Heroes of Islam
Series 28

Hayreddin Barbarossa

Grand Admiral of the Ottomans and Hero of Preveza, According to the Qur'an, Authentic Hadith and the Books of History



Hj Che Alim Hj Che Haron
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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SERIES 28

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Grand Admiral of the Ottomans and Hero of Preveza, According to the Qur'an, Authentic Hadith and the Books of History

رَّبُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى يُزْجِى لَكُمُ ٱلْفُلْكَ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ لِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٦﴾

"It is your Lord who drives the ship for you through the sea that you may seek of His bounty. Indeed, He is ever, to you, Merciful."

Surah Al-Isra' 17:66

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who drives the ships through the sea for His servants, that they may seek of His bounty. May blessings and peace be upon our master, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, upon his family and Companions, and upon those who followed his path in excellence — among them Hayreddin Barbarossa, Grand Admiral of the Ottomans.

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**.

This twenty-eighth book of Heroes of Islam tells the story of Hayreddin Barbarossa: the younger brother of Oruç Reis who carried on his struggle, placed Algiers under Ottoman protection, freed its harbour from a Spanish fortress, and defeated the fleet of the Holy League at Preveza in 1538. His story is told with honesty about its sources, including the numbers of ships at Preveza, the fate of coastal captives and the alliance with France. May this knowledge be ‘ilmun yuntafa‘u bih — knowledge that benefits.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

This eBook's cover does not depict any human being or animal. It shows ***the Gulf of Preveza*** on the Ionian Sea on the morning after a storm at the end of September 1538, with dark storm clouds breaking apart and golden sunlight shining through the blue sky.

Across the sea, ***a fleet of Ottoman war galleys*** sails in a ***crescent formation***, with long oars and lateen sails filled with wind — recalling the formation of Hayreddin's fleet at the Battle of Preveza.

On the left, on a green rocky headland with cypress and olive trees, stands ***a stone fortress*** with round towers guarding the mouth of the gulf. On the horizon, ***enemy ships*** are seen scattered and retreating in the haze.

The ***dark blue band*** at the bottom, framed by ***fine gold lines***, is where the author's name appears — the same as on the covers of Series 1 to Series 27, so that all the covers of Heroes of Islam match.

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Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = sirah note (report from the books of sirah); blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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HAYREDDIN BARBAROSSA

In 1518 Oruç Reis fell as a martyr near Tlemcen, and the Muslims of Algiers lost the leader who had defended them against Spain. Many thought the struggle would end. But his younger brother, ***Hızır***, rose to carry it on, and within twenty-five years he became the most feared admiral in the Mediterranean.

He is known as ***Hayreddin*** (Khayr al-Din, "goodness of the religion"), and Europeans called him ***Barbarossa***. He placed Algiers under Ottoman protection, freed its harbour from a Spanish fortress, was appointed ***Kaptan-ı Derya*** (Grand Admiral) of the Ottomans, and defeated the combined European fleet at ***the Battle of Preveza*** in 1538.

This eBook is the twenty-eighth in the ***Heroes of Islam*** series, continuing the story of his brother in Series 27. Hayreddin's story comes mainly from the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa, a memoir he himself had written, and from hostile European sources. Every story is given with its source and grade honestly — including the numbers of ships at Preveza, the capture of the people of the Italian coasts, and the alliance with France at Toulon — and its lessons are grounded in the Qur'an and authentic Hadith.

Hayreddin's story is that of a younger brother who did not let his brother's struggle stop, and a sailor who made the sea a rampart for the ummah.

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WHO WAS HAYREDDIN BARBAROSSA?

His original name was ***Hızır son of Yakup***, born around 883 AH (1478 CE) on the island of Midilli (Lesbos) in the Aegean Sea. He was the younger brother of Oruç Reis, and died in Istanbul in 953 AH (1546 CE).

After his brother's martyrdom he led Algiers, and was then appointed by Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent as Grand Admiral of the Ottoman fleet. Under his leadership the eastern Mediterranean came under the control of Ottoman ships for several decades.

HIS NAMES AND TITLES

NAME / TITLE	EXPLANATION
Hızır (Khidr)	His original name
Hayreddin (Khayr al-Din)	"Goodness of the religion", a title linked to the Ottoman sultan
Barbarossa	"Red Beard", a European title inherited from his brother
Kaptan-ı Derya	Grand Admiral of the Ottoman fleet (1533)
Beylerbeyi	Governor-general of Algiers and of the Islands

LESSONS

A good name is a trust. The title "goodness of the religion" requires its bearer to strive so that his deeds match his name.

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HIZIR FROM THE ISLAND OF MIDILLI

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE YOUNGEST WHO BECAME AN ADMIRAL

Hızır was the third son of Yakup Ağa, an Ottoman cavalryman on Midilli. Like his brothers, he grew up with ships and the sea. According to the Gazavat, he first traded with a small ship, carrying goods around the Aegean.

After his brother Oruç was captured by the Knights of Rhodes and his brother İlyas was killed, Hızır worked to ransom his brother, then joined him in the western Mediterranean. From then on the two brothers struggled together — Oruç as leader, Hızır as his loyal helper.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

LESSONS

A younger brother's loyalty to his elder is a strength. Those who work together in goodness are stronger than those who walk alone.

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WITH ORUÇ IN NORTH AFRICA

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1504–1518

With Oruç, Hızır was based in Tunis and Djerba, helped carry the Andalusian Muslims to North Africa, took Jijel (1514) and freed Algiers (1516). When Oruç led the campaign to Tlemcen in 1517, Hızır was left to defend Algiers.

The story of this shared struggle is told in Series 27 (Oruç Reis). After Oruç fell in 1518, the whole burden of leadership fell on Hızır's shoulders, then about 40 years old.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

LESSONS

A loyal helper today may be a leader tomorrow. Preparing to bear a trust begins when we help others bear it.

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PLACING ALGIERS UNDER OTTOMAN PROTECTION

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1519

After Oruç's martyrdom, Algiers was surrounded by enemies: Spain at Oran and at the Peñón fortress, and rebellious local chiefs. Hızır made an important decision: he sent envoys to ***Sultan Selim I*** in Istanbul, offering Algiers as an Ottoman province.

Sultan Selim accepted, appointed Hızır ***beylerbeyi*** (governor-general) of Algiers, and sent cannon and about 2,000 Janissaries. With this decision Hızır gave up his independence as a ruler in his own right for the protection of a greater Muslim state. Some historians see it as a wise political decision; others see it as a sign of sincerity.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:
Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr; TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi.

Only Allah knows the intention behind every decision:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1

حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الزُّبَيْرِ ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ ، قَالَ : أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ التَّيْمِيُّ ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ عَلْقَمَةَ بْنَ وَقَّاصٍ اللَّيْثِيَّ ، يَقُولُ : سَمِعْتُ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ، قَالَ : سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، يَقُولُ : " إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى دُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا، فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ

TRANSLATION:
'Alqamah ibn Waqqas al-Laythi said: I heard 'Umar ibn al-Khattab say from the pulpit: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ***"Actions are only by intentions, and every person will have only what he intended.*** So whoever's emigration was for a worldly gain he seeks, or a woman he would marry, his emigration is for what he emigrated for."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Al-Humaydi 'Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Ansari, from Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Taymi, from 'Alqamah ibn Waqqas al-Laythi, from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Revelation, Hadith No. 1.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1

LESSONS

Sometimes strength lies in being willing to unite under a greater banner, not in holding on to one's own power.

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THE FREEING OF THE PEÑÓN AND THE HARBOUR OF ALGIERS

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1529

For almost twenty years the Spanish fortress of ***the Peñón*** on a small island in front of Algiers blocked the harbour and threatened its people. In May 1529, after weeks of bombardment, Hayreddin finally took the fortress — something Oruç had failed to do in 1516.

Hayreddin then demolished the fortress and used its stones to build ***a mole*** joining the small islands to the mainland. This mole made Algiers a safe and strong harbour, and it became the main base of the Muslim fleets in North Africa for three centuries.

Status of the report: The taking of the Peñón in 1529 and the building of the harbour mole are established in Ottoman and European sources.

REFERENCES:
Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); contemporary European sources.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stressed the importance of skill in shooting, the strength of long-range weapons:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1917

حَدَّثَنَا هَارُونُ بْنُ مَعْرُوفٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي عَمْرُو بْنُ الْحَارِثِ، عَنْ أَبِي عَلِيٍّ، ثُمَامَةَ بْنِ شُفَيٍّ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ عُقْبَةَ بْنَ عَامِرٍ، يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ يَقُولُ " وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ أَلاَ إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ الرَّمْىُ أَلاَ إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ الرَّمْىُ أَلاَ إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ الرَّمْىُ "

TRANSLATION:

'Uqbah ibn 'Amir said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say while he was on the pulpit: ***"'And prepare against them whatever you are able of power.' Indeed, power is shooting. Indeed, power is shooting. Indeed, power is shooting."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Harun ibn Ma'ruf, from 'Abdullah ibn Wahb, from 'Amr ibn al-Harith, from Abu 'Ali Thumamah ibn Shufayy, from 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Government, Hadith No. 1917.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1917

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LESSONS

True victory is when the enemy's ruins are turned into material for building something useful.

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SEVEN VOYAGES FOR THE ANDALUSIAN MUSLIMS

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1529

According to the Gazavat and Kâtib Çelebi, in 1529 Hayreddin sent his ships on several voyages — some say seven — to the coast of Spain to carry Andalusian Muslims (Moriscos) who wished to escape. The Gazavat says about 70,000 people were rescued that year.

This figure cannot be confirmed and may be exaggerated, but Hayreddin's effort to continue his brother's work in helping the Andalusian Muslims is acknowledged by many sources. Many of them settled in Algiers and other North African cities, bringing their learning and skills with them.

Status of the report: The effort to rescue Andalusian Muslims is narrated in Ottoman sources; the figure of 70,000 is uncertain.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

LESSONS

Good work begun by one person should be continued by others. Hayreddin carried on his brother's trust toward the Andalusian Muslims.

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KAPTAN-I DERYA: GRAND ADMIRAL OF THE OTTOMANS

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1533

In 1532 the famous Genoese admiral ***Andrea Doria***, serving Emperor Charles V, took several Ottoman fortresses in Greece. Sultan ***Süleyman the Magnificent*** needed an admiral able to match him. He summoned Hayreddin to Istanbul.

Hayreddin arrived in Istanbul at the end of 1533 with his fleet, and was appointed ***Kaptan-ı Derya*** (Grand Admiral) and beylerbeyi of the Islands. Through the winter he rebuilt the Ottoman fleet in the Istanbul arsenal, making it the strongest fleet in the Mediterranean.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

Every office is a trust for which one will be questioned:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 7138

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، حَدَّثَنِي مَالِكٌ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ دِينَارٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ " أَلاَ كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَالإِمَامُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهْوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهْوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّجُلِ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَهْوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُ، أَلاَ فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ ".

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Indeed, each of you is a shepherd, and each of you will be asked about his flock. The ruler over the people is a shepherd and will be asked about his flock;*** a man is a shepherd over his household and will be asked about them; a woman is a shepherd over her husband's house and children and will be asked about them; a servant is a shepherd over his master's wealth and will be asked about it. Indeed, each of you is a shepherd, and each of you will be asked about his flock."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Isma'il ibn Abi Uways, from Malik ibn Anas, from 'Abdullah ibn Dinar, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

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REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Judgements, Hadith No. 7138.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:7138

LESSONS

A leader's trust in capable people is part of the wisdom of leadership.

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TUNIS: BETWEEN VICTORY AND DEFEAT

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1534–1535

In 1534 Hayreddin took ***Tunis*** from the Hafsid sultan, Mulay Hasan. But the following year (1535) Emperor ***Charles V*** came with a great fleet and retook Tunis. Charles V's troops killed and captured many of the people of Tunis — European sources themselves describe the cruelty.

Hayreddin escaped to Algiers with part of his ships. Soon after, he attacked the port of ***Mahón*** on the island of Menorca, showing that his strength was not broken. The defeat at Tunis was a bitter lesson, but it did not stop his struggle.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); contemporary European sources.

LESSONS

Defeat is not the end for those who do not despair. What matters is rising again more wisely.

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COASTAL RAIDS AND THE FATE OF CAPTIVES

SOURCE NOTE: THE BITTER SIDE

Like all fleets of the time, Hayreddin's fleet also raided enemy coasts — in Italy, Spain and the Mediterranean islands — and brought back captives. European sources mention thousands of civilians from towns such as Lipari (1544) captured and sold as slaves. At the same time, Christian fleets did the same to Muslim coasts, and thousands of Muslims became galley slaves on European ships.

This is stated here honestly because it is part of history. Islamic law sets strict ethics of war, including the prohibition of killing women and children. The customs of war at that time were not all in line with these ethics, and they cannot be made beautiful in the name of heroism.

Status of the report: The raids and captures are established in European and Ottoman sources; the numbers vary.

REFERENCES:
contemporary European sources; Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade the killing of women and children in war:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3015

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، قَالَ قُلْتُ لأَبِي أُسَامَةَ حَدَّثَكُمْ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ، عَنْ نَافِعٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ وُجِدَتِ امْرَأَةٌ مَقْتُولَةً فِي بَعْضِ مَغَازِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَنَهَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَنْ قَتْلِ النِّسَاءِ وَالصِّبْيَانِ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Umar said: A woman was found killed in one of the expeditions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, ***so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade the killing of women and children.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Ishaq ibn Ibrahim, from Abu Usamah, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Umar, from Nafi', from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: Killing Women in War, Hadith No. 3015.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3015

LESSONS

Heroism in Islam is measured by ethics, not only by victory. We acknowledge the mistakes of history so as not to repeat them.

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THE BATTLE OF PREVEZA

HISTORICAL NOTE: 28 SEPTEMBER 1538

In 1538 the Pope, Venice, Spain and other states formed ***the Holy League*** to destroy the Ottoman fleet. Their combined fleet, led by Andrea Doria, was far larger — the sources speak of about 300 ships, including large sailing ships, against about 120 Ottoman galleys.

Hayreddin anchored in ***the Gulf of Preveza*** on the western coast of Greece and waited patiently. On 28 September 1538 (4 Jumada al-Ula 945 AH) he came out to attack when the wind changed and the enemy fleet was in disorder. The battle ended in an Ottoman victory: several enemy ships were captured or sunk, and Andrea Doria withdrew. This victory placed the eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman power for more than three decades.

Status of the report: The victory at Preveza is established; the numbers of ships and losses vary between sources.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr; contemporary European sources.

Allah commands obedience, unity and patience in facing the enemy:

SURAH AL-ANFAL 8:46

وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفۡشَلُواْ وَتَذۡهَبَ رِيحُكُمۡۖ وَٱصۡبِرُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ٤٦

And obey Allāh and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allāh is with the patient.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/8:46

And it is Allah who drives the ships through the sea:

SURAH AL-ISRA' 17:66

رَّبُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِي يُزۡجِي لَكُمُ ٱلۡفُلۡكَ فِي ٱلۡبَحۡرِ لِتَبۡتَغُواْ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِكُمۡ رَحِيمٗا ٦٦

It is your Lord who drives the ship for you through the sea that you may seek of His bounty. Indeed, He is ever, to you, Merciful.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/17:66

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LESSONS

Unity and patience can defeat greater numbers. Disputes and haste weaken the ranks.

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THE TREATY WITH VENICE

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1540

After Preveza, Venice sought peace. In 1540 a treaty was concluded between the Ottoman state and Venice, in which Venice gave up several of its fortresses in Greece and paid compensation. Trade between the two sides was reopened.

This treaty shows that the aim of war is not merely to destroy the enemy, but to achieve a just peace. Muslims are bound to honour the treaties they have made.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:

Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr; contemporary European sources.

Allah commands accepting peace when the enemy inclines to it:

SURAH AL-ANFAL 8:61

۞ وَإِن جَنَحُواْ لِلسَّلۡمِ فَٱجۡنَحۡ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ

٦١

And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also] and rely upon Allāh. Indeed, it is He who is the Hearing, the Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/8:61

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a stern warning against killing one under a covenant:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3166

حَدَّثَنَا قَيْسُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَاحِدِ، حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَمْرٍو، حَدَّثَنَا مُجَاهِدٌ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ " مَنْ قَتَلَ مُعَاهَدًا لَمْ يَرِحْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ رِيحَهَا تُوجَدُ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ أَرْبَعِينَ عَامًا ".

TRANSLATION:

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***“Whoever kills a mu‘ahad (a non-Muslim under a treaty with the Muslims) will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, though its fragrance can be perceived from a distance of forty years’ travel.”***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Qays ibn Hafs, from ‘Abd al-Wahid ibn Ziyad, from Al-Hasan ibn ‘Amr, from Mujahid ibn Jabr, from ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Jizyah, Hadith No. 3166.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3166

LESSONS

True strength allows one to choose peace with dignity. Honouring treaties is part of Islamic character.

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THE STORM AT ALGIERS (1541)

HISTORICAL NOTE: HELP FROM THE SKY

In October 1541 Emperor Charles V himself came to Algiers with a fleet of more than 500 ships and about 24,000 soldiers to wipe out Hayreddin's base. Hayreddin was then in Istanbul, and Algiers was defended by his deputy, ***Hasan Ağa***, with a far smaller force.

Soon after Charles V's troops landed, a terrible storm struck. Heavy rain spoiled their gunpowder, and great waves destroyed more than a hundred ships. The people of Algiers counter-attacked, and Charles V was forced to withdraw with heavy losses. The Muslims saw the storm as help from Allah.

Status of the report: The failure of Charles V's expedition in 1541 because of the storm is established in European and Ottoman sources.

REFERENCES:

contemporary European sources; Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

LESSONS

Victory does not always come from human strength. Allah is able to send help in unexpected ways.

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NICE AND TOULON: THE ALLIANCE WITH FRANCE

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1543–1544

The King of France, ***Francis I***, was then at war with Charles V and formed an alliance with Sultan Süleyman. In 1543 Hayreddin brought his fleet west to help France and, together with French troops, besieged the city of ***Nice***, held by an ally of Charles V.

In the winter of 1543–1544 Hayreddin's fleet wintered in the port of ***Toulon*** in southern France, which the French king had emptied for the Ottoman forces. According to tradition, the call to prayer was heard in the town all winter. This alliance was harshly criticised in Europe, and it shows that the politics of the time did not always follow religious lines.

Status of the report: The siege of Nice and the winter at Toulon are established; the story of the call to prayer in Toulon is a tradition.

REFERENCES:

contemporary European sources; Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

LESSONS

Politics between states is often complex. A Muslim should understand history in all its complexity, not in black and white alone.

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MEMOIR, ENDOWMENTS AND A MADRASAH

HISTORICAL NOTE: A LEGACY BEYOND THE SWORD

In the last years of his life, Hayreddin asked a writer, ***Seyyid Murâdî***, to record the story of his struggle together with his brothers. The result was the ***Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa***, one of the main sources for Ottoman naval history, though it was also written to praise his family.

He also built a mosque, a madrasah and a bathhouse in Istanbul, and endowed his wealth for charitable works. He lived in his palace on the Bosphorus in the last years of his life.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — chiefly the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Hayreddin's memoir written by Seyyid Murâdî), the Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr of Kâtib Çelebi, and contemporary European sources — without a chain by the standards of the Hadith scholars. The story is accepted as history, but it cannot be used as proof in the way an authentic hadith can.

REFERENCES:

Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa (Seyyid Murâdî); Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr.

Charity does not decrease wealth, and humility raises one's rank:

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 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 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 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

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

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LESSONS

A hero's legacy is not only victories on the battlefield, but also knowledge recorded and endowments that keep giving benefit.

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DEATH AND THE TOMB AT BEŞIKTAŞ

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1546

Hayreddin died in Istanbul in 953 AH (4 July 1546 CE), aged about 68. He was buried at ***Beşiktaş***, on the shore of the Bosphorus, in a tomb built by the great Ottoman architect ***Mimar Sinan***.

According to tradition, for centuries Ottoman naval ships saluted as they passed his tomb before going out to sea. Today a statue and a naval museum stand near the tomb, and his name remains in the history of Algeria and Turkey.

Status of the report: The date of his death and his tomb are established; the story of the ships' salute is a tradition.

REFERENCES:

Kâtib Çelebi, Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr; modern historical research.

LESSONS

Every hero finally returns to Allah. What remains are the deeds and good memories left behind.

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STORIES AND FIGURES THAT NEED ASSESSMENT

SOURCE NOTE: BETWEEN FACT AND LEGEND

Some matters in Hayreddin's story need careful assessment. ***First***, the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa was written at Hayreddin's own request, so it tends to praise; European sources were written by his enemies. ***Second***, the numbers of ships at Preveza and of Andalusian Muslims rescued vary and are hard to confirm. ***Third***, the story that the title "Hayreddin" was given by Sultan Selim I or Sultan Süleyman cannot be confirmed precisely.

Fourth, the label "pirate" in European sources is unfair because it ignores the same actions by the Christian side, but coastal raids and the enslavement of civilians cannot be made beautiful. ***Fifth***, the stories of the call to prayer in Toulon and the ships' salute at his tomb are traditions. What is established: the placing of Algiers under the Ottomans (1519), the taking of the Peñón (1529), his appointment as Kaptan-ı Derya (1533), the victory at Preveza (1538), and his death in Istanbul (1546).

Status of the report: The main events are established; many details are traditions or disputed.

REFERENCES:

A comparison of the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa, Kâtib Çelebi, European sources and modern historical research.

LESSONS

A true hero needs no legends. Established facts are example enough.

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SOURCES OF THE STORIES OF HAYREDDIN

This table summarises the source and grade of each story so that the reader can distinguish the authentic from the merely famous.

STORY	SOURCE	GRADE
Hızır from Midilli	Gazavat; Kâtib Çelebi	History
Placing Algiers under Selim I (1519)	Gazavat; Kâtib Çelebi	Established
Actions are by intentions	Sahih al-Bukhari 1	Authentic
Taking of the Peñón (1529)	Gazavat; European sources	Established
Strength is shooting	Sahih Muslim 1917	Authentic
70,000 Andalusian Muslims rescued	Gazavat	Figure uncertain
Kaptan-ı Derya (1533)	Gazavat; Kâtib Çelebi	Established
Each of you is a shepherd	Sahih al-Bukhari 7138	Authentic
Loss of Tunis (1535)	European sources	Established
Coastal raids and captives	European sources; Gazavat	Established; numbers vary
Prohibition of killing women and children	Sahih al-Bukhari 3015	Authentic
Victory at Preveza (1538)	Various sources	Established; numbers vary
Treaty with Venice (1540)	Kâtib Çelebi; European sources	Established
Killing one under a covenant	Sahih al-Bukhari 3166	Authentic
The storm at Algiers (1541)	European and Ottoman sources	Established
The call to prayer in Toulon	Tradition	Uncertain
Charity does not decrease wealth	Sahih Muslim 2588	Authentic
The ships' salute at his tomb	Tradition	Uncertain

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PEOPLE, PLACES AND TIMELINE

PERSON	ROLE
Oruç Reis	Hayreddin's elder brother; fell in 1518
Sultan Selim I	Accepted Algiers as an Ottoman province
Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent	Appointed Hayreddin Grand Admiral
Andrea Doria	Genoese admiral who led the Holy League fleet
Charles V	Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain
Francis I	King of France, ally of the Ottomans
Hasan Ağa	Hayreddin's deputy who defended Algiers (1541)
Seyyid Murâdî	Author of the Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa
Mimar Sinan	Architect who built Hayreddin's tomb

PLACE	EVENT
Midilli (Lesbos)	Hayreddin's birthplace
Algiers	His main base; the Peñón taken in 1529
Istanbul	Appointed Kaptan-ı Derya (1533)
Tunis	Taken in 1534; lost in 1535
Preveza	Naval victory in 1538
Nice and Toulon	Alliance with France (1543–1544)
Beşiktaş	Hayreddin's tomb

YEAR	EVENT
c. 1478 CE	Birth of Hızır on Midilli
1518 CE	Martyrdom of Oruç; Hızır leads Algiers
1519 CE	Algiers becomes an Ottoman province
1529 CE	Taking of the Peñón; voyages to rescue Andalusian Muslims
1533 CE	Appointed Kaptan-ı Derya
1534–1535 CE	Tunis taken, then lost
1538 CE	Battle of Preveza
1541 CE	Charles V's expedition to Algiers fails
1543–1544 CE	Nice and Toulon
1546 CE	Death in Istanbul

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HAYREDDIN BARBAROSSA

This chapter answers questions often asked about Hayreddin Barbarossa. The answers are brief; the details are in the earlier chapters.

1. WHO WAS HAYREDDIN BARBAROSSA?

The younger brother of Oruç Reis, leader of Algiers and Grand Admiral of the Ottomans, who died in Istanbul in 1546.

2. WHAT WAS HIS ORIGINAL NAME?

Hızır; “Hayreddin” is a title meaning “goodness of the religion”.

3. WHY DID HE PLACE ALGIERS UNDER THE OTTOMANS?

To gain the protection and help of a greater Muslim state against Spain.

4. WHAT WAS THE PEÑÓN?

The Spanish fortress in front of Algiers that he took in 1529.

5. WHAT DOES KAPTAN-I DERYA MEAN?

Grand Admiral of the Ottoman fleet.

6. WHEN WAS THE BATTLE OF PREVEZA?

On 28 September 1538.

7. WHO WAS HIS ENEMY AT PREVEZA?

The fleet of the Holy League led by Andrea Doria.

8. WAS HE A PIRATE?

He was a state admiral; coastal raids were carried out by both sides, though they involved the capture of civilians that cannot be made beautiful.

9. WHY DID HE ALLY WITH FRANCE?

Because France and the Ottomans had a common enemy, Charles V.

10. WHAT IS THE GAZAVAT-I HAYREDDIN PAŞA?

A memoir of his struggle written by Seyyid Murâdî at his request.

11. WHERE IS HIS TOMB?

At Beşiktaş in Istanbul, built by Mimar Sinan.

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12. WHAT IS THE GREATEST LESSON OF HIS STORY?

To carry on the struggle with unity, patience and trustworthiness, while keeping the ethics of war.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Hayreddin's story is that of a younger brother who carried on his elder brother's struggle, united Algiers with a greater Muslim state, and made the Ottoman fleet the strongest in the Mediterranean — though his story also contains matters that must be honestly assessed.

LESSON	FROM HAYREDDIN'S STORY
Intention in decisions	Placing Algiers under the Ottomans; Sahih al-Bukhari 1
Preparing strength	The Peñón and the cannon; Sahih Muslim 1917
Office as a trust	Kaptan-ı Derya; Sahih al-Bukhari 7138
The ethics of war	The fate of captives; Sahih al-Bukhari 3015
Unity and patience	Preveza; Al-Anfal 8:46; Al-Isra' 17:66
Honouring treaties	Venice; Al-Anfal 8:61; Sahih al-Bukhari 3166
A legacy of knowledge and endowment	The Gazavat and the madrasah; Sahih Muslim 2588
Rising after defeat	Tunis and Mahón

May we follow Hayreddin in his loyalty to the struggle, his patience in waiting for the right moment, and his willingness to unite under a greater banner, while learning from the matters in his story that need assessment.

In sha' Allah, the Heroes of Islam series will continue with the story of Turgut Reis, the admiral who freed Tripoli.

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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."

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 Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after his death, Hadith No. 1631.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

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

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