the heart of an unbeliever.

2. A heart which is tilted. This is the heart of a hypocrite.

أصفة الصفوة ١/٣١٢.

الترغيب والترهيب للأصبهاني ص١٦٤.

3. A heart which is bare. It has a brilliant light. This is the heart of a believer.

4. A heart which has hypocrisy and *īmān*. *Īmān* is like a tree which grows with wholesome water. Hypocrisy is like a boil which grows with pus and blood. Such a heart is overpowered by whichever of the two overpowers it."[1]

The doors of the rulers

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Beware of going to places of tribulation."

He was asked: "O Abū 'Abdillāh! What are the places of tribulation?"

He replied: "The doors of the rulers. When you go to a ruler, you end up affirming his falsehood and saying what is not in your heart."[2]

The approach of the final hour

These are some of the signs of the approach of the final hour: the leaders will be immoral, the *'ulamā'* will be flagrant sinners, and trustworthy people will be treacherous.[3]

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٦.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٧٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٠٦.

[3] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص٣٢.

...ike the *du'ā'* of a drowning man

...udhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There will come a time when no one will be saved from it except the person who makes *du'ā'* like the *du'ā'* of a drowning man."[1]

The levels of prohibiting evil

...udhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O people! Will you not ask me? People used to ask Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* about good, and I used to ask him about evil. Will you not ask about the living dead?"

He said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* sent Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* who invited people from deviation towards guidance, and from *kufr* towards *īmān*. There were those who accepted his call. In this way, the one who was 'dead' came alive through the truth. And the one who was alive 'died' because he remained on falsehood."

"Prophet-hood then came to an end, and caliphate came on the pattern of prophet-hood. This will be followed by clinging kingship."

"There will the one who will prohibit [evil] with his heart, hand and tongue. He would have fulfilled his responsibility."

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[1] حلية الصفوة ١\٣١٠.

"There will be the one who will prohibit with his heart and tongue, but withhold his hand. He would have left aside one branch of his responsibility."

"There will be the one who will prohibit with his heart, but withhold his hand and tongue. He would have left aside two branches of his responsibility."

"There will be the one who will not prohibit with his heart and tongue. He is the living dead."[1]

The changing times

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"What you consider to be good today was considered evil in past times. What you consider evil today, will be considered good in times to come. You will remain on good as long as you recognize the truth, and the *ʿālim* among you does not consider the truth to be unimportant."[2]

Change in rules

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You are in an era wherein if a person were to cast aside one tenth of what he knows, he will be destroyed. There will come a time when a person

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٧٤-٢٧٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٠٦.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٠٥.

who practises on one tenth of what he knows will be saved. This will be because of an abundance of those who do nothing."[1]

Forbearance

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person who was immoral in matters of his *Dīn*, foolish in matters of his livelihood may well enter Paradise because of his forbearance."[2]

The changing heart

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There comes a time when the heart is filled with *īmān* to the extent that hypocrisy does not find place in it even the size of the eye of a needle. Then there comes a time when it is filled with hypocrisy to the extent that *īmān* does not find place in it even the size of the eye of a needle."[3]

Get ready to depart

Ḥudhayfah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A caller calls out every morning and evening: 'O people! Get ready to depart, get ready to depart.'"[4]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٨٥.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٢٣.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٦.

[4] إحياء علوم الدين ٦\٨٩.

'ABDULLĀH IBN 'UMAR
radiyallāhu 'anhu

Love for Allāh's sake

Ibn 'Umar[1] *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"By Allāh, if I were to fast continuously without stopping, spend the night in worship without sleeping in the least, and spend my wealth in Allāh's cause without stopping, and then I were to die without having any love in my heart for those who obey Allāh *ta'ālā*, and abhorrence for those who disobey Allāh *ta'ālā*, then all that [fasting, worshipping, and spending] will not help me in the least."[2]

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[1] He is 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb, Abū 'Abd ar-Rahmān. He embraced Islam and emigrated with his father. He was presented before Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* before the battles of Badr and Uhud but Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* considered him to be too young to take part. He then permitted him to take part in the battle of Khandaq. He was fifteen years old at the time. He was from among those who pledged allegiance (*bay'ah*) to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* under the tree [on the occasion of Hudaybīyyah] and took part in the conquest of Makkah. He was from among the jurists of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum*.
He distanced himself from all disputes and passed away in 74 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٢/٢٤٦.

A time for everything

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to say to those sitting around him:

"A time for this world and a time for the hereafter. And in the course of your conversation, you must say: 'O Allāh! Forgive us.'"[1]

What causes doubt in your heart

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person will not reach the essence of *īmān* until he keeps away from what causes doubt in his heart."[2]

Curtailing hopes

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When you pass the evening, do not expect to see the morning, and when you get up in the morning, do not expect to see the evening. Take maximum benefit from your good health before illness overtakes you, and from your life before death overtakes you."[3]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد برقم ٢٦٦.
[2] البخاري كتاب الإيمان، باب ١ تعليقا.
[3] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٤١٦.

They were the best of this *ummah*

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If anyone wants to emulate anyone, he must emulate those who have passed away. They are the Companions of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. They were the best of this *ummah* - they had the most righteous hearts, they possessed the most in-depth knowledge, and they had the least formalities."

"They were a people whom Allāh *ta'ālā* selected for the companionship of His Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the conveying of His *Dīn*."

"You should imitate their character and mannerisms because they were the Companions of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. I take an oath in the name of Allāh, the Lord of the Ka'bah, they were on a straight path of guidance."[1]

Accompany this world with your body

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O man! Accompany this world with your body, but distance yourself from it with your heart and concerns because you will be made to stand on the basis of your deeds. Take maximum benefit from what is in your power in preparation for

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١/٣٠٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١/٢١٨.

what is going to come at the time of death. If you do this, good will come to you."[1]

I have no knowledge of it

Urwah said: Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked about a matter, so he said: "I have no knowledge of it."

When the man departed, he said to himself: "Ibn Umar was asked about something which he had no knowledge, and he said: 'I have no knowledge of it.'"[2]

If a person deceives us in Allāh's name, we will allow ourselves to be deceived by him

Nāfi' said: "When Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* became too attracted to one of his possessions, he would give it away in Allāh's cause."

Nāfi' said: "His slaves knew this habit of his. So one of them would remain occupied in the musjid. When Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* would see him in this wonderful condition, he would set him free."

His companions would say to him: "O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān! They are only deceiving you."

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١/٣٠٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١/٢١٨.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١/٢٨٩.

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* would reply: "If a person deceives us in Allāh's name, we will allow ourselves to be deceived by him."[1]

A strict accounting

Nāfi' said: "Whenever Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* read these verses from the end of Sūrah al-Baqarah, he would most certainly cry:

"And if you reveal what is in your minds or conceal it, Allāh will call you to account for it." (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 184)

He would then say: "This is certainly a very strict accounting."[2]

Their hearts must become humble

Nāfi' said: "When Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to read the following verse:

"Has the time not come for the believers that their hearts should feel humble at the remembrance of Allāh" (Sūrah al-Ḥadīd, 57: 16)

he would cry until he was overcome by crying."[3]

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٩٤، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢١٢.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٩٤.
[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٨.

Do not seek worldly gain through knowledge

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person will reach a high position of knowledge as long as he is not envious of the one above him, he does not scorn the one below him, and does not seek any price [worldly gain] through his knowledge."[1]

But they did not leave him

Someone said to Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Zayd ibn Ḥārithah al-Anṣārī has passed away."

He said: "May Allāh have mercy on him."

The person said: "O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān! He left behind 100 000 dirhams."

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "But the dirhams did not leave him."[2]

Purity of the tongue

Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The tongue of a person is most deserving of purity."[3]

[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٨.
[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٨.
[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٩.

The one who compiles the Qur'ān cannot be incapable

Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf wrote to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* thus:

"I heard that you are seeking the caliphate. The caliphate is not suited to a person who is incapable, a miser, and a self-respecting person."

Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to him: "With regard to your reference to my seeking the caliphate, you should know that I never sought it nor am I bothered about it."

"As for your reference to stammering, miserliness, and self-respect: a person who compiles the Qur'ān cannot be incapable, and the one who pays the zakāh of his wealth cannot be a miser. As for your reference to self-respect, those who are most deserving of my self-respect are my children – someone else should not partner me with regard to their lineage."[1]

They would eat one day and remain hungry the next

A person said to Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Have you set aside a laxative for you?"

He asked: "What is a laxative?"

[1] صفة الصفوة ١/ ٢٩٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١/ ٢١١.

The man said: "When you are overburdened by a meal, you take a laxative to ease your stomach."

He said: "I have not eaten to my fill for the last four months. And it is not because I did not have sufficient to eat, but because I met people [Sahabah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum*] who would eat until they were satiated one day, and remain hungry the next."[1]

Their sustenance is in their stomachs and on their backs

One of the sons of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* came to 'Abdullāh and asked him to give him a lower garment (*izār, lungi*), and said: "My lower garment got torn."

'Abdullāh *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him: "Patch your lower garment and wear it."

The youngster was not too happy with this suggestion.

So 'Abdullāh *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him: "Woe to you! Fear Allāh, and do not be of those people who place the sustenance which Allāh *ta'ālā* provided to them in their stomachs and on their backs [by wasting it on excessive food and clothing]."[2]

[1] حلية الأولياء ١/ ٣٠٠، والزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٣٧.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١/ ٢٩٣.

Where are the abstinent ones?

Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* heard a man saying: "Where are those who are abstinent in this world, desirous of the Hereafter?"

So he showed him the graves of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*, and said: "Are you asking about these people?"[1]

Destructive praise

Nāfi' *raḥimahullāh* said: "A man said to Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: 'O the best of people', or 'O the son of the best of people.'"

Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him: "I am not the best of people nor the son of the best of people. Rather, I am one of the servants of Allāh *ta'ālā*. I have hope in Allāh's mercy and fear His wrath. By Allāh, you people will continue showering praises on a person until you destroy him."[2]

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٠٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢١٩.
[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٠٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢١٩.

This world decreases the ranks of the Hereafter

Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The more a person acquires of this world, the more his rank decreases in Allāh's sight, even if He has been generous and kind to him."[1]

People at a time of tribulation

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Our similitude in this tribulation is like a group of people travelling on a road which they knew. While they were travelling, clouds and darkness enveloped them. Some of them turned to the right and left and lost the way. But we remained where we were until Allāh *ta'ālā* cleared the clouds and darkness for us. We saw our original path, recognized it, and proceeded on our way."

"These youth of the Quraysh are killing each other over this leadership and this world, whereas I will not exchange these worn-out shoes of mine for what they are fighting over."[2]

[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٩٥.
[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٦٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٢٠.

Replying to a letter

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I take an oath, I consider the duty to reply to a letter similar to the duty of replying to a *salām*."[1]

Giving up a thing which preoccupies the heart

Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* sold one of his camels, so someone said to him: "Why did you not retain it?"

He replied: "It was very agreeable to me, but it took away a part of my heart, and I did not want my heart to become preoccupied with anything."[2]

You do not know what your name is going to be tomorrow

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When you get up in the morning, do not think about what you are going to do in the evening. When evening arrives, do not think about what you are going to do in the morning. Take full advantage of your good health before you fall ill, and of your life before death overtakes you. O servant of Allāh! You do not know what your name is going to be tomorrow."[3]

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[1] الزياد والنسين ٢\١٠٢.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٩٤.

[3] أخرجه الترمذي برقم ٢٣٣٣، وهو عند البخاري برقم ٦٤١٦ عدا الجملة الأخيرة.

The laughing of the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu anhum*

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked: "Did the Companions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* laugh?"

He said: "Yes, but *īmān* was firmer than mountains in their hearts."[1]

Emulating Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam

Mālik *raḥimahullāh* said: "If you were to see Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* when he was following the footsteps of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, you would say he is a mad man."[2]

What happened to your people?

Mujāhid *raḥimahullāh* said: "I was walking with Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* when he passed by some ruins. He said to me: 'Say: 'O ruins! What happened to your people?'"

I said: 'O ruins! What happened to your people?'"

Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: 'They departed from this world and their deeds remain.'"[3]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣١١، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٢١.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٣١٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٢٠.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٣٩.

Long-windedness in *du'ā'*

Some people said to Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* "Make *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* for us with many *du'ā's*."

He said: "O Allāh! Have mercy on us, bestow us with well-being, and give us sustenance."

They said: "O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān! Make a longer *du'ā'* for us."

He replied: "We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from long-windedness."[1]

I do not like to utter this word

Az-Zuhrī said: "Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* wanted to curse his servant, so he said: 'O Allāh! Cur...' and he did not complete the word. He then said: 'This is a word which I do not like to utter."[2]

The imām

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If the imām is just, he will be rewarded and it is your duty to be grateful. If the imām is unjust, he will bear the sin, and it is your duty to remain patient."[3]

البيان والتبيين ١\١٩٥.
حلية الأولياء ١\٣٠٧.
العقد الفريد ١\٢٤.

A third of hypocrisy

Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Breaking a promise is a third of hypocrisy."[1]

Modesty and *īmān*

Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Modesty and *īmān* are always bound together. When one of them is removed, the other is removed with it."[2]

Backbiting and carrying tales

Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"We have been prohibited from backbiting and listening to it, and from carrying tales and listening to them."[3]

Salām

Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked about a person entering a musjid or house in which there is no one.

He said: "He must say: '*As-salāmu 'alaynā wa 'alā 'ibādillāhiṣ ṣāliḥīn* (peace be to us and to the righteous servants of Allāh)."[1]

العقد الفريد ١\١٩٧.
العقد الفريد ٢\٢٣٧.
رسالة المسترشدين ص١٢١.

Absolute *īmān*

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person will not experience absolute *īmān* until he is fully conscious of the fact that Allāh *ta'ālā* is watching him. So he should not do a deed in privacy which will cause him disgrace on the day of Resurrection."[2]

Good neighbourliness

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The value of a house increases if its neighbour is friendly and pleasant in speech."[3]

A Muslim's right over another Muslim

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked about a Muslim's right over another Muslim. So he said:

"He must not be satiated while leaving his brother hungry, he must not be dressed while leaving his brother without any clothes, and he must not be miserly in spending gold and silver [money] on him."[4]

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[1] العقد الفريد ٢\٢٥٣.
[2] تنبيه المغترين ص٢٢.
[3] تنبيه المغترين ص٧٢.
[4] تنبيه المغترين ص١٣٩.

We also fear Allāh *ta'ālā*

Abū Ḥāzim *raḥimahullāh* said: "Ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* passed by a man from Iraq who was fallen on the ground, so he asked: 'What happened to him?' The people replied: 'He is afflicted by this when the Qur'ān is recited to him.' He said: 'We also fear Allāh *ta'ālā* but we do not fall down.'"[1]

It is hypocrisy

Someone said to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "When we go to a ruler we say certain things in his presence. But when we leave, we say things different from what we said to him."

He said: "We used to consider this to be hypocrisy."[2]

Īmān and the Qur'ān

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"We lived for some time in which we would be taught *īmān* before we were taught the Qur'ān. A sūrah would be revealed and the lawful, unlawful, orders, warnings, and precautions which it contained would be learnt."

"Now I see people who are taught the Qur'ān before they are taught *īmān*. Consequently, such

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٢.
[2] تنبيه المغترين ص٤١٠.

a person reads the Qur'ān from beginning to end without knowing its orders, warnings, and what precautions he must take. He scatters it as though he is scattering dates."[1]

Hypocrisy

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* heard a man speaking out against al-Ḥajjāj. So he said to him: "Tell me, had he been present here and listening, would you say what you are saying about him?" The man replied: "No."

He said: "We considered this to be hypocrisy in the time of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*."[2]

Ghurabā'

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The most beloved servants of Allāh in Allāh's sight are the *ghurabā'*."

He was asked: "Who are the *ghurabā'*?"

He replied: "Those who flee with their *Dīn* [in protection of their *Dīn*]. They will assemble around al-Masīḥ ['Īsā] *'alayhis salām* on the day of Resurrection."[3]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٠٠.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٦٤.
[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٦١.

A single tear in exchange for 1 000 dīnārs

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I prefer shedding a single tear out of Allāh's fear to spending 1 000 dīnārs in charity."[1]

An 'ālim

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person will not reach a high position of knowledge as long as he is not envious of the one above him, does not scorn the one below him, and does not seek any price [worldly gain] through his knowledge."[2]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\١٤.
[2] أخرجه الدارمي برقم ٢٩٠.

UBAYY IBN KA'B
raḍiyallāhu 'anhu

Acceptance of the truth

A person said to Ubayy ibn Ka'b[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Advise me, but let it be brief."

He said: "Accept the truth from whoever brings it, even if he is a distant and abhorrent person. Reject falsehood from the one who brings it to you, even if he is a close and beloved person."[2]

Knowledge is not for embellishment

Ubayy ibn Ka'b *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Seek knowledge and practise on it. Do not seek it to embellish yourselves with it. There may well

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[1] He is Ubayy ibn Ka'b ibn Qays al-Anṣārī an-Najjārī, Abū al-Mundhir. He is known as *Sayyid al-qurrā'* (the chief of the readers). He was from among those of the 'Aqabah Thāniyah (the second pledge undertaken by the Anṣār). He took part in the battle of Badr and the other battles. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to him: "May knowledge be wholesome and palatable to you, O Abū al-Mundhir." He also said to him: "Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed me to read to you."
'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* used to refer to him as: *Sayyidul Muslimīn* (the chief of the Muslims). There is difference of opinion with regard to the year of his demise. In his book, *al-Iṣābah*, Ibn Ḥajar *raḥimahullāh* gives preference to his demise being in 30 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١/١٢١.

come a time when knowledge will be used for self embellishment as clothes are worn for self embellishment."[1]

The believer is on light

Ubayy ibn Ka'b *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A believer is found in four situations:

(1) When he is put through a tribulation, he exercises patience.

(2) When he is blessed [with prosperity], he is grateful.

(3) When he speaks, he speaks the truth.

(4) When he passes judgement, he is just."

He moves around in five lights, and this is referred to by Allāh *ta'ālā* as: 'Light upon light.' (Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 35). They are:

(1) His speech is light.

(2) His knowledge is light.

(3) His entrance is in light.

(4) His exit is from light.

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١/٨٢.

(5) And he will proceed towards light on the day of Resurrection."

"The unbeliever moves around in five forms of darkness:

(1) His speech is darkness.

(2) His actions are darkness.

(3) His entrance is in darkness.

(4) His exit is from darkness.

(5) He will proceed towards darkness on the day of Resurrection."[1]

Adhering to the Sunnah

Ubayy ibn Ka'b *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Adhere to the path [of Islam] and the Sunnah because any servant who is on the path and Sunnah, remembers the Merciful, and his eyes shed tears out of Allāh's fear, then the Hell-fire will not touch him."

"A servant who is on the path and Sunnah, remembers the Merciful, and he has goose flesh out of Allāh's fear, then he is like a tree whose leaves became dry. While it is still dry, a wind

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\٢٥٥.

blows and its leaves fall off. This servant's sins fall off him just as the leaves fall off this tree."

"Moderation on the path and Sunnah is better than independent judgement which is against the path and Sunnah. So look at your deeds – whether they are based on independent judgement or on moderation – they must be on the path and Sunnah of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*."[1]

The Book of Allāh

A man said to Ubayy ibn Ka'b *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Advise me."

He said: "Take the Book of Allāh as an *imām*, accept it as a judge and arbiter, because this is the Book which your Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* left behind for you. It is an intercessor whose intercession is accepted, and a witness which is beyond accusation."

"It contains your accounts and the accounts of those before you, it is a judge between you, and it contains information for you and those after you."[2]

What he left for Allāh

Ubayy ibn Ka'b *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\٢٥٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٩٧، والزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٥.

2 حلية الأولياء ١\٢٥٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٩٧.

"When a servant leaves something for Allāh's sake, He most certainly replaces him with something far better from avenues he never imagined. When a servant scorns a thing and takes it from an unsuitable place, Allāh *ta'ālā* gives him something more distressing to him from places he never imagined."[1]

Be on your guard with your friend

A man said to Ubayy *radiyallāhu 'anhu*: "O Abū al-Mundhir! Advise me."

He said: "Do not get involved in matters which do not concern you, remain aloof from your enemy, be on your guard with your friend, only desire what a living person has if you would desire what a dead person has [since a dead person has nothing, do not desire anything which another person has], do not seek the fulfilment of a need from a person who does not bother about fulfilling it for you."[2]

The world is a conveyance towards the Hereafter

Abū Nadrah said: I had some work with 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* during his caliphate. I reached Madīnah at night and went to him the next morning. Allāh blessed me with intelligence and the ability to speak well. I had become engrossed

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٤٧.

[2] كنز العمال ١٦\٢٢٢ برقم ٤٤٢٤٩.

in the world, then considered it to be insignificant, and cast it aside as though it was nothing. There was a man sitting at his side with white hair and wearing white clothes. When I completed my speech, he said:

'Everything you said was to the point, except for your engrossment in the world. Do you know what this world is?'

'This world contains the means for our journey to the Hereafter, and in it are our deeds for which we will be recompensed in the Hereafter.'

"He added: 'A person who is more knowledgeable than me became engrossed in this world as well.'"

"I said: 'O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Who is this man sitting at your side?'"

"He replied: 'He is the chief of the Muslims, Ubayy ibn Ka'b.'"[1]

Maintain brotherhood to a certain extent

Ubayy *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

'Befriend your brothers to the extent of their piety, do not shower praises to those who do not deserve it, only desire what a living person has if you would desire what a dead person has [since a

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[1] الأدب المفرد برقم ٤٨٣.

dead person has nothing, do not desire anything which another has]."[1]

حلية الأولياء ٩\١٢١.

MUʿĀDH IBN JABAL *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*

A warning against four things

Muʿādh ibn Jabal[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There are four qualities which a person should try to avoid as far as possible"

Some people asked: "What are they?"

He replied:

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[1] He is Muʿādh ibn Jabal ibn ʿAmr Anṣārī Khazrajī, Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān. He was present in the pledge of al-ʿAqabah ath-Thāniyah, took part in the battle of Badr and all the other battles after it. He was one of the four people from the Khazraj who compiled the Qur'ān during the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* testified in his favour by saying that he is the most knowledgeable of the *ummah* with regard to *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*.
Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to him: "O Muʿādh! I love you..." Before Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* passed away, he sent Muʿādh *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to Yemen. And so, he was in Yemen at the time of Rasūlullāh's *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* demise. He was a senior person and the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* acknowledged his status. He passed away in the plague of ʿAmawās in 18 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him. There is difference of opinion with regard to his age at the time of his death. The most popular opinion states that he was 33 years old.

(1) A time will come when falsehood will become obvious.

(2) A person will get up in the morning on a particular *Dīn* and would have changed to another *Dīn* by the evening.

(3) A man will say: 'By Allāh, I do not know on what [*Dīn*] I am. He is neither living with insight nor does he die with insight.

(4) A man will be given wealth from Allāh's wealth[1] to speak falsehood which obviously displeases Allāh."[2]

The status of knowledge

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Acquire knowledge because acquiring it for Allāh's sake produces fear for Him, seeking it is an act of worship, discussing it is a *tasbīḥ* (glorification of Allāh *taʿālā*), and researching it is a jihād."

"Teaching it to the one who does not know it is an act of charity, and giving it to its worthy recipients is a means of proximity to Allāh *taʿālā* because it is a guide-post for the lawful and

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[1] That is, from the Bayt al-Māl – the Islamic treasury. This did occur when the Bayt al-Māl came into the hands of rulers who began spending from it as they liked.

[2] طبقات ابن سعد ٣\٢٩٨.

unlawful, a lighthouse for the people of Paradise, a solace in distress, a companion in a strange land, and a company in solitude."

"It shows you occasions of joy and sadness, it is a weapon against the enemy, and a beautification among friends. Allāh *taʿālā* elevates some people through it, makes them leaders and *imāms* in good, their ways are adopted, their actions are emulated, and their opinions are accepted. The angels desire their friendship and they touch them with their wings. Every creature seeks forgiveness for them – even the fish and reptiles in the ocean, birds of prey, and cattle."

"This is because knowledge is a life for the hearts from ignorance, and a light to the eyes from darkness. Through knowledge a person reaches the ranks of the virtuous, and the highest position in this world and in the Hereafter."

"Pondering and reflecting on knowledge is equal to fasting, and mutual learning and teaching is equal to spending the night in worship."

"Ties of kinship are joined through knowledge, and the lawful is distinguished from the unlawful."

"It is the leader of those who do deeds, and deeds are subservient to it. The fortunate are inspired by it, and the unfortunate are deprived of it."[1]

Leadership of children

A plague broke out in Shām and remained there. People said: "This is nothing but a flood without water." When Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard this, he delivered the following sermon:

"I have heard what you are saying. This is most certainly a mercy from your Allāh, a *duʿā'* of your Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*,[2] and it embraced the righteous before you. But they feared what was more dangerous than it, i.e. a man leaves his house in the morning without knowing whether he is a believer or a hypocrite, and they feared the leadership of children."[3]

Innovation (*bidʿah*) is deviation

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٨٨.

[2] Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said with regard to a plague: ".... Allāh *taʿālā* made it a mercy for the believers. A person who experiences a plague and remains in his place patiently and in expectation of reward, believing fully that he will only be afflicted by what Allāh *taʿālā* has destined for him, then he will certainly receive the reward of a martyr." (أخرجه البخاري برقم ٣٤٧٤)

[3] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٤٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٨.

"There will be tribulations which will follow you, in which there will be an abundance of wealth, the Qur'ān will be opened and read by a believer, a hypocrite, a child, an adult, the light-skinned and the dark-skinned."[1]

"A time will come when a person will say: 'Why should I read the Qur'ān to the people when they are not following me in it? I don't think they will follow me in it unless I read something else to them.'"

"Beware, beware of what he innovates, because what he innovates is deviation."

"I warn you of the deviation of the wise man, because Satan utters a statement of deviation in the wise man, and a hypocrite may well make a statement of truth."

"Accept the truth because there is light on the truth."[2]

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[1] The first tribulation is that of wealth. The second tribulation is memorizing the Qur'ān while being very far from understanding it, reflecting over its verses, and practising on it. Allāh *taʿālā* says: "It is a blessed Book which We revealed to you so that people may contemplate over its verses and intelligent people may comprehend it." (Sūrah Ṣād, 38: 29)

[2] This means that a person must go with the truth wherever it goes. His attachment must not be with individuals unless they are within the circle of truth. If they deviate from this circle, he must cast them aside.

Some people said: "May Allāh have mercy on you, how do we know that a wise man may well make a statement of falsehood?"

He said: "It will be a statement which you will not be accustomed to hearing from him. And you will say: 'What is this?' He will not commend you, and he may well retract some of what you know."

"Knowledge and *īmān* are such that whoever seeks them until the day of Resurrection will find them."[1]

Moderation

A man said to Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Teach me."

He asked: "Will you follow my instructions?"

The man said: "I am extremely desirous of obeying you."

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "You must alternate between fasting and not fasting, you must engage in night ṣalāh and you must also sleep at night, you must earn a living but do not commit a sin, ensure you die as a Muslim, and beware of the *duʿā'* of the oppressed."[2]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٢، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٣.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٥٦.

Duʿā' at the time of *tahajjud*

When Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to get up for *tahajjud* at night, he would say:

"O Allāh! The eyes are asleep, the stars have penetrated deeply, but You are ever-living, sustaining all."

"O Allāh! My quest for Paradise has been slow, and my fleeing from the Hell-fire has been weak."

"O Allāh! Reserve guidance for me which You will give to me on the day of Resurrection, surely You do not go back on Your word."[1]

The ṣalāh of a person departing from this world

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his son:

"O my son! When you perform ṣalāh, perform it as though you are about to depart from this world; do not think you will ever return to it again."

"O my son! Remember – a believer dies between two good deeds – a deed which he sent forward and a deed which he deferred."[2]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٣.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٥٧.

Give preference to your share of the Hereafter

A man came with some of his friends to Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to greet him and bid him farewell. So Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I advise you to do two things, if you safeguard them, you will be safeguarded. You cannot do without your share of this world, but you are more in need of your share of the Hereafter. You should therefore give preference to your share of the Hereafter over your share of this world. Arrange it in the proper manner and it will remain with you wherever you go."[1]

The remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I prefer engaging in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* from morning to evening than being carried on the best horse in the cause of Allāh *taʿālā* from morning to evening."[2]

Knowledge and practice

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Learn as much as you want provided you practise on it because Allāh *taʿālā* will never

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٤، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٤.
[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٤.

reward you for knowledge until you practise on it."[1]

The tribulation of women

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You were put through the tribulation of adversity and you exercised patience. You will be put through the tribulation of ease and comfort. But the thing which I fear most for you is the tribulation of women when they wear gold and silver necklaces, the fine and soft fabrics of Shām, and the garments of Yemen. In so doing, they will exhaust the wealthy man, and impose on the poor man beyond his means."[2]

Three things which present one for destruction

Muʿādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Three things will present a person for destruction:

(1) Laughing without any humouring incident.

(2) Sleeping without waking up.

(3) Eating without hunger."[3]

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٥.
[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٥.
[3] الزهد الكبير رقم ٤٣٧.

The continuation of tribulations

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You will only see calamities and tribulations in this world, and the matter will only get worse. You will find your leaders very harsh and stern. You will consider each terrifying incident to be more terrifying than the previous one."[1]

Turning to Allāh when people are heedless of Him

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You will inevitably sit in the company of people who will engage in conversations. When you see them becoming heedless [of Allāh *taʿālā*], you must turn with full enthusiasm towards Allāh *taʿālā*."[2]

Salāh with congregation

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The person who would like to go to Allāh *taʿālā* while feeling safe and secure must perform these five salāhs where the call to them is made [i.e. in the musjid]. They are from among the ways of guidance and Sunnah which your Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* left for you. Do not say: 'I have a place for salāh in my house and I will perform salāh there. If you do this, you will be abandoning the Sunnah of your Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. And if you leave the Sunnah of your Prophet *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, you will go astray."[1]

Speak less with people

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Speak less with people, but speak a lot with your Allāh. Perhaps your heart will see Allāh *taʿālā*."[2]

This is when the heart will be at rest

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A believer's heart will not be at rest and his fear will not subside until he leaves the bridge of Hell behind him."[3]

He also said:

"A servant should not express joy until he crosses the bridge of Hell."[4]

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[1] العقد الفريد ٣\١٧٣.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٥٧.

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٣٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٨٤.

[2] الرسالة القشيرية ص١٢٢.

[3] الرسالة القشيرية ص١٢٧.

[4] تنبيه المغترين ص٥٠.

Those who beg in musjids

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The most abhorrent in Allāh's sight are those who beg in musjids."[1]

The error of an *ʿālim*

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Beware when an *ʿālim* errs because he is of high status among people and they will follow him in his error."[2]

The regret of the people of Paradise

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The people of Paradise will not regret anything except for the moment which they let pass without having remembered Allāh *taʿālā* in it."[3]

Justice between wives

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* had two wives. When he was with one of them, he would not drink the water from the house of the other.[1]

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[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٩.

They are abhorred by Allāh *taʿālā* because they are begging from people while they are in Allāh's House. They ought to beg from Him.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٨٤.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٣٩٢.

The tribulation of an *ʿālim*

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O assembly of Arabs! How will you respond to three things: (1) a world which chops off your necks, (2) an error of an *ʿālim*, (3) a hypocrite disputing with the Qur'ān?" The people remained silent. So he said:

"If the *ʿālim* is guided, relegate affairs of your *Dīn* to him. If he is put through tribulation, do not sever your patience with him because a believer is put through tribulation and he repents."

"As for the Qur'ān, it has light like the light for the path. It is not concealed from anyone. Whatever you know about the Qur'ān, do not inquire about it. Whatever you have doubt about, refer it to the one who has knowledge of it."

"As for this world, the one in whose heart Allāh *taʿālā* placed contentment has surely triumphed. As for the one who is not blessed with such contentment, his world is not going to benefit him in any way."[2]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢٨.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١٣٦.

Humility

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who wilfully knows who is to his right and left when he is in ṣalāh has not really performed his ṣalāh."[1]

The remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Man has not done a deed which is as great a saviour from Allāh's punishment than the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*."

The people asked: "O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān! Not even jihād in the cause of Allāh *ta'ālā*?"

He replied: "Not even when he strikes with his sword until it is broken. This is because Allāh *ta'ālā* says: 'The remembrance of Allāh is the greatest.'"[2] (Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 45)

Hope at the time of death

When death approached Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*, he said:

"O Allāh! I used to fear You, and now I have hope in You."

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٢١٣.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢٩.

"O Allāh! You know that I did not love this world and did not want to live long in it in order to make streams flow and trees grow. Rather, I wanted to live in it to experience the thirst of hot days, to endure difficult times, and to hasten in going to the *'ulamā'* at the time when they conduct assemblies of *dhikr*."[1]

Towards the end of time

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Towards the end of time there will be readers [of the Qur'ān] who will be flagrant sinners, ministers who will be immoral, trustworthy people who will be treacherous, monitors who will be oppressive, and rulers who will be liars."[2]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٦\١١٥.
[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٦١.

ABŪ AD-DARDĀ'
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

As though you can see Him

Abū ad-Dardā'[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Worship Allāh *taʿālā* as though you can see Him. Consider yourself to be among the dead. Beware of the supplication of the oppressed."

"Remember! A little which suffices you is better than a lot which makes you heedless. Righteousness does not wear out, and a sin is not forgotten."[2]

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[1] His name is 'Uwaymir ibn Zayd ibn Qays al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī. He embraced Islam when the battle of Badr took place, took part in the battle of Uḥud, and displayed remarkable feats. He is one of the four who compiled the Qur'ān during the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.
'Umar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* sent him to Ḥimṣ and then to Damascus to teach the Qur'ān. He became the judge of Damascus during the caliphate of 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*.
He is an imām who is followed, the physician of this *ummah*, and the chief of the readers [of the Qur'ān] in Damascus.
He passed away in 32 A.H. in Damascus.

[2] سير أعلام النبلاء ٢\٣٥٠، والزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٨.

Be fully concerned about your brother

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Reprimanding one's brother is better for him than losing him. Do you really have a completely perfect brother? Give to your brother, be affectionate towards him, and do not obey one who is jealous of him or else you will be like the jealous person."

"Death will come to you tomorrow and you will lose him. How, then, can you cry for him after death when you broke ties with him when he was alive."[1]

Have love for the best among you

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You will continue experiencing goodness as long as you have love for the best among you. Whatever is said to you in the name of the truth, you will recognize it. The one who recognizes the truth is like the one who practises on it."[2]

Gratitude for bounties

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The one who only acknowledges Allāh's favours in his food and drink has in fact done very little

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢١، وتهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٧٢.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٨.

deeds, and his punishment has arrived. The person who is not independent of this world does not really own the world."

He also said:

"How many favours of Allāh *taʿālā* are lying concealed in a motionless vein!"[1]

What follows death

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If you only knew what you are going to see after death, you will not eat any food with desire, you will not drink any liquid with desire, and you will not enter a house to shade you. You will go out to the highlands beating your chests, and you will cry over yourselves. And I wish I was a tree which grows strong and is eaten thereafter."[2]

The peak of *īmān*

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The peak of *īmān* is: to be patient over whatever order is issued, to accept Allāh's decree, to be sincere in reliance on Him, and to submit completely to Allāh *taʿālā*."[3]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٧.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧١.

[3] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٢.

Be concerned about your self

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do not impose on people what they have not been imposed [by Allāh *taʿālā*]. Do not be judgemental of them."

"O man! Worry about your self because the person who bothers about what he sees in people will experience lengthy grief and his anger will not subside."[1] [He will always find something to grieve about, or to be angry at].

Allāh *taʿālā* loves him

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Maslamah ibn Mukhallad al-Anṣārī saying:

"Peace be to you. When a servant acts in obedience to Allāh *taʿālā*, Allāh *taʿālā* loves him. When Allāh *taʿālā* loves him, He makes him beloved to His servants. When a servant acts in disobedience to Allāh *taʿālā*, Allāh *taʿālā* detests him. When Allāh *taʿālā* detests him, He makes him detestable to His servants."[2]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١١، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٨.

[2] الزهد الكبير برقم ٧٩٧.

Until you detest your self

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You cannot fully comprehend until you study different aspects of the Qur'ān. You cannot fully comprehend until you detest people for Allāh's sake. And then, you must look at your self and detest it more than how you detested people."[1]

Admonition is an act of charity

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A believer does not carry out an act of charity which is more beloved to Allāh *taʿālā* than an admonition which he imparts to his people. They then disperse with Allāh *taʿālā* having enabled them to benefit from the admonition."[2]

Two types of *duʿā'*

Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Beware of the *duʿā'* of two people, viz. the *duʿā'* of an orphan and the *duʿā'* of an oppressed. Their *duʿā's* go up to Allāh *taʿālā* at night while people are asleep."[3]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١١، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٨.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢١.

[3] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢١.

O people of Damascus!

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You are our brothers in *Dīn*, our neighbours where we live, and our helpers against the enemies."

"What prevents you from befriending me, whereas my expenses are paid by someone else [and not by you]?"

"How is it I see your *ʿulamā'* departing and the ignorant among you not learning?"

"I see you devoting yourselves to what has already been guaranteed for you [i.e. you are devoting yourselves to acquiring sustenance which is already destined for you], while you are casting aside whatever you have been ordered to do."

"Listen! There were nations who built fortified buildings, amassed a lot of wealth, and had many distant hopes. But their buildings were reduced to graves, their hopes were shattered to deception, and whatever riches they amassed were all ruined."

"Listen! Study and teach to others because an *ʿālim* and a student are equal in reward. And there is no good in people after these two."[1]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٠.

I order you but I do not do it myself

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I order you to do something but do not do it myself, yet I hope for reward for it. The one I would dislike to wrong the most is the person who seeks help from none other than Allāh *taʿālā*."[1]

The reward for pondering and reflecting

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Pondering and reflecting for some time is better than spending the entire night in worship."[2]

Remember Allāh *taʿālā* during prosperity

A man said to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Advise me."

He said: "Remember Allāh *taʿālā* during prosperity and He will remember you during adversity. When you hanker after something of this world, look where it is heading to."[3]

When they abandoned Allāh's order

Jubayr ibn Nufayr said: "When Qabrus was conquered, its people were separated, and they began crying to each other. I saw Abū ad-Dardā'

1صفة الصفوة ١\٢١٩.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٧.

3حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٧.

raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu sitting alone and crying. I said: 'O Abū ad-Dardā'! Why are you crying on a day in which Allāh *taʿālā* honoured Islam and the Muslims?'"

"He replied: 'Woe to you, O Jubayr! Look at how insignificant people become in Allāh's sight when they abandon His orders, whereas they were a powerful and influential nation, and they had the kingdom. When they abandoned Allāh's orders, they were reduced to what you see before you.'"[1]

Taking admonition from death

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said when he saw a funeral procession:

"You may depart in the morning and we will depart in the evening. Or you may depart in the evening and we will depart in the morning. What a forceful admonition, yet our heedlessness in this regard is so swift. Death is sufficient as an admonisher. One person and then the next departs, and the next one is left with no dreams [and hopes]."[2]

Wealth is increasing but life is decreasing

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

1حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٣.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٤.

"Every person has a defect in his intelligence with regard to his aspirations and knowledge. This is because when the world comes to him with excessive wealth, he becomes happy and delighted.

"The night and day are continuously decreasing his life-span, yet that does not cause him grief!!"

"He is really deviated. Of what benefit is wealth which increases while his life-span is decreasing!?"[1]

The grave protects the believer

Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Nothing but the grave can protect a believer from evil people."[2]

Things which cause me to laugh and cry

Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Three things caused me to laugh, and three things caused me to cry.

The following caused me to laugh:

(1) A person who has hopes in this world while death is seeking him.

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٣.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٥٧.

(2) A person who is heedless yet [Allāh] is not heedless of him.

(3) A person who laughs a mouthful, but he does not know whether Allāh is pleased or displeased with him.

The following caused me to cry:

(1) The terror of what is to follow soon after death.

(2) The end and termination of all deeds.

(3) My standing before Allāh *ta'ālā* – I do not know whether He will admit me into Paradise or cast me into the Hell-fire."[1]

I detest his actions

Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* passed by a man who committed a sin, and people were hurling abuses at him.

So he said: "Tell me, if you were to find him in a well, will you not try to take him out of it?"

The people said: "Yes."

He said: "So do not swear your brother. Rather, thank Allāh *ta'ālā* for having saved you [from committing the same sin]."

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٥١.

The people asked: "Do you not detest him?"

He replied: "I only detest his action. If he gives it up, he is my brother."[1]

I love three things

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I love death out of yearning to meet my Allāh. I love poverty out of humility before my Allāh. I love sickness as an atonement for my sins."[2]

A letter on how to deal with one's sons

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to one of his brothers saying:

"People of the past were also involved in the matters of this world which you are involved in at present. And people who are to come after you will also be involved in the same matters. There is nothing for you except what you sent forward for your self."

"So give preference to yourself over worrying about setting right your children's affairs, because you are giving to someone who will not excuse you and accumulating for someone who will not thank you."

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٢٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٩.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٢.

"You actually accumulate for one of two people: (1) One who acts in it in obedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*. If such is the case, he will be enjoying what you deprived yourself of. (2) One who acts in it in disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*. If such is the case, you will regret what you accumulated for him."

"By Allāh, neither of the two deserves your back-breaking efforts, nor do you have to give preference to him over your self."

"Hope for Allāh's mercy for those of them who have passed on, and entrust the provision and sustenance of Allāh *ta'ālā* for those of them who are still alive. Peace be to you."[1]

A strict accounting

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Destruction to every accumulator who opens his mouth wide [out of greed] as though he is a mad man. He looks at what people have and not at what Allāh *ta'ālā* has. If it were possible for him, he would have joined the night to the day [worked 24 hours to accumulate the riches of this world]. How unfortunate! He will have to face a strict accounting and a severe punishment."[2]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٣.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٢.

The closest a person is to Allāh's anger

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The closest a person is to Allāh's anger is when he is himself angry. Beware of wronging the one who has no helper except Allāh."[1]

The legacy of the 'Ād

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O people of Damascus! Are you not ashamed?!"

"You are amassing what you cannot eat, constructing what you cannot live in, and hoping for what you cannot realize."

"Nations before you amassed plenty, had many hopes, and constructed fortified buildings. Whatever they amassed was ruined, their hopes were shattered into deception, and their homes were reduced to graves."

"Here are the 'Ād before you who filled the entire area between Aden and Oman with wealth and children. Now who is there who will buy the legacy of the 'Ād for even two dirhams?"[2]

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٣\١٤١.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٤.

Did you know or did you not know?

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The thing which I fear the most on the day of resurrection is that I be asked: 'Did you know or did you not know?'"

"If I were to say: 'I knew', there will not remain a single verse of order or prohibition for which I will not be answerable for. I will be asked about the verses of order: 'Did you carry out its order?' and I will be asked about the verses of prohibition: 'Did you desist from its prohibition?'"

"So I seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from knowledge which does not benefit, a soul which is not satisfied, and a *du'ā'* which is not heard."[1]

Sitting in the market places

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"What an excellent monastery a home is for a person. [By remaining in his house], he safeguards his self, eyes and private part in his house. Beware of sitting in the market places because they cause a person to engage in futile conversations and they divert him [from Allāh *ta'ālā*]."[2]

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٠. وأخرجه أحمد.

[2] الزهد الكبير برقم ١٢٨.

Remembrance of death

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who remembers death in abundance will have little to rejoice over, and little to be jealous of."[1]

He said:

"When you think of the dead, consider yourself to be like one of them."[2]

A letter to Salmān al-Fārsī *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to Salmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* saying:

"My brother, make the best of your health and free time before an affliction [death] which man cannot repulse descends on you."

"Make the best of the *du'ā'* of a person who is afflicted [because his *du'ā'* is certainly accepted]."

"My brother, make the musjid your house because I heard Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying: 'The musjid is the house of every pious person. Allāh guarantees comfort, mercy, and crossing the *ṣirāṭ* (the bridge over Hell) and proceeding towards the pleasure of Allāh *ta'ālā* for those who make the *masājid* their homes.'"

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١/٢٢٠، وتهذيب الحلية ١/١٧٦.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٦/٧٩.

my brother! Show mercy to the orphan, bring him close to you, and feed him of your food. I heard Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying to a person who was complaining about his hard-heartedness: 'Would you like your heart to become soft?' The man replied: 'Yes.' Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to him: 'Take an orphan close to you, pass your hand [of affection] over his head, and feed him the food which you eat. This will soften your heart and you will be able to fulfil your need.'"

My brother, do not accumulate what you cannot be grateful for because I heard Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying: 'A person who accumulated of this world and obeyed Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to his wealth will be brought forward on the day of Resurrection. He will be in front of his wealth and his wealth will be behind him. Each time the *ṣirāṭ* turns him around, his wealth will say to him: 'Proceed forward because you fulfilled your duty which was placed on you.'"

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: 'The person who did not obey Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to his wealth will be brought forward. His wealth will be placed on his shoulders, and it will cause him to stumble. It will say to him: 'Destruction to you! Why did you not obey Allāh *ta'ālā*?' This will continue until he himself will cry for his own destruction.'"

"My brother, I have been informed that you purchased a servant (*khādim*). I heard Rasūlullāh

ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam saying: 'A person will remain attached to Allāh *ta'ālā* and He to him as long as he is not served [by a servant]. Once he is served [by others], the accounting [of deeds] becomes obligatory on him.' [My wife], Umm ad-Dardā' asked me for a servant at a time when I was quite wealthy. But I disapproved of it because of the accounting [of deeds] which I heard about."

"My brother, do not be deluded into thinking that you are a Companion of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. We have lived a long time after his departure, and Allāh *ta'ālā* alone knows what we attained after his departure."[1]

The severity of the accounting of deeds

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I was a businessman when Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was commissioned as a Prophet of Allāh *ta'ālā*. I tried to combine worship with business but the two could not combine. So I gave up my business and devoted myself to worship."

"I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is Abū ad-Dardā's life, I do not even wish I had a shop today which is right outside the musjid so that I do not miss a single ṣalāh, wherein I make a profit of forty dīnārs daily, and give all of it as charity in Allāh's cause."

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١/٣٢٠.

was asked: "O Abū Dardā'! What do you ake about this?"

replied: "The severity of the accounting of eds."[1]

part of you departs every day

ū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

man! Tread the earth with your feet because it soon become your grave. O man! You are rely a collection of days. A part of you departs ith each passing day. O man! You have been stroying your life-span ever since your mother ve birth to you."[2]

o not be the fourth

ū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

'Leave in the morning as an *'ālim*, a student, or a rson who is going to listen attentively [to owledge which is imparted]. But do not be the urth, or else you will be destroyed."

l-Ḥasan *raḥimahullāh* said: "The fourth is a *ubtadi'* (one who practices *bid'ah* – novations)."[3]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١/٢٠٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١/١٦٧.

[2] الزهد الكبير برقم ٥١١.

[3] صفة الصفوة ١/٣١٩.

There is no good in the riffraff

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"People are divided into three categories: an *'ālim*, a student, and the third are the riffraff – there is no good in them."[1]

He also said:

"The *'ālim* and the student are partners in good. And all other people are the riffraff in whom there is no good."[2]

Competing in acts of obedience

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is no greatness in having a lot of wealth and children. Rather greatness lies in your being very forbearing, possessing a lot of knowledge, and in competing with people in worshipping Allāh *ta'ālā*. And when you do good, you thank Allāh *ta'ālā*. When you do wrong, you seek forgiveness from Allāh *ta'ālā*."[3]

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٢.
2 إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٧.
3 حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٢، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٩.

The door is open

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The one who frequents the doors of kings will have to stand and sit [he will have to demean himself]. The one who finds a door shut, will find an open door next to it. When he make *du'ā'* [at this door], his *du'ā'* will be accepted. And when he begs, he will be given."[1] [This is the door of Allāh *ta'ālā*].

Have love for the people of knowledge

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Seek knowledge. If you do not seek it, have love for those who possess knowledge (the *'ulamā'*). If you do not love them, then do not detest them."[2]

Desires and deeds

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a man gets up in the morning, his desires and deeds combine. If his deeds are subservient to his desires, it is an evil day for him. But if his desires are subservient to his deeds, it is a good day for him."[3]

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1 العقد الفريد ١\٧٤.
2 الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٠.
3 صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٢.

The scattering of the heart

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from the scattering of the heart."

He was asked: "What is the scattering of the heart?"

He replied: "When it is placed in every deviated valley [it is easily influenced towards evil]."[1]

Sins in privacy

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person should be cautious of the hearts of believers detesting him without his perceiving it."

He was asked: "How does that happen?"

He replied: "A person becomes involved in disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā* in privacy. And so, Allāh *ta'ālā* casts loathing towards him in the hearts of the believers without his perceiving it."[2]

Pick up spikes of grain

Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "If I become needy after you pass away, must I eat from charity?"

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٣.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٢.

He replied: "No. You must work and eat from your earnings."

She asked: "What if I am too weak to work?"

He replied: "You must pick up spikes of grain [and eat them], but do not eat from charity."[1]

Those with the lightest load

Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* complained to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*, so he said:

"Impose patience on yourself because there is a difficult pass ahead of us, and only those with the lightest load will be able to cross it."[2]

Knowledge and action

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"One time destruction to the person who does not know. Had Allāh willed, he would have known it. Seven times destruction to the person who knows but does not practise."[3]

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٢٥.

Imām Aḥmad *raḥimahullāh* narrates the above as follows: "When you are need, you must walk behind those who are harvesting grain and see what falls [from their bags of grain]. You must pick it up, grind it into flour and eat it. But do not ask anything from people. (*az-Zuhd*, p. 175)

[2] العقد الفريد ٣\١٢٥.

[3] صفة الصفوة ١\٣١٨.

He also said:

"The thing which I fear most is when I am made to stand for the accounting of deeds and I am asked: 'You had knowledge, but how much did you practise on the knowledge which you had?'"[1]

Where will her *Dīn* be on that day?

Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah sent a proposal to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* for his daughter, ad-Dardā', but he refused the proposal. One of those who was sitting there said: "May Allāh make you prosperous, will you permit me to marry her?"

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Is it so far-fetched!?"

The man said: "So permit me, may Allāh make you prosperous."

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Yes."

The man asked for her hand in marriage, and Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* got his daughter married to him.

People began speaking among themselves: "Yazīd sent a proposal to Abū ad-Dardā' but he refused. Yet, when one of the poor Muslims proposed, he accepted his proposal."

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1 الزهد للإمام أحمد ص ١٧٠.

So Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "I was more concerned about ad-Dardā's welfare. Do you think I am not concerned about her? [If she were to get married to Yazīd] and she had attendants at her beck and call, and she looked at the rooms which dazzle her eyes [with all the comforts which she sees], where will her *Dīn* be on that day?"[1]

Silence

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Your ears are twice your mouth – you have two ears and one mouth so that you may listen more than what you talk."[2]

When an *'ālim* slips

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"What I really fear for you is when an *'ālim* slips, and a hypocrite argues with the Qur'ān. Whereas the Qur'ān is true, and there is a clear light over the Qur'ān."[3]

One hundred clerks

Someone said to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Abū Sa'īd ibn Munabbih has set free one hundred clerks."

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧١.

2 العقد الفريد ٢\٢٨٤.

3 حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٩.

He said: "One hundred clerks from a person's wealth is a very large number. But if you want, I can tell you of something superior to this: your *īmān* remaining attached to you by night and day, and your tongue remaining moist with the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*."[1]

The remembrance of Allāh

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I prefer saying *Allāhu Akbar* 100 times to giving 100 dīnārs in charity."

He said: "Those whose tongues are moist with the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* will enter Paradise while they are smiling."

He said: "Do you want to know your best deed, the one which is most beloved to your Allāh, which would elevate your ranks the most, which is better than fighting against your enemy in which they kill you and you kill them, and better than giving dirhams and dīnārs in charity?"

They asked: "What is it, O Abū ad-Dardā'!"

He said: "The remembrance of Allāh. And the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest."[2]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص ١٧٠.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٥و١٧٦.

I fear drowning

Someone said to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Make *duʿā'* for us."

He replied: "I cannot swim well and I fear drowning."[1]

Harmony between husband and wife

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his wife:

"When you see me angry, you must do things to make me happy. When I see you angry, I will do things to make you happy."[2]

Starvation from knowledge

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I fear a hidden desire in a bounty which diverts your attention. This will be when you are satiated with food and are starving from knowledge."

The quick approach of death

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The best of you is the one who says to his friend: 'Come, let us fast before we die.' The worst of you is the one who says to his friend: 'Come, let us eat, drink and enjoy ourselves before we die.'"

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٨، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٥.

[2] العقد الفريد ٦\١٢٩.

He said: "One hundred clerks from a person's wealth is a very large number. But if you want, I can tell you of something superior to this: your *īmān* remaining attached to you by night and day, and your tongue remaining moist with the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*."[1]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص ١٧٠.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٥و١٧٦.

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٨، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٥.

[2] العقد الفريد ٦\١٢٩.

Buildings

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* passed by some people who were constructing a building, so he said:

"You are renovating this world whereas Allāh *ta'ālā* wills its destruction. And Allāh's will always supersedes."

Mak-ḥūl said: "Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* used to go to ruined buildings and say: 'O ruined buildings! Where have the destroyed nations of the past gone to?'"

The wealthy

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O assembly of wealthy people! Save yourselves from the heat of the Hell-fire by spending your wealth in Allāh's cause before you and I become equal in it. That is, if you do not spend your wealth, you will be merely looking at it. And those who do not have wealth also merely look at the wealth of the wealthy. [In this way, the wealthy and the poor will be equal]."[1]

A bounty

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

[1] هذا القول وما قبله من حلية الأولياء ١\٢١٨.

"Whenever people cause me a calamity on any day, I believe there is certainly a bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* in it."[1]

Advice

A man said to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*: "Teach me something through which Allāh *ta'ālā* will benefit me."

He said: "There are two, three, four and five things which if a person does, Allāh *ta'ālā* will reward him with high ranks:

1. Eat only what is pure and wholesome.
2. Earn only what is pure and wholesome.
3. Permit only the pure and wholesome into your house.
4. Beg of Allāh *ta'ālā* to provide you with sustenance one day after the other.
5. When you get up in the morning, consider yourself to be among the dead – as if you have already joined them.
6. Hand over your honour and dignity to Allāh *ta'ālā*, and if anyone swears you, is abusive to you, or fights with you, leave him for Allāh's sake.

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٢٠.

7. When you do wrong, seek forgiveness from Allāh ta'ālā.[1]

We have an abode for which we are accumulating

Some guests went to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*. One of them passed the night on a felt blanket while another passed the night in the clothes he was wearing.

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* went to them the next morning and noticed how they spent the night. So he said: "We have an abode for which we are accumulating and to which we are to return."[2]

For an hour like mine

Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* relates that when Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was on his death-bed, he began saying: "Who is going to do for a day like mine? Who is going to do for an hour like mine? Who is going to do for a sleeping place like mine?" He then said: "We shall overturn their hearts and their eyes just as they did not believe in the signs the first time." (Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 110)[3]

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[1] أخلاق حملة القرآن، ص ٢٠٠.
[2] أخلاق حملة القرآن، ص ٢٠٢.
[3] أسد الغابة، ٥/ ٢٠٠.

A mark of intelligence

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A mark of a person's intelligence is his kindness in his way of life."

He also said: "The mark of a man's intelligence is his walking, entering, leaving, and sitting with people of knowledge (*'ulamā'*)."

The list of foolish people

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"How excellent is the sleep and eating of the intelligent ones! How they fault the remaining wake and fasting of foolish people! An atom's weight of good performed by a man of piety and conviction is greater, superior to, and better than mountains of worship of those who are arrogant."[1]

Was it not for three things

Ḥiṭṭān ibn Khulayd said: Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Were it not for three things, I would not want to remain in this world."

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[1] This means that Allāh *ta'ālā* does not look at the amount of fasting and spending the night in worship. Rather, he looks at piety which is in the heart. And so, piety is the measure of a Muslim.

I asked: "What are they?"

He replied:

(1) "Placing my facing in prostration before my Allāh during hours of the day and night as a way of sending forward for my life [in the Hereafter].

(2) Feeling thirsty in the heat of the afternoon [when I am fasting].

(3) Sitting in the company of people who select topics for discussion as fruit are selected. [That is, they discuss matters of intelligence and knowledge].

Perfection in *taqwā* is when a servant is fearful of Allāh *ta'ālā* to the extent of fearing Him even with regard to an atom's weight. So much so that he leaves out a thing which is lawful out of fear that it may be unlawful. This fear comes as a barrier between himself and what is unlawful.

Allāh *ta'ālā* explained to His servants their lot and destiny. He says: 'Whoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it. Whoever does an atom's weight of evil shall see it.' So do not disregard abstaining from the most insignificant evil, and do not disregard doing the most insignificant good deed."[1]

[1] الزهد الكبير برقم ٨٧٠.

The tongue

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is no part of a believer which is more beloved to Allāh *ta'ālā* than his tongue. He will admit him into Paradise through it. There is no part of an unbeliever which is more abhorred by Allāh *ta'ālā* than his tongue. He will cast him into Hell through it."[1]

Following desires

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to the people of Damascus:

"Are you content with filling yourselves with wheat bread year after year, while Allāh *ta'ālā* is not even remembered in your meetings? How is it your *'ulamā'* are departing and the ignorant ones are not seeking knowledge? Had your *'ulamā'* wanted, they would have increased, and had your ignorant people searched for knowledge, they would have found it."

"I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, no nation was destroyed except for having followed its desires and considering itself to be pure and pious."[2]

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٣.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٢٢، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٧٨.

Desire which resulted in grief

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Many a person thinks he is honouring his self when he is really dishonouring it."

"Many a desire fulfilled in a single moment results in a long grief for the person."[1]

The gift of *salām*

A person said to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "So and so person conveys *salām* to you."

He replied: "It is an excellent gift, and a light weight to carry."[2]

Allāh's pleasure and people's pleasure

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When a person seeks Allāh's pleasure even if it means earning the displeasure of people, Allāh suffices him from the needs of people. When a person seeks people's pleasure while earning Allāh's displeasure, Allāh *taʿālā* leaves him to the people."[3]

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[1] الزهد الكبير برقم ٣٤٤.

[2] البيان والتبيين ١٠٢\٢.

[3] العقد الفريد ٦٤\١.

Building without a need

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When a person refuses to pay his dues [obligations to Allāh *taʿālā*] from his wealth, Allāh destroys his wealth in water and soil [Allāh causes him to waste it on buildings]."[1]

Lame love

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Our wealthy brothers have not been fair with us. One of them says to me: 'O Abū ad-Dardā'! I love you for Allāh's sake.' But when I seek anything of this world from him, he leaves me and flees."

"It is sufficient honour for us when the wealthy run to us when they are in difficulty, and we do not run to them."[2]

We and the wealthy

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The wealthy eat and we also eat. They drink and we drink. They wear and we also wear. They have extra possessions which they look at. We also join them in looking at their possessions. But they will

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[1] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٦٩.

[2] تنبيه المغترين ص١٩٤.

have to give an account for their possessions while we will be absolved of it."[1]

Do not abandon your brother

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If your brother changes and diverts from the condition in which he was, do not abandon him because of that. Your brother goes wayward at times, and comes onto the path at times."[2]

The sign of an ignorant person

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There are three signs of an ignorant person: self-conceit, speaking excessively in matters which do not concern him, prohibiting something while doing it himself."[3]

People have become thorns

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I saw people who were leaves without any thorns. But now, people have become complete thorns with no sign whatsoever of any leaves."[4]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٢٢٨، وتنبيه الغافلين ص١٧٨.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٢٧٤.
[3] العقد الفريد ٢\٢١١، جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٧٣.
[4] تنبيه المغترين ص١٥٦.

The consequence of not enjoining good

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You must certainly enjoin good and forbid evil or else Allāh *ta'ālā* will impose an unjust ruler over you who will neither respect your seniors nor show mercy to your young ones. The best of you will make *du'ā'* against him but the *du'ā'* will not be accepted. You will ask for help but you will not receive it. You will seek forgiveness but you will not be forgiven."[1]

Learning a *mas'alah* (ruling)

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Learning a single *mas'alah* (ruling of the Sharī'ah) is more beloved to me than spending the night in worship."[2]

Abstinence

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Perfection in *taqwā* is when a servant is fearful [of Allāh *ta'ālā*] to the extent of fearing Him even with regard to an atom's weight. So much so that he leaves out something which is lawful out of

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[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٦٣.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٧.

fear that it may be unlawful. This fear comes as a barrier between himself and the Hell-fire."[1]

Companions from another world

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was in the habit of sitting near graves. When someone asked him about it, he said: "I am sitting near people who remind me of my destination, and when I get up and leave them, they do not backbite me."[2]

Admonishing in privacy

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who admonishes his brother in public has actually dishonoured him. And the one who admonishes him in private has actually embellished him."[3]

The eyes

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"O my son! Do not look at everything which you see in people because the one who does this will have to endure lengthy grief and his anger will not subside."

"The one who only acknowledges Allāh's favours in his food and drink has in fact done very little

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\١٦٧.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٣٠٨.
[3] تنبيه الغافلين ص٦٧.

deeds, and his punishment has arrived. The person who is not independent of this world does not really own the world."[1]

The insignificance of this world

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"These are among the signs of how insignificant this world is in the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā*: (1) this is the only place where He is disobeyed, (2) His treasures can only be acquired by discarding this world."[2]

Knowledge and jihād

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The one who thinks that going out to seek knowledge in the morning and evening is not a jihād, then his intellect and opinion are certainly deficient."

He also said: "The reward of a *mujāhid* is certainly recorded for the person who goes to the musjid to learn some good or teach it. He certainly returns with booty [reward]."[3]

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٦.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٣٧٣.
[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٣٨.

Who is the dead man?

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* saw a man in a funeral who was asking [about the identity of the deceased person: "Who is this?"

So Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "This is you, this is you. Allāh *taʿālā* says: 'You are to die, and they are certainly to die [as well].'"[1]

My complaint is my sins

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* fell ill, so his companions went to visit him. They asked him: "O Abū ad-Dardā! What is your complaint?"

He replied: "My complaint is my sins."

They asked: "What do you desire?"

He replied: "I desire Paradise."

They asked: "Should we call a doctor for you?"

He replied: "He is the one who caused me to fall ill."[2]

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٧.
2الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٨.

People walking behind a person

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person will continue going further away from Allāh *taʿālā* as long as he has people walking behind him."[1] (Because this is a sign of pride).

Seeking recreation

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I seek recreation for my self (*nafs*) with a little amusement so that it assists me in the truth."[2]

Knowledge is a sustenance

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Allāh *taʿālā* provides knowledge to the fortunate and deprives the unfortunate of it."[3]

The ignorant are not seeking knowledge

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"How is it I see your *'ulamā'* departing and your ignorant ones not seeking knowledge?! Seek knowledge before it is raised and you waste what you have been entrusted with. I know the evil ones among you better than how a veterinarian knows horses. They are the ones who only pay

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1إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٥٧.
2إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٨١.
3جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٦٨.

zakāh as a debt, who only come for ṣalāh when it is over, and only listen to the Qur'ān when it is forsaken."[1]

Supplicating to Allāh during prosperity

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Supplicate to Allāh ta'ālā during prosperity, perhaps He will accept your supplication during your adversity."[2]

More knowledge makes one more accountable

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who increases in knowledge increases in the pain as well."[3]

Three beliefs of *jāhilīyyah*

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Knowledge is acquired through study, forbearance is acquired by imposing it on one's self, the person who makes an effort to seek good is bestowed with it, and the person who makes an effort to avoid evil is safeguarded against it."

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص١٦٧.

This means: they delay in the payment of zakāh until it becomes a debt on their shoulders, they offer ṣalāh when the time is about to expire, and listen to the Qur'ān when it is recited in a mumbling fashion.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٨.

[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٦٤.

"The person who commits the following three will not inhabit the lofty levels of Paradise – I am not saying he will not go to Paradise: (1) going to fortune tellers, (2) resorting to divining arrows, (3) returning from a journey because of an ill-omen."[1]

Corruption of people

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Were it not for three things, people would have been righteous: (1) greed which is obeyed, (2) desires which are followed, (3) each person is headstrong on his own opinion."[2]

You are constructing what you will not inhabit

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* looked at the people of Ḥimṣ and said:

"Are you not ashamed? You are constructing buildings which you will not inhabit, you are hoping for things which you cannot realize, and you are accumulating what you cannot eat. Nations before you built fortified buildings, accumulated a lot, and had many distant hopes. But their abodes were reduced to graves, their

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٦٤.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٩.

hopes were dashed, and whatever they accumulated was ruined."[1]

The worst person

Abū ad-Dardā' raḍiyallāhu 'anhu said:

"The worst person in Allāh's sight on the day of Resurrection will be an 'ālim from whose knowledge no benefit was derived."[2]

Earning what is lawful

Abū ad-Dardā' raḍiyallāhu 'anhu said:

"Earning wealth from lawful means is very rare."

"The person who earns through unlawful means but spends it in rightful places, and the one who earns through lawful means but spends it in unlawful places are both suffering from a chronic disease."

"As for the person who earns through lawful means and spends it in rightful places – he is washing off his sins just as water washes off soil from a rock."[3]

It is sufficient

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

1تنبيه الغافلين ص١٦٩.
2جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٩٦.
3الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧١.

"To continue fighting is sufficient to render you a sinner. To continue disputing is sufficient to render you a wrongdoer. To continue relating whatever you hear – except what is connected to Allāh ta'ālā – is sufficient to render you a liar."[1]

Piety and knowledge

Abū ad-Dardā' raḍiyallāhu 'anhu said:

"You cannot be a taqīy (pious person) until you are an 'ālim. You cannot be embellished through knowledge unless you practise on it."[2]

Excellence in livelihood

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A mark of a person's intelligence is his effort to rectify his livelihood."

He also said: "Excellence in one's livelihood comes from excellence of one's *Dīn*, and excellence of one's *Dīn* comes from excellence of one's intellect."[3]

He does not know what is illness

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* saw a man and was astonished by his skin. So he asked him: "Have you never fallen ill?"

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٢.
2جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٩.
3جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١٩.

He replied: "No."

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "How unfortunate, he is dying because of his sins."[1]

Half of knowledge

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person says: 'I do not know', with regard to what he does not know, then this is half of knowledge."[2]

Waiting for deliverance

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When you are faced with a matter which you do not have the power against, then remain patient and wait for deliverance from Allāh *ta'ālā*."[3]

Evils

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

1. Doubt [in matters of *īmān*] is part of unbelief (*kufr*).

2. Wailing over the dead is a practice of *jāhilīyyah*.

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٢.

This means that illness is an atonement for sins.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٦٨.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٢.

3. Poetry is one of the instruments of Satan.

4. Treachery in the spoils of war is an ember from Hell.

5. Alcohol is the source of all sin.

6. Youth is a part of madness.[1]

7. Women are the traps of Satan.

8. Pride is worse than evil.

9. The worst food is to devour the wealth of an orphan. And the worst earning is the earning of usury (interest).

10. The fortunate person is the one who takes admonition from others. The unfortunate person is the one who was unfortunate from the time he was conceived in his mother's womb.[2]

Hypocritical humility

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from hypocritical humility."

People asked: "What is hypocritical humility?"

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[1] This is a time when man is inclined towards desires and is daring [without concern for dangers]. As though he has lost his mind.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٥.

He said: "When a person appears to be humble but the heart is not."[1]

The next generation is not seeking knowledge

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"How is it I see your *ʿulamā'* are dying but your ignorant people are not seeking knowledge? I fear the former departing and the latter not seeking knowledge. If an *ʿālim* seeks knowledge, his knowledge will increase. If an ignorant person seeks knowledge, he will find knowledge before him. How is it I see you satisfied with food but starving from knowledge."[2]

Three essential prerequisites

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Three things are the essential prerequisites of man:

(1) Do not complain about your misery.

(2) Do not make mention of your pain.

(3) Do not purify yourself [do not speak highly of your self, do not praise yourself].[3]

1الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٦.
2جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٢٤٦.
3الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٧٨.

The keys to goodness

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There are people who are keys to goodness, and locks for evil. They will be rewarded for it. And there are people who are keys to evil, and locks for goodness. They will have to bear the burden of this."[1]

An abode for the one who has no abode

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"This world is an abode for the one who has no abode [in the Hereafter]. The one who has no intelligence accumulates for this world."[2]

Learn to remain silent

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Learn to remain silent just as you learn to speak. Silence is a mark of great forbearance. Be more desirous to remain silent than to speak. Do not speak on matters which do not concern you. Do not laugh when the occasion does not demand it. Do not go to something without any real need for it."[3]

1كنز العمال ٣\٦٩٦ برقم ٨٤٩٢.
2كنز العمال ٢\٧٢٧ برقم ٨٥٨٩.
3كنز العمال ٣\٧٧٠ برقم ٨٧٠٣.

Deeply-embedded love for this world

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person's self (*nafs*) will remain energetic in its love for a thing even when his collarbones join due to old age. But those whose hearts Allāh *taʿālā* tested for the Hereafter are excluded from this, and they are very few in number."[1]

[1] أكنز العمال ١٦\٢٢٢ برقم ٤٤٢٤٥.

SALMĀN AL-FĀRSĪ *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*

Knowledge is plentiful

Salmān[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Knowledge is plentiful while life is short. So seek knowledge which you will need in matters of your *Dīn* and leave aside all else – do not spend your efforts in learning it."[2]

He used to eat from what his hands earned

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I love to eat from the earnings of my hands."[3]

[1] He is Salmān al-Fārsī, Abū 'Abdillāh. He is also known as Salmān ibn al-Islam and Salmān al-Khayr. He was originally from Rāmhurmuz. He had heard about a Prophet who is going to be commissioned soon, so he went in search of him. But he was captured as a slave, sold in Madīnah and worked as a slave. The first battle which he took part in was the battle of Khandaq. He participated in the conquest of Iraq and was made governor of al-Madā'in. He passed away there during the caliphate of 'Uthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٨٠.

[3] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\١٦١.

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to buy palm leaves for one dirham, weave them [into mats, baskets, etc.] and sell them for three dirhams. He would use the three dirhams as follows: one dirham to buy palm leaves, one dirham would

Humility

Jarīr narrates that Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O Jarīr! Humble yourself for Allāh's sake because the one who humbles himself for His sake in this world, Allāh *taʿālā* will elevate him in the Hereafter."

"O Jarīr! Do you know what is the cause of darkness on the day of Resurrection?"

I replied: "No."

He said: "People oppressing and wronging each other in this world."

He then took a small twig which I could hardly see between his fingers and said: "O Jarīr! If you were to look for a twig like this in Paradise you will not find it."

I said: "O Abū 'Abdillāh! What about the date palms and trees [of Paradise]?"

He said: "Their roots and bases will be of pearls and gold, and their crests will be laden with fruit."[1]

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be spent on his family, and one dirham would be given in charity. (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 1, p. 278)

[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٨٠.

Excessive speech

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Those with the most sins on the day of Resurrection will be those who speak the most in matters concerning disobedience to Allāh *taʿālā*."[1]

Noble ancestry

Someone asked Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "What is your ancestry?"

He replied: "My nobility lies in my *Dīn*, and my ancestry is soil. I was created from soil and I will return to soil. I will then be resurrected and proceed towards the scales [for the weighing of my deeds]. If my scales are weighty, my ancestry will indeed be very noble. And how honourable I will be in the sight of my Allāh who will admit me into Paradise! But if my scales are light, my ancestry will definitely be very ignoble. And how despicable I will be in the sight of my Allāh who will punish me – unless He showers forgiveness and mercy over my sins."[2]

Knowledge does not decrease

A man from the Banū 'Abas accompanied Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. This man drank some water from the Tigris River.

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٢، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٣.

[2] الزهد الكبير برقم ٧٦٣.

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him: "Go and drink again."

He replied: "My thirst is quenched."

He said: "Do you think the little water which you drank from this [mighty] river reduced its water?"

He replied: "How can what I drank reduce its water?"

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "In like manner, knowledge does not decrease. So seek knowledge which would be of benefit to you."[1]

Three categories of people

Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb relates that he spent a night with Salmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* to see what worship he engages in. Ṭāriq says: "He got up and began performing ṣalāh in the latter part of the night." Ṭāriq thought he would see him engaging in more worship, so he mentioned this to him.

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Safeguard the five ṣalāhs because they atone for sins provided they are not major sins. When people complete the *'ishā ṣalāh*, they depart in three ways:

(1) The one who has a record against him and nothing in his favour.

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\١٨٨، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٥٦.

(2) The one who has a record in his favour and nothing against him.

(3) The one who has no record in his favour and nothing against him.

The first one makes use of the darkness of the night and the obliviousness of people to get engrossed in sin. He has a record against him and nothing in his favour.

The second one makes use of the darkness of the night and the obliviousness of people to stand up in prayer. He has a record in his favour and nothing against him.

The third one performed ṣalāh and went to sleep. He has no record in his favour and nothing against him.

Beware of overburdening yourself. Impose moderation and continuity [in your worship]."[1]

Flowery speech

Some people in al-Madā'in heard that Salmān *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* is in the musjid, so they went in droves to him, until about 1000 assembled around him.

He stood up and began saying: "Sit down, sit down."

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\١٨٩، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٥٧.

When they sat down, he opened Sūrah Yūsuf and began reading it. So the people began parting and leaving until only about 100 were left. Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* became angry and said: "You wanted to hear some embellished and flowery speech? Then when I started reading the Book of Allāh *taʿālā* to you, you departed!!"[1]

The land does not sanctify anyone

Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Salmān al-Fārsī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* saying: "Come to the sanctified land [Bayt al-Maqdis]."

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote a reply: "The land does not sanctify anyone. It is man's actions which sanctify him. I have heard that you have been appointed as a doctor.[2] If you are able to treat people, then good for you. But if you are merely posing as a doctor [without really being one], then beware of killing anyone because you will enter the Hell-fire for it."

So when Abū ad-Dardā' passed judgement between two people and they turned to depart, he would look at them and say: "By Allāh, I am

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٣.

[2] In other words, you have been appointed as a judge to sort out peoples' social problems and disputes just as a doctor treats illnesses.

merely posing as a doctor. Come back and relate your story to me once again."[1]

When modesty and shame is removed

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When Allāh *taʿālā* wills bad or destruction for a person, He removes modesty from him. You will therefore find him to be detestable and despicable."

"When he is detestable and despicable, mercy is removed from him. And so, you will find him to be stern and hard-hearted. When this happens, trustworthiness is removed from him. This will result in his becoming treacherous and deceitful. When his happens, the rope of Islam is removed from his neck. This will result in his becoming accursed and doomed."[2]

The *salām* (Islamic greeting) is a trust

A man came to Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and said: "O Abū Abdillāh! Such and such person conveys *salām* to you."

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٨١.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٤، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٤.

He replied: "Listen! Had you not conveyed it to me it would have been a trust around your neck [for which you would have been accountable]."[1]

The heart and the body

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The similitude of the heart and body is like a person who is paralysed and one who is blind. The paralysed man says: 'I see a date but I cannot stand up to get it, so carry me up.' The blind man carries him, he eats the date and also feeds it to the blind man."[2]

A wise word from an unbeliever

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* [were travelling] and stopped over by a Nibṭī woman. They asked her: "Is there a pure place where we can perform ṣalāh?"

She replied: "Purify your heart."

One of them said to the other: "Look at her! A wise word from the heart of an unbeliever."[3]

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[1] البيان والتبيين ٢\١٠٢.

[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٨٠.

[3] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٥.

Illness is a form of admonishment

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* went to visit one of his friends from Kindah who had fallen ill, and said to him:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* tests His believing servant with a misery, then gives him well-being. This becomes an atonement for his past sins, and a means for him to take admonition for the future."

"Allāh *ta'ālā* tests His immoral servant with a misery, then cures him. This causes him to become like a camel whose owner had tied and then released. He does not know why his owner tied him and why he released him."[1]

Things which caused me to laugh and cry

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Three things caused me to laugh, and three things caused me to cry."

I laughed at:

(1) A person who has hopes in this world while death is pursuing him.

(2) A person who is heedless, whereas Allāh is fully aware of him.

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٨٢.

(3) A person who laughs with his mouth wide open, but does not know whether Allāh is angry with him or pleased with him.

I cried over:

(1) The separation from my beloveds - Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his companions.

(2) The terrifying scene at the time when I will have to experience the pangs of death.

(3) When I will stand before Allāh *taʿālā*, not knowing whether I will be going towards the Hell-fire or towards Paradise."[1]

When the soul gets its food

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* went into the market and bought some food. Zayd ibn Ṣauḥān said to him: "O Abū ʿAbdillāh! Are you doing this while you are a Companion of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*!?"

He replied: "When the soul gets its food, it is satisfied, it becomes free for worship, and evil whisperings despair of having any influence on it."[2]

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٥.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٢٨٢.

A believer and desires

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The similitude of a believer in this world is like a sick man who has his doctor with him. The doctor knows his illness and the medicine which will treat him. When he desires something which will be harmful to him, the doctor refuses to give it to him, and says: 'Do not even go near it because if you consume it, it will destroy you.' The doctor continues prohibiting him until he is fully cured from his ailment."

"Similar is the case of a believer – he desires many things which others have been blessed with. But Allāh *taʿālā* does not give them to him and keeps him away from them until He takes his life away and admits him into Paradise."[1]

An offering of a fly

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A man entered Paradise on account of a fly, and another entered Hell because of a fly."

People asked: "How did that happen?"

He replied: "Two men from one of the past nations came across some people with their idol.

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٧، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٥.

Whenever anyone came to them, he had to make an offering to the idol."

The people said to one of them: "Make an offering."

He replied: "I do not have anything."

They said: "Give anything, even if it is a fly."

So he gave a fly as an offering, and continued on his way. He entered Hell because of this.

They said to the other man: "Make an offering."

He replied: "I cannot make an offering to anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*."

So they killed him, and he entered Paradise.[1]

Follow an evil deed with a good deed

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When you commit an evil in privacy, follow it with a good deed in privacy. When you commit an evil in public, follow it with a good deed in public. In this way, the latter will be an atonement for the former."[2]

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٣.
[2] المسند الصغير ١\٢٨٠.

The external and the internal

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Every person has an external and an internal. When a person rectifies his external, Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies his internal. When a person corrupts his external, Allāh *taʿālā* corrupts his internal."[1]

Silence and honesty

A man came to Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and said: "Advise me."

He said: "Do not speak."

The man said: "A person who is living among people cannot abstain from speaking."

He said: "If you have to speak, speak what is right or remain silent."

The man said: "Give me more advice."

He said: "Do not become angry."

The man said: "I am overcome and unable to control myself."

He said: "When you become angry, restrain your tongue and hand."

The man said: "Give me more advice."

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[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٢٠٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\١٦٣.

He said: "Do not intermingle with people."

The man said: "It is not possible for a person who lives among people not to intermingle with them."

He said: "If you have to intermingle with them, speak the truth and fulfil your trusts."[1]

The angels' intercession for a person making *du'ā'*

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A person used to make *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* during times of prosperity. He is then afflicted by adversity. Now when he makes *du'ā'*, the angels say: 'We recognize this voice which is now coming from a weak man.' They intercede in his favour."

"If a person was not in the habit of making *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* during times of prosperity, and now makes *du'ā'* when he is afflicted by adversity, the angels say: 'We do not recognize this voice which is coming from a weak man.' They do not intercede in his favour."[2]

A letter to Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu*

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

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[1] اسنة الصفوة ١\٢٨١.

[2] الصفة الصفوة ١\٢٨١.

"You will never acquire what you want unless you cast aside what you desire. You will never acquire what you hope for unless you exercise patience over what you dislike."

"Your speech should therefore be the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*, your silence must be for reflection, and your looking must be for admonishment. This world is constantly shifting and its splendour is changing, so do not be deceived by it. Make the musjid your house. Peace be to you."[1]

Moderation and continuity

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Adhere to moderation and continuity in your deeds, and you will be the horse which wins."[2]

Abstinence

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If you befriend a wealthy person, beware of asking him anything if you want to maintain your position with him. This is because begging is a blight on the face of the beggar. The giver is

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[1] العقد الفريد ٣\١١٠.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\١٩٩.

forced to think highly of the person who returns what is given to him."[1]

Obligatory and optional acts

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who engages in excessive optional acts while leaving out the obligatory ones is like a trader who loses his capital while he is seeking profits."[2]

The one with the most sins

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The one with the most sins on the day of Resurrection will be the one who used to speak the most in matters of disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*."[3]

The appearance of knowledge

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"A time will soon come when knowledge will be in the open but practising on it will be hidden; people will maintain mutual contact verbally but their hearts will be cut off from each other. When

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[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٥١.

[2] تنبيه المغترين ص١٥٩.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٢٥٨.

they do this, Allāh *ta'ālā* will set a seal on their hearts, ears and eyes."[1]

The fall of an *'ālim*

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"What will you do in the following three situations: (1) when an *'ālim* errs, (2) when a hypocrite disputes through the Qur'ān, (3) when the world chops off your necks [i.e. when you are reduced to poverty]?"

"As for the *'ālim*, do not hand over matters of your *Dīn* to him."

"As for the hypocrite who disputes through the Qur'ān, you should know that the Qur'ān has a light like the light of the road. So accept from him what you recognize as being from the Qur'ān, and what you do not recognize, leave it to Allāh *ta'ālā*."

"As for the world chopping off your necks, look at those who are in a worse off condition than you, and do not look at those who are in a better condition than you."[2]

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١١.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\١٣٦.

Dislike for leadership

Someone asked Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "What do you dislike about leadership?"

He replied: "It is very sweet when one is 'breast-fed' with it, but very bitter when one is 'weaned' off it."[1]

Knowledge is like springs

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"Knowledge is like springs which people crowd, and this person and that person and many others are filled with it. Thus, Allāh *taʿālā* enables many people to benefit from it. Words of wisdom which are not uttered are like a body without a soul. Knowledge which does not emanate [from a person] is like a treasure which is not spent."

"The similitude of an *ʿālim* is like a man who holds a lamp on a dark road. All those who pass by obtain light from it, and each of them makes *duʿā'* in his favour."[2]

If only the salt contained thyme

Abū Wā'il relates: "My friend and I went to visit Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He offered us barley

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[1] طبقات ابن سعد ٤\٣٦٣.

[2] أخرجه الدارمي برقم ٥٥٧.

bread and crushed salt. My friend said: 'This salt would have been excellent if it had thyme.'"

"Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* left with his washing utensil and mortgaged it for thyme.[1] [He returned with the thyme] and when we all completed eating, my friend said: 'All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for making us content with what He gave us to eat.'"

"So Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: 'Had you been content with what you were given to eat, my washing utensil would not have been mortgaged.'"[2]

Boasting

One day, the Quraysh were boasting [about their ancestry] before Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. So he said:

"But I was created from a dirty drop [of semen], I will then become a rotting corpse, and then proceed towards the scale [of deeds]. If my scale is heavy, I am a noble person. If my scale is light, I am a wretched and ignoble person."[3]

Passing on knowledge

Salmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

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[1] He did not have any money to buy the thyme, that is why he mortgaged his washing utensil.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\٥٨.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٤٤.

"People will continue experiencing goodness as long as the first generation teaches the next. But if the first departs before the next can learn, they will be destroyed."[1]

Farewell advice

Sa'd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* went to visit Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, and the latter began to cry. So Sa'd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him:

"O Abū 'Abdillāh! Why are you crying? Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was pleased with you when he passed away. You will go to him at the Fount [the Haud-e-Kauthar], and you will meet your companions."

Salmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Listen! I am neither crying out of fear for death nor desire to remain in this world. Rather, it is because Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* had said to us: 'Your possessions in this world should be like what a rider carries [for his journey].' Now look at all these possessions around me."

Sa'd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* says: "The only items which he had around him were a vessel to wash clothes, a pair of tweezers and a washing utensil."

So Sa'd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said to him: "O Abū 'Abdillāh! Give us some advice which we could hold on to after you."

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٨٩.

He said: "O Sa'd! Remember Allāh *ta'ālā* when you intend anything, remember Him when you distribute anything with your hand, and remember Him when you pass a decision."[1]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٩٠.

ZAYD IBN THĀBIT
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

The conveyer of the heart

Zayd ibn Thābit[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Ubayy ibn Kaʿb *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

"Allāh *taʿālā* made the tongue a conveyer for the heart, and the heart a vessel and supervisor. The tongue submits to the instructions of the heart. If the heart is in line with the tongue, the statement will be balanced and the tongue will not stutter and falter. A person cannot be forbearing if his heart is not in front of his tongue. If a person leaves his speech to his tongue while his heart is not in agreement, it will result in his humiliation.

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[1] Zayd ibn Thābit ibn aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī an-Najjārī. He was a scribe of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, recording revelation for him, the senior teacher of the readers [of the Qur'ān], those proficient with the laws of inheritance, and the muftī of Madīnah. His father was killed in the battle of Buʿāth. Zayd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was eleven years old when Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* emigrated to Madīnah. He had the honour of combining knowledge and companionship [with Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*]. The battle of Khandaq was the first battle in which he took part. He learnt the ʿIbrānī language by the instruction of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He was the one who compiled the Qur'ān for the first time during the era of Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He possesses many virtues and merits. He passed away in 45 A.H., (and in 51 A.H. according to some scholars). May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

If a person were to weigh his speech with his actions, they will coincide with his speech.

He thinks: Did you see a miserly who is only generous with words and counts his deeds as favours. This happens when his tongue is in front of his heart.

He thinks: Do you see honour and respect in a person if he does not uphold what he says, and then follows it? He says what he says while knowing it is his duty to say it at the time when he utters it.

He is not too interested in looking at the faults of others because the one who looks at the faults of others considers his own faults to be insignificant. He is like a person who imposes upon himself to do something which he was not ordered to do. May peace be on you."[1]

Shyness

Zayd ibn Thābit *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* came out with the purpose of going for the Jumuʿah ṣalāh. But he saw people returning. So he went into a house. When someone asked him the reason for doing this, he said: "The one who is not shy before people cannot be shy before Allāh *taʿālā*."[2]

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1 كنز العمال ١٦\٢١٩ برقم ٤٤٢٤.

2 سير أعلام النبلاء ٢\٤٣٩.

ABŪ SAʿĪD AL-KHUDRĪ
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

Means of salvation

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Be particular about fear (*taqwā*) of Allāh *taʿālā* because it is the peak of everything."

"Be particular about jihād because it is the monasticism of Islam."

"Be particular about the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* and recitation of the Qur'ān because it is your soul among the angels, and the cause of your remembrance among the inhabitants of earth."

"Be particular about remaining silent except in matters of the truth. If you do this, you will overpower Satan."[1]

Abstain from ostentation

Abū Salamah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* relates: "I said to Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī: 'What do you think of the new things which people introduced with regard to their clothing, drinks, animals of conveyance, and food?'"

He replied: "O my nephew! Drink for the sake of Allāh, eat for the sake of Allāh, and dress for the sake of Allāh. Now if pride, boasting, showing off, or the desire to be heard enters any of this, it is a sin and extravagance. Carry out the domestic tasks in your house which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to carry out in his house."[2]

Deeds which destroy a person

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You are doing deeds which are finer than hair in your sight [i.e. you consider them trivial]. But in the time of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa*

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[1]He is Saʿd ibn Mālik ibn Sinān, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī al-Khazrajī. His father was martyred in the battle of Uḥud. Abū Saʿīd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* took part in the battle of Khandaq and those which followed.
I was presented before Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* before the battle of Uḥud when I was thirteen years old. My father said: "O Rasūlullāh! He has well-rounded bones." Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* began inspecting me [to see if I was old enough to take part in the battle]. He then said: "Send him back." And my father sent me back [I did not take part in this battle].
He was a senior *ʿālim* and muftī of Madīnah. He passed away in 74 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

1سير أعلام النبلاء ٣\ ١٧٠.
2إحياء علوم الدين ٤\ ١٦٠.

sallam, we used to consider them to be from among the deeds which would destroy a person."[1]

The tongue

Abū Sa'īd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When a person gets up in the morning, his body parts submit before his tongue and say: 'Fear Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to us. If you remain upright, we will remain upright. If you become wayward, we will become wayward."[2]

[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٤٣.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد.ص٢٤٣.

ABŪ UMĀMAH AL-BĀHILĪ *radiyallāhu 'anhu*

The suspended scriptures

Abū Umāmah[1] *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Read the Qur'ān and do not be deceived by these suspended scriptures because Allāh *ta'ālā* will not punish a heart which is a vessel for the Qur'ān."[2]

You should do this in your house

Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* saw a person crying in the musjid while he was in prostration. So he said to him:

"O you! You should rather do this in your house."[3]

Intermingling with sinners

Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

[1] His actual name is Sudayy ibn 'Ajalān. He is one of those who pledged allegiance to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* under the tree [on the occasion of Hudaybiyah]. He settled down in Himṣ and was with 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* in the battle of Siffīn. He passed away in 86 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٥٣، والإحياء ١\٣٦٣.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٨٤.

"People from this *ummah* will be resurrected in the form of monkeys and pigs because of their attachment to sinners, and not prohibiting them while they had the power to do so."[1]

Admonition at a grave

Sulaym ibn 'Āmir relates: "We joined a funeral at the Damascus gate, and Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was with us. When he completed performing the *janāzah ṣalāh* and the people began burying the body, Abū Umāmah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

'O people! You are spending your days and nights in an abode wherein you commit both good and evil deeds. Soon you will proceed to another abode, and it is this – and he pointed towards the grave – abode of solitude, darkness, worms and insects, and a constricted and cramped abode except for the one for whom Allāh *ta'ālā* expands. Then from this abode you will proceed to different places on the day of Resurrection.'

'In one of those places, Allāh's order will cover the people resulting some faces to be whitened and others to be blackened. You will then proceed to another place where pitch darkness will envelop the people. Light will then be distributed – the believer will receive it while the unbeliever and hypocrite will receive nothing. A similitude of this

[1] تنبيه المغترين ص١٦٣.

is related by Allāh *ta'ālā* in His Book when He says:

'Or [their deeds are] like the depths of darkness in a deep sea covered by a wave, topped by another wave, overcast by clouds – depths of darkness one above another. When he holds up his hand, he can hardly see it. He to whom Allāh gives no light, shall find no light at all.' (Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 40)

The unbeliever and hypocrite will not be able to obtain any light from the believer just as a blind man cannot obtain any light from the sight of the one who can see.

The male and female hypocrites will say to the believers:

'Wait for us so that we may take some light from you! It will be said to them: 'Go back to your rear and search [for your own] light.' (Sūrah al-Ḥadīd, 57: 13)

They will go back to the place where light is being distributed but will not find anything. They will turn towards the believers but a wall with a door would have been placed between them 'within it will be mercy and on its outside, punishment.' (Sūrah al-Ḥadīd, 57: 13)

The hypocrite will remain at a loss until all the light is distributed and Allāh *taʿālā* will separate the hypocrites from the believers."[1]

Miserliness

Abū Umāmah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"O people! You are more mistaken than the people of *jāhilīyyah*. Allāh *taʿālā* said that if you spend a single dīnar in His cause, He will give you the reward of 700 dīnārs, and 700 dirhams for one single dirham. Yet you are hoarding!"[2]

Useless displays

Sulaymān ibn Ḥabīb said: "We went to visit Abū Umāmah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. But when he saw some silver ornamentation on our swords, he became angry and said:

'Others also conquered places but their swords were not embellished with gold and silver, rather they only had un-tanned leather, lead and steel.'"[3]

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[1] تفسير ابن كثير عند الآية (١٣) من سورة الحديد.

[2] كنز العمال ١٦\٢١٨-٢١٩ برقم ٤٤٢٣٨.

[3] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٢٩٠٩، وابن ماجه برقم ٣٨٠٧.

JUNDUB IBN ʿABDILLĀH AL-BAJALĪ
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

Protect your *Dīn* then yourselves

Jundub al-Bajalī[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Fear Allāh and read the Qur'ān because it is a light for the dark night and a splendour for the day. Then practise on it no matter what difficulties and poverty you have to endure."

"When calamity descends, use your wealth [by spending in Allāh's cause] to defend yourselves."

"When Allāh *taʿālā* sends calamity, use your lives to defend your *Dīn*."

"Remember! A loser is one whose *Dīn* is lost, and a destroyed person is one whose *Dīn* is destroyed."

"Listen! There is no poverty after Paradise, and there is no wealth after the Hell-fire. This is because the one who is imprisoned in the Hell-fire will not be set free, the one who falls in it will not

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[1] He is Jundub ibn ʿAbdillāh al-Bajalī, Abū ʿAbdillāh. He was a young boy during the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He lived in Kūfah and then Basra, when he went to this city with Muṣʿab ibn az-Zubayr. The people of Basra and Kūfah narrated Aḥādīth from him. He lived till around 70 A.H.

be freed, and the one who is burning in it will not be extinguished."

"A Muslim will be prevented entry into Paradise for just a handful of blood which he shed from his Muslim brother. Each time he tries to enter through one of its doors, he will find it repulsing him from it."

"Remember! When a person dies and is buried, his stomach will be the first to decompose. So do not combine filth with the decomposition."

"Fear Allāh *ta'ālā* with regard to your wealth, and desist from shedding [unlawful] blood."[1]

[1] كنز العمال ١٦\٢١٤ برقم ٤٤٢٣٥.

ABŪ HURAYRAH
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

The merit of keeping guard

Abū Hurayrah[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"If you spend three nights as a guard [guarding the Islamic borders], those engaged in worship may continue worshipping as much as they like [you will surpass them in reward]."[2]

Satan is still alive

When Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to go into *sajdah* (prostration), he would seek refuge from committing adultery, stealing, becoming an unbeliever, or committing a major sin.

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[1] His name is ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ṣakhar ad-Dausī. He embraced Islam in the year Khaybar was conquered, remained in the constant company of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and memorized his Aḥādīth. He surpasses all the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* in the number of Aḥādīth which he narrated from Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed him as a zakāh assessor of Bahrain, and Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam appointed him as a deputy *amīr* of Madīnah on more than one occasion. He was jovial by nature, and remained aloof during the disputes among the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*. He performed the *janāzah ṣalāh* of ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā*. He passed away in 59 A.H. in Madīnah. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٦٣.

Someone asked him: "Do you fear you will commit these sins?"

He replied: "How can I feel secure when Satan is still alive? Furthermore, the Turner of the hearts [Allāh *ta'ālā*] can turn my heart as He wills."[1]

A bounty in the hands of an immoral person

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Do not be desirous of a bounty which you see in the hands of an immoral person because there is a fast seeker behind him, i.e. 'Hell. Whenever [the fire] abates, We will rekindle it upon them."[2] (Sūrah al-Isrā'/Banī Isrā'īl,. 17: 97)

When you see six things

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If you see six things, then set free your soul if it is in your hands. I desire death because of these things, and fear they will catch up with me. [They are]:

(1) When foolish people are made rulers.

(2) When rules and regulations are sold [changed for a price].

(3) When the shedding of blood is considered trivial.

[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\١٢٠.

[2] البداية والنهاية ٨\١١٩.

(4) When ties of kinship are severed.

(5) When duties of the police are sold [given to unqualified people at a price].

(6) When you get a generation of people who make the Qur'ān into a musical instrument [they will read it in musical tones]."[1]

Love for death

Abū Salamah relates: "Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* fell ill so I went to visit him and said: "O Allāh! Cure Abū Hurayrah."

He said: "O Allāh! Do not send it back."

He then said: "O Salamah! There will soon come a time when people will desire death more than the finest gold."[2]

Forgotten realities

A man built a house in Madīnah. When he completed building it, Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* passed by while the man was standing at the entrance. The man said: "Wait, O Abū Hurayrah! What should I write on the door of my house?"

Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "Write: 'I am the son of one who is to be destroyed, the

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٨٤.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٨٤.

child of one who is bereft of his mother, and I am gathered for my inheritors.'"[1]

Those who will sit in Allāh's company

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The abstentious in this world and the ascetics are the ones who will sit in Allāh's company tomorrow."[2]

The honour of a believer

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A true believer is more honourable in Allāh's sight than some of the angels who are with Him."[3]

A conversation between two satans

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A satan of a believer and a satan of an unbeliever met. The satan of the unbeliever was well-anointed, fat, and fully-clothed. The satan of the believer was very thin, dishevelled, dusty and naked."

The satan of the unbeliever said to the other: "Why are you so thin?"

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\٣٨٥.

2 الرسالة القشيرة ص١١٢.

3 تنبيه المغترين ص٤٤.

He replied: "I am with a man who takes the name of Allāh when he commences eating. And so, I remain hungry. When he drinks something, he takes the name of Allāh. This causes me to remain thirsty. When he dresses, he takes Allāh's name. So I remain naked. When he applies oil, he takes Allāh's name. So I am left dishevelled."

The satan of the unbeliever said: "But I am with a man who does not do any of these things. This is why I join him in his food, drink and clothes."[1]

A cold booty

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Do you want to know about a cold booty [booty which is acquired without much effort]?"

People asked: "What is it, O Abū Hurayrah?"

He said: "Keeping fast in winter [because the days are short, making it easy for a person to fast and still obtain rewards]."[2]

Misery caused by the stomach

Farqad as-Sabakhī said: "When Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to perform *ṭawāf*, he would say: 'O the pain which my stomach causes

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1 إحياء علوم الدين ٣\١٥٥.

2 الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢١.

to me! When I fill it, it overstuffs me. When I keep it hungry, it is abusive to me.'"[1]

Piety

A man asked Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "What is *taqwā*?"

He replied: "Did you ever walk on a thorny path?"

The man said: "Yes."

He asked: "How did you tread such a path?"

The man said: "When I saw any thorns, I moved away from them, went around them, or retracted from them."

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "That is *taqwā*."[2]

People have departed

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"People (*nās*) have departed, and *nasnās* have remained."

Someone asked him: "What is *nasnās*?"

He replied: "Those who resemble *nās* (people) but are not *nās*."[1]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢٢، والحلية ١\٣٨٢.

[2] الزهد الكبير للبيهقي برقم ٩٦٣.

A burdensome person

When Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* considered a person to be burdensome and annoying, he would say: "O Allāh, forgive him and release us from him [let us not have anything to do with him]."[2]

A little and a lot

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The following is written in the Taurāh: 'If anything is done for My pleasure, a little of it is a lot in My sight. If anything is done for others, a lot of it is little in My sight.'"[3]

The *amīr* is carrying a bundle of firewood

Thaʿlabah ibn Abī Mālik al-Quraẓī relates: "Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* entered the market carrying a bundle of firewood when he was the deputy of Marwān [the caliph] on that day. He said to me: 'Give way to the *amīr*, O Ibn Abī Mālik.'"

"So I said to him: 'May Allāh be good to you, there is no need for you to do this.'"

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[1] الزهد الكبير للبيهقي برقم ٢١٩

[2] البيان والتبيين ١\٤٠٣.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٦٨.

"He said: 'Give way to the *amīr* while the bundle of firewood is on him.'"[1]

An effective admonishment

When Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to pass by a funeral, he would say: "You are departing in the morning, we may depart in the evening." Or: "You are departing in the evening, we may depart in the morning."

"A funeral is an effective admonishment, but we forget very quickly. The first departs, but the next remains without any intelligence."[2]

Adorning the *masājid*

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Once you start adorning your *masājid* and decorating your Qur'āns, destruction will befall you."[3]

No possessions for a distant journey

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* began crying in his illness, so someone asked him: "Why are you crying?"

He replied: "Listen! I am not crying over this world of yours. Rather, I am crying over the fact

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1صفة الصفوة ١\٣٥٢.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٣٨٣.

3حلية الأولياء ١\٣٨٣.

that my journey is very long and I have very few possessions [for it]. I am now on a highpoint which is falling towards Paradise and Hell, and I do not know to which of the two I will be taken."[1]

What you cannot realize

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Your selves have not been true to you. You are hoping for things which you cannot realize, you are accumulating what you cannot eat, and you are building what you cannot inhabit."[2]

A small twig and a large tree trunk

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person looks at a tiny twigs in his brother's eyes, but forgets the huge tree trunk in his own eyes."[3]

Knowledge which is of no benefit

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Knowledge which is of no benefit is like a treasure which is not spent in Allāh's cause."[4]

1حلية الأولياء ١\٣٨٣، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٥٣.

2الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢١.

3الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٢٢.

4جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٩٧.

Danger points

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"There is nothing more harmful to this *ummah* than the following three:

(1) Love for dīnārs and dirhams [money].

(2) Love for leadership

(3) Frequenting the rulers.

And Allāh *taʿālā* has provided a way out from all of these."[1]

Fear of losing knowledge

A man came to Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and said: "I want to acquire knowledge, but I fear I will lose it and not practise on it."

So Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"Keeping away from knowledge is far worse than losing it."[2]

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٢١٠.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٣٨.

Garbage

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"This garbage will destroy you in this world and in the Hereafter." He was referring to desires and the things which people eat.[1]

Two announcements

Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* would make two announcements every day.

He would announce at the beginning of the day: "The night has departed and the day has arrived, and the people of Pharaoh are presented to the fire."

He would announce in the evening: "The day has departed and the night has arrived, and the people of Pharaoh are presented to the fire."

Every single one who heard this announcement would seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from the fire.[2]

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[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\١٢٠.

[2] البداية والنهاية ٨\١١٩.

This is based on the Qur'ānic verse: "and the miserable punishment encompassed the people of Pharaoh. It is the fire which is displayed before them in the morning and evening." (Sūrah al-Mu'min/Ghāfir, 40: 45-46)

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ʿAMR IBN AL-ʿĀṢ
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

Man's appointed time guards him

When ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was about to die, he called his guards and asked: "What type of person was I to you?"

They said: "You were an upright person who used to honour us, give us, and do such and such good things."

He said: "I used to do that so that you would defend me from death. But death has approached, so get rid off it from me."

They started looking at each other and said: "By Allāh, we never expected you to make such a

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[1] ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ al-Qurashī as-Sahmī embraced Islam in the period of the peace treaty [of Ḥudaybiyah] six months before the Conquest of Makkah. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* appointed him over the military detachment which went to Dhāt as-Salāsil, and appointed him as a zakāh assessor over Oman. He held this position until the demise of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* retained him in this position.
He supported Muʿāwiyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* in his dispute with ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Consequently, Muʿāwiyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed him as an *amīr* of Egypt. He retained this position until his death in 43 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

crooked statement. You know fully well that we cannot help you against death in any way."

He said: "I said it and I know what I said. But the reason for saying it is so that you may take admonition. Not taking any one of you to defend me against death is more beloved to me than such and such things. How correct [ʿAlī] ibn Abī Ṭālib was when he used to say: 'A person's appointed time is his guard [against death].'"[1]

He then said: "O Allāh! I am not innocent whereby I could offer an excuse, nor do I have the power to exact revenge. If Your mercy does not encompass me, I will be destroyed."[2]

On the verge of the Hereafter

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said before he could pass away:

"We consider the *shahādah – lā ilāha illallāhu Muḥammadur Rasūlullāh* to be most superior."

I went through three stages in my life:

(1) I remember a time when there was no one who hated Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* more than me. And I did not desire anything more than the ability to get hold of him and kill him.

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[1] Someone advised ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to hire a personal guard, so he gave the above reply.

[2] طبقات ابن سعد ٤\٤٠٠، وسير أعلام النبلاء ٣\٧٦.

Had I died in such a condition, I would have been from the inmates of Hell.

(2) When Allāh *ta'ālā* placed Islam in my heart, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* became the most beloved and most honourable of all to me. I could not look at him full in the face out of awe for him. Had I died in that state, I hope I would be among the people of Paradise.

(3) We were then made responsible for many things, and I do not know what my condition is.

When I die, I do not want any wailing woman to accompany my funeral, and no fire should be lit for me. Once you have buried me, throw soil over my grave then stand around it for as long as it takes to slaughter a camel and distribute its meat. Do this so that I could gain from your company and be able to see what answers I give to my Allāh's angels."[1]

The following is related in *al-'Iqd al-Farīd*:

When 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* was on his death-bed, he assembled his sons and said:

"O my sons! Can you help me in any way from Allāh's decree?"

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[1] اخرجه مسلم برقم ١٢١.

They replied: "O beloved father! It is death. Had it been anything else, we would have protected you with our lives."

He said: "Make me sit up." So they made him sit up.

He then said: "O Allāh! You ordered me but I did not carry out Your orders. You reprimanded me but I did not pay heed. I am not innocent whereby I could offer an excuse, nor do I have the power to exact revenge. I am not proud, but I am seeking forgiveness. I seek forgiveness from You and turn to You in repentance. There is none worthy of worship except You. Glory to You. I was certainly from among the wrongdoers."

He continued repeating the above words until he passed away.[1]

I do not become fed up with three things

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There are three things which I do not become fed up with: my sitting companion for as long as he understands what I say, my clothes for as long as they cover me, and my steed for as long as it carries me."[2]

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[1] العقد الفريد ٣\١٩٥-١٩٦.

[2] البيان والتبيين ٢\٣٩.

Obesity

'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Obesity takes away intelligence [sharpness of the mind]."[1]

Justice is the foundation for a civilization

'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There can be no rule without people, there can be no people without wealth, there can be no wealth without civilization, and there can be no civilization without justice."[2]

Keeping a secret

'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"When I shared a secret with a person and he conveyed it to others, I did not blame him [but blamed myself] because if I could not keep a secret within myself, how could he!?"[3]

Learning a lesson from history

'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was asked: "What is intelligence?"

1البيان والتبيين ٢\٨١.

2العقد الفريد ١\٤٤.

3العقد الفريد ١\٧٠.

He replied: "To foresee correctly, and to know what is going to happen after learning a lesson from what happened in the past."[1]

Hastening in good

'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"There is to be no delay in the following three: (1) hastening in doing good deeds, (2) burying the deceased, (3) getting a person married once a suitable partner is found."[2]

I have put right some of my worldly affairs

Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* went to meet 'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and asked him: "How was your morning, O Abū 'Abdillāh?"

'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* replied: "This morning, I wasted away a lot of my *Dīn*, while I put right some of my worldly affairs. If what I had put right been what I had wasted, and what I wasted been what I put right, I would have certainly triumphed."

"Had seeking [of this world] been of benefit to me, I would have sought it. Had fleeing saved me, I would have fled [but there is no where to flee to]. I have now become like a mad man between the

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1العقد الفريد ٢\٩٧.

2العقد الفريد ٢\١٠٩.

heavens and the earth. I can neither climb with my two hands, nor descend with my two legs."

"O Ibn 'Abbās! Admonish me with something which would benefit me."

Ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "But oh! Your nephew is now your brother.[1] And when you feel like crying, I certainly feel like crying as well."[2]

Good deeds mixed with evil deeds

Ibn Umāmah went to visit 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* and found him fasting, whereas he presented food to his brothers. He then performed ṣalāh and read it to perfection. Some money was brought to him, so he said: "Take this amount to such and such person, and this amount to such and such person." He continued distributing it until all was given.

Ibn Umāmah said to him: "O Abū 'Abdillāh! You performed ṣalāh to perfection, you presented food to your brothers, and some money came to you. You were most in need of the money yet you said: 'Take this amount to such and such person, and this amount to such and such person', until you

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[1] This means that Ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* is no longer a young boy, but a man now. He is thus like a brother to him. Alternatively, this could mean that he has the same sins which 'Amr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* is speaking about. This is inferred from the next sentence.

[2] حلية الأولياء ٩\١٢٠.

distributed all of it. Why did you do this O Abū 'Abdillāh?"

'Amr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* replied: "Woe to you, Ibn Umāmah! If this world was attached to *Dīn*, we would have taken both – the world and *Dīn*. If this world kept us away from falsehood, we would have adopted it and left *Dīn*. When I realized this is how the situation is – we have good deeds and evil deeds – then I hope for Allāh's mercy."[1]

Recognizing evil

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"An intelligent person is not the one who can distinguish good from evil, rather he is the one who can distinguish the better of the two evils."[2]

A description of the descent of death

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "My father would often say: 'I am astonished at a man on whom death descends but cannot describe it despite being in his senses and having the ability to speak!'"

['Abdullāh, the son continues]: "Death then descended on my father while he was in his senses and had the ability to speak. So I said: 'O my father! You used to say: 'I am astonished at a

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[1] حلية الأولياء ٩\١٢١.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\٣٠٩.

heavens and the earth. I can neither climb with my two hands, nor descend with my two legs."

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[1] حلية الأولياء ٩\١٢١.

[2] العقد الفريد ٢\٣٠٩.

man on whom death descends but cannot describe it despite being in his senses and having the ability to speak!'"

He said: "O my son! Death is beyond description. But I will describe a little to you. By Allāh, it seems as though the mountains of Raḍwā and Tihāmah are on my shoulders, as if my soul is coming out through the eye of a needle, as though thorns of the boxthorn tree are in my stomach, and it seems as though the skies flattened themselves onto the earth with me in-between them."[1]

A true person who maintains relations

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The person who maintains relations with those who maintain relations with him, and severs relations with those who sever them with him is not a *wāṣil* (one who maintains contact with his relatives). Such a person is a man of principle."

"A true *wāṣil* is the one who maintains relations with those who sever it and is affectionate to the one who casts him aside."

"A forbearing person is not one who is tolerant towards people as long as they are tolerant towards him, and intolerant to them when they

[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٢٠-٢١.

are intolerant to him. Such a person is a man of principle."

"A true forbearing person is one who is tolerant when they are tolerant, and tolerant to them when they are intolerant towards him."[1]

An unjust imām is better

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"An imām who is unjust is better than a tribulation (*fitnah*) which is never-ending."[2]

Having many friends

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The more friends a person has, the more enemies he will have on the day of Resurrection. The one who does not show affection to his brothers with all that is within his power, their love for him will decrease to the extent of his deficiency in showing affection to them."[3]

Reading the Qur'ān

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Each verse of the Qur'ān equals one level in Paradise, and it is a lamp in your homes."

[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٠٥.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣٥٦/٤.

[3] تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٣.

He also said:

"When a person reads the Qur'ān, prophet-hood inserts itself into his body, however, he does not receive wa<u>h</u>y (divine revelation)."[1]

Kindness

'Amr ibn al-'Ā<u>s</u> *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu* asked his son: "What do you understand by kindness?"

He replied: "You must be able to persevere until you can soften the leaders and rulers."

'Amr ibn al-'Ā<u>s</u> *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu* asked: "What do you consider to be stupidity?"

He replied: "To be antagonistic towards your imām and to oppose the one who has the power to cause you harm."[2]

Self-respect

Someone asked 'Amr ibn al-'Ā<u>s</u> *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu*: "What is self-respect?"

He replied: "When a man sets right his wealth [financial affairs] and does good to his brothers."[3]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ١\٣٦٣.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٣٤٥.
[3] طبقات ابن سعد ٤\٤٥١.

Weariness is an evil characteristic

'Amr ibn al-'Ā<u>s</u> ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu said:

"I do not get tired of my clothes as long as they fit me, I do not get tired of my wife as long as she remains a good wife to me, and I do not get tired of my steed as long as it carries me [and conveys me wherever I need to go]. Weariness is an evil characteristic.[1]

Dhāt as-Salāsil

Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* sent 'Amr *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu* on the military expedition of Dhāt as-Salāsil. The Sa<u>h</u>ābah *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhum* experienced severe cold, so 'Amr *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu* said to them: "No one is allowed to light a fire." When they returned [to Madīnah], they complained [to Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*]. So 'Amr *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu* said: "O Prophet of Allāh! They were few in number and I feared the enemy would see their small numbers [had they lit the fires]. And I prohibited them from pursuing the enemy because I feared they might have someone waiting to ambush us."

Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was pleased by his reply.[2]

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[1] سير أعلام النبلاء ٣\٥٧.
[2] سير أعلام النبلاء ٣\٦٦.

'ABDULLĀH IBN 'AMR IBN AL-'ĀṢ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*

The wealthy will be poor in the Hereafter

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I would rather be one among ten poor people on the day of Resurrection than being one among ten wealthy people. Those who possess a lot [in this world] will have very little on the day of Resurrection except the one who does like this and this..." – that is, he gives charity to the right and left of him.[2]

Treasure your tongue

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"People used to say: 'Stay away from what does not concern you, do not speak about what does not concern you, and treasure [restrain] your tongue just as you treasure your silver."[1]

[1] He is 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ as-Suhamī *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*. He was from among the distinguished Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum*, an ardent worshipper, and one who narrated many Aḥādīth. He embraced Islam before his father and he used to reprimand him for remaining in temptations. He passed away in 65 A.H. at the age of 72. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with him.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٢٨٨.

Adopt the appearance of a crying person

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and cry a lot. Had you known with absolute certainty, you would shout until you lose your voice, and remain in prostration until your back breaks. So cry, and if you cannot cry, then adopt the appearance of a crying person."[2]

A tear

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"I prefer shedding a single tear out of Allāh's fear to giving 1000 dīnārs in charity."[3]

I do not know

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"If a person is asked about something which he does not know, and he says: 'I do not know', he has amassed half of knowledge."[1]

1حلية الأولياء ١\٢٨٨.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٢٨٩.

3صفة الصفوة ١\٣٣٤.

The accounting of the wealthy

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"You will be assembled and an announcement will be made: 'Where are the poor and needy of this *ummah*?' They will come forward and they will be asked: 'What do you have to say?' They will say: 'O our Allāh! We were put through trials and tribulations but we remained patient. And You know best. You gave riches and authority to someone else.' It will be said to them: 'You are right.' They will then enter Paradise before all the other people, and a severe reckoning will be taken from the wealthy."[2]

The market place

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"Do not be the first to enter the market place, nor the last to leave it because there is an egg and young bird of Satan there."[3]

[1] العقد الفريد ٢\٧٨.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٣٤.
[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٢\١٥٥.

The death of a believer

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

"The example of a believer when his soul is taken out of him is like a person who was in prison and then released. When he is released, he enjoys the wide expanse of the earth and moves around freely in it."[1]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٦\١٧٤.

ANAS IBN MĀLIK
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

The tongue

Anas[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"A person cannot fear Allāh *taʿālā* until he restrains his tongue."[2]

Lowering one's gaze

Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"When you meet a woman, lower your gaze until she passes."[3]

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[1] He is Anas ibn Mālik Anṣārī Khazrajī Najjārī, Abū Ḥamzah. He was a *muḥaddith* (Ḥadīth scholar), *qārī* and a distinguished personality of Islam. He remained in the service of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for ten years. He was ten years old when Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* emigrated to Madīnah. He participated in all the battles. He was present for the battle of Badr but did not fight in it because of his tender age. Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* sent him as a zakāh collector to Bahrain. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* supplicated in his favour for long life and many children. Allāh *taʿālā* accepted this supplication. He passed away in Basra in 93 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

[2] الزهدّ للإمام أحمد ص٢٥٩.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٥٩.

Zakāh for a house

Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"The zakāh for a house is for one section of it to be reserved for guests."[1]

Aids to fasting

Someone spoke about fasting before Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* so he said:

"If a person does three things, he will be able to control himself: he must partake of *suḥūr* (*seḥrī* – meal at predawn in preparation of the fast), he must take a nap in the afternoon (*qaylūlah* – siesta), and he must eat before he drinks [at the time of opening the fast]."[2]

These are excellent qualities

Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

The Aus and Khazraj tribes began boasting to each other. The Aus said:

"We have:

(1) Ḥanẓalah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* who was bathed by the angels.

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raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

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(2) ʿĀṣim ibn Thābit ibn Abī al-Aqlaḥ *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* whose flesh was protected by a swarm of bees.[1]

(3) Khuzaymah ibn Thābit *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said the *shahādah* twice.

(4) Saʿd ibn Muʿādh *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* at whose death the ʿArsh (Throne of Allāh *taʿālā*) trembled."

The Khazraj said:

"We have four people who read the Qur'ān during the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. No one apart from them read it, viz. Zayd ibn Thābit, Abū Zayd, Muʿādh ibn Jabal and Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, the leader of the *qārīs* – *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*. We also have Ḥassān ibn Thābit *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* whom Allāh *taʿālā* helped through Jibra'īl in composing his poetry."[2]

The *'ulamā'* will be questioned

Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"I have heard that the *'ulamā'* will be questioned about conveying the message [of Islam] on the

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[1] He was killed in the battle of ar-Rajīʿ. The Hudhayl tribe wanted to take his head and sell it, but a swarm of bees prevented them from doing this.

[2] العقد الفريد ٣\٢٩٤.

day of Resurrection just as the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* will be questioned."[1]

Trivializing major sins

Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

"You are committing acts which you consider to be finer [more trivial] than a strand of hair, whereas during the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* we used to regard such acts to be from among those which would cause a person's destruction."[2]

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٤٩.

[2] أخرجه البخاري برقم ٦٤٩٢.

'ABDULLĀH IBN 'ABBĀS
raḍiyallāhu 'anhu

Concern for the Muslims

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"I read a verse of the Qur'ān and wish all people knew what I know about it. I hear of a Muslim judge meting out justice in his court and I rejoice over it even though I may never have to present myself in his court. I hear of rain falling in one of the Muslim lands and I rejoice over it even though I do not have any grazing animals in that region."[2]

Say good words to people

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

[1] He is 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, a cousin of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He was the erudite scholar of the *ummah*, the jurist of his time, and a *tarjumān* of the Qur'ān (a distinguished commentator of the Qur'ān). He was born in the Sh'ib Abī Ṭālib three years before the *hijrah*. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* supplicated to Allāh *ta'ālā* to bless him with a deep understanding of Islam. 'Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* used to include him with senior Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* when consulting with them. He passed away in 68 A.H.

[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٢٢.

"If Pharaoh were to say to me: 'May Allāh bless you', I would say: 'May He bless you as well.'"[1]

O sinner!

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"O you who are committing a sin! Do not consider yourself safe from its consequences. Worse than the sin is if you do any of the following things after committing the sin:

(1) Your lack of shame from the angels who are to your right and left at the time of committing the sin is worse than the sin if you commit it.

(2) Your laughter when you do not know what Allāh *ta'ālā* is going to do to you is worse than the sin itself.

(3) Your rejoicing over the sin which you committed is worse than the sin itself.

(4) Your grief over not being able to commit a sin when you miss an opportunity to commit it is worse than the sin itself had you committed it.

(5) Your fear of the wind which would unveil the curtain of your door while you are committing the sin while your heart does

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٢٢.

not tremble at the fact that Allāh *ta'ālā* is watching you. This is worse than the sin if you commit it."[1]

Lust is a god that is worshipped

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Lust is a god that is worshipped." He then read this verse: "Look at the one who has made his own lust his deity. And Allāh, knowing him as such, led him astray."[2] (Sūrah al-Jāthiyah, 45: 23)

Patience over sustenance

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* has decreed lawful (*halāl*) sustenance for every person – whether he is a believer or a transgressor. If he waits for it patiently, Allāh *ta'ālā* bestows it to him. But if he is impatient and consumes unlawful (*harām*) sustenance, Allāh *ta'ālā* decreases his lawful sustenance."[3]

The dīnār and dirham

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

1صفة الصفوة ١\٣٨٣.

2البيان والتبيين ١\٢٣٥.

3حلية الأولياء ١\٣٢٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٣٠.

"When the dīnār and dirham were minted, Satan took them and placed them on his eyes. He then addressed them saying: 'You are the fruit of my heart and the coolness of my eyes. I will cause people to transgress and disbelief through you, and I will cause them to go to Hell through you. I will be happy as long as man's love for this world causes him to worship you."[1]

People have departed

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"People (*nās*) have departed, and *nasnās* have remained."

Someone asked him: "What is *nasnās*?"

He replied: "Those who resemble *nās* (people) but are not *nās*."[2]

The perplexity of a person who enters a place

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Every person who enters [an unfamiliar place] is hesitant and perplexed. So make him comfortable by offering him *salām* (by saying *as-salāmu 'alaykum*)."[3]

1صفة الصفوة ١\٣٨٤.

2حلية الأولياء ١\٣٢٨، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٣١.

3البيان والتبيين ٢\٩١.

The consequence of rebellion

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"If one mountain were to rebel against another, the rebellious one would be reduced to bits. When rebellion raises its head among a people, it results in numerous deaths."[1]

The benefits of *dhikr*

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"The person who says: *'Bismillāh'* – has remembered Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The person who says: *al-hamdulillāh* – has thanked Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The person who says: *'Allāhu akbar'* – has extolled the greatness of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The person who says: *'Lā ilāha illallāh* – has extolled the oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The person who says: *'Lā haula wa lā qūwwata illā billāh'* – has subjected himself and submitted himself [before Allāh *ta'ālā*]. He shall receive splendour and a treasure in Paradise."[2]

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[1] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٢٨.

[2] تهذيب حلية الأولياء ١\٢٢٨.

Acts which are superior to hajj

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"I would prefer seeing to the needs of a Muslim family for a month, a week, or for whatever period Allāh *ta'ālā* likes than going for hajj again and again. I would prefer giving a plate which costs one dāniq (1/6 of a dirham) to a fellow brother for Allāh's sake than spending one dīnār in Allāh's cause."[1]

Allāh's servants

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* has servants who are silenced by His fear. They are neither dumb nor do they have any speech impediment. They are the true *'ulamā'*, eloquent ones, freed ones, and distinguished ones."

"They are *'ulamā'* with regard to Allāh's workings in the universe. When they think of Allāh's greatness, their intellects are confounded, their hearts are subdued, and their tongues are severed [they are unable to utter a thing]. When they recover from this, they hasten towards Allāh *ta'ālā* with pure deeds."

"They consider themselves to have transgressed, whereas they are the intelligent and strong ones.

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[1] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٨٤.

They think they are with the wrongdoers and sinners whereas they are the obedient and innocent ones. However, they do not consider their many good deeds to be many, they are not pleased with doing a little, and they are not boastful of their deeds. Wherever you meet them, you will find them very concerned, fearful [of Allāh *ta'ālā*], afraid and frightened."[1]

Accept words of wisdom

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Accept wisdom from whoever you hear it. Many a time a person utters words of wisdom despite not being a wise man. His words are like an arrow which did not come from a shooter."[2]

I do not know

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"If an *'ālim* abandons saying: 'I do not know', a vital part of his body will be struck [i.e. it will lead to his destruction]."[3]

The best knowledge

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٢٥، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٢٩.
[2] صفة الصفوة ١\٣٨٤.
[3] البيان والتبيين ١\٣٩٨.

"Knowledge is limitless, so acquire the best of each branch of knowledge."[1]

Fulfilling compulsory duties

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Adhere strictly to the compulsory duties, fulfil the rights of what Allāh *ta'ālā* prescribed to you, and seek Allāh's help for their fulfilment. When Allāh *ta'ālā* sees a genuine/sincere intention in a person and a desire for the reward which He has reserved, He defers all evil from the person. Allāh *ta'ālā* is the King who does as He wills."[2]

Knowledge which is sufficient

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"That amount of *Dīnī* knowledge regarding which you should never be ignorant of is sufficient for you. That amount of literary knowledge is sufficient for you whereby you can quote as evidence and use as examples."[3]

What does not concern you

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Do not speak on matters which do not concern you. Do not dispute with a foolish person nor a

[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٢٧.
[2] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٢٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٣٠.
[3] العقد الفريد ٢\٧١.

forbearing person. Speak about your brother as you would like to be spoken about."[1]

The effulgence of a good deed

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"A good deed causes light in the heart, effulgence on the face, strength to the body, an increase in sustenance, and love for the person in the hearts of the creation."

"An evil deed causes darkness in the heart, dullness on the face, weakness to the body, a decrease in sustenance, and hatred for the person in the hearts of the creation."[2]

This is what we have been ordered to do

'Ammār ibn Abī 'Ammār relates: Zayd ibn Thābit *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was riding one day when 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* took hold of his mount.

Zayd said: "Move aside O cousin of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*!"

He replied: "This is how we have been ordered to respect our *'ulamā'* and elders."

Zayd said: "Let me see your hand." So he showed him his hand.

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[1] رسالة المسترشدين للمحاسبي ص٧٣.

[2] الإستقامة لابن تيمية ١\٣٥١.

Zayd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* kissed his hand [out of respect] and said: "This is what we have been ordered to do with the family of our Prophet [*sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*]."[1]

Experiencing pain over the worries of others

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"The person who twists and turns on his bed [because he cannot fall asleep due to worry] when a calamity, worry or grief afflicts me, then I cannot pay him back because he made me his need before Allāh *ta'ālā* [and Allāh *ta'ālā* will pay him back for it]."[2]

He also said:

"The person who does not feel discomforted by a fly which settles on his brother's body is not a true brother to him."[3]

The benefit of wealth

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"If a person is not constrained to be generous with his wealth, he should rather give up accumulating it."[1]

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1 كنز العمال ١٣\٣٩٦ حديث (٣٧٠٦١).

2 تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٢.

3 تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٣.

Discussing matters of knowledge

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Discussing matters of knowledge for a part of the night is more beloved to me than remaining awake the entire night [in worship]."[2]

The sweetness of deviation

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Deviation has a sweetness in the hearts of the deviated. Allāh *ta'ālā* says: 'Leave those alone who consider their religion to be a play and amusement.'[3] Allāh *ta'ālā* says: 'Is that person to whom the evil of his deeds is beautified to him and so he regards it as good...'[4] So everything which is innovated after the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* and crosses the limit of necessity and need is part of play and amusement."[5]

Your own faults

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

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[2] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٥.

[3] Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 70.
[4] Sūrah Fāṭir, 35: 8.

[5] إحياء علوم الدين ١\١٠٦.

"If you want to mention the faults of your friend, think of your own faults."[1]

Perfection in an act of kindness

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"An act of kindness can only be perfected if the following three conditions are found: (1) it is done quickly, (2) the one who does it considers it to be insignificant, (3) he conceals it from people."[2]

Shame is in the eyes

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Do not seek the fulfilment of a need from a person at night because shame is in the eyes."[3]

Seeking lawful sustenance

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Seeking lawful sustenance is more difficult than moving one mountain to another mountain."[4]

Superior to jihād

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* was asked about jihād, so he said:

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٣٦.

[2] تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص١٤٠.

[3] تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٢.

[4] تنبيه المغترين ص١٩٦.

"Do you want to know what is better than jihād? That you build a musjid, teach the compulsory duties, the Sunnah, and matters of *Dīn* in it."[1]

An advice to do six things

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* advised a man to do six things:

1. Your heart must have full conviction with regard to whatever Allāh *ta'ālā* made you responsible for, and you must ponder over the Hereafter.
2. You must perform the compulsory duties at their appointed times.
3. Your tongue must remain moist in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*.
4. Do not do anything in accordance to what Satan dictates because he is jealous of mankind.
5. Do not worry about inhabiting this world because it will destroy your Hereafter.
6. You must always desire the well-being of Muslims."[2]

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[1] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\٣٨.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين للسمرقندي ص١٤٥.

His stomach will be his main concern

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"There will come a time when a person's stomach will be his main concern, his desires will be his religion, and his tongue will be his sword."[1]

Abstaining from *ḥarām*

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Allāh *ta'ālā* does not accept the ṣalāh of a person while there is *ḥarām* in his stomach."[2]

Knowledge which is not passed on

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Knowledge which a person does not express is like a treasure which a person does not spend."[3]

Noble qualities of *jāhilīyyah*

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

There were three qualities of *jāhilīyyah* which were considered to be good, and the Muslims have to be even more particular about them:

(1) When a *ḥanīf* (a person who was on the religion of Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām*) came to

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[1] تنبيه المغترين ص٨٥.

[2] تنبيه المغترين ص٨٧.

[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٤٨.

them, they would do their utmost to be kind to him.

(2) If a person had a wife who became old with him [i.e. he had her from a young age and now she became old], he would not divorce her. He would retain her out of fear that she would be neglected and ruined.

(3) If a neighbour was burdened by debts, or he was afflicted by difficulty and hardship, they would do their utmost to relieve him from his debts and remove him from his difficulty."[1]

The mistake of an *ʿālim*

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

"How unfortunate is the case of an *ʿālim* and his followers. He commits a mistake and retracts from it. But the people take the mistake and convey it to the rest of the world [without mentioning his retraction]."[2]

[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٠٦.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٢٧٣.

A little and a little

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

"Good deeds with few sins are more beloved to Allāh *taʿālā* than a lot of good deeds with a lot of sins."[1]

The sanctity of a believer

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* would look at the Kaʿbah and say:

"Allāh *taʿālā* sanctified you, honoured you and blessed you. But a believer is more sanctified than you in Allāh's sight."[2]

Honouring the one who sits next to you

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

"The most superior good deed is to honour the one who is sitting next to you."[3]

The categories of patience

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

There are three types of patience in the Qur'ān:

1تنبيه المغترين للشعراني ص٢٩.

2تنبيه المغترين ص٢٩.

3تنبيه المغترين ص٢٩.

1. Patience in carrying out the compulsory duties of Allāh *taʿālā*. This entails 300 ranks.

2. Patience in remaining away from the unlawful. This entails 700 ranks.

3. Patience over a calamity at the very time when it befalls. This entails 900 ranks.[1]

Seeking help through patience and ṣalāh

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* was given the news of one of his daughter's death while he was on a journey. So he said *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rājiʿūn* (to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return). He then said:

"She was an *ʿaurah* (something which has to remain concealed) whom Allāh *taʿālā* kept concealed, a responsibility which Allāh *taʿālā* fulfilled for me, and a reward which Allāh *taʿālā* sent to me." He then descended from his mount, performed two *rakʿats* of ṣalāh, and said:

"We have done what Allāh *taʿālā* ordered us to do: 'Seek help through patience and ṣalāh.'"[2] (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 153)

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\٣٢٣.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٩٩.

Those who are fearful

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* was asked about those who are fearful, so he said:

"Their hearts are ulcerated on account of fear and their eyes are constantly crying. They say: 'How can we rejoice when death is behind us, the grave is in front of us, the Resurrection is our appointed time, our path is over Hell, and we are to stand before Allāh *taʿālā*, our Sustainer?'"[1]

The choicest servants

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

"Allāh *taʿālā* has His choicest servants from His creation: They take delight from doing good, seek forgiveness when they do wrong, are grateful when bounties are bestowed to them, and are patient when they are put through trials and tribulations."[2]

Speak what the intellects can comprehend

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

"Speak to people with what they can understand. Do you want Allāh *taʿālā* and His Messenger *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to be rejected?"[3]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٤٠.

[2] تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٥٢.

[3] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٦٣.

Four virtuous qualities

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"A person who has the following four qualities has certainly triumphed: honesty, modesty, good character, and gratefulness."[1]

Good and evil

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Pondering over good urges a person to do it. Remorse over an evil propels a person to abstain from it."[2]

The doors of the kings

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"Keep away from the doors of the kings [do not go to them] because you will not acquire any material benefit from them while they will damage your Hereafter."[3]

[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٥\٢٩٦.
[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٦\٤٥.
[3] تنبيه الغافلين ص٤١٢.

Crying

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"The eye sheds a tear solely by the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*. And a person only sheds a tear when an angel passes his hand over the person's heart."[1]

The departure of knowledge

When Zayd ibn Thābit *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* passed away, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"If anyone would like to see how knowledge departs, this is how it departs." [i.e. by the death of *'ulamā'*]

He also said:

"One *'ālim* after another will continue dying and traces of the truth will get wiped off until there will be an abundance of ignorant people, and the *'ulamā'* would have departed. The people will then practise on their ignorance, they will adopt creeds which are not on the truth, and in this way, they will deviate from the straight path."[2]

[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٤٤٠.
[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٨٧.

A materialistic mind

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"The person who honours wealth and scorns poverty is cursed."[1]

The Qur'ān and Sunnah

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"We have to confine to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. If anyone then says anything on the basis of his person opinion, I do not know whether he will find it recorded in his good deeds or evil deeds."[2]

Five things

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

There are five things which are more beloved to me than having horses which are left for Allāh's cause [for jihād]. They are:

1. Do not speak about matters which do not concern you because this amounts to futility, and it may well be a sin. Do not speak about matters which concern you

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص١٧٨.

This refers to a person who honours a wealthy person because of his wealth and scorns another because of his poverty.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ٢\٣٢.

until you find an appropriate occasion for them. Many a time, a person speaks about a matter which concerns him, but at an inappropriate occasion. And so, this causes him fatigue and hardship.

2. Do not dispute with a foolish person nor a forbearing person. The forbearing person will cause you to become angry and the foolish person will offend you.

3. Speak about your brother in his absence as you would like him to speak about you. Pardon him for the things which you would want him to pardon you.

4. Treat your brother as you would like him to treat you.

5. Do deeds like a person who is fully aware that he will be rewarded for good and taken to task for sinning.[1]

Advice

'Āmir ash-Sha'bī *raḥimahullāh* relates that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā* said:

"My father said to me: 'O my son! I see the Amīr al-Mu'minīn ['Umar *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*] summoning you, keeping you close to him, and seeking your counsel together with [senior]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٢٥٥.

Companions of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. Now I want you to bear in mind the following three points:

1. *Fear Allāh ta'ālā* - *'Umar must never find you lying.*
2. *Do not disclose any secret of his.*
3. *Do not backbite about anyone before him.*

'Āmir raḥimahullāh says: "I said to Ibn 'Abbās raḍiyallāhu 'anhu: 'Each one of these statements is better than a thousand.'"

Ibn 'Abbās raḍiyallāhu 'anhu said: "Each one of them is better than ten thousand."[1]

Seeking knowledge

'Abbās raḍiyallāhu 'anhu said to his son 'Abdullāh raḍiyallāhu 'anhu:

"O my son! Do not seek knowledge for the following three reasons: (1) to show off with it, (2) to dispute with others through it, (3) to boast over others through it. And do not cast it aside for the following three reasons: (1) a desire for ignorance, (2) feeling you have too much of knowledge, (3) feeling shy to learn."[2]

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1 حلية الأولياء ١\٣١٨، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٢٤.

2 جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٧٠.

'ABDULLĀH IBN AZ-ZUBAYR *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*

Signs of the people of *taqwā*

Wahb ibn Kīsān raḥimahullāh said: 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā wrote the following admonition to me:*

"The people of taqwā have certain hallmarks by which they are identified and which they themselves know: patience at the time of trials and tribulations, accepting the decree of Allāh ta'ālā, gratitude at times of prosperity, and submitting totally to the order of the Qur'ān."

"The imām is like a market place – whatever sells a lot in it will be taken to it. So if the imām disperses the truth, the truth will be taken to him and the people of the truth (ahl al-ḥaqq) will go to

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1 He is 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awām Abū Khubayb al-Qurashī al-Asadī. His mother was Asmā' bint Abī Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā*. He was the first Muslim child to be born in Madīnah in Shawwāl 2 A.H. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* made his *taḥnīk* (softened dates in his own mouth and placed them in the mouth of 'Abdullāh) and made *du'ā'* for him. When Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah and his son, Mu'āwiyah ibn Yazīd passed away, 'Abdullāh was given the pledge to the caliphate. This was in 64 A.H. His rule continued until al-Ḥajjāj laid siege to Makkah and the Ḥaram Sharīf. 'Abdullāh was killed within the Ḥaram and al-Ḥajjāj crucified him in 73 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*.

him. If he disperses falsehood, the people of falsehood will go to him and it will be dispersed from him."[1]

A sermon during the hajj season

Muḥammad ibn 'Abdillāh ath-Thaqafī relates: I was present when ['Abdullāh] ibn az-Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* delivered a sermon during the ḥajj season. He appeared before us one day before the day of *tarwiyah* (8th of Dhū al-Ḥijjah) while he was in a state of *iḥrām*. He said the *talbiyah* (*labbayk Allāhumma labbayk...*) in the most beautiful voice I ever heard. He then praised and thanked Allāh *ta'ālā* and said:

"You have come from different regions as delegates before Allāh *ta'ālā*. Allāh *ta'ālā* takes it upon Himself to honour His delegates. So whoever has come to seek from what Allāh *ta'ālā* has, let him know that the one who seeks from Allāh *ta'ālā* never goes empty-handed. Now show the truth of your words with deeds because deeds are the essential prerequisites of words. Be mindful of your intention, be mindful of your intention! Set right your hearts, set right your hearts!"

"Fear Allāh, fear Allāh in these days, because these are the days in which sins are forgiven."

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٣٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٣٦.

"You have come here from different regions – not for trade, not in search for wealth, nor to acquire of this world. Rather, you hope for what is here."

He then said the *talbiyah* and the people followed suite. I never saw more people crying than on that day.[1]

[1] حلية الأولياء ١\٣٣٦، وتهذيب الحلية ١\٢٣٥.

AL-ḤASAN IBN ʿALĪ IBN ABĪ ṬĀLIB
raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu

This world

Al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā* said:

"The person who seeks this world will be hampered by it. The one who is abstinent of it will not bother about who devours of it. The one who is desirous of it is actually a slave of the one who has it."

"The minimum of this world is sufficient, while having all of it will not make a person independent."

[1] He is al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the grandson of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* – the son of his daughter, Fāṭimah az-Zahrā *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā*. He was born in the 3rd year of the *hijrah*. There are many Aḥādīth which mention Rasūlullāh's *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* love for al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā*. They are the leaders of the youth of Paradise. He took over the caliphate after his father, but was more concerned about safeguarding the lives of Muslims, and therefore relinquished the caliphate in favour of Muʿāwiyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He was poisoned on more than one occasion. He passed away in 49 A.H. after a poisoning which he did not survive. May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him. He had countless virtuous qualities like his generosity and big-heartedness which were unparalleled.

"The one who considers his day in the world to be balanced is misled. The one who considers his today to be better than his tomorrow is deceived."

"The one who does not find any loss within his self is certainly in loss. And death is better for the one who is in loss."[1]

Acceptance

Someone said to al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhumā*: Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* says: "I prefer poverty to affluence, and illness to good health."

Al-Ḥasan *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "May Allāh *taʿālā* have mercy on Abū Dharr. As for me, I say: The person who relies on Allāh's *taʿālā* excellent choice for him will not wish for a condition different from what Allāh *taʿālā* chose for him."[2]

Description of a friend

Muhammad ibn Kīsān said: al-Ḥasan *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his companions on one day:

Let me tell you about one of my brothers. He was the greatest of all people in my eyes. And what I considered to be the greatest, he considered to be the most insignificant in this world."

1كنز العمال ١٦\٢١٤، برقم ٤٤٢٣٦.

2البداية النهاية ٨\٤٢.

"He was not dictated by his stomach. He would not desire what he could not obtain, and would not eat too much if he obtained it."

"He was not dictated by his private part, and so, his intellect and opinion will not be dimmed by it."

"He was not dictated by his ignorance, and so, he will not extend his hand unless he was sure of some benefit. He would not take a step unless it was for a good deed. He would neither get angry nor annoyed."

"When he was in the presence of *'ulamā'*, he would prefer to listen to them than to speak in their presence."

"If he did speak, his moments of silence were more than his speech."

"He spent a major portion of his life remaining silent. But if he did speak, he would triumph over those who spoke. He would not take part in any claims, not enter into any discussion or place which would cause him to show off, and would not advance any argument unless he saw a judge saying something which he does not do, and doing something which he does not say. He did this out of his merit and honour."

"He would not be unmindful of his brothers and would not reserve anything for himself to their exclusion."

"When two matters presented themselves before him – and he did not know which of the two was closer to the truth – he would see which of the two was closer to his desires and act against it."[1]

[1] البداية والنهاية ٨\٤٢.

ʿĀ'ISHAH UMM AL-MU'MINĪN *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā*

Noble characteristics

ʿĀ'ishah[1] *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* said:

There are ten noble characteristics: (1) honesty in speech, (2) genuine courage in the obedience of Allāh ta'ālā, (3) giving to a beggar, (4) repaying one who does good to you, (5) maintaining family ties, (6) fulfilling trusts, (7) fulfilling one's responsibilities to one's neighbour, (8) fulfilling one's responsibility to one's guest, (9) and the peak of all this is shame and modesty (ḥayā')."

The narrator probably forgot the tenth characteristic.[1]

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[1] She is ʿĀ'ishah bint Abī Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, the wife of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. She was the most beloved of all his wives. Among her special qualities was that not only was she the most learned of his wives, but the most learned of all women. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* married her in Makkah and consummated the marriage in the 2nd year of the *hijrah* in Shawwāl after the battle of Badr. Apart from Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*, no Ṣaḥābī related as many Aḥādīth as her. The Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* used to refer to her when they experienced any difficulty in understanding any matter. She was eighteen years old when Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* passed away. She passed away in 58 A.H. and Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* performed the *janāzah ṣalāh* over her. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with her.

Allāh's pleasure

ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* said:

"When a person earns the anger of people for the sake of Allāh's pleasure, Allāh *ta'ālā* causes him to be independent of the people. When a person pleases people while earning Allāh's displeasure, Allāh *ta'ālā* leaves him to the people [he becomes dependent on them, but they are unable to fulfil his needs]."[2]

The flourishing of communities

ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* said:

"Good character, good neighbourliness, and maintaining family ties cause communities to flourish and increase life-spans, even if the people are sinners."[3]

I wish

ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* said:

"I wish I was a complete non-entity – totally forgotten."

She also said:

1كنز العمال ٦٦٦\٣ برقم ٨٤٠٨.

2الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٥.

3تنبيه الغافلين ص٣٦٢.

"I wish I was a tree which gave support. I wish I was not created."[1]

Abstinence

'Ā'ishaḥ *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"You people are unmindful of the most superior acts of worship, it is abstinence."[2]

The first innovation

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"The first innovation (*bid'ah*) after Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* left this world is eating to one's fill. When people's stomach became filled, their souls defied them and hastened towards this world."[3]

Gifts

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"The key to having your needs fulfilled is to give a gift."[4]

A sinner

Someone asked 'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā*: "When is a person considered to be a sinner?"

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٥، ٢٠٦.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\١٦١.

[3] إحياء علوم الدين ٣\٢١٩.

[4] تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٢.

She replied: "When he thinks he has done good."[1]

Less sins

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"Reduce your sins because you will not meet Allāh *ta'ālā* with anything more superior than less sins."[2]

Humility

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"You people are unmindful of one of the most superior acts of worship, it is humility."[3]

Disobedience

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"When a person disobeys Allāh *ta'ālā*, those who used to praise him will now sneer at him."[4]

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين ٤\١٧٦.
The sin was committed because he thought highly of himself.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٦.

[3] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٦.

[4] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٠٦.

A small charity

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"Do not scorn any amount of charity because a small seed given in charity will be weighed as mountains of rewards on the day of Resurrection."[1]

Abū al-'Āliyah *raḥimahullāh* said: "I was with 'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* and several other women were with her. A beggar came to her and she asked someone to give the beggar a grape seed. The women were astonished [at this small and insignificant charity], so she said: 'It contains numerous tiny particles [each of which will turn into a reward for the giver].'"[2]

Deal with people according to their ranks

'Ā'ishah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said:

"Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* ordered us to deal with people according to their ranks while bearing in mind what Allāh *ta'ālā* says in the Qur'ān: 'Above every knowledgeable person, there is one more knowledgeable.'"[3] (Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 76)

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1 تنبيه المغترين ص١٤٩.

2 الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢٦١.

3 مقدمة صحيح الإمام مسلم.

UMM AD-DARDĀ'
raḍiyallāhu 'anhā

Reprimand your self

Sulaym ibn 'Āmir relates: "Umm ad-Dardā'[1] *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* sent me to Nauf al-Bakālī and to another person who used to relate stories in the musjid. She said to me: 'Go and tell them: 'Fear Allāh, and let your admonishment to people be to your own selves.'"[2]

The speech of the deceased

Hazār relates: Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said to me:

"O Hazār! Do you want to know what a deceased person says when he is laid in his bier?"

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[1] Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* married two women both of whom had the *kunnīyyat* of Umm ad-Dardā'. The first one's name was Khayrah bint Abī Ḥadrad. She was the senior Umm ad-Dardā'. She was one of the most virtuous and intelligent women. She was a Companion of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and she passed away before Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*.
The second one was the junior Umm ad-Dardā'. Mu'āwiyah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* had proposed to her after the death of Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* but she did not accept his proposal. Her name was Hujaymah al-Waṣābīyyah. She was not a Companion of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. She relates [Aḥādīth] from Abū ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*.

2 الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢١٩.

I replied: "Indeed."

She said: "He calls out: *'O my family! O my neighbours! O you who are carrying my bier! Do not let the world deceive you as it deceived me. Do not let it play around with you as it played around with me. My family could not bear any of my sins for me. If they could argue on my behalf before the Almighty, they would have done so.'"*

She then said: "The world is more bewitching to the heart of a person than Hārūt and Mārūt. Anyone who gave preference to this world was most certainly disgraced and humiliated."[1]

Discussing matters of knowledge

'Aun ibn 'Abdillāh narrates: "Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* came to us so we began speaking in her presence. After some time, we said to her: 'O Umm ad-Dardā'! We must have got you tired.'

"She replied: 'You did not get me tired and bored. I always sought worship in everything, and I did not come across anything more satisfying to my soul than discussing matters of knowledge.' Or she said: 'than discussing matters of jurisprudence.'"[2]

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[1] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص١٦٥. والزهد الكبير برقم ٥٠٦.

[2] جامع بيان العلم وفضله ١\١٢٣.

Hard-heartedness

A man complained to Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* about his hard-heartedness. So she said to him: "Visit the sick, attend funerals, and look into the graves."[1]

Are you asking for the sake of practising?

Wahb al-Makkī relates: A youngster was posing questions to Umm ad-Dardā' *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* and he asked her many questions. So she asked him: "Do you practise on everything which you ask?"

He replied: "No."

She said: "The more questions you ask the more you are increasing Allāh's evidence against you. [The more you know the more you will be accountable for]."[2]

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Al-ḥamdu lillāh, thumma al-ḥamdu lillāh – all thanks are due solely to Allāh *ta'ālā* for having enabled me to complete the English translation of this blessed and inspiring book. I make an earnest *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this translation, to make it a means for my salvation in this world and the Hereafter, and to include me

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[1] تنبيه الغافلين ص٤١٦.

[2] الزهد للإمام أحمد ص٢١٩.

among His righteous servants by virtue of this humble contribution.

أُحِبُّ الصَّالِحِيْنَ وَلَسْتُ مِنْهُمْ – لَعَلَّ اللهُ يَرْزُقُنِيْ صَلاَحَا

"I love the righteous although I am not of them. Perhaps Allāh will bestow me with righteousness [by virtue of my love for them]."

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes, and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

Was salām
Mahomed Mahomedy
28 Ramaḏān 1432 A.H./28 August 2011
Durban, South Africa.

مواعظ الصحابة

باللغة الإنجليزية

About the Book

The generation of the Saḥābah ﷺ is considered to be the peak of expression in human history. They are the ones whom Allāh ta'ālā selected to be the companions of His Prophet ﷺ in the journey of bearing the message of guidance which emanated from the land of Makkah to carry goodness and guidance to all parts of the world. No generation in the past reached this rank, and no generation thereafter would ever reach such a position.

They were a unique people whose true value can only be ascertained by a true and genuine believer. And it is only a hypocrite who can belittle them.

They [the Sahābah] were given something which no other generation was ever given…their experiences, their knowledge and their understanding of matters are considered to be sources in the the understanding of the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

This is why their statements are considered to be an important source for every Muslim. Their statements convey a person to that most superior era, enable him to inhale that wonderful fragrance, and breathe in that allpervading aroma…he is able to see – with the eyes of his heart – the personalities behind those names who are still filling the ears and eyes since time immemorial.

This book is a collection of some of the wise words of wisdom which emanated from the blessed mouths of the Sahābah ﷺ. It is hoped that the reader will benefit from them and practise on them.

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