**Sincerity and Honesty**

**Purity of Intention**



3.29. Say (to the believers): "Whether you keep secret what is in your bosoms or reveal it, God knows it. He knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. God has full power over everything. (1)



11.51. "O my people! I ask of you no wage for it (for conveying the Message to you); my wage is due from only Him Who originated me with a unique individuality. Will you not reason and understand?(2)



18.110. Say: "I am but a mortal like you, but it is revealed to me that your God is the One and Only God. So, whoever is looking forward to meeting his Lord, let him do good, righteous deeds, and let him not associate any partner in the worship of His Lord. "(3)

**HADITH**

1. Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, say, ‘Indeed, actions only go by intentions. Everyone gets what they intend. Anyone, therefore, who emigrates to Allah and His Messenger, his emigration is indeed to Allah and His Messenger. But anyone who emigrates to gain something of this world or to marry a woman, his emigration is to that to which he emigrated.’” (Sahih al-Bukhari, Iman, 41; Sahih Muslim, Imara, 155).(4)

 **Complete Sincerity**

Another indispensable characteristic is sincerity, which in this context means “purity of intention, to do everything solely for the sake of God.” We are told to worship God sincerely: They were commanded only to serve God, making the religion His sincerely, men of pure faith, and to perform the prayer, and pay the alms (98:5). God also mentions sincerity as the foremost attribute of the Prophets: And mention in the Book Moses; he was made sincere, and he was a Messenger, a Prophet (19:51).
We worship God only because we are His servants and He has told us to do so. Obeying Him allows us to secure His approval and be rewarded in the Hereafter. Said Nursi, the great twentieth-century Turkish thinker, said: “Do what you do only for God’s sake, start for God’s sake, work for God’s sake, and act within the sphere of God’s good approval.” [1]

God’s Last Prophet worshipped God so sincerely that people could say: “No one can remain as humble as he was at the beginning of his career or quest after attaining its height. Muhammad was an exception to this.” He is so great and sublime that we still stand out of respect for him, although he used to warn his Companions: “When I come upon you, don’t stand up as the Persians do (for their elders).” [2] Although his Companions had complete respect for him, he considered himself a poor slave of God. On the day he conquered Makka, he was the same as when he humbly had begun his mission. At the outset of his mission, he would sit and eat with the poor and slaves. As he entered Makka in triumph, he rode a mule in such deep submission and humility before God that his forehead touched its packsaddle. He was prostrating before God and taking refuge in Him from being a tyrannical, haughty conqueror.

God’s Messenger had one intention: to please God and worship Him sincerely. He worshipped Him at a level of perfect goodness and sincerity, as he himself stated in a famous Tradition: “Perfect goodness or virtue is to worship God as if you were seeing Him, and while you see Him not, yet truly He sees you.”

[3] [1] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words, The First Word, 5.
[2] Abu Dawud, Adab, 152; Ibn Hanbal, 5:253.
[3] Bukhari, Iman, 47; Muslim, Iman, 5:7.

**THE OUTCOME OF HONESTY AND DECEIT**

“Live honestly. Honesty leads to goodness and goodness leads to Paradise. Once a man has given himself over to honesty and heads in that direction, he will always speak the truth, always search for what is right. Thus, he will be recorded as “Siddiq” (Truthful) with God. Avoid lying. Lying leads to immorality and immorality leads to Hell. Once a man has given himself to lies will always lie. Thus he will be recorded as “Kazzab” (one who lies very much) with God.”
(Bukhari, Adab, 69; Abu Dawud, Adab, 80)
Honesty is one of the characteristics that all the Prophets had, whereas lying or deceit is the sign of hypocrites and disbelievers. Honesty is an important part of our lives, affecting our past, present and future; deceit is a shadow of darkness that pursues us throughout our lives. Nobody has ever found happiness with deceit or lies and people on the path of truth and honesty will never be deprived in this world or in the Hereafter.
Deceit is the most evident characteristic of unbelief; it is the means of opposing that which God perceives and knows. Lying has destroyed the morals and principles of modern society; it is a social disease that has turned the world into a nation of deceitful beings. There is no salvation for those nations who open their doors to deceit, allowing it to flow freely into every aspect of their lives and their homes, businesses, their political dealings, or military posts. Nor will there be any salvation for them. This is the most significant aspect of the Islamic mission, the most evident awareness of faith, the foundation of the principles of Prophet Muhammad. This is the greatest feature of all the teachings of the Prophets and scholars; honesty is the only means to spiritual and material progress in the universe.
On one hand, we have the honored servant of God, Prophet Muhammad who is the Pride of Humanity; while on the other hand, we have the display of unbelief and corruption of the soul, an obvious trait of the devil.
The example of the first word in the hadith, birr (goodness), refers to purity of thought and action in human life; it is an expression of faith of such vast scope that it covers many aspects of life and favorable actions, including honest thought, honest speech, honest intentions, honest actions, and above all an honest way of living. However, the word fujur (immorality) is the complete opposite; it is the result of evil, it is the basis of deviant thought, speech, and evil actions, and it is an attribute of Hell.
In the hadith, a siddiq and a kazzab are mentioned side by side. The first has integrity, which indicates a person who has made honesty and truthfulness his way of life, the second example is one who has become a habitual liar. Both words are inflected to express the top level of the relevant adjective; accordingly a person who takes pride in their honesty, speaking and acting in a truthful manner, is sure to reach the affection of God at sometime during their life, while the person who takes pride in lying and who is dishonest in their everyday actions will become the epitome of dishonesty.
The final destination of these paths, although some are long and others short, although some gleam with light and security while others are misty and dangerous, is either Paradise or Hell. The path that leads to Paradise consists of various stages of blessings and encouragement, while the one that ends up in eternal disappointment consists of nothing but great disadvantages and obstructions.
The matter that we have tried to bring to everybody’s attention here is what are the consequences of honesty in this world and in the Hereafter and the damage that dishonesty can do to both individuals and to society; if we have been able to convey this in such a brief explanation, this is due to the great words contained in the hadith of the Prophet.(5)

 “It is related from Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “Actions are judged according to intentions. One is rewarded for whatever one intends to do. Whoever emigrates for Allah and His Messenger has emigrated for Allah and His Messenger; whoever emigrates to acquire something worldly or to marry has emigrated for what is intended.” (Sahih al-Bukhari, Iman, 41; Sahih Muslim, Imara, 155).

**EXPLANATION**

During the Emigration, all the Muslims were emigrating from Mecca to Medina for the sake of Allah. However, a Companion unknown by name had emigrated to marry a woman he loved, by the name of Umm Qays. This individual too was, without question, a believer, but his intention and purpose did not outweigh his behavior and actions. He also was one of the Emigrants, but his emigration was to Umm Qays. He endured all this difficulty that could only have been endured for the sake of Allah, for the sake of a woman instead. This incident, without mention of the name of the Companion, became the subject of the abovementioned Prophetic statement. The particularity of the reason for its articulation does not hinder the universality of the principle. The hadith’s ruling, therefore, is general and encompasses all affairs and people. Allah the Almighty has declared: “Say (to the believers): ‘Whether you keep secret what is in your bosoms or reveal it, Allah knows it. He knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Allah has full power over everything’” (Al Imran 3:29). Secrecy or openness pertains only to human beings. Just as Allah knows all that human beings do when in private, He is also aware of the thoughts and feelings occurring to their hearts. A person who believes in Allah and embraces the religion He revealed, must keep check of their behavior and even the feelings occurring to their hearts. Intention transpires in the heart. If a person senses a lapse in the sincere intention they entertain in their heart, they must renew their intention at once. This hadith, generally speaking, encompasses the following two topics: Intention and Emigration.

**A. INTENTION**

1) Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, “The foundations of Islam are upon these three hadith: ‘Actions are by intentions’; ‘Whoever introduces into this affair of ours that which is not in accordance with it will have it rejected’; and ‘The lawful is clear and the prohibited is clear.’”

2) The intention of a believer is better than their deeds. In another hadith, Allah’s Messenger said, “Allah considers not your bodily statures, but your hearts. Rather, He considers your hearts.”

3) Through their intention, a person’s mundane, daily actions become transformed into worship and an entire life becomes meritorious and filled with reward.

4) Whoever intends to carry out an act of goodness, they attain the rewards for having done so even if they are unable to actualize it.

5) Intention is the spirit of deed. That is to say, in the same way that a body without a spirit is of no avail, a deed performed without regard to Divine approval resembles a soulless body and is nothing more than mere display. In one of his hadith, the Messenger of Allah refers to a martyr being the first of people against whom judgment will be pronounced on the Day of Judgment. Upon Allah’s calling him to account concerning what he did in the world, he will say, “I fought for You until I died a martyr.” The following communication will then take place:

He [Allah] will say: “You have lied—you did but fight that it might be said [of you]: ‘He is courageous.’” And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hellfire. [Another] will be a man who has studied [religious] knowledge and has taught it and who used to recite the Qur’an. He will be brought and Allah will make known to him His favors and he will recognize them. [The Almighty] will say: “And what did you do about them?” He will say: “I studied [religious] knowledge and I taught it and I recited the Qur’an for Your sake.” He will say: “You have lied—you did but study [religious] knowledge that it might be said [of you]: ‘He is learned.’” And you recited the Qur’an that it might be said [of you]: ‘He is a reciter.’ And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

The continuation of the hadith gives an account of a wealthy man who will be brought to account who will say that he spent it for Allah’s sake. He too will be told that he did so that it might be said of him, “He is open-handed.” And he too will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hellfire (Sahih Muslim, Imara, 152).

6) Intention holds such excellence that it transforms sin into reward and reward into sin. That is to say, intention is a spirit and the spirit of that spirit is sincerity. On this account, salvation is only possible with sincerity.

**B. EMIGRATION**

Whoever emigrates in Allah’s cause will find on the earth enough room for refuge and plentiful resources. He who leaves his home as an emigrant to Allah and His Messenger, and whom death overtakes (while still on the way), his reward is due and sure with Allah. Assuredly, Allah is All-Forgiving, All- Compassionate. (an-Nisa 4:100)

Definition: Emigration literally means to abandon and to leave one place to settle in another.

In a religious context, emigration denotes a person’s leaving the country or region in which they reside, to settle in another, in the event of their inability to freely practice their religion due to oppression and persecution. Historically speaking, the Emigration is the emigration of the Prophet and his Companions from Mecca to Medina in the year 622. Intention is of utmost importance in emigration, If emigration is realized in order to earn Allah’s approval and good pleasure, then the reward mentioned in the following Prophetic Tradition can be attained: “If anyone leaves their home for (the sake of) Allah and something befalls them on the way, the angels cannot record their reward; it is Allah Who will reward him.” Otherwise it will amount to nothing other than sightseeing or being wearied by travel. All the Prophets have emigrated, including Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Isa, and Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon them. The Messenger of Allah states, “Whosoever seeks martyrdom with sincerity will be ranked by Allah among the martyrs even if they die in their bed.” Sincerity is to undertake everything one does with complete belief and to perfection, on account of Allah’s having commanded it.

**Emigration is of Two Kinds:**

a) Emigration from Sin, or the abandonment of wrongdoing. The best emigrant is one who emigrates from sin and transgression. Leaving behind those things that Allah has prohibited is considered to be emigration in the general sense. Thus, Allah’s Messenger states, “The emigrant (muhajir) is one who abandons what Allah has forbidden.”

b) Emigration to Allah’s Mercy: This refers to immediately abandoning a sin after having committed it, turning to Allah’s mercy, and entreating His forgiveness. It is echoing the words of Ibrahim ibn Adham and beseeching Allah’s mercy and forgiveness: “O Allah, Your rebellious servant has come to Your door. He knows that his sins are great, but nevertheless entreats You. If You forgive him, this is from Your majesty. If You turn him away, he has no other door to which to turn.”

The Messenger of Allah stated, “There is no emigration after the Conquest of Mecca,” but this is in terms of emigration from Mecca to Medina. That is to say, emigration continues in our day, and every journey or flight from one’s land and home undertaken for the sake of Allah still constitutes an emigration and, provided one’s intention is sincere, one attains the rewards of emigration.(6)

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