Heroes of Islam
Series 26

Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror

The Conqueror of Constantinople, 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

HEROES OF ISLAM

SERIES 26

SULTAN MEHMED THE CONQUEROR

The Conqueror of Constantinople, According to the Qur'an, Authentic Hadith and the Books of History

وَأُخْرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَا ۖ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

"And [you will obtain] another [favor] that you love - victory from Allāh and an imminent conquest; and give good tidings to the believers."

Surah As-Saff 61:13

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who promised the believers victory from Him and a conquest near at hand. 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 Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, who opened Constantinople.

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-sixth book of Heroes of Islam tells the story of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror: the young sultan who built Rumeli Hisarı, hauled his ships over a hill into the Golden Horn, and conquered Constantinople in 1453 CE. His story is told with honesty about its sources, including the weakness of the chain of the hadith of "the best commander", the question of Hagia Sophia and the law of fratricide. 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 Bosphorus strait*** at dawn in the spring of 1453, under a soft golden-pink sky, with red tulips on the hillside and cypress and pine trees.

On the left stands the fortress of ***Rumeli Hisarı*** — thick grey stone walls and great round towers — built by Sultan Mehmed in 1452 to control the strait and cut off help to Constantinople.

Across the calm water lies the city of ***Constantinople***: Byzantine walls and the great dome of ***Hagia Sophia*** (without minarets, as before 1453) in the morning mist. ***Ottoman sailing ships*** rest near the shore, and thin smoke rises from ***white tents*** on a hill — recalling the moments before the conquest of the city.

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 25, so that all the covers of Heroes of Islam match.

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SULTAN MEHMED THE CONQUEROR

For more than eight centuries, the city of ***Constantinople*** — capital of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire — stood firm between Europe and Asia. Its triple walls had withstood many sieges, including sieges by Muslim armies since the time of Mu'awiyah.

On the morning of 20 Jumada al-Ula 857 AH (29 May 1453 CE), the city was finally opened by a young sultan of 21: ***Sultan Mehmed (Muhammad) son of Murad***, the seventh Ottoman sultan, who was afterwards known by the title ***al-Fatih***, "the Conqueror". The city became the capital of the Ottoman state and is known to this day as Istanbul.

This eBook is the twenty-sixth in the ***Heroes of Islam*** series. The story of the Conqueror comes from richer sources than those of earlier figures: Ottoman chronicles such as that of Tursun Bey, who took part in the siege, and the accounts of Christian witnesses such as the diary of Nicolò Barbaro and the histories of Doukas, Sphrantzes and Kritoboulos. Every story is given with its source and grade honestly — including the weakness of the chain of the famous hadith of "the best commander", legendary stories, the question of Hagia Sophia and the law of fratricide — and its lessons are grounded in the Qur'an and authentic Hadith.

The Conqueror's story is a story of careful preparation, patience in failure, and the courage to try a path no one had imagined.

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WHO WAS SULTAN MEHMED THE CONQUEROR?

He was ***Mehmed (Muhammad) son of Murad son of Mehmed***, known in Turkish as ***Fâtih Sultan Mehmed*** or ***Mehmed II***. He was born in Edirne on 27 Rajab 835 AH (30 March 1432 CE), the son of Sultan Murad II, and died on 4 Rabi‘ al-Awwal 886 AH (3 May 1481 CE).

He reigned twice: the first time as a boy (1444–1446 CE), and the second time for thirty years (1451–1481 CE). In that time he conquered Constantinople and expanded his state in the Balkans and Anatolia.

HIS NAMES AND TITLES

NAME / TITLE	EXPLANATION
Mehmed (Muhammad)	His given name; the Turkish pronunciation of Muhammad
al-Fatih (Fâtih)	“The Conqueror”, his title after the conquest of Constantinople
Abu al-Fath	“Father of Conquest”, a title in chronicles and official letters
Mehmed II	The second Ottoman sultan named Mehmed (the seventh sultan)
Kayser-i Rûm	“Caesar of Rome”, a title he took after conquering the city

LESSONS

Great titles come after great efforts. The name “the Conqueror” was not inherited; it was earned through preparation and sacrifice.

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THE SON OF MURAD IN EDIRNE

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE EDUCATION OF A PRINCE

Mehmed grew up in the palace of Edirne, then the Ottoman capital. As was the custom for Ottoman princes, he was sent as a child to be governor of Amasya, under the care of tutors (lalas). The chronicles relate that at first he was stubborn and disliked study, until his father sent a strict scholar, ***Molla Gürani*** (Ahmad ibn Isma'il al-Kurani), who was permitted to beat him if he refused to learn.

Under Molla Gürani and other scholars, he memorised the Qur'an and studied jurisprudence, history, mathematics and several languages. Another of his teachers was ***Shaykh Akşemseddin*** (Aq Shams al-Din), a scholar and Sufi whom he deeply respected. Contemporary Christian sources also mention that he knew several languages and was interested in the history of Alexander and the Roman Caesars.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — such as the Ottoman chronicles of Tursun Bey, Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri, and the accounts of Byzantine and Italian witnesses such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, Kritoboulos and Nicolò Barbaro — 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:
Tursun Bey, Tarih-i Ebü'l-Feth; Doukas, History of Byzantium; Taşköprüzâde, al-Shaqa'iq al-Nu'maniyyah.

The scholars who taught him instilled one important intention: to fight only to make the word of Allah supreme, not for fame or wealth:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2810

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ عَمْرٍو، عَنْ أَبِي وَائِلٍ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى - رضى الله عنه - قَالَ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ يُقَاتِلُ لِلْمَغْنَمِ، وَالرَّجُلُ يُقَاتِلُ لِلذِّكْرِ، وَالرَّجُلُ يُقَاتِلُ لِيُرَى مَكَانُهُ، فَمَنْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ " مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِتَكُونَ كَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ".

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa said: A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "A man fights for spoils, a man fights to be mentioned, and a man fights so that his position may be seen. Which of them is in the path of Allah?" He said: ***"Whoever fights so that the word of Allah is the highest, he is in the path of Allah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sulayman ibn Harb, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from 'Amr ibn Murrah, from Abu Wa'il Shaqiq ibn Salamah, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Hadith No. 2810.

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

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Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2810

LESSONS

Great leaders are shaped by strict and sincere teachers. Education from childhood sets the direction of a life.

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TWICE ON THE THRONE

HISTORICAL NOTE: VARNA AND THE RETURN OF MURAD

In 848 AH (1444 CE), Sultan Murad II handed the throne to Mehmed, then only 12, and retired to Manisa. Seeing a child sultan, the European kingdoms broke their peace treaty and launched a crusade. At the urging of the statesmen, Murad returned to lead the army and defeated the crusaders at ***Varna*** on 10 November 1444.

After a revolt of the Janissaries in Edirne (the Buçuktepe incident, 1446), Murad resumed his reign and Mehmed was sent back to Manisa. Only after Murad's death in 855 AH (February 1451 CE) did Mehmed ascend the throne for the second time, at the age of 19. Many in Europe thought him a weak and inexperienced youth.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — such as the Ottoman chronicles of Tursun Bey, Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri, and the accounts of Byzantine and Italian witnesses such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, Kritoboulos and Nicolò Barbaro — 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:

Tursun Bey, Tarih-i Ebü'l-Feth; Doukas, History of Byzantium; TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, "Mehmed II".

LESSONS

Failure at a young age is not the end. The bitter experience in Edirne taught the Conqueror that power requires readiness, not merely a right.

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THE HADITHS ABOUT CONSTANTINOPLE

Since the time of the Companions, the Muslims made Constantinople their goal because of certain hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ. The most authentic of them is the hadith of Umm Haram رضى الله عنها about "the city of Caesar":

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2924

حَدَّثَنِي إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ الدِّمَشْقِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ حَمْزَةَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي ثَوْرُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ، عَنْ خَالِدِ بْنِ مَعْدَانَ، أَنَّ عُمَيْرَ بْنَ الأَسْوَدِ الْعَنْسِيَّ، حَدَّثَهُ أَنَّهُ، أَتَى عُبَادَةَ بْنَ الصَّامِتِ وَهُوَ نَازِلٌ فِي سَاحِلِ حِمْصَ، وَهُوَ فِي بِنَاءٍ لَهُ وَمَعَهُ أُمُّ حَرَامٍ، قَالَ عُمَيْرٌ فَحَدَّثَتْنَا أُمُّ حَرَامٍ أَنَّهَا سَمِعَتِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ " أَوَّلُ جَيْشٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَغْزُونَ الْبَحْرَ قَدْ أَوْجَبُوا ". قَالَتْ أُمُّ حَرَامٍ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَنَا فِيهِمْ. قَالَ " أَنْتِ فِيهِمْ ". ثُمَّ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم " أَوَّلُ جَيْشٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَغْزُونَ مَدِينَةَ قَيْصَرَ مَغْفُورٌ لَهُمْ ". فَقُلْتُ أَنَا فِيهِمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ. قَالَ " لاَ ".

TRANSLATION:

'Umayr ibn al-Aswad al-'Ansi related that he came to 'Ubadah ibn al-Samit while he was staying on the coast of Hims, and Umm Haram was with him. 'Umayr said: Umm Haram told us that she heard the Prophet ﷺ say: "The first army of my ummah to campaign by sea has made (Paradise) certain for itself." Umm Haram said: I said, "O Messenger of Allah, am I among them?" He said: "You are among them." Then the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"The first army of my ummah to attack the city of Caesar will be forgiven."*** I said, "Am I among them, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "No."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Ishaq ibn Yazid al-Dimashqi, from Yahya ibn Hamzah, from Thawr ibn Yazid, from Khalid ibn Ma'dan, from 'Umayr ibn al-Aswad al-'Ansi, from Umm Haram bint Milhan رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Imam al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Hadith No. 2924.

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:2924

SOURCE NOTE: THE HADITH OF "THE BEST COMMANDER"

The hadith best known among the public reads: ***"Constantinople will surely be conquered; how excellent a commander will its commander be, and how excellent an army will that army be."*** It is narrated by Imam Ahmad in al-Musnad, al-Bukhari in al-Tarikh al-Kabir, and al-Hakim, who graded it authentic. However, its chain depends on one narrator, 'Abdullah ibn Bishr al-Ghanawi, whose reliability is not established; for this reason many Hadith scholars — among them al-Albani and Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut — graded its chain ***weak (da'if)***.

The scholars say that "the city of Caesar" in the hadith of Umm Haram is Constantinople, and that the first army to attack it was the army of Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah around 49–52 AH, which Abu Ayyub al-Ansari رضى الله عنه joined. Sahih Muslim (Nos. 2897 and 2920) also narrates a conquest of Constantinople near the end of time with tahlil and takbir — it relates to the events of the Last Hour, not to the events of 1453. Therefore the Conqueror's honour need not rest on a weak hadith; his deeds and struggle are example enough.

Status of the report: The hadith of Umm Haram — authentic. The hadith of "the best commander" — disputed; many Hadith scholars grade its chain weak.

REFERENCES:

Musnad Ahmad (No. 18957); al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak; al-Albani, Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Da'ifah (No. 878); Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari.

LESSONS

Love for Islamic history does not permit us to attribute anything to the Prophet ﷺ without care. What is authentic is inspiration enough.

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ABU AYYUB AL-ANSARI BENEATH THE WALLS

HISTORICAL NOTE: A COMPANION AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

Abu Ayyub al-Ansari رضى الله عنه was the Companion in whose house the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed when he first arrived in Madinah. Although advanced in age, he joined the Muslim army that besieged Constantinople in the time of Mu'awiyah. He fell ill there and asked that his body be carried as far as possible into enemy land and buried near the walls of the city.

Eight centuries later, after the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmed built a mosque and tomb at the place believed to be the grave of Abu Ayyub, in the area now known as ***Eyüp***. According to Ottoman tradition, the grave was discovered by his teacher, Shaykh Akşemseddin. The account of the discovery comes from later sources, but the Eyüp Sultan Mosque became a deeply revered place, and later Ottoman sultans were girded with the sword there on their accession.

Status of the report: Abu Ayyub's participation and death at Constantinople are narrated in the books of history; the story of the discovery of his grave by Akşemseddin is a later tradition.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah; Ottoman tradition.

LESSONS

Zeal for carrying Islam knows no age. An elderly Companion asked to be buried as close as possible to his goal.

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RUMELI HISARI: THE STRAIT-CUTTER

HISTORICAL NOTE: FOUR MONTHS OF BUILDING

In the spring of 856 AH (1452 CE), Sultan Mehmed built a great fortress on the European shore of the Bosphorus, opposite the fortress of Anadolu Hisarı built by his great-grandfather, Bayezid I. It was named ***Boğazkesen*** ("the strait-cutter") and is now known as ***Rumeli Hisarı***. According to the sources, it was completed in about four months, with thousands of workers and statesmen each responsible for building one tower.

With cannon on both shores, ships carrying help from the Black Sea to Constantinople could be stopped. The Byzantine emperor, Constantine XI, sent envoys to protest, but the Sultan replied that he was building on his own land.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — such as the Ottoman chronicles of Tursun Bey, Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri, and the accounts of Byzantine and Italian witnesses such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, Kritoboulos and Nicolò Barbaro — 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:

Tursun Bey, Tarih-i Ebü'l-Feth; Doukas, History of Byzantium; Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror.

Careful preparation is part of Allah's command:

SURAH AL-ANFAL 8:60

وَأَعِدُّواْ لَهُم مَّا ٱسۡتَطَعۡتُم مِّن قُوَّةٖ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ ٱلۡخَيۡلِ تُرۡهِبُونَ بِهِۦ عَدُوَّ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَدُوَّكُمۡ وَءَاخَرِينَ مِن دُونِهِمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُهُمۡۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُواْ مِن
شَيۡءٖ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيۡكُمۡ وَأَنتُمۡ لَا تُظۡلَمُونَ ٦٠

And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/8:60

LESSONS

Reliance on Allah does not mean abandoning preparation. Before attacking the city, the Conqueror first cut off its lifeline.

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ORBAN'S CANNON AND THE FLEET

HISTORICAL NOTE: A NEW TECHNOLOGY

A cannon founder named ***Orban*** (Urban), from Hungary or Transylvania, first offered his services to the Byzantine emperor, but the emperor could not pay him. He then came to Sultan Mehmed, who gave him a large wage. In Edirne, Orban cast a giant cannon which, according to Doukas, needed dozens of pairs of oxen and hundreds of men to haul it to Constantinople.

Besides cannon, the Sultan built a large fleet and gathered troops from across his realm. Modern historians estimate the Ottoman army at between 50,000 and 80,000 men — the figures in older sources are far larger — while the defenders of the city numbered only about 7,000 to 8,000, including Genoese and Venetian volunteers.

Status of the report: The existence of Orban's cannon is established in several contemporary sources; its size and the numbers of troops vary between sources.

REFERENCES:

Doukas, History of Byzantium; Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror; Sphrantzes, Chronicon Minus.

LESSONS

Muslims were once pioneers of knowledge and technology. The Conqueror valued expertise, wherever it came from, and used it for a great purpose.

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THE THEODOSIAN WALLS AND THE CHAIN OF THE GOLDEN HORN

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE SIEGE BEGINS

The siege began in early April 1453 (Rabi‘ al-Akhir 857 AH). On the landward side, Constantinople was protected by ***the Theodosian Walls*** — layered walls with a moat that had not been breached for a thousand years. On the sea side, the entrance to the harbour of ***the Golden Horn*** was closed with a great iron chain, and the Ottoman ships could not enter.

The Ottoman cannon pounded the walls day and night, but the defenders repaired the damage every night. Several assaults failed with heavy losses, and on 20 April four Christian ships broke through the Ottoman blockade and entered the harbour. It is related that the Sultan was so angry that he rode his horse into the sea.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — such as the Ottoman chronicles of Tursun Bey, Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri, and the accounts of Byzantine and Italian witnesses such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, Kritoboulos and Nicolò Barbaro — 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:

Nicolò Barbaro, Diary of the Siege of Constantinople; Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror; Doukas, History of Byzantium.

When war drags on, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught the etiquette of facing the enemy — not to wish for it, but to be patient when it comes:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1742

وَحَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ رَافِعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي مُوسَى، بْنُ عُقْبَةَ عَنْ أَبِي النَّضْرِ، عَنْ كُتَّابٍ، رَجُلٍ مِنْ أَسْلَمَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُقَالُ لَهُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي أَوْفَى فَكَتَبَ إِلَى عُمَرَ بْنِ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ حِينَ سَارَ إِلَى الْحَرُورِيَّةِ يُخْبِرُهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَانَ فِي بَعْضِ أَيَّامِهِ الَّتِي لَقِيَ فِيهَا الْعَدُوَّ يَنْتَظِرُ حَتَّى إِذَا مَالَتِ الشَّمْسُ قَامَ فِيهِمْ فَقَالَ " يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لاَ تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ الْعَافِيَةَ فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُوهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلاَلِ السُّيُوفِ " .

TRANSLATION:

From the letter of ‘Abdullah ibn Abi Awfa: On one of the days when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ met the enemy, he waited until the sun had passed its zenith, then stood among them and said: ***“O people, do not wish to meet the enemy, and ask Allah for well-being. But when you meet them, be patient, and know that Paradise is beneath the shade of swords.”***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad ibn Rafi', from 'Abd ar-Razzaq, from Ibn Jurayj, from Musa ibn 'Uqbah, from Abu an-Nadr Salim, from 'Abdullah ibn Abi Awfa رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Hadith No. 1742.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1742a

LESSONS

Failure in the early stages is no reason to stop. Patience is a key to victory that is often forgotten.

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SHIPS OVER THE HILL

HISTORICAL NOTE: 22 APRIL 1453

Because the iron chain blocked the entrance to the Golden Horn, Sultan Mehmed planned something the enemy had never imagined. On the night of 21–22 April 1453, some 70 ships were hauled over a wooden track greased with oil and fat, up the hill behind Galata, and lowered into the Golden Horn behind the chain.

That morning, the people of Constantinople were astonished to see Ottoman ships inside their own harbour. The sea walls along the Golden Horn were now exposed, and the defenders had to divide their already small forces. This event was recorded by Christian witnesses such as Barbaro and Doukas, though details of the number of ships and the exact route vary.

Status of the report: Established in several contemporary eyewitness sources; the number of ships and the exact route vary.

REFERENCES:

Nicolò Barbaro, Diary of the Siege of Constantinople; Doukas, History of Byzantium; Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror.

LESSONS

When the usual road is closed, a creative mind finds another. Victory often comes from the courage to think differently.

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ULUBATLI HASAN AND THE MARTYRS

SOURCE NOTE: BETWEEN HISTORY AND LEGEND

According to a very famous story in Turkey, a Janissary named ***Ulubatlı Hasan*** was the first to plant the Ottoman flag on the walls of Constantinople before falling as a martyr under a hail of arrows. This story is not found in the main contemporary sources; it appears only in much later accounts, and historians regard it as a tradition or legend.

What is certain is that many soldiers fell in the assaults on the city walls during more than fifty days of siege. Kritoboulos, a Greek historian who later served the Sultan, described the bravery of both sides in that battle.

Status of the report: The story of Ulubatlı Hasan is a later tradition not established in contemporary sources.

REFERENCES:
Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror; Ottoman tradition.

Allah knows the sincerity of every heart that longs for martyrdom, whether or not people remember its name:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1909

حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو الطَّاهِرِ، وَحَرْمَلَةُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، - وَاللَّفْظُ لِحَرْمَلَةَ - قَالَ أَبُو الطَّاهِرِ أَخْبَرَنَا وَقَالَ، حَرْمَلَةُ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ وَهْبٍ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو شُرَيْحٍ، أَنَّ سَهْلَ بْنَ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ بْنِ سَهْلِ، بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ حَدَّثَهُ عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ " مَنْ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ الشَّهَادَةَ بِصِدْقٍ بَلَّغَهُ اللَّهُ مَنَازِلَ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَإِنْ مَاتَ عَلَى فِرَاشِهِ " .

TRANSLATION:

Sahl ibn Abi Umamah ibn Sahl ibn Hunayf narrated from his father, from his grandfather, that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"Whoever sincerely asks Allah for martyrdom, Allah will raise him to the ranks of the martyrs even if he dies on his bed."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu at-Tahir and Harmalah ibn Yahya, from 'Abdullah ibn Wahb, from Abu Shurayh 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Shurayh, from Sahl ibn Abi Umamah, from Abu Umamah ibn Sahl, from Sahl ibn Hunayf رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Government, Hadith No. 1909.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1909

LESSONS

Many true heroes are unknown by name. Allah records every sincere sacrifice, even if history forgets it.

THE DAWN OF 20 JUMADA AL-ULA 857

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE FINAL ASSAULT

Before the final assault, Sultan Mehmed ordered his army to fast and repent, and the scholars and shaykhs went round the camp to raise their spirits. In the early hours of Tuesday, 20 Jumada al-Ula 857 AH (29 May 1453 CE), a great assault was launched in several waves. After fierce fighting, Giovanni Giustiniani, the Genoese commander defending the most important section of the walls, was badly wounded and withdrew, and the line of defence began to collapse.

The Ottoman army entered the city. The last Byzantine emperor, ***Constantine XI Palaiologos***, was killed in the fighting; his body was never identified with certainty. After more than fifty days of siege, Constantinople was opened, and the young Sultan, aged 21, entered the city that afternoon.

Status of the report: The date and the main events are established in many contemporary sources.

REFERENCES:

Nicolò Barbaro, Diary of the Siege of Constantinople; Doukas, History of Byzantium; Tursun Bey, Tarih-i Ebü'l-Feth; Sphrantzes.

The victory the believers long for is a gift from Allah:

SURAH AS-SAFF 61:13

وَأُخۡرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَاۖ نَصۡرٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَتۡحٞ قَرِيبٞۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ١٣

And [you will obtain] another [favor] that you love - victory from Allāh and an imminent conquest; and give good tidings to the believers.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/61:13

LESSONS

Victory came after fasting, repentance and unceasing effort. It is a gift from Allah, not merely the fruit of human strength.

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HAGIA SOPHIA: BETWEEN FACT AND DEBATE

HISTORICAL NOTE: A CHURCH BECOMES A MOSQUE

The church of ***Hagia Sophia*** (Ayasofya), built by the Emperor Justinian in the sixth century CE, was the greatest church of the Eastern Christian world. After the conquest, Sultan Mehmed converted it into a mosque, and the first Friday prayer was held in it on 1 June 1453. Minarets were added later, and most of the mosaics were not destroyed but covered.

The matter is debated to this day. Some scholars argue that a city taken by force (‘anwatan) allows the ruler to use its buildings; there is a report that the Sultan bought the building with his own wealth and endowed it, but this report is late and not established. Others recall the covenant of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab with the people of Jerusalem, which left their churches to them. Hagia Sophia later became a museum (1934) and was made a mosque again (2020).

Status of the report: The conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque is established; the report that the Sultan bought it with his own wealth is not established.

REFERENCES:

Tursun Bey, Tarih-i Ebü’l-Feth; Doukas, History of Byzantium; Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror; TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi.

LESSONS

History must be told fairly, including what is debated. We can take pride in the conquest of Constantinople while understanding the views of others.

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JUSTICE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY

HISTORICAL NOTE: GENNADIOS AND GALATA

According to the custom of war at the time, the soldiers were allowed to take plunder in the city for three days, and many inhabitants were taken captive; the Christian sources describe great suffering in those days, and this is stated here honestly. After that, the Sultan ordered the plunder to stop, ransomed some of the captives, and invited the people who had fled to return to their homes.

The Sultan appointed an Orthodox scholar, ***Gennadios Scholarios***, as Patriarch of Constantinople in January 1454, and gave the Orthodox Christian community freedom of religion and the right to manage its own affairs. To the Genoese of Galata he granted a letter of guarantee (ahidname) protecting their property, churches and trade. He also moved Muslim, Christian and Jewish settlers from other provinces to bring the city back to life.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — such as the Ottoman chronicles of Tursun Bey, Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri, and the accounts of Byzantine and Italian witnesses such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, Kritoboulos and Nicolò Barbaro — 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:

Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror; Doukas, History of Byzantium; the Galata ahidname (1453).

The Qur'an affirms that there is no compulsion in religion:

SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:256

لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَيِّۚ فَمَن يَكۡفُرۡ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَيُؤۡمِنۢ
بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسۡتَمۡسَكَ بِٱلۡعُرۡوَةِ ٱلۡوُثۡقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَاۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٥٦

There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become distinct from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in ṭāghūt and believes in Allāh has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allāh is Hearing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:256

And just rulers have an honoured place with Allah:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1827

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَزُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، وَابْنُ، نُمَيْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ عَنْ عَمْرٍو، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ دِينَارٍ - عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ أَوْسٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، قَالَ ابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ يَبْلُغُ بِهِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَفِي حَدِيثِ زُهَيْرٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى اللَّه

عليه وسلم " إِنَّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَلَى مَنَابِرَ مِنْ نُورٍ عَنْ يَمِينِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَكِلْتَا يَدَيْهِ يَمِينٌ الَّذِينَ يَعْدِلُونَ فِي حُكْمِهِمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ وَمَا وَلُوا " .

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Indeed, the just will be with Allah upon pulpits of light, on the right of the Most Merciful, Mighty and Majestic — and both His hands are right — those who are just in their judgements, with their families and in what they are entrusted with."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, Zuhayr ibn Harb and Ibn Numayr, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from 'Amr ibn Dinar, from 'Amr ibn Aws, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Government, Hadith No. 1827.

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

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1827

LESSONS

Opening a city is only the beginning; opening the hearts of its people requires justice. The city the Conqueror opened remained a home for many faiths for centuries.

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THE LAW OF FRATRICIDE

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE DARK SIDE

Soon after he ascended the throne in 1451, the Sultan's infant half-brother, ***Ahmed***, was killed on his order to prevent a future struggle for the throne. In the kanunname (law code) attributed to him there is a clause permitting the sultan who comes to the throne to kill his brothers "for the order of the world" (nizam-ı âlem), with the claim that most scholars had permitted it.

This practice led to the killing of many innocent Ottoman princes in later generations, until it was abandoned in the early seventeenth century. Historians discuss the authenticity of the text of that kanunname, but the killing of Ahmed and the practice of fratricide itself are established in history. It is stated here honestly because it contradicts the principle of the Shari'ah regarding the blood of a Muslim.

Status of the report: The killing of Ahmed and the practice of fratricide are established in history; the exact text of the kanunname is debated.

REFERENCES:
Kanunname-i Âl-i Osman; Doukas, History of Byzantium; Halil İnalcık, The Ottoman Empire.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ affirmed that the blood of a Muslim is not lawful except for one of three reasons:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6878

حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، حَدَّثَنَا الأَعْمَشُ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُرَّةَ، عَنْ مَسْرُوقٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم " لاَ يَحِلُّ دَمُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَأَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلاَّ بِإِحْدَى ثَلاَثٍ النَّفْسُ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالثَّيِّبُ الزَّانِي، وَالْمَارِقُ مِنَ الدِّينِ التَّارِكُ الْجَمَاعَةَ ".

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah (ibn Mas'ud) said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"The blood of a Muslim who testifies that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah is not lawful except in one of three cases: a life for a life, the married person who commits adultery, and the one who leaves the religion and abandons the community."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Umar ibn Hafs ibn Ghiyath, from Hafs ibn Ghiyath, from Sulayman al-A'mash, from 'Abdullah ibn Murrah, from Masruq ibn al-Ajda', from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Imam al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Blood Money, Hadith No. 6878.

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

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Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6878

LESSONS

A leader's greatness does not make his mistakes lawful. Loving the Conqueror does not mean approving everything he did.

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BUILDER OF ISTANBUL, LOVER OF KNOWLEDGE, AND HIS DEATH

HISTORICAL NOTE: 1453–1481

Sultan Mehmed made Istanbul the capital of his state. He built ***the Fatih Mosque*** with a complex (külliye) containing eight higher madrasahs (the Sahn-ı Seman), a hospital, a public kitchen and a library, as well as the Topkapı Palace. He gathered scholars, poets and scientists — among them the astronomer ***'Ali Qushji*** of Samarkand — and sponsored the translation of works of learning.

He continued his military campaigns: Serbia (1459), the Morea (1460), Trebizond (1461), Bosnia (1463) and Otranto in Italy (1480). Yet he also failed at times, as in the sieges of Belgrade (1456) and Rhodes (1480). He died on 4 Rabi' al-Awwal 886 AH (3 May 1481 CE) at Hünkâr Çayırı near Gebze, while starting a new campaign whose goal is unknown; there are claims that he was poisoned, but this cannot be confirmed. He was buried at the Fatih Mosque.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of history — such as the Ottoman chronicles of Tursun Bey, Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri, and the accounts of Byzantine and Italian witnesses such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, Kritoboulos and Nicolò Barbaro — 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:

Tursun Bey, Tarih-i Ebü'l-Feth; Kritoboulos, History of Mehmed the Conqueror; TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, "Mehmed II".

LESSONS

A true conqueror does not only tear down walls but also builds madrasahs, hospitals and libraries. Victory must be followed by building.

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STORIES AND FIGURES THAT NEED ASSESSMENT

SOURCE NOTE: BETWEEN FACT AND LEGEND

Some matters in the Conqueror's story need careful assessment. ***First***, the chain of the hadith "how excellent a commander will its commander be" is disputed, and his honour need not rest on it. ***Second***, the story of Ulubatlı Hasan planting the flag is a later tradition. ***Third***, the stories that none of the Conqueror's soldiers had ever missed an obligatory prayer since puberty, or that only the Sultan had never missed the regular sunnah prayers, are modern tales with no historical source.

Fourth, the troop numbers in older sources — some speak of hundreds of thousands — far exceed the estimates of modern historians. ***Fifth***, the stories that the Sultan bought Hagia Sophia with his own wealth, and that he was poisoned, cannot be confirmed. What is certainly established: careful preparation, the building of Rumeli Hisarı, the ships hauled into the Golden Horn, the conquest of the city on 29 May 1453, and the policy of religious freedom he gave to the people of the city.

Status of the report: The main events are established; many popular details are traditions, legends or modern tales.

REFERENCES:

A comparison of Tursun Bey, Doukas, Kritoboulos, Barbaro, Sphrantzes and modern historical research.

LESSONS

The Conqueror's greatness needs no invented stories. The authentic facts are example enough.

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SOURCES OF THE STORIES OF THE CONQUEROR

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
Education by Molla Gürani and Akşemseddin	Taşköprüzâde; chronicles	History
Intention of making Allah's word supreme	Sahih al-Bukhari 2810	Authentic
The first army to the city of Caesar	Sahih al-Bukhari 2924	Authentic
"How excellent a commander"	Musnad Ahmad	Disputed; many grade it weak
Abu Ayyub's grave found by Akşemseddin	Ottoman tradition	Later tradition
Building of Rumeli Hisarı (1452)	Tursun Bey; Doukas; Kritoboulos	Established
Orban's cannon	Doukas; Kritoboulos	Established; size varies
Do not wish to meet the enemy	Sahih Muslim 1742	Authentic
Ships over the hill (22 April)	Barbaro; Doukas; Kritoboulos	Established
Ulubatlı Hasan	Later accounts	Legend
Asking sincerely for martyrdom	Sahih Muslim 1909	Authentic
Conquest of the city (29 May 1453)	Many contemporary sources	Established
Hagia Sophia made a mosque	Tursun Bey; Doukas	Established
The Sultan bought Hagia Sophia	Late report	Not established
Gennadios and the Galata ahidname	Kritoboulos; the ahidname document	Established
The just on pulpits of light	Sahih Muslim 1827	Authentic
Killing of Ahmed and the law of fratricide	Kanunname; Doukas	Established; text debated
A Muslim's blood lawful only in three cases	Sahih al-Bukhari 6878	Authentic
The Conqueror died of poison	Various claims	Uncertain

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PEOPLE, PLACES AND TIMELINE

PERSON	ROLE
Murad II	The Conqueror's father; the sixth Ottoman sultan
Molla Gürani	The Conqueror's teacher; a strict scholar
Shaykh Akşemseddin	The Conqueror's spiritual teacher
Abu Ayyub al-Ansari رضى الله عنه	The Companion who died beneath the walls of Constantinople
Orban	Founder of the giant cannon
Constantine XI	The last Byzantine emperor
Giovanni Giustiniani	Genoese commander defending the city
Gennadios Scholarios	Orthodox Patriarch appointed by the Conqueror
'Ali Qushji	Astronomer at the Conqueror's court

PLACE	EVENT
Edirne	The Conqueror's birthplace; capital before Istanbul
Rumeli Hisarı	The fortress built in 1452
Theodosian Walls	The land walls of Constantinople
Golden Horn	The harbour closed by a chain
Hagia Sophia	Made a mosque on 1 June 1453
Eyüp	Tomb of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari
Fatih Mosque	Complex of learning and the Conqueror's tomb

YEAR	EVENT
c. 49–52 AH	Siege of Constantinople; death of Abu Ayyub
835 AH / 1432 CE	Birth of the Conqueror in Edirne
848 AH / 1444 CE	First accession; Battle of Varna
855 AH / 1451 CE	Second accession
856 AH / 1452 CE	Building of Rumeli Hisarı
857 AH / 1453 CE	Conquest of Constantinople (29 May)
858 AH / 1454 CE	Appointment of Patriarch Gennadios
860 AH / 1456 CE	Failed siege of Belgrade
886 AH / 1481 CE	Death near Gebze

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SULTAN MEHMED THE CONQUEROR

This chapter answers questions often asked about Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror. The answers are brief; the details are in the earlier chapters.

1. WHO WAS SULTAN MEHMED THE CONQUEROR?

The seventh Ottoman sultan, son of Murad II, who conquered Constantinople in 1453 CE.

2. WHAT DOES THE TITLE AL-FATIH MEAN?

“The Conqueror” or “the Opener”, because he opened the city of Constantinople.

3. HOW OLD WAS HE WHEN HE CONQUERED CONSTANTINOPLE?

About 21 years old.

4. WHO WERE HIS TEACHERS?

Among them Molla Gürani and Shaykh Akşemseddin.

5. IS THE HADITH “HOW EXCELLENT A COMMANDER WILL ITS COMMANDER BE” AUTHENTIC?

It is disputed; many Hadith scholars grade its chain weak. The authentic hadith about the city of Caesar is the hadith of Umm Haram in Sahih al-Bukhari.

6. WHAT IS RUMELI HISARI?

The fortress he built in 1452 to control the Bosphorus strait.

7. HOW DID THE SHIPS ENTER THE GOLDEN HORN?

The ships were hauled over the hill behind Galata and lowered behind the chain.

8. WHEN WAS CONSTANTINOPLE CONQUERED?

On 20 Jumada al-Ula 857 AH (29 May 1453 CE).

9. IS THE STORY OF ULUBATLI HASAN TRUE?

It is a later tradition not established in contemporary sources.

10. HOW DID HE TREAT THE CHRISTIANS?

He appointed Patriarch Gennadios and granted freedom of religion, though the first days after the conquest brought suffering.

11. DID HE MAKE MISTAKES?

Yes; among them the killing of his infant half-brother and the law of fratricide.

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12. WHERE IS HIS TOMB?

At the Fatih Mosque in Istanbul.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The Conqueror's story is the story of a young man who, through careful preparation, patience in failure and the courage to think differently, opened a city that could not be opened for eight centuries — though his story also contains mistakes that must be honestly acknowledged.

LESSON	FROM THE CONQUEROR'S STORY
The right intention	Education by scholars; Sahih al-Bukhari 2810
Care with hadith	The hadith of the city of Caesar; Sahih al-Bukhari 2924
Careful preparation	Rumeli Hisarı and the cannon; Al-Anfal 8:60
Patience before the enemy	Early failures; Sahih Muslim 1742
Creative thinking	Ships over the hill
The sincerity of martyrs	The soldiers who fell; Sahih Muslim 1909
Victory is from Allah	29 May 1453; As-Saff 61:13
Justice to all	Gennadios and Galata; Al-Baqarah 2:256; Sahih Muslim 1827
The sanctity of Muslim blood	The law of fratricide; Sahih al-Bukhari 6878

May we follow the Conqueror in his eagerness to learn, his care in preparation and his patience under trial, while learning from his mistakes.

In sha' Allah, the Heroes of Islam series will continue with the story of Oruç Reis, the Algerian admiral who rescued the Muslims of Andalusia.

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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 .

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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 .

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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

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

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