

Analysis of the hadith

The narrator of this hadith is ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud and the information about him was given previously. Imam Muslim accepted this hadith authentic and recorded it in his *sahīh* collection. The other hadith scholars such as Tirmidhi and Ibn Mājah also recorded it in their Sunan collections.

The Prophet taught us how to pray and also what to ask from God. The hadith books have a section called ‘Kitāb al-Adhkār’ (the book of supplications) which deals with the supplications of the Prophet in different circumstances. The Prophet always prayed God before doing anything and there is no place which he did not supplicate to God for prayer is a connection between the servant and God. Although people should take necessary precautions and follow precedents to accomplish things in this material world, where cause and effect has a special place, they should never forget that everything ultimately depends on God for its existence therefore they should combine action and prayer.²³³ The Prophet loved and feared God most. When reading his supplications, we see that they have deep meaning which reflect profound belief, deep sincerity, absolute submission and complete confidence.²³⁴

It is recommended by the scholars to memorize the supplications of the Prophet, so Believers express their servanthood with them. In this hadith, the Prophet asked four things from God. They are very important virtues. The first thing that needs to be asked from God is guidance. If Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who is infallible, asks guidance from God Believers must consider it seriously. Indeed, Believers ask guidance in every rak’ah of prayer in which they recite Surah Fatiha. There is no guarantee for any person that he will remain on straight path during all his life. There is a potential of deviation for everyone except the Prophets therefore people should ask guidance from God as much as they can.

The second element of supplication is *taqwa* which can be translated as fear of God. It is the greatest means of piety and strongest defense against sins. In order to have a spiritual life one should have perfect piety which can be obtained by avoiding doubtful things and minor sins. The Prophet said;

“The lawful is evident and the forbidden is also evident. Between these two are things which most of the people do not know whether they are lawful or forbidden. Thus, he who avoids doubtful matters clears himself in regard to his religion and his honor. It is possible for one who does doubtful things to commit forbidden acts, just as it is possible for the flock of a shepherd pasturing near a field belonging to another or the public to enter that field. Know that each king has a protected area under his protection; the protected area of God is forbidden things. Also know that there is a part of flesh in the body. If it is healthy, the body will become healthy; if it is ailing, the body will be ailing. That part is the heart.”²³⁵

²³³ Gülen, *The Messenger of God*, p. 279.

²³⁴ Gülen, *ibid.*

²³⁵ Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Īmān, 39; Muslim, *Sahīh*, Musaqāt, 107.

A true spiritual life depends on being sensitive to matters about which there is some doubt. The lawful and unlawful things are explained by God but there are many things which stay between two and only those who avoid doubtful things can live a truly religious life.²³⁶

Chastity is another virtue which the Prophet asked from God in his supplication. Chastity can be defined as a state of purity in actions, thoughts and morality. One must follow the principles of Islamic belief to attain this virtue. The last virtue mentioned in the hadith is self-sufficiency. It is the antonym of poverty and covers physical and spiritual richness. With this virtue Believers are content with what God provided to them and are not envious of people because of their possessions.

Fourth hadith

عَنْ أَبِي طَرِيفٍ عَدِيِّ بْنِ حَاتِمِ الطَّائِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ ثُمَّ رَأَى أَنْتَقَى اللَّهُ مِنْهَا فَلْيَأْتِ التَّقْوَى

Adiy ibn Hātim al-Tai heard the Messenger of God (pbuh) saying: “He who has taken an oath (to do something) but found something else better than that (which brings him closer to God), then he should do that which is better in piety (and he should expiate for the breaking of oath).”²³⁷

Adiy ibn Hātim

He is a son of a father who was well-known with his generosity. He came to Medina with the deputation of Tay to meet with the Prophet under the leadership of Zayd al-Khayl. The Prophet welcomed them warmly and even he gave his own seat to Adiy. After listening to the Prophet, he was deeply affected from the characteristics of Muhammad (pbuh) and understood that he was the real prophet, therefore he accepted Islam.²³⁸ There are many stories about the generosity of Adiy. He and his clan were sincere Muslims. Although some Arab tribes apostatized after the death of the Prophet they remained loyal to Islam. Adiy was the first person among his clan who calculated his zakat and gave it to Caliph Abū Bakr.

Adiy was present at the conquest of Makka. He relates one of the predictions of the Prophet about the near future of Islam as follows;

“One-day people complained, in the presence of God’s Messenger, about poverty, deprivation, and unsafe desert roads. He replied: ‘A day will come when a woman will travel alone on her camel from Hira to the Ka’ba with fear of nothing but God alone. A day will come and the treasures of Chosroes (the Persian ruler) will be distributed among you. A day

²³⁶ Gülen, *Sufism*, vol.1, p. 47.

²³⁷ Muslim, *Sahīh*, Ayman, 15.

²³⁸ Recep Dogan, *The Exemplary Role Model Muhammad*, FB Publishing, San Clemente 2014, p. 305.

will come when people will travel around to find someone to pay the prescribed alms to, but in vain.’ When he predicted this, members of the Tay tribe used to attack travelers, and the Persian Empire was enjoying its most splendid days. But I personally witnessed the first two predictions come true, and I am expecting the third also will prove to be true.’²³⁹

‘Adiy did not live long enough to see the third prediction but soon after his death, during the caliphate of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, people became so rich that no one could be found to give the prescribed alms in the vast lands of the Muslim state.²⁴⁰ Adiy narrated 66 hadiths from the Prophet. He lived very long and died in the year 68 of hijrah when he was 120 years old. May God be well pleased with him.

Analysis of the hadith

The hadith is authentic according to criteria of Imam Muslim therefore he recorded it in his *sahīh* collection. Taking an oath to do something is not encouraged but it is permissible. Sometimes people may need to take an oath to convince others about their thoughts and actions. It is obligatory to observe the requirements of oaths unless they are disobedience to God. Oaths are binding upon Muslims and if they break them they must compensate them. However, if the subject matter of oath is against the notion of *taqwa* it should not be observed.

There are two contradicting principles of Islam here; fulfilling of oaths and acting according to *taqwa*. If fulfilment of oath is against *taqwa* the latter is preferred for the Prophet encouraged Muslims to do so. *Taqwa* brings honor and nobility to Believers, but it is achieved with the knowledge that leads one to fear and revere God. Individuals who combine piety and knowledge in their hearts are mentioned in the Qur’ān as those who pass the test of piety:²⁴¹ “they are those whose hearts God has tested for piety.”²⁴²

Believers should break their oaths and compensate them if this is better for piety. Muslims should live their life according to the principles of *taqwa* for it is the essential foundation of spiritual life. The Prophet himself practiced this advice in his acts first. During Tabuk expedition some Muslims asked from the Prophet to give them camels but the Prophet swore that he would not give. However, later he granted their wish. Thereupon, some Companions reminded him the oath but he said; “if I take an oath to do something and later I find something else better, then I do what is better and make expiation for my oath.”²⁴³

²³⁹ Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Manāqib, 22

²⁴⁰ Gülen, *Messenger of God*, p. 54.

²⁴¹ Gülen, *Sufism*, vol.1, p. 48.

²⁴² Qur’ān 49: 3.

²⁴³ Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Ayman, 1.

Fifth hadith

عن أبي أمامة صدِّي بن عجلان الباهلي رضي الله عنه قال: سمعتُ رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَخْطُبُ في حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ فَقَالَ: اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، وَصَلُّوا حَمْسَكُمْ، وَصُومُوا شَهْرَكُمْ، وَأَدُّوا زَكَاةَ أَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَاءَكُمْ، تَدْخُلُوا جَنَّةَ رَبِّكُمْ

Abū Umama heard Messenger of God (pbuh) during the sermon of the Farewell Pilgrimage saying; “fear from God (taqwa), perform your five daily prayers, observe fasting during the month of Ramadan, pay the Zakat on your properties and obey your leaders. If you do so you will enter the Paradise of your Lord.”²⁴⁴

Abū Umama Suday ibn Ajlan

He is a Companion famous with the title Abū Umama. He lived in Egypt and then in Humus in Syria. He narrated 150 hadiths from the Prophet (pbuh) in total. His reports take place in well-known six authentic hadith books (kutub al-sitta). He passed away in the year 81 of *hijra* in Damascus. Some hold that he was the Companion who died last in the region of Damascus. May God be well pleased with him.

Analysis of the hadith

The hadith is *ḥasan* (fair) according to criteria of Tirmidhi. He recorded it in his Sunan collection. In Islamic thought belief and action is strongly connected to each other. Similarly, life in this world determines the life in the next one. The notion of *taqwa* encompassed both worlds. In the context of worship and obedience, *taqwa* means purity of heart, spiritual profundity, and sincerity while in the context of refraining from what is unlawful, it means being determined not to commit sins and to avoid doubtful things.²⁴⁵

Taqwa is not sole claims of respect to God which does not have any action basis. A person cannot be pious if he/she does not carry out the commandments and observe the prohibitions in Islam. If Muslims are sincere in their *taqwa* they must obey the rules of God. One cannot be pious without practicing Islam. In order to be respectful to God one should fulfil His commands and avoid His prohibitions.

Final destination for Believers is Paradise. The travelers in this journey must struggle hard to achieve the eternal bliss and happiness. The Prophet provided the basic guidelines to Muslims to attain this goal in this hadith; “fear from God (taqwa), perform your five daily prayers, observe fasting during the month of Ramadan, pay the Zakat on your properties and obey your leaders. If you do so you will enter the Paradise of your Lord.” These recommendations

²⁴⁴ Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Juma’, 80

²⁴⁵ Gülen, *Sufism*, vol.1, p. 48.

are made by the Prophet in his Farewell Pilgrimage before he left this world. This makes them more important for the Prophet reminded his followers the most important principles of Islam one more time before he left them.

The first element which is emphasized on this hadith is *taqwa*. It can be translated as fear of God or piety. *Taqwa* is the foundation of all kind of worship. God introduced Himself as “He is the Lord of righteousness and piety, and the Lord of forgiveness.”²⁴⁶ It means He is the One whose punishment must be feared most as well as His forgiveness must be hoped most. If one has *taqwa* he/she performs prayers, observes fasting during month of Ramadan, pays Zakat and obeys his/her leaders. *Taqwa* is a path which leads to Paradise and it is also precondition to enter it. *Taqwa* provides for its possessor straightforwardness in this world and salvation in the next one.

In conclusion, *taqwa* has many aspects and some of them can be summarized as follows;

Believers, who are pious, seek only God’s content and approval. They clean their hearts from worldly things and keep it pure for its Creator to come. They observe the laws of religion and nature. Science and religion are the two faces of one truth for they come from the same source therefore believers must observe both to be successful here and the Hereafter.

They meet the conditions to attain their goal, but they know that the result is created by God. So, they are not fatalist who hold that human free will is useless and whatever God decrees it happens. On the other side, they are not pure rationalist either, because they do not ascribe all the accomplishments to themselves by ignoring God’s help and support in them.

They are extremely cautious against whatever may divert them from God. In order to achieve God’s pleasure and love they constantly fight against their carnal desires that may lead them to what is forbidden.

They are very loyal and sincere in their faith therefore they ascribe all their physical and spiritual success to God alone. They know that without His help and favor they could succeed. Thus, they praise God for all the achievements which He bestowed upon them.

They are very humble in their servanthood to God. They do not consider themselves superior to others for this is against the meaning of being a servant of God.

For them there is one real goal in this world; that is God’s pleasure and love. They know that wealth, status, fame, worldly power etc. are all temporary and God trial His servants with them. With the consciousness of *taqwa* they do not pursue other than God and His approval. They know that if they find God they find everything but if they lose God they can’t find anything.

Since the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the best servant and the exemplary role model for all humankind they follow his Sunnah without condition or reservation. Indeed, God himself connected His love to following his Sunnah; “Say (to them, O Messenger): ‘If you indeed

²⁴⁶ Qur’ān 75: 56.

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love God, then follow me, so that God will love you and forgive you your sins.’ God is all-Forgiving, all-Compassionate.’²⁴⁷

Pious believers renew themselves constantly to increase their faith. They study and reflect on three books; their selfhood, the book of universe and the book of revelation (the Qur’ān). Through reflecting on them they try to understand God’s names, attributes and essential qualities. As a matter of fact, God manifested Himself on these books and they can only be read and understood right from the perspective of *taqwa*. The laws in nature are not different than the laws in the Qur’ān or in human selfhood. God created them all and each confirms the others. In order to know God better all these books should be studied together. *Taqwa* is the key concept which can combine them all and bring the real success for Believers here and the Hereafter.

In order to remain pious all the time they constantly remember death. They know that it may happen any time and with this conscious they never waste their life. In short, *taqwa* is the heavenly water of life, and a pious one is the fortunate one who has found it.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ Qur’ān 3: 31.

²⁴⁸ Gülen, *Sufism*, vol.1, p. 49.