CLIMBING THE HILL OF VIRTUE

Falling, Rising and Walking On Without Despair



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Falling, Rising and Walking On Without Despair

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

"And indeed, you are of a great moral character."

SURAH AL-QALAM 68:4

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who has shown mankind the two ways and opens the door of repentance by night and by day for whoever slips. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was sent to perfect good character, and upon his family and companions.

This eBook is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

May Allah ease our climb up the hill of virtue, lift us up every time we stumble, and make this knowledge *'ilmun yuntafa'u bih* — knowledge that benefits.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

The cover shows a **tall green hill at sunrise**, rendered in 3D. A **narrow winding footpath** climbs from the foot of the hill to its summit, which glows in **golden light**. Along the path are several climbers in traditional Malay dress: one has reached the summit, one **stops to reach out his hand** and help a friend who has fallen get back up, and an elderly man walks slowly with a walking stick.

At the foot of the hill stretches a **golden paddy field**. The morning breeze makes the **rice stalks bow** in the same direction — the image of the pantun ***"In the storm the rice stalks bow"***: the fuller the grain, the lower it bows (Chapter 6). The **climbing path** symbolises ***al-'aqabah***, the steep pass of Surah Al-Balad (Main Topic); the **climber who falls and is helped up** depicts the one who errs but returns in repentance (Chapter 4); and the **slow but unbroken steps** remind us that the most beloved deeds to Allah are the consistent ones, even if few (Chapter 5).

The **light at the summit** symbolises excellence of character — the final goal of the climb. The **deep navy band** with its **fine gold line** at the bottom is the firm foundation on which the author's name rests, just as *budi* is the pillar of a person and of a nation.

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SUPPORT & DONATIONS

Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; blue box = scientific finding; grey box = reflection or quotation. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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CLIMBING THE HILL OF VIRTUE

There is a hill that appears on no map of any land, yet every human being is called to climb it. That hill is the **hill of *budi** — *a Malay word for virtue: wisdom of mind, nobility of character, and kindness rendered to others. Buya Hamka (1908–1981), the great scholar and man of letters of the Malay world, described it beautifully in his book* **Lembaga Budi***: the summit of the climb is excellence of character, which he called* the final goal*. And the noblest aspiration is to free oneself from the animal tendencies that dwell within the soul.

As Hamka pictured it, not everyone who climbs reaches the top. Some cannot endure and turn back; some, weak of foot, stumble and never rise again. But others **fall, then stand up again**, and continue on — slowly, but **never knowing despair**. These are the truly virtuous.

> *Diributlah runduklah padi,*
> *Dicupak Datuk Temenggung;*
> *Hidup jikalau tidak berbudi,*
> *Duduk tegak ke mari canggung.*
>
> (In the storm the rice stalks bow, measured by the Datuk Temenggung;
> a life lived without virtue is awkward wherever it sits or stands.)
>
> A traditional Malay pantun, quoted by Buya Hamka at the opening of Lembaga Budi (1940)

The pantun teaches that rice laden with grain bows when the wind blows, while a person without *budi* is forever "awkward" — never at ease, even when seated in a high place. This is the message of this eBook: ***a life of virtue is our goal!***

The image of the hill is not merely a poet's invention. The Qur'an itself calls the path of goodness ***al-'aqabah*** — the steep and difficult pass — in Surah Al-Balad:

SURAH AL-BALAD 90:10–18

وَهَدَيْنَٰهُ ٱلنَّجْدَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾

And have shown him the two ways.

فَلَا ٱقْتَحَمَ ٱلْعَقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾

But he has not broken through the difficult pass.

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْعَقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾

And what can make you know what is [breaking through] the difficult pass?

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فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾

It is the freeing of a slave.

أَوْ إِطْعَٰمٌ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾

Or feeding on a day of severe hunger.

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾

An orphan of near relationship.

أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

Or a needy person in misery.

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلْمَرْحَمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾

And then being among those who believed and advised one another to patience and advised one another to compassion.

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ ﴿١٨﴾

Those are the companions of the right.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/90:10-18

Allah has shown mankind ***"the two ways"*** (*al-najdain*): the way of good and the way of evil. Then He rebukes: ***"But he has not broken through the difficult pass."*** Linguistically, *al-'aqabah* means **a steep mountain pass**. Ibn Kathir reports from Qatadah that *al-'aqabah* is a high and difficult barrier, and the way to cross it is through **obedience to Allah**. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 90:11

Remarkably, Allah explains *al-'aqabah* not only with hidden acts of worship, but with **kindness to people**: freeing a slave, feeding others on a day of hunger, caring for the orphan and the destitute, and advising one another to **patience** and **compassion**. The steep path is the path of **virtue**.

HADITH — AL-ADAB AL-MUFRAD, NO. 273

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حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أَبِي أُوَيْسٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَجْلاَنَ عَنِ الْقَعْقَاعِ بْنِ حَكِيمٍ عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ السَّمَّانِ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لأُتَمِّمَ صَالِحَ الأَخْلاَقِ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"I was sent only to perfect good character."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Isma'il ibn Abi Uways, from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Muhammad al-Darawardi, from Muhammad ibn 'Ajlan, from al-Qa'qa' ibn Hakim, from Abu Salih al-Samman, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in al-Adab al-Mufrad, Book of Good Character, Hadith No. 273. Also narrated by Imam Ahmad in al-Musnad and al-Hakim in al-Mustadrak.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded authentic by Shaykh al-Albani in Sahih al-Adab al-Mufrad and al-Silsilah al-Sahihah (No. 45); al-Hakim graded it authentic on the criteria of Imam Muslim and al-Dhahabi agreed.

Source: https://sunnah.com/adab:273

This hadith sums up the purpose of the prophetic mission in one sentence: **to perfect character**. Virtue is not an "extra" to religion; it is part of the very purpose of religion. So to climb the hill of virtue is to follow in the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Note: Scientific findings in this eBook are presented as evidence of harmony, not to "prove" the Qur'an. Buya Hamka's passage is summarised in the author's own words; please refer to the original Lembaga Budi for the full text.

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1. BUDI: THE CROWN OF A HUMAN BEING

In Malay, ***budi*** carries a wide meaning: a wise mind, good conduct, and kindness rendered to others. Hamka equated *budi* with **akhlaq** (character) — a disposition so deeply rooted in the soul that good deeds flow from it easily, without being forced or long deliberated. *Budi* is therefore not "doing good now and then", but a **character that is formed**.

SURAH AL-QALAM 68:4

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

And indeed, you are of a great moral character.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/68:4

This is the highest praise Allah gave to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ — not for wealth or power, but for his **great character**. When 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها was asked about his character, she replied that his character was the Qur'an. Ibn Kathir explains that he made the commands and prohibitions of the Qur'an his very nature and disposition. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 68:4

SURAH ASH-SHAMS 91:7–10

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٧﴾

And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it.

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾

And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ﴿٩﴾

He has succeeded who purifies it.

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ﴿١٠﴾

And he has failed who instills it [with corruption].

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/91:7-10

Allah inspired the human soul with **two inclinations**: towards wickedness and towards righteousness. Success (*al-falah*) is promised to whoever **purifies** the soul, and failure to whoever **corrupts** it. *Budi* is the fruit of that purification — it does not fall from the sky; it is **striven for**.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6035

حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، حَدَّثَنَا الأَعْمَشُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي شَقِيقٌ، عَنْ مَسْرُوقٍ، قَالَ كُنَّا جُلُوسًا مَعَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو يُحَدِّثُنَا إِذْ قَالَ لَمْ يَكُنْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَاحِشًا وَلاَ مُتَفَحِّشًا، وَإِنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ «إِنَّ خِيَارَكُمْ أَحَاسِنُكُمْ أَخْلاَقًا».

TRANSLATION:

Masruq said: We were sitting with ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr رضى الله عنهما while he was narrating hadith to us, when he said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was neither obscene in speech nor one who deliberately spoke obscenely. And he used to say: **“Indeed, the best of you are those with the best character.”**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from ‘Umar ibn Hafs ibn Ghiyath, from his father Hafs ibn Ghiyath, from Sulayman al-A‘mash, from Shaqiq ibn Salamah (Abu Wa’il), from Masruq ibn al-Ajda‘, from ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘As رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Good Manners (Kitab al-Adab), chapter on good character and generosity, Hadith No. 6035.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book after the Qur'an by consensus of the hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6035

The measure of “the best” in this hadith is not knowledge, wealth, lineage or position, but **character**. Hamka stressed the same in the same book: *budi* is the **pillar** of a house, a person and a nation — when virtue collapses, the nation collapses with it.

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2. LEAVING THE ANIMAL WITHIN BEHIND

Hamka said that a noble aspiration is to **free oneself from animal tendencies**. Humans share many needs with animals — food, drink, sleep, desire and the instinct of self-defence. What sets humans apart is **reason, the heart and faith**, which are able to govern those instincts. When instinct becomes master and reason its servant, a human being falls to a rank lower than an animal.

SURAH AL-A'RAF 7:179

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ
أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ
أَضَلُّ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/7:179

Allah describes people who have hearts, eyes and ears but do not use them to understand the truth as ***"like livestock; rather, they are more astray"***. Ibn Kathir explains: animals still use their senses for the purpose they were created, while the heedless person wastes the faculties Allah gave him to know Him. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 7:179

SURAH AT-TIN 95:4–6

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ فِىٓ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

We have certainly created man in the best of stature.

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَٰهُ أَسْفَلَ سَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾

Then We return him to the lowest of the low.

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٦﴾

Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds, for they will have a reward uninterrupted.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/95:4-6

Man was created in ***"the best of stature"***, yet he can fall to ***"the lowest of the low"***. Only faith and righteous deeds hold him back from that fall. These are the two ends of the hill: the **summit of honour** and the **valley of disgrace** — and every day we are walking towards one of them.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6114

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «لَيْسَ الشَّدِيدُ بِالصُّرَعَةِ، إِنَّمَا الشَّدِيدُ الَّذِي يَمْلِكُ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الْغَضَبِ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"The strong one is not the one who overcomes others in wrestling. The strong one is only the one who controls himself when he is angry."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf al-Tinnisi, from Malik ibn Anas, from Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Good Manners (Kitab al-Adab), chapter on being cautious of anger, Hadith No. 6114.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book after the Qur'an by consensus of the hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6114

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ redefined "strength". The strong one is not the one who can throw others down, but the one who can **throw down the anger within himself**. Anger is among the instincts closest to the animal nature; mastering it is the first step up the hill of virtue.

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SCIENTIFIC FINDING: CHILDHOOD SELF-CONTROL PREDICTS THE FUTURE

Moffitt and colleagues (2011) followed **about 1,000 children** in Dunedin, New Zealand, from birth to age 32. Their **self-control** as children — the ability to restrain themselves, be patient and not act rashly — was assessed by parents, teachers and observers.

Children with **lower self-control** were more likely, as adults, to have physical health problems, substance dependence, financial difficulties and criminal convictions — **even after accounting for intelligence (IQ) and family social background**. Children whose self-control improved during childhood also showed better outcomes.

This study harmonises with the Prophet's ﷺ teaching that "the strong one" is the one who controls himself.

It also shows that self-control **can be nurtured** — virtue can be cultivated.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Moffitt TE, Arseneault L, Belsky D, et al. (2011). A gradient of childhood self-control predicts health, wealth, and public safety. PNAS 108(7):2693–2698. PubMed PMID 21262822. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1010076108

3. THE HILL WE CLIMB: MUJAHADAH

A hill is not climbed by daydreaming. It is climbed **step by step**, with laboured breath and aching legs. In religious language, the earnest struggle against the desires of the self to attain Allah's pleasure is called **mujahadah**.

SURAH AL-'ANKABUT 29:69

وَٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُواْ فِينَا لَنَهۡدِيَنَّهُمۡ سُبُلَنَاۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ٦٩

And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/29:69

This verse holds a deeply reassuring promise: whoever **strives earnestly** for Allah, Allah Himself will **guide** them to His ways. The climber does not walk alone; ***"indeed, Allah is with the doers of good."***

SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:286

لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفۡسًا إِلَّا وُسۡعَهَاۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتۡ وَعَلَيۡهَا مَا ٱكۡتَسَبَتۡۗ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذۡنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوۡ أَخۡطَأۡنَاۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحۡمِلۡ عَلَيۡنَآ إِصۡرٗا كَمَا حَمَلۡتَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِنَاۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلۡنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦۖ وَٱعۡفُ عَنَّا وَٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَا وَٱرۡحَمۡنَآۚ أَنتَ مَوۡلَىٰنَا فَٱنصُرۡنَا عَلَى ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ٢٨٦

Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned. "Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred. Our Lord, and lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us. Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear. And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us. You are our protector, so give us victory over the disbelieving people."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:286

Some climbers are **weak of foot** — because of age, illness, poverty or life's trials. Allah does not burden a soul **beyond its capacity**. The measure of success is therefore not who is fastest, but who **keeps striving according to his ability**, asking Allah not to be burdened beyond his strength.

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2664

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حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ إِدْرِيسَ، عَنْ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ عُثْمَانَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَحْيَى بْنِ حَبَّانَ، عَنِ الأَعْرَجِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «الْمُؤْمِنُ الْقَوِيُّ خَيْرٌ وَأَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِ الضَّعِيفِ وَفِي كُلٍّ خَيْرٌ احْرِصْ عَلَى مَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَلاَ تَعْجِزْ وَإِنْ أَصَابَكَ شَىْءٌ فَلاَ تَقُلْ لَوْ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ كَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا. وَلَكِنْ قُلْ قَدَرُ اللَّهِ وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَ فَإِنَّ لَوْ تَفْتَحُ عَمَلَ الشَّيْطَانِ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, and in each there is good. Be keen on what benefits you, seek help from Allah and do not become helpless (do not give up).** If something befalls you, do not say: 'If only I had done such-and-such, it would have been such-and-such.' Rather say: 'Allah has decreed, and what He wills He does.' For indeed *"if only"* opens the door to the work of Satan."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah and Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Numayr, from 'Abdullah ibn Idris, from Rabi'ah ibn 'Uthman, from Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Habban, from 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Hurmuz al-A'raj, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Divine Decree (Kitab al-Qadar), chapter on the command to be strong and to abandon helplessness, Hadith No. 2664.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, one of the two most authentic hadith collections (al-Sahihayn).

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2664

This hadith is a complete provision for the climber: **strive** in what is beneficial, **seek Allah's help**, and **do not give up**. When you slip, do not drown in the regret of "if only…"; accept Allah's decree and keep walking. An *"if only"* that feeds regret without action only opens the door to Satan.

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SCIENTIFIC FINDING: LONG-TERM PERSEVERANCE ("GRIT")

Duckworth and colleagues (2007) introduced the concept of ***grit*** — a combination of **perseverance** and **sustained passion** for long-term goals. In several studies (including university students, West Point military cadets and national spelling bee contestants), grit scores predicted achievement **beyond what IQ alone predicted**.

An honest note: a later meta-analysis (Credé and colleagues, 2017) found the effect of grit to be more modest than first claimed, and the **perseverance** component to matter more than the passion component. The core finding remains: **persistent effort** is an important determinant of success.

This harmonises with the instruction *"be keen… and do not give up"* and with Allah's promise to guide those who strive.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Duckworth AL, Peterson C, Matthews MD, Kelly DR (2007). Grit: perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 92(6):1087–1101. PubMed PMID 17547490. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087

Credé M, Tynan MC, Harms PD (2017). Much ado about grit: a meta-analytic synthesis of the grit literature. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 113(3):492–511. PubMed PMID 27845531. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000102

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4. SOME FALL, SOME RISE

No climber never slips. Hamka himself acknowledged it: some fall and some rise. The question is not **whether** we will fall, but **what we do after we fall**. Some stay down out of shame and despair; others get up, brush the dust off their knees, and continue the climb.

SURAH ALI 'IMRAN 3:135–136

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟ فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا۟ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can forgive sins except Allah? - and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know.

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

Those - their reward is forgiveness from their Lord and gardens beneath which rivers flow [in Paradise], wherein they will abide eternally; and excellent is the reward of the [righteous] workers.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/3:135-136

These verses describe the God-conscious — not those who **never** sin, but those who, when they slip, **immediately remember Allah**, seek forgiveness, and **do not persist** in the wrong. Their reward is forgiveness and Paradise. A fall is not the end; staying down in the fall is what destroys.

HADITH — JAMI' AL-TIRMIDHI, NO. 2499

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا زَيْدُ بْنُ حُبَابٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مَسْعَدَةَ الْبَاهِلِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا قَتَادَةُ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «كُلُّ ابْنِ آدَمَ خَطَّاءٌ وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَّائِينَ التَّوَّابُونَ». قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ غَرِيبٌ لاَ نَعْرِفُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ حَدِيثِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مَسْعَدَةَ عَنْ قَتَادَةَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Every son of Adam often errs, and the best of those who err are those who repent."**

Abu ‘Isa (Imam al-Tirmidhi) said: This hadith is gharib; we only know it through the narration of ‘Ali ibn Mas‘adah from Qatadah.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani‘, from Zayd ibn al-Hubab, from ‘Ali ibn Mas‘adah al-Bahili, from Qatadah ibn Di‘amah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Tirmidhi in Jami‘ al-Tirmidhi, chapters on the description of the Day of Resurrection, softening of hearts and scrupulousness, Hadith No. 2499. Also narrated by Ibn Majah (No. 4251).

GRADE: HASAN — graded hasan by Shaykh al-Albani (Sahih al-Jami‘) and by the Darussalam edition. An honest note: Imam al-Tirmidhi himself described it as gharib, since it comes only through ‘Ali ibn Mas‘adah, a narrator described as “truthful but makes mistakes”, and some scholars considered it weak. Its meaning, however, is strongly supported by Surah Ali ‘Imran 3:135 and the hadith of Sahih Muslim 2759 below.

Source: https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:2499

Error is part of the nature of the children of Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. What distinguishes people is their **readiness to return**. Prophet Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ himself slipped, then repented and his repentance was accepted — the father of mankind taught his descendants how to **rise again**.

SURAH AZ-ZUMAR 39:53

۞ قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/39:53

This is one of the gentlest calls in the Qur’an. Allah addresses those who have transgressed with the tender words ***“O My servants”*** and forbids them to despair. The door is never closed while the soul has not yet reached the throat.

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2759

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ مُرَّةَ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ، يُحَدِّثُ عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَبْسُطُ يَدَهُ بِاللَّيْلِ لِيَتُوبَ مُسِيءُ النَّهَارِ وَيَبْسُطُ يَدَهُ بِالنَّهَارِ لِيَتُوبَ مُسِيءُ اللَّيْلِ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ

الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا». وَحَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، بِهَذَا الإِسْنَادِ نَحْوَهُ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Indeed, Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, stretches out His hand at night so that the one who sinned during the day may repent, and He stretches out His hand during the day so that the one who sinned at night may repent — until the sun rises from the west."**

(Imam Muslim said:) Muhammad ibn Bashshar narrated to us, Abu Dawud narrated to us, Shu'bah narrated to us with this chain, something similar.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far (Ghundar), from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from 'Amr ibn Murrah, from Abu 'Ubaydah ibn 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه. Second chain: Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi, from Shu'bah.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Repentance (Kitab al-Tawbah), chapter on the acceptance of repentance from sins even if repeated, Hadith No. 2759.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, one of the two most authentic hadith collections (al-Sahihayn).

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2759

Allah "stretches out His hand" — an expression of the vastness of His mercy and His acceptance of repentance — by day and by night, again and again, until the great sign of the Hour. The climber who falls by night can rise by day; the one who falls by day can rise by night.

REFLECTION: The one who falls and rises again carries a gift that the one who has never fallen does not — **humility**. He knows his weakness, so he is more careful, more reliant on Allah, and more compassionate towards others who are still stumbling.

5. WALKING SLOWLY, NEVER DESPAIRING

Hamka praised the climber who **keeps walking slowly**. Speed is not the measure; what matters is **direction** and **consistency**. Many begin the climb at a run, run out of breath halfway and stop altogether.

SURAH YUSUF 12:87

يَٰبَنِيَّ ٱذۡهَبُواْ فَتَحَسَّسُواْ مِن يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَاْيۡـَٔسُواْ مِن رَّوۡحِ ٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يَاْيۡـَٔسُ مِن رَّوۡحِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلۡقَوۡمُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ٨٧

O my sons, go and find out about Joseph and his brother and despair not of relief from Allah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/12:87

Prophet Ya'qub عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had lost Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ for many years, then lost another son. His eyes turned white with grief. Yet his advice to his sons remained the same: ***"Do not despair of relief from Allah."*** Despair is described as a trait of those who disbelieve.

SURAH ASH-SHARH 94:5–6

فَإِنَّ مَعَ ٱلۡعُسۡرِ يُسۡرًا ٥

For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.

إِنَّ مَعَ ٱلۡعُسۡرِ يُسۡرًا ٦

Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/94:5-6

Scholars explain that *al-'usr* (hardship) is mentioned with the definite article, while *yusr* (ease) is mentioned without it — as if **one hardship is accompanied by two eases**. A steep climb surely has level ground on which to rest.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 39

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ السَّلاَمِ بْنُ مُطَهَّرٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ، عَنْ مَعْنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْغِفَارِيِّ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْمَقْبُرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «إِنَّ

الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ، وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلاَّ غَلَبَهُ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالرَّوْحَةِ وَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدُّلْجَةِ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Indeed, the religion is easy. No one burdens himself excessively in the religion except that it overpowers him. So be upright, come as close (to perfection) as you can, and receive glad tidings; and seek help (through worship) in the morning, in the afternoon and a part of the night."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abd al-Salam ibn Mutahhar, from 'Umar ibn 'Ali al-Muqaddami, from Ma'n ibn Muhammad al-Ghifari, from Sa'id ibn Abi Sa'id al-Maqburi, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Faith (Kitab al-Iman), chapter: the religion is easy, Hadith No. 39.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book after the Qur'an by consensus of the hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:39

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught a **strategy for the climb**: do not overburden yourself until your spirit breaks; be upright and come close to perfection even if not yet perfect; be optimistic; and use the **fresh times** — morning, afternoon and part of the night — like a wise traveller choosing when to journey.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6464

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ، عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ عُقْبَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «سَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُدْخِلَ أَحَدَكُمْ عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَأَنَّ أَحَبَّ الأَعْمَالِ أَدْوَمُهَا إِلَى اللَّهِ، وَإِنْ قَلَّ»

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Be upright and come as close (to perfection) as you can. Know that no one's deeds alone will admit him into Paradise. And the most beloved of deeds to Allah are those done consistently, even if they are few."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah al-Uwaysi, from Sulayman ibn Bilal, from Musa ibn 'Ugbah, from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd al-Rahman, from 'A'ishah Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening of Hearts (Kitab al-Riqaq), chapter on moderation and consistency in deeds, Hadith No. 6464.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book after the Qur'an by consensus of the hadith scholars.

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Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6464

A small deed done **consistently** is more beloved to Allah than a great deed that stops. The climber who takes a few steps every day eventually reaches the summit, while the one who sprints now and then only circles the foot of the hill.

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: HABITS FORM THROUGH REPETITION

Lally and colleagues (2010) at University College London followed **96 volunteers** trying to build one new healthy habit (such as drinking water or walking after a meal) every day for 12 weeks.

The time needed for a habit to become **automatic** varied widely between individuals — from **18 to 254 days**, with a median of about **66 days**. Notably, **missing an occasional day did not derail** habit formation — as long as participants **returned to it**.

This harmonises with two messages of this chapter and the previous one: the most beloved deeds to Allah are **consistent ones, even if small**, and the one who falls must **rise and keep walking**, not stop altogether.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Lally P, van Jaarsveld CHM, Potts HWW, Wardle J (2010). How are habits formed: modelling habit formation in the real world. European Journal of Social Psychology 40(6):998–1009. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.674

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6. IN THE STORM THE RICE STALKS BOW

Rice that is **full of grain** bows when the wind blows; **empty** rice stands upright, head held high. So it is with the virtuous: the higher their knowledge, rank and deeds, the more they **humble themselves**. The climber near the summit does not look down on those still at the foot of the hill, for he knows that he too once stumbled.

SURAH AL-FURQAN 25:63

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمۡشُونَ عَلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ هَوۡنٗا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلۡجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُواْ سَلَٰمٗا ٦٣

And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/25:63

The first trait of ***'ibad al-Rahman*** (the servants of the Most Merciful) is that they **walk upon the earth humbly** (*hawnan*). Ibn Kathir explains: they walk with calm and dignity, without arrogance — not feigning weakness. When addressed with harsh words, they reply with words of peace. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 25:63

SURAH LUQMAN 31:18–19

وَلَا تُصَعِّرۡ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمۡشِ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مَرَحًاۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخۡتَالٖ فَخُورٖ ١٨

And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful.

وَٱقۡصِدۡ فِي مَشۡيِكَ وَٱغۡضُضۡ مِن صَوۡتِكَۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ ٱلۡأَصۡوَٰتِ لَصَوۡتُ ٱلۡحَمِيرِ ١٩

And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the voice of donkeys.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/31:18-19

Luqman the Wise counselled his son on matters that seem small — **how we look at people, how we walk and the tone of our voice**. *Budi* shows itself in such small things. The arrogant may sit high, yet they remain **"awkward wherever they sit or stand"** — welcomed by no one.

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HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Charity does not decrease wealth.**

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya ibn Ayyub, Qutaybah ibn Sa'id and 'Ali ibn Hujr, from Isma'il ibn Ja'far, from al-'Ala' ibn 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Joining Ties of Kinship and Good Manners (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, one of the two most authentic hadith collections (al-Sahihayn).

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

Three promises in one hadith: charity **does not decrease** wealth, forgiveness **increases** honour, and humility **raises** one's rank. Worldly logic says giving is loss, forgiving is weakness and humility is disgrace; the logic of revelation reverses them all. This is the secret of the bowing rice: it bows not because it is defeated, but because it is **full**.

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7. A LIFE OF VIRTUE IS OUR GOAL

The summit of the hill of virtue is not a place to rest and boast. It is from the summit that the virtuous **reach out their hands** to those still climbing. True *budi* is virtue that **flows to others** — without expecting anything in return.

SURAH AL-INSAN 76:8–9

وَيُطْعِمُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive.

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنكُمْ جَزَآءً وَلَا شُكُورًا ﴿٩﴾

[Saying], "We feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/76:8-9

The righteous (*al-abrar*) give food **despite their own love for it** to the poor, the orphan and the captive, saying: ***"We feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude."*** This is sincere virtue — virtue that does not demand repayment.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2442

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، أَنَّ سَالِمًا، أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لاَ يَظْلِمُهُ وَلاَ يُسْلِمُهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرُبَاتِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ».

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he does not wrong him nor abandon him (to harm). Whoever fulfils the need of his brother, Allah will fulfil his need. Whoever relieves a Muslim of a hardship, Allah will relieve him of one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. And whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allah will conceal (his faults) on the Day of Resurrection."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, from Salim ibn 'Abdullah, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

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REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Oppression (Kitab al-Mazalim), chapter: a Muslim does not wrong another Muslim, Hadith No. 2442.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book after the Qur'an by consensus of the hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2442

Every time we help someone out of hardship, Allah promises **greater help** on the hardest day of all — the Day of Resurrection. Helping a fallen climber to his feet is part of our own climb.

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: GIVING TO OTHERS MAKES THE GIVER HAPPIER

Dunn, Aknin and Norton (2008) studied the link between how people spend money and their happiness. In a survey of **632 adults** in the United States, those who spent more **on others** (gifts and charity) reported greater happiness, while spending on oneself showed no such link.

In an experiment, participants were given **USD 5 or USD 20** and randomly instructed to spend it either on themselves or on others. By that evening, those who had spent the money **on others** reported **greater happiness** — regardless of the amount.

This harmonises with the Prophet's ﷺ saying that charity does not decrease wealth: what decreases in the hand increases in the heart.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Dunn EW, Aknin LB, Norton MI (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. Science 319(5870):1687–1688. PubMed PMID 18356530. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1150952

PROVISIONS FOR THE CLIMBER ON THE HILL OF VIRTUE

OBSTACLES ON THE SLOPE	PROVISIONS TO OVERCOME THEM
Animal tendencies: anger, greed, desire	Self-control — "the strong one controls himself" (Chapter 2)
Weak legs and fading spirit	Mujahadah, prayer and "do not give up" (Chapter 3)
Stumbling through sin and error	Repentance and rising again — "the best of those who err are those who repent" (Chapter 4)
Despair because the road is long	Small, consistent steps — "the most beloved deeds are the consistent ones" (Chapter 5)
Arrogance as one rises higher	Humility like laden rice — "Allah raises the one who humbles himself" (Chapter 6)
Living only for oneself	Kindness to others — "whoever fulfils his brother's need, Allah fulfils his" (Chapter 7)

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CLOSING: THE CLIMBER'S PRAYER

The climb up the hill of virtue is a lifelong journey. We may not know where we stand on the slope today — perhaps near the summit, perhaps still at the foot, perhaps stumbling. What matters is that our face is **turned towards the summit** and our steps **do not stop**. End each day with the supplication the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to make:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2721

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ أَبِي الأَحْوَصِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَى وَالتُّقَى وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَى».

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate: **"O Allah, I ask You for guidance, piety, chastity (purity from what is unlawful) and self-sufficiency (a heart not dependent on people)."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna and Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far (Ghundar), from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu Ishaq al-Sabi'i, from Abu al-Ahwas 'Auf ibn Malik al-Jushami, from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Remembrance, Supplication, Repentance and Seeking Forgiveness, Hadith No. 2721.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, one of the two most authentic hadith collections (al-Sahihayn).

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2721

Guidance to know the path, piety to guard our steps, chastity to keep clear of the mud on the slope, and contentment of heart so as not to depend on people's praise. With these four provisions, *in sha' Allah*, we will arrive. ***A life of virtue is our goal!***

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

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. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

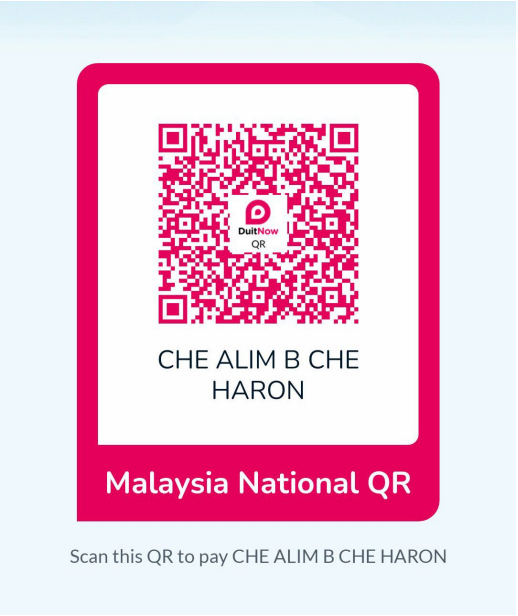
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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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