

Aspects of Charity

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Achieve Noble Character

Aspects of Charity

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Acknowledgements

All praises are for Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds, who has given us the inspiration, opportunity and strength to complete this volume. Blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad whose path has been chosen by Allah, the Exalted, for the salvation of mankind.

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We pray that Allah, the Exalted, completes His favour on us and accepts each letter of this book in His august court and allows it to testify on our behalf on the Last Day.

All praise to Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds and endless blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on his blessed Household and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Compiler's Notes

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com.

Introduction

The following book will discuss an important aspect of Noble Character namely, Charity.

According to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that the heaviest thing in the Scales of Judgment Day will be Noble Character. It is one of qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which Allah, the Exalted, complimented in Chapter 68 Al Qalam, Verse 4 of the Holy Quran:

“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”

Therefore, it is a duty on all Muslims to gain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to Achieve Noble Character.

Aspects of Charity

Some have restricted the concept of charity to only donating wealth to the poor. This is incorrect as the concept of charity in Islam encompasses every aspect of one's life. For example, according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1956, smiling at someone to make them feel comfortable or removing an obstacle from a path are acts of charity.

Giving charity is such an important characteristic that without it one can never achieve success in this world or in the next. There are countless verses and Hadiths supporting this. For example, a Hadith found in Imam Malik's, Muwatta, Book 51, Hadith number 15, advises that the love of Allah, the Exalted, becomes obligatory on a muslim when they spend their wealth on others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. This spending does not only include donating to the poor but can include other types of spending also. For example, spending on one's own necessities and the necessities of their family is recorded as charity. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 4006.

People spend countless hours stressing over the security of their wealth and properties. But they fail to recognize that there is only one guaranteed place where their investments will not only be protected but they will also yield a profit beyond their reckoning. This only occurs when one banks their wealth with Allah, the Exalted, instead of with the temporal world. Chapter 73 Al Muzzammil, verse 20:

“...And whatever good you put forward for yourselves - you will find it with Allah. It is better and greater in reward...”

No matter how secure one may believe their worldly investments are there is always a chance of a financial crisis. Even if this does not occur eventually, the person will die and leave it behind for others to enjoy while the deceased is held accountable for it. How foolish is the person who spends their entire life accumulating and hoarding the material world only to leave it behind when they journey to their grave alone. Chapter 19 Maryam, verse 80:

“And We will inherit him [in] what he mentions, and he will come to Us alone.”

The only way to ensure that one's investment accompanies them in their dark grave on the Day of Resurrection and beyond is by banking it with Allah, the Exalted.

This business with Allah, the Exalted, is the only type that guarantees a large profit. The Holy Quran promises a minimum 10 to 700 times reward and in certain cases a reward that is uncountable. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 261:

“The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills...”

As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1962, a true believer cannot be stingy. Therefore, one must analyze themselves to determine the strength of their faith.

All obligatory duties must be fulfilled unless one is exempt by Islamic law. It is obvious to all that if every muslim donated their obligatory charity there would not be a hungry person left on the face of this planet. Even though scholars advise that a muslim should donate more than the obligatory charity which has been indicated in the Holy Quran and multiple Hadiths yet, some are not even bothered to donate the obligatory, let alone extra. Chapter 5 Al Ma'idah, verse 12:

“...and give zakah and believe in My messengers and support them and loan Allah a goodly loan...”

It is important to note, that one's intention when donating must purely be for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Otherwise they may miss the reward in this world and in the next as Allah, the Exalted, judges people on their intention as well as action. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. This is closely related to a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4923, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, described the Judgment of a

generous man on the Day of Resurrection in order to teach mankind the importance of intention when donating. Allah, the Exalted, will question the man about his wealth. The man will explain the different ways he donated his wealth to charity. Allah, the Exalted, will reply that he only did it to gain fame therefore there will be no reward for him on this Day. He will then be sent to Hell.

Sincerity is so important when donating that when one adopts it Allah, the Exalted, raises them to levels beyond the comprehension and reach of normal men. For example, demonstrating the correct intention when donating charity is shown by the third rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Usman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him. Once he donated an abundant amount of wealth for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, took some of this wealth in his lap he gave Usman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, the glad tidings that from then on nothing could harm his faith. This has been mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3701.

This was the attitude that inspired the other Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to declare that Usman Bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, bought Paradise twice in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3703. The first incident was described earlier and the other time is when he purchased a water well from a non-muslim and donated it for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted.

If one believes that donating charity publically will cause them to develop pride the Holy Quran has advised to donate it privately. But if one

sincerely desires to encourage others then donating publically is preferred. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 274:

“Those who spend their wealth [in Allah's way] by night and by day, secretly and publicly - they will have their reward with their Lord...”

As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6800, the one that guides others to good deeds gets the same reward as the one who performed the good deed. Allah, the Exalted, has opened all doors for those who desire to donate charity solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. As long as the intention is to please Allah, the Exalted, then it is accepted by Him. Those who do deeds for others will be ordered to seek their reward from them on Judgment Day. This is warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4203.

One should never fall for the whisperings of the Devil and believe that their charity only holds value when others are aware of it. One should sincerely believe that the Angels have recorded it and Allah, the Exalted, will keep the deed safe and reward it immensely in this world and in the next.

Unfortunately, some fall for this trap and hence lose out on their reward simply because of showing off. These deeds will be turned to scattered particles of dust on the day where good deeds will be priceless. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 23:

“And We will approach [i.e., regard] what they have done of deeds and make them as dust dispersed.”

But those who are protected from this outcome only need to remain patient. The day will come when Allah, the Exalted, reveals their deeds to the entire creation and then even the pious servants of Allah, the Exalted, will be proud of them.

A good example of this is seen in the life of the first rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, which is recorded in Imam Suyuti's, *The History of the Khalifahs who took the right way*, Page 68. Once Omar Bin Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, desired to aid an elderly woman who had no one to support her. Every night he would come to her house only to observe that someone already performed all the daily chores for her. This occurred night after night until Omar, may Allah be pleased with him, came very early one night in order to identify the secret helper. He was left standing in amazement as he observed that none other than the leader of the Islamic nation Abu Bakkar Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, was the one who secretly helped this elderly woman every night.

Some are fooled by the Devil into believing that one should only donate large amounts of charity. This is incorrect as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in *Sahih Bukhari*, number 1417, that muslims should create a shield from the fire of Hell even by donating half a date fruit.

Allah, the Exalted, does not judge one on quantity but on quality. If a person donates even a penny with the correct intention it will be accepted in the court of Allah, the Exalted. And in return He will reward them with something much greater. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 661. Hence why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 43, that the most beloved deed to Allah, the Exalted, is the one that is done regularly even if it is small. In other words donating a small amount regularly is better than donating large amounts once in a blue moon.

When a righteous predecessor learned the Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 603, that a muslim will stand under the shade of their charity on Judgment Day when the Sun will be brought near to the creation he gave charity everyday even if it was just a slice of cake. This response proves his deep love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The true lovers act on every command of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Another example can be seen in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1415. Once a very wealthy Companion Abdul Rahman Bin Ahouf, may Allah be pleased with him, donated a large amount of gold coins. The hypocrites stated that Abdul Rahman Bin Ahouf, may Allah be pleased with him, was simply showing off and had no desire to please Allah, the Exalted. Another poorer Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, donated what he could in the form of a few date fruits which he obtained by working all night. When the hypocrites observed this they mocked him by stating that his contribution would make no

difference to the strength of the Islamic nation. Allah, the Exalted, rebuked the hypocrites in the following verse thus clearly showing that sincere charity is always accepted by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 79:

“Those who criticize the contributors among the believers concerning [their] charities and [criticize] the ones who find nothing [to spend] except their effort, so they ridicule them - Allah will ridicule them, and they will have a painful punishment.”

A person may incorrectly believe that the reward for an act of charity performed collectively is divided between those who take part. But this goes against the infinite mercy of Allah, the Exalted. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 807, that the one who organizes food for another who breaks their fast will gain the same reward as a fasting person. Some make the mistake of comparing the giving of Allah, the Exalted, to the giving of people. People are limited in how and what they can give. Allah, the Exalted, has no limits in any aspect. Therefore, a full share of reward will be given to each participating person and this reward only varies depending on the intention of each person.

If someone does not have the ability to give charity they do have the ability to advise someone to do it. If they perform this action sincerely they will be rewarded for the advice as well as any good actions that result from it. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4899.

One must trust the promises given by Allah, the Exalted, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as this is a branch of faith. Allah, the Exalted, has promised that donating charity will only increase the grace of one's wealth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, even took an oath that charity does not decrease one's wealth in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2029, as Allah, the Exalted, compensates them one way or another. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 245:

“Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over?...”

Even though it seems that a person loses wealth by donating charity in reality, it only increases it. One way this occurs is that Allah, the Exalted, blesses the muslim who donates with financial opportunities that they would never have gained if they did not donate. The wealth mentioned in the Hadith quoted earlier could be referring to a muslim's true everlasting wealth which are righteous deeds which can only increase with donating charity. Finally, those that donate are blessed with grace which ensures that their remaining wealth satisfies all their needs.

Those that refrain from donating may possess more wealth but ultimately lose their peace of mind and contentment because of a lack of grace in their wealth.

People often look for compensation when problems occur such as, car insurance. But they often lose out on it because of some loop hole. Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed compensation for those who spend on worthy causes for His sake. So muslims should strive for this compensation so that it can benefit them in both worlds.

As mentioned in earlier an important thing to understand is that donating wealth is not the only type of charity mentioned in Islam. If it was the only type then countless poor muslims would have been deprived of this great deed. Any form of aid to another is recorded as charity. For example, if one offers good advice, encourages others to perform good deeds and forbids sins then these actions are all recorded as charity. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1956. In fact, this Hadith even advises that smiling to make others feel comfortable is recorded as charity.

In another Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4940, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a man once removed an obstacle in a path and for this act of charity his sins were forgiven. Another example of this is found in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 267:

“O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth...”

In the following verse Allah, the Exalted, clearly warns that a person will never become a successful muslim until they spend in the way of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 92:

“Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love...”

The important thing to note is that this verse does not specifically declare wealth but any form of charity. It specifically mentions your favorite things. But it is important to note, that one should not give to others what they would not desire for themselves. This is a strict condition of giving charity.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 2554, that one of the main reasons a group of muslims will enter Paradise is because of their generosity. But this generosity extends beyond financial aid and includes being generous with their knowledge, property, time and advice.

As the branches of charity expand to all aspects of one's life muslims are left with no excuse but to partake in them.

The following verses of the Holy Quran show that piety and charity are intrinsically connected. Chapter 92 Al Layl, verses 5-6:

“As for he who gives and fears Allah. And believes in the best [reward].”

These two characteristics are required for every muslim who desires success in this world and in the next. Unfortunately, some people believe being generous leads to a reduction in their status within society. For example, they hoard knowledge and refuse to spread it believing that it makes them unique. But history clearly shows those who spread their knowledge are the ones who are remembered as the honorable teachers of mankind whereas those who hoarded it were forgotten.

As advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 534, charity is evidence that will benefit a muslim. One possible meaning is that charity is a proof of one's piety. As proven by the Holy Quran those who establish their prayers and donate charity are the pious. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verses 2-3:

“This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah. Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.”

In this respect, piety can be split into two aspects: physical and monetary worship. Even though physical worship is difficult it is still easier than the latter. Charity is evidence proving that those who donate are the chosen one's of Allah, the Exalted, as they fulfill the harder task.

Charity is also evidence of one's faith and it will therefore assist them on Judgment Day. It is also evidence of one's faith in this material world. Hence, why Allah, the Exalted, addresses the believers by ordering them to offer charity in the following verse. Meaning, only true believers donate charity. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 254:

“O you who have believed, spend from that which We have provided for you...”

Therefore, one's faith will always be incomplete without charity. The same way the prayer establishes proof of one's faith so does charity. Unfortunately, some refuse to give the obligatory let alone voluntary charity. One must persevere in fighting their inner and outer Devils by overcoming their influence and sincerely donate for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

A muslim should avoid those who always aim to discourage muslims from donating charity. Even if one suffers a setback while donating charity they should never stop donating. The same way one does not give up their occupation after a setback in their profession or business they should not give up their religious business after facing hardships.

Whoever abandons this proves that their love for worldly business is greater than their love for Allah, the Exalted.

Out of deep love for wealth one should never abandon donating to the needy for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. They should remember that wealth is one of the favorite toys of the Devil. When the first ever coins were formed he kissed them and declared that they would cause mankind to become his slaves. This has been mentioned in Imam Asfahani's, *Al Hilyat Al Awliya*, number 924. One must understand that wealth should be used to reach the next world successfully instead of being hoarded or spent wastefully, excessively or extravagantly.

It is very important to note that the one who obtains wealth by unlawful means and donates it believing they will gain reward is grossly misguided. It has been clearly stated by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in *Sahih Bukhari*, number 1410, that this type of charity is rejected by Allah, the Exalted. Unless one sincerely repents this leads to punishment in both worlds.

Another tool of the Devil is that he convinces muslims that donating the obligatory charity is enough to please Allah, the Exalted. Undoubtedly, one needs to fulfill the obligatory charity and without this voluntary charity will carry no weight in the court of Allah, the Exalted. But one must ensure they give extra in order to follow the footsteps of the righteous predecessors.

Islam is not an extreme religion it does not teach muslims to donate so much that they become needy themselves. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 29:

“And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent.”

Instead, Islam teaches one to firstly fulfill the responsibilities placed on their shoulders. If they are not exempt by Islamic law muslims must donate the obligatory charity. Only after this should one give some of the remaining wealth away in charity instead of wasting it on unnecessary things or hoarding it. Some are pleased to waste their money on pointless things but become tight fisted when the opportunity to donate charity presents itself. The hoarders behave as if they will never die and their wealth will never leave them. This is plain foolishness as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6514, that one's family and wealth abandons them once they are buried and only their deeds remain with them.

They fail to remember that their wealth can only ever be used in three ways: what they eat, what they wear and what they send ahead to Allah, the Exalted, in the form of charity. All other wealth will be left behind for others to use while the deceased will be held accountable for collecting it. This has been confirmed in Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7420.

Muslims should realize that no worldly wealth or business ever lasts. Even though, the basic necessities such as food and clothing have been required and used since the dawn of time a company which proudly declares its date of establishment rarely surpasses a few centuries. This is because no worldly business endures. Therefore, one should concern themselves more with the permanent hereafter that will last. People are always moving between wealth and poverty therefore, one must make use of their wealth before they face poverty which can be caused by the economy or death. Chapter 102 At Takathur, verses 1-2:

“Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you. Until you visit the graveyards.”

When a muslim truly believes that everything they possess belongs to Allah, the Exalted, then giving charity through the grace of Allah, the Exalted, becomes easy. One who adopts this attitude realizes they are simply returning a loan that was given to them by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 254:

“O you who have believed, spend from that which We have provided for you...”

This behaviour also protects one from destroying their good deed of charity through pride. Pride makes a person believe they are doing Allah, the Exalted, and the needy a favor by donating charity. But the same way one returns a bank loan without pride muslims need to realize their charity is a way of repaying the loan given by Allah, the Exalted. In

actual fact, the needy are doing the donor a favor by taking their charity. The needy are a means for them to obtain reward from Allah, the Exalted, and without them this would be impossible. If one believes that their wealth was accumulated through their intelligence and strength they must understand that these things were also given by Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, this loan in the form of blessings such as wealth must be returned to Allah, the Exalted, otherwise they may face a penalty that will begin in this world and continue into the hereafter.

When one donates charity their transaction is not with a poor person in fact it is with Allah, the Exalted. All pathways of monetary charity are only a medium to connect one's wealth to Allah, the Exalted. There is always a risk of a worldly treasury being looted but the treasury one transfers their wealth into when dealing with Allah, the Exalted, can never be looted. When a person sincerely does business with Allah, the Exalted, they can be confident of an unimaginable profit which will benefit them in this world and in the next. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 245:

“Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over?...”

As mentioned in earlier, some act as if their material wealth will stay with them forever but fail to remember the countless people who were wealthier than them who departed from this world empty handed. They are heedless to the way their wealth was plundered by their inheritors while they journeyed to their graves alone. One should never forget that wealth is only a means to collect blessings and reward from Allah, the Exalted, by spending it on their necessities, fulfilling their responsibilities

and spending in other ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, without excessiveness, waste or extravagance. Those who fail to remember this lose themselves in their wealth and become playthings for the Devil.

In reality, wealth possesses similar characteristics as water. The same way water stays in one's hand only for a moment before slipping away so does wealth. When a person is dehydrated it can lead to serious health complications. Similarly, a lack of wealth can lead to destruction for the one who lacks patience. Death by drowning is caused by excess water entering the body. Excess wealth can drown its owner into heedlessness which leads to regret in this world and in the next.

The sad thing people fail to understand is that one of the greatest pains a person feels at the time of death is when they realize that their strenuous effort dedicated on obtaining excess wealth was pointless as it all abandoned them in their hour of need. The other truth they finally understand which only increases their suffering is not only did they leave their hard-earned wealth behind for their inheritors to enjoy but the deceased will be questioned about all of it on a day when Hell will be ablaze in front of them. The successful are fully aware of this and thus use their wealth in the correct way before it slips away and they face the reckoning on a Great Day.

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