بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE SHAMA'IL OF THE PROPHET

COMPLETE SERIES

AS THOUGH WE BEHELD HIM

The Shama'il of the Prophet ﷺ — Complete Series: All 56 Chapters of Imam at-Tirmidhi's ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, with the Grade of Every Narration

لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often."

SURAH AL-AHZAB 33:21

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who sent us the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as an excellent example for whoever hopes in Allah and the Last Day. Blessings and peace be upon him, and upon his family and his Companions, who watched his appearance, his clothing, his meals, his smile, his worship and his character with deep love, then preserved and passed on every description of him to us, so that we who never saw him can see him, as it were, through their eyes.

This book 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 book gathers all six books of The Shama'il of the Prophet ﷺ into one volume, following the order of all 56 chapters of Imam at-Tirmidhi's ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah. The grade and chain of every hadith are stated, and weak reports are set apart in Note boxes. May this book be a bridge to knowing, loving and following the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and an ongoing charity for everyone who helps with it, reads it and shares it.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS BOOK

This book's cover does not depict any human being or animal. It shows **the oasis of Madinah at dusk**: **green date-palm groves** heavy with ripe fruit, **low mud-brick houses** roofed with palm fronds, and in their midst **a simple mosque** — mud-brick walls, palm-trunk pillars and a roof of palm fronds, with no dome and no minaret. In the distance stretches **the reddish range of Mount Uhud** beneath a wide sky.

This is the city where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spent the last ten years of his life: in this mosque he prayed, taught and sat with his Companions, and among these palm groves he walked, ate and rested. Anas رضى الله عنه said that on the day he arrived in Madinah, ***everything in it became bright*** (ash-Shama'il 393). There is no one in the picture, yet through the narrations of the Companions in this book, it is ***as though we behold him*** walking its lanes.

The dark blue band at the bottom, framed by **fine gold lines**, is where the author's name appears.

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Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = note (weak report or further explanation); blue table = comparison.

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PART ONE

None More Beautiful

Chapters 1–7 of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah

His Appearance, the Seal of Prophethood, His Hair, Grey Hairs, Dye and Kohl

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NONE MORE BEAUTIFUL

This book continues the series ***The Prophet's Sirah***. Where the Sirah followed ***the life journey*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ from birth to death, this book, ***The Shama'il of the Prophet*** ﷺ, brings us ***closer to his person*** — his appearance, clothing, food, speech, worship and character — following the chapter order of a very famous book: ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** by ***Imam at-Tirmidhi***.

This first book covers ***chapters 1 to 7*** of that work: his physical form, the seal of prophethood, his hair, how he combed it, his grey hairs, dye, and kohl — ***53 narrations*** in all. We present the sahih and hasan narrations in Hadith boxes, while weak narrations are explained in Note boxes.

Why know his appearance? Because ***love is born of knowing***. The Companions who saw him preserved every detail, so that later generations — including us — could know him through their words.

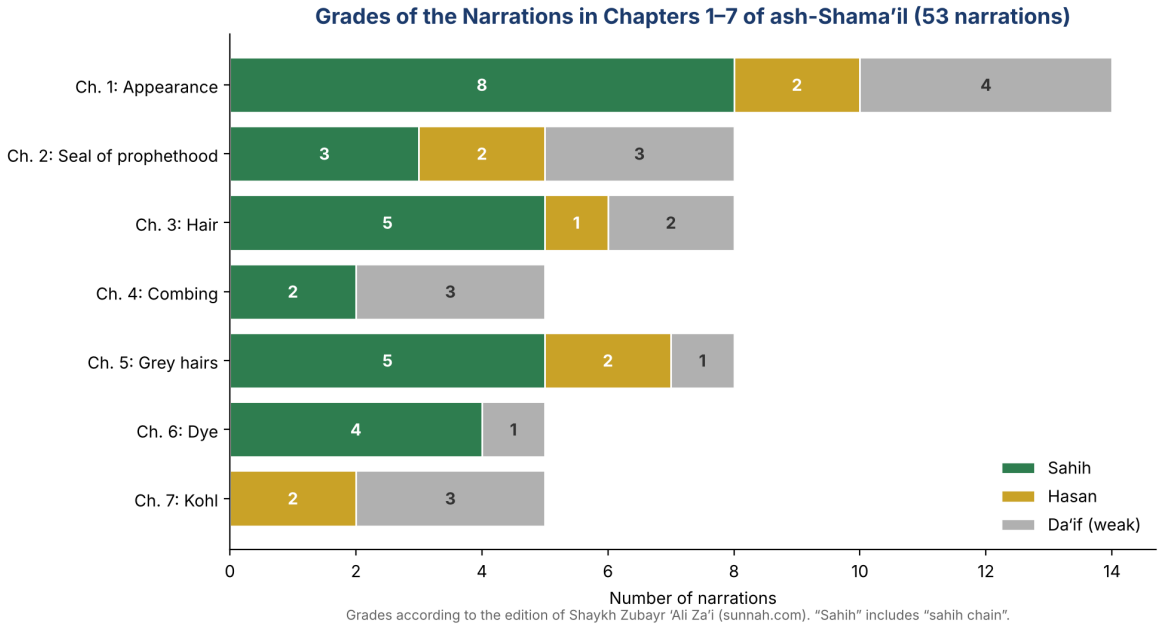


Figure 1: The grades of the narrations in chapters 1–7 of ash-Shama'il.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this book is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box, based on the edition of Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i as shown on sunnah.com. The physical description of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is given in words only, without any drawing, out of respect for him.

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GETTING TO KNOW ASH-SHAMA'IL

The word ***shama'il*** is the plural of ***shimal***, meaning qualities, nature and manners. In the terminology of hadith scholars, ***ash-Shama'il*** is the field that gathers narrations about the ***physical features and character*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and his manners and habits in daily life.

Ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah is the most famous book in this field. Imam at-Tirmidhi arranged it in ***56 chapters***, beginning with his appearance and ending with the chapter on seeing him in a dream, with more than ***400 narrations*** with full chains.

This book has been explained by many scholars, including ***Jam' al-Wasa'il*** by Mulla 'Ali al-Qari and ***al-Mawahib al-Laduniyyah*** by Shaykh Ibrahim al-Bajuri. In modern times, Shaykh Nasir ad-Din al-Albani abridged it in ***Mukhtasar ash-Shama'il***, removing weak narrations, and Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i graded every chain.

In the Malay world, this book is also known and taught in pondok schools and mosques, especially through al-Bajuri's commentary. Studying it is a way to ***bring love*** for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***to life*** in the heart.

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IMAM AT-TIRMIDHI

His full name was ***Abu 'Isa Muhammad ibn 'Isa ibn Sawrah at-Tirmidhi***. He was born around ***209 AH*** near Tirmidh, a town on the banks of the Jayhun (Amu Darya) river, in today's ***Uzbekistan***.

He travelled in search of hadith to Khurasan, Iraq and the Hijaz, and studied with great imams such as ***Imam al-Bukhari***, ***Imam Muslim*** and ***Imam Abu Dawud***. He was al-Bukhari's closest student, and often quoted his teacher's judgements on narrators and hadiths.

His greatest work is ***al-Jami'*** (Sunan at-Tirmidhi), one of the six major hadith collections. He also wrote ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** and ***al-'Ilal***. In his last years he became blind, and he died in ***279 AH***.

NOTE: AL-BUKHARI'S PRAISE OF HIS STUDENT

Adh-Dhahabi relates that Imam al-Bukhari once said to at-Tirmidhi: "What I have benefited from you is more than what you have benefited from me." These words show at-Tirmidhi's brilliance and standing with his teacher, though they are conveyed through biographical works rather than a chain examined in detail.

REFERENCES:

adh-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam an-Nubala' (biography of at-Tirmidhi); Ibn Hajar, Tahdhib at-Tahdhib.

Imam at-Tirmidhi was also known for ***piety and much weeping*** out of fear of Allah. Adh-Dhahabi relates that he wept until he went blind at the end of his life. His great learning did not make him proud, but increased his fear of Allah.

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THE METHOD OF THIS BOOK

Ash-Shama'il contains narrations of ***various grades***. Imam at-Tirmidhi, like the hadith scholars of his time, narrated with full chains so that readers could judge for themselves. So some of its narrations are sahih, some hasan, and some weak (da'if).

In this book we hold to three principles: (1) ***sahih and hasan*** narrations are presented in Hadith boxes with linked chains; (2) ***weak*** narrations are explained in Note boxes, and if their meaning is supported by other sahih narrations, that support is mentioned; and (3) the grade of every narration is stated clearly.

The grades used are those of ***Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i*** as shown on sunnah.com, and we sometimes mention Shaykh al-Albani's grade where they differ. Differences between hadith scholars are normal, and they show their ***care*** in guarding the Sunnah.

Figure 1 shows that of the 53 narrations in chapters 1–7, about ***two-thirds*** are sahih or hasan. This means the basic picture of the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reaches us through ***firm narrations***.

This method is in line with the Prophet's warning ﷺ: "Whoever narrates from me a hadith he knows to be false is one of the liars" (Sahih Muslim, Introduction). So we are careful in attributing anything to him.

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CHAPTER 1: HIS PHYSICAL FORM

The first chapter of ash-Shama'il is titled ***"What has come about the form of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It contains 14 narrations from Companions who saw him with their own eyes: Anas ibn Malik, al-Bara' ibn 'Azib, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Jabir ibn Samurah, Abu Hurayrah, Jabir ibn 'Abdullah, Abu at-Tufayl and others رضي الله عنهم.

These Companions were not painters, but they were very precise with words. They used comparisons the Arabs understood: ***the moon, silver, a sword***, and named every feature with exact terms. Later scholars explained these terms one by one.

All these Companions described him with ***love***, not mere observation. They remembered every detail because they loved him dearly — and that love preserved these narrations until they reached us.

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NEITHER TOO TALL NOR SHORT

The first narration in ash-Shama'il comes from ***Anas ibn Malik*** رضى الله عنه, who served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 1

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو رَجَاءٍ قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ مَالِكِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ، عَنْ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَهُ، يَقُولُ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، لَيْسَ بِالطَّوِيلِ الْبَائِنِ، وَلاَ بِالْقَصِيرِ، وَلاَ بِالأَبْيَضِ الأَمْهَقِ، وَلاَ بِالآدَمِ، وَلاَ بِالْجَعْدِ الْقَطَطِ، وَلاَ بِالسَّبْطِ، بَعَثَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى رَأْسِ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً، فَأَقَامَ بِمَكَّةَ عَشْرَ سِنِينَ، وَبِالْمَدِينَةِ عَشْرَ سِنِينَ، وَتَوَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى رَأْسِ سِتِّينَ سَنَةً، وَلَيْسَ فِي رَأْسِهِ وَلِحْيَتِهِ عِشْرُونَ شَعَرَةً بَيْضَاءَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was neither very tall nor short; neither pale white nor tawny; his hair was neither tightly curled nor completely straight.*** Allah the Exalted sent him at the age of forty. He stayed in Makkah ten years and in Madinah ten years, and Allah took him at the age of sixty, ***with not even twenty white hairs on his head and beard."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu Raja' Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Malik ibn Anas, from Rabi'ah ibn Abi 'Abd ar-Rahman, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 1; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3547 and Sahih Muslim No. 2347.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Its meaning is in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:1

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Anas used the style "not too… nor too…" — as if each of his features stood at ***the most balanced middle point***. Scholars note that this physical balance reflects the balance of his teaching: neither extreme nor neglectful.

This hadith also summarises ***the timeline*** of prophethood: sent at 40, living in Makkah and Madinah, and dying at around 60. More precise narrations state he lived in Makkah for 13 years and died at 63; scholars explain that Anas gave round figures without counting the fractions.

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And notice a very personal detail: ***his grey hairs were fewer than twenty***. Only someone very close to him — like Anas, who served him daily — could know such a fine detail. We will return to his grey hairs in Chapter 5.

This detail also teaches us to honour those who serve and accompany the righteous. Anas began serving the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as a boy, and later said that in all those years he never once said "Uff" to him, nor asked him why he had done something or why he had not done it (Sahih Muslim 2309). Such gentleness is part of his perfect character.

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MEDIUM AND UPRIGHT

The following narrations confirm Anas's description. In the second narration, Anas said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was ***of medium height***, neither tall nor short, ***well-built***, his hair neither curly nor straight, his complexion light brown; ***when he walked, he walked with a firm stride***" (ash-Shama'il 2) — sahih.

Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a man of medium height, ***broad between the shoulders***, with thick hair reaching his earlobes, and he wore a red garment. ***I never saw anything more beautiful than him***" (ash-Shama'il 3) — sahih chain.

In another narration he said: "I never saw anyone with long hair in a red garment ***more handsome than the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ" (ash-Shama'il 4) — sahih. It is from al-Bara's words that the title of this part is taken: ***None More Beautiful***.

NOTE: ON THE RED GARMENT

Scholars explain that the "hullah hamra'" he wore was not entirely red, but ***red-striped*** — a Yemeni cloth with red lines. Discussion of his clothing will continue in the second book (the chapter on clothing).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad — chapter on clothing.

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'ALI IBN ABI TALIB'S DESCRIPTION

'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه, his cousin and son-in-law who grew up in his home, gives a more detailed description:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 5

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْمَسْعُودِيُّ، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ مُسْلِمِ بْنِ هُرْمُزَ، عَنْ نَافِعِ بْنِ جُبَيْرِ بْنِ مُطْعِمٍ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، قَالَ: لَمْ يَكُنِ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِالطَّوِيلِ، وَلا بِالْقَصِيرِ، شَثْنُ الْكَفَّيْنِ وَالْقَدَمَيْنِ، ضَخْمُ الرَّأْسِ، ضَخْمُ الْكَرَادِيسِ، طَوِيلُ الْمَسْرُبَةِ، إِذَا مَشَى تَكَفَّأَ تَكَفُّؤًا، كَأَنَّمَا يَنْحَطُّ مِنْ صَبَبٍ، لَمْ أَرَ قَبْلَهُ، وَلا بَعْدَهُ مِثْلَهُ، صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ was neither tall nor short; his palms and feet were thick and firm; his head was large; his joints were large; the line of hair from his chest to his navel was long. When he walked, he leaned forward as if descending a slope. I never saw anyone like him, before him or after him ﷺ."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Isma'il (al-Bukhari), from Abu Nu'aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn, from al-Mas'udi, from 'Uthman ibn Muslim ibn Hurmuz, from Nafi' ibn Jubayr ibn Mut'im, from 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 5; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3637 (hasan sahih).

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. At-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih in his Jami'.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:5

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'Ali's description stresses ***strength***: firm hands and feet, large joints. He was not physically weak; he dug the Trench, fought at Badr and Uhud, and walked long distances. His gait — ***leaning forward as if descending a slope*** — shows an energetic, purposeful stride, neither lazy nor swaggering.

NOTE: 'ALI'S LONG NARRATION (ASH-SHAMA'IL 7)

At-Tirmidhi also narrates a longer description by 'Ali through Ibrahim ibn Muhammad, 'Ali's grandson. It includes: his face was somewhat round, fair with a reddish tint, intensely black eyes, long eyelashes; ***"Whoever saw him unexpectedly was awed by him, and whoever came to know him loved him."***

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This narration's chain is ***weak*** because it is broken between Ibrahim ibn Muhammad and 'Ali. Yet most of its content is supported by other sahih narrations in this chapter.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 7 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:7

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THE HADITH OF HIND IBN ABI HALAH

The longest narration in this chapter comes from ***al-Hasan ibn 'Ali*** رضى الله عنهما, who asked his uncle, ***Hind ibn Abi Halah***, about the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Hind was his stepson (Khadijah's son by a previous husband), and was known for his skill in description.

NOTE: THE HADITH OF HIND IBN ABI HALAH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 8)

Among Hind's descriptions: ***his face shone like the moon on the night it is full***; his forehead was broad; his eyebrows arched and not joined, with a vein between them that swelled when he was angry; his beard thick; his neck like the neck of a statue carved in silver; his chest broad; the soles of his feet so smooth that water did not settle on them.

On his manner: ***"He often looked down; his gaze at the ground was longer than at the sky; he walked behind his Companions, and was first to greet whomever he met."***

This narration's chain is ***weak*** because it contains an unknown narrator (a man of Banu Tamim). Even so, it is very famous, and much of its content agrees with sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 8 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:8

From this narration we also learn ***the etiquette of seeking knowledge***: al-Hasan, his grandson, asked one who knew more. He said: "I wished him to describe something I could hold on to." The generations after the Companions longed for him, and strove to know him through those who had seen him.

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MOUTH, EYES AND HEELS

Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنهما described three features in very concise terms:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 9

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُوسَى مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ سِمَاكِ بْنِ حَرْبٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ جَابِرَ بْنَ سَمُرَةَ، يَقُولُ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم ضَلِيعَ الْفَمِ، أَشْكَلَ الْعَيْنِ، مَنْهُوسَ الْعَقِبِ.

TRANSLATION:

Simak ibn Harb said: I heard Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنهما say: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was dali' al-fam (wide-mouthed), ashkal al-'ayn (with long eye-slits), and manhus al-'aqib (with little flesh on his heels)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu Musa Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far (Ghundar), from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Simak ibn Harb, from Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 9; also Sahih Muslim No. 2339.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:9

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

In this narration, the narrator Shu'bah asked his teacher Simak about the meaning of each term, and Simak explained: ***dali' al-fam*** means a wide mouth; ***ashkal al-'ayn*** means a long eye-slit; and ***manhus al-'aqib*** means a heel with little flesh. To the Arabs, a wide mouth was a sign of ***eloquence***, and long eyes a sign of beauty.

Notice the ***precision*** of the hadith narrators: they were not content with the words alone, but asked their meaning so they would not be misunderstood. This is the trust of knowledge that guarded the Sunnah for centuries.

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"NO, RATHER LIKE THE MOON"

The most famous comparison for the face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is with ***the moon***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 11

حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ بْنُ وَكِيعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حُمَيْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرُّؤَاسِيُّ، عَنْ زُهَيْرٍ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، قَالَ: سَأَلَ رَجُلٌ الْبَرَاءَ بْنَ عَازِبٍ: أَكَانَ وَجْهُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِثْلَ السَّيْفِ؟ قَالَ: لا، بَلْ مِثْلَ الْقَمَرِ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Ishaq said: A man asked al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما: ***"Was the face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ like a sword?"*** He said: ***"No, rather like the moon."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Sufyan ibn Waki', from Humayd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ar-Ru'asi, from Zuhayr ibn Mu'awiyah, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 11; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3552.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:11

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The man asking may have imagined a long face gleaming like a sword blade. Al-Bara' rejected that: his face was ***slightly rounded and softly radiant*** like the moon, not long and sharp. Moonlight soothes rather than dazzles — so was his face to those who looked at him.

NOTE: "MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE MOON" (ASH-SHAMA'IL 10)

Jabir ibn Samurah said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on a moonlit night, wearing a red garment. I looked at him and at the moon; ***to me he was more beautiful than the moon.***"

This narration is very famous, but its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i because of the narrator Ash'ath ibn Sawwar. It is also in Jami' at-Tirmidhi (No. 2811), where it is likewise graded weak. Its basic meaning — his face like the moon — is authentic through al-Bara's hadith above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 10; Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 2811. sunnah.com/shamail:10

This also reminds us that the ***true beauty*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not only in his face, but in the light of guidance he brought. That moon-like face lit up the world with the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

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AS IF FASHIONED FROM SILVER

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه gave another comparison: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was white, ***as if fashioned from silver***, his hair slightly wavy" (ash-Shama'il 12) — hasan. Silver gives the image of skin that is fair and shining, but not pallid.

Scholars combine the narrations on his complexion: Anas said "neither pale white nor dark", and in another narration "light brown". The conclusion is that he was ***radiant white with a reddish tint***, the most beautiful colour in the Arabs' eyes.

Abu at-Tufayl رضى الله عنه, the last Companion to die, said: "I saw the Prophet ﷺ, and ***there is no one left on the face of the earth who saw him except me***." Asked to describe him, he said: "He was white, pleasant-faced, and of medium build" (ash-Shama'il 14) — sahih. Abu at-Tufayl died around 100–110 AH; with his death the age of the Companions ended.

NOTE: LIGHT BETWEEN HIS TEETH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 15)

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that his front teeth were slightly apart, and when he spoke it looked as if light came out from between them. This narration's chain is ***very weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, so it cannot be relied upon.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 15 — very weak chain. sunnah.com/shamail:15

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THE PROPHETS SHOWN TO HIM

The first chapter also contains a fascinating hadith: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself described the appearance of some prophets who were shown to him:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 13

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنِي اللَّيْثُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ أَبِي الزُّبَيْرِ، عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: عُرِضَ عَلَيَّ الأَنْبِيَاءُ، فَإِذَا مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ، ضَرْبٌ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ، كَأَنَّهُ مِنْ رِجَالِ شَنُوءَةَ، وَرَأَيْتُ عِيسَى بْنَ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ، فَإِذَا أَقْرَبُ مَنْ رَأَيْتُ بِهِ شَبَهًا عُرْوَةُ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ، وَرَأَيْتُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ، فَإِذَا أَقْرَبُ مَنْ رَأَيْتُ بِهِ شَبَهًا صَاحِبُكُمْ، يَعْنِي نَفْسَهُ، وَرَأَيْتُ جِبْرِيلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ، فَإِذَا أَقْرَبُ مَنْ رَأَيْتُ بِهِ شَبَهًا دِحْيَةُ.

TRANSLATION:

Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"The prophets were shown to me.*** Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a lean man, as if he were one of the men of Shanu'ah. I saw 'Isa son of Maryam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, and the closest in resemblance to him I have seen is 'Urwah ibn Mas'ud. ***I saw Ibrahim*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ***, and the closest in resemblance to him is your companion*** — meaning himself. And I saw Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, and the closest in resemblance to him is Dihyah."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from Abu az-Zubayr, from Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 13; also Sahih Muslim No. 167.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:13

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows that the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***most resembled the Prophet Ibrahim*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, father of the prophets and his ancestor. This is an honour: Allah made the line of Ibrahim — who built the Ka'bah — visible in the face of the last Prophet, who completed the religion of Ibrahim.

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It also explains why Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ sometimes came in the form of ***Dihyah al-Kalbi***, a Companion known for his handsome looks. Companions such as Umm Salamah once saw Jibril in Dihyah's form without realising it.

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CHAPTER 2: THE SEAL OF PROPHETHOOD

Khatam an-nubuwwah — "the seal of prophethood" — was a physical mark between the shoulders of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, closer to the left shoulder. It was mentioned in earlier scriptures as one of the signs of the final Prophet, and some people of the Book recognised him by it.

The second chapter of ash-Shama'il contains 8 narrations about the seal. The Companions described it with various images: ***the button of a canopy, a pigeon's egg, a clenched fist, a cluster of hairs***. These differences do not contradict; each Companion described what he saw from a different angle and at a different time.

The name "seal" also carries a deeper meaning. Allah says that Muhammad is ***"the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:40). The physical mark on his back was like ***a seal*** that closes and confirms the chain of prophethood.

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LIKE THE BUTTON OF A CANOPY

As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid رضى الله عنه saw the seal when he was still a child:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 16

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو رَجَاءٍ قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حَاتِمُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، عَنِ الْجَعْدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ السَّائِبَ بْنَ يَزِيدَ، يَقُولُ: ذَهَبَتْ بِي خَالَتِي إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَقَالَتْ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، إِنَّ ابْنَ أُخْتِي وَجِعٌ فَمَسَحَ رَأْسِي وَدَعَا لِي بِالْبَرَكَةِ، وَتَوَضَّأَ، فَشَرِبْتُ مِنْ وَضُوئِهِ، وَقُمْتُ خَلْفَ ظَهْرِهِ، فَنَظَرْتُ إِلَى الْخَاتَمِ بَيْنَ كَتِفَيْهِ، فَإِذَا هُوَ مِثْلُ زِرِّ الْحَجَلَةِ.

TRANSLATION:

As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid رضى الله عنه said: My maternal aunt took me to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allah, my sister's son is ill." ***So he stroked my head and prayed for blessing for me.*** Then he performed ablution, and I drank from the water of his ablution. I stood behind him, ***and I looked at the seal between his shoulders, and it was like the button of a bridal canopy."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu Raja' Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Hatim ibn Isma'il, from al-Ja'd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from as-Sa'ib ibn Yazid رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 16; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 190 and Sahih Muslim No. 2345.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:16

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows the ***tenderness*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ towards children: he stroked the head of a sick boy, prayed for him, and let him come close. As-Sa'ib lived long and was among the last Companions to die in Madinah. His student saw him at 94 still strong and upright, and as-Sa'ib said his hearing and sight remained because of the Prophet's prayer (Sahih al-Bukhari 3540).

NOTE: LIKE A PIGEON'S EGG (ASH-SHAMA'IL 17–19)

At-Tirmidhi narrates from Jabir ibn Samurah that the seal was ***"like a reddish pigeon's egg"***. At-Tirmidhi's chain is weak, but its meaning is ***authentic***, for Imam Muslim narrated it from Jabir ibn Samurah through another chain: "like a pigeon's egg, its colour resembling the colour of his body" (Sahih Muslim 2344).

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Rumaythah's narration (No. 18) about the Throne shaking at the death of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh has a weak chain here, but the event itself is ***authentic*** in Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3803.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il 17–19; Sahih Muslim 2344; Sahih al-Bukhari 3803. sunnah.com/muslim:2344a

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"A CLUSTER OF HAIRS"

Abu Zayd 'Amr ibn Akhtab رضى الله عنه once touched the seal with his own hand, at the Prophet's request:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 20

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَاصِمٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَزْرَةُ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي عِلْبَاءُ بْنُ أَحْمَرَ الْيَشْكُرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو زَيْدٍ عَمْرُو بْنُ أَخْطَبَ الأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ: قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: يَا أَبَا زَيْدٍ، ادْنُ مِنِّي فَامْسَحْ ظَهْرِي، فَمَسَحْتُ ظَهْرَهُ، فَوَقَعَتْ أَصَابِعِي عَلَى الْخَاتَمِ قُلْتُ: وَمَا الْخَاتَمُ؟ قَالَ: شَعَرَاتٌ مُجْتَمِعَاتٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Zayd 'Amr ibn Akhtab al-Ansari رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me: ***"O Abu Zayd, come close to me and rub my back."*** So I rubbed his back, and my fingers touched the seal. (The narrator asked:) "What was the seal?" He said: ***"A cluster of hairs."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Abu 'Asim ad-Dahhak ibn Makhlad, from 'Azrah ibn Thabit, from 'Ilba' ibn Ahmar al-Yashkuri, from Abu Zayd 'Amr ibn Akhtab al-Ansari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 20; also Musnad Ahmad.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:20

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Notice his ***warmth***: he asked a Companion to rub his back, like a father with a son. In another narration, he wiped Abu Zayd's face and prayed for him; the narrator said Abu Zayd lived to 120 with only a few grey hairs (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3629 — sahih).

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه described it as ***"a raised piece of flesh on his back"*** (ash-Shama'il 22) — hasan chain. All these descriptions complement each other: it was a slightly raised patch of flesh, the size of a pigeon's egg, with some hairs on it.

The differences in the Companions' descriptions of the seal also show their ***honesty***. They did not harmonise their stories; each conveyed what he saw in his own words. This is a sign of genuine narration, not fabrication.

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For believers today, the seal of prophethood is no longer something we can see. But its meaning remains: Muhammad ﷺ is the final Messenger, and ***no prophet comes after him***. Holding firmly to this belief protects the Ummah from false claimants to prophethood in every age.

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SALMAN AL-FARISI AND THE SEAL

The most moving story in this chapter is that of ***Salman al-Farisi*** رضى الله عنه. Salman came from Persia, left Zoroastrianism, studied with several Christian monks, and was told by his last teacher of the signs of the coming prophet: ***he would not eat charity, he would accept gifts, and between his shoulders would be the seal of prophethood***. Eventually he was sold as a slave and reached Madinah.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 21

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَمَّارٍ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ حُرَيْثٍ الْخُزَاعِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَاقِدٍ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ بُرَيْدَةَ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبِي بُرَيْدَةَ، يَقُولُ: جَاءَ سَلْمَانُ الْفَارِسِيُّ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، حِينَ قَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ بِمَائِدَةٍ عَلَيْهَا رُطَبٌ، فَوَضَعَهَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَقَالَ: يَا سَلْمَانُ مَا هَذَا؟ فَقَالَ: صَدَقَةٌ عَلَيْكَ، وَعَلَى أَصْحَابِكَ، فَقَالَ: ارْفَعْهَا، فَإِنَّا لا نَأْكُلُ الصَّدَقَةَ، قَالَ: فَرَفَعَهَا، فَجَاءَ الْغَدَ بِمِثْلِهِ، فَوَضَعَهُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَقَالَ: مَا هَذَا يَا سَلْمَانُ؟ فَقَالَ: هَدِيَّةٌ لَكَ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لأَصْحَابِهِ: ابْسُطُوا ثُمَّ نَظَرَ إِلَى الْخَاتَمِ عَلَى ظَهْرِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَآمَنَ بِهِ، وَكَانَ لِلْيَهُودِ فَاشْتَرَاهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، بِكَذَا وَكَذَا دِرْهَمًا عَلَى أَنْ يَغْرِسَ لَهُمْ نَخْلا، فَيَعْمَلَ سَلْمَانُ فِيهِ، حَتَّى تُطْعِمَ، فَغَرَسَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، النَّخلَ إِلا نَخْلَةً وَاحِدَةً، غَرَسَهَا عُمَرُ فَحَمَلَتِ النَّخْلُ مِنْ عَامِهَا، وَلَمْ تَحْمِلْ نَخْلَةٌ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: مَا شَأْنُ هَذِهِ النَّخْلَةِ؟ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، أَنَا غَرَسْتُهَا، فَنَزَعَهَا رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَغَرَسَهَا فَحَمَلَتْ مِنْ عَامِهَا.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Buraydah said: I heard my father, Buraydah رضى الله عنه, say: Salman al-Farisi came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he arrived in Madinah, bringing a tray of fresh dates, and placed it before him. He asked: "O Salman, what is this?" He said: "Charity for you and your companions." He said: ***"Take it away, for we do not eat charity."*** The next day he came with the same and said: "This is a gift for you." So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to his Companions: "Reach out (and eat)." ***Then Salman looked at the seal on the back of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and believed in him.*** Salman was then a slave of some Jews, so

the Messenger of Allah ﷺ bought his freedom for a certain number of dirhams, on condition that he plant date palms for them and Salman work on them until they bore fruit. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ planted all the palms except one planted by 'Umar. All bore fruit that same year except that one. He asked about it, and 'Umar said: "I planted it." ***So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ pulled it out and replanted it, and it bore fruit that same year.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu 'Ammar al-Husayn ibn Hurayth al-Khuza'i, from 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Waqid, from al-Husayn ibn Waqid (his father), from 'Abdullah ibn Buraydah, from Buraydah ibn al-Husayb رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 21; also Musnad Ahmad.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:21

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Salman tested all three signs one by one: ***charity refused, the gift accepted, and the seal seen***. When all three were confirmed, he believed at once. This is faith built on ***knowledge and searching***, not mere imitation.

The palm-tree story shows his ***miracle*** and his eagerness to free a slave: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ planted the trees with his own hands, and those he planted bore fruit that same year. Salman's full story was touched on in the Sirah series.

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"AND FOR YOU TOO"

'Abdullah ibn Sarjis رضى الله عنه wished to see the seal, but was shy to ask. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ understood his wish without a word:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 23

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ الْمِقْدَامِ أَبُو الأَشْعَثِ الْعِجْلِيُّ الْبَصْرِيُّ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ عَاصِمٍ الأَحْوَلِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ سَرْجِسَ، قَالَ: أَتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ فِي نَاسٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ، فَدُرْتُ هَكَذَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ، فَعَرَفَ الَّذِي أُرِيدُ، فَأَلْقَى الرِّدَاءَ عَنْ ظَهْرِهِ، فَرَأَيْتُ مَوْضِعَ الْخَاتَمِ عَلَى كَتِفَيْهِ، مِثْلَ الْجُمْعِ حَوْلَهَا خِيلاَنٌ، كَأَنَّهَا ثَآلِيلُ، فَرَجَعْتُ حَتَّى اسْتَقْبَلْتُهُ، فَقُلْتُ: غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، فَقَالَ: وَلَكَ فَقَالَ الْقَوْمُ: أَسْتَغْفَرَ لَكَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ فَقَالَ: نَعَمْ، وَلَكُمْ، ثُمَّ تَلا هَذِهِ الآيَةَ ﴿وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ﴾

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Sarjis رضى الله عنه said: I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while he was among a group of his Companions. I went around behind him like this, ***and he understood what I wanted, so he dropped the cloak from his back.*** I saw the place of the seal on his shoulders, like a clenched fist, surrounded by moles like warts. Then I came around to face him and said: "May Allah forgive you, O Messenger of Allah." He said: ***"And you."*** The people asked: "Did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ask forgiveness for you?" He said: "Yes, and for you all," then recited: ***"And ask forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and believing women"*** (Muhammad 47:19).

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn al-Miqdam Abu al-Ash'ath al-'Ijli, from Hammad ibn Zayd, from 'Asim al-Ahwal, from 'Abdullah ibn Sarjis رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 23; also Sahih Muslim No. 2346.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:23

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The verse he recited was: ***"and ask forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and believing women"*** (Muhammad 47:19) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 47:19.

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This hadith holds three lessons: (1) his ***sensitivity*** to others' feelings; (2) the ***good manners*** of 'Abdullah ibn Sarjis in praying for his forgiveness; and (3) his ***love***, returning that prayer and even asking forgiveness for all believers, including us today.

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CHAPTER 3: HIS HAIR

The third chapter of ash-Shama'il contains 8 narrations about the hair of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The sahih narrations show that ***its length varied over time***: sometimes to ***the middle of his ears*** (ash-Shama'il 24), sometimes to ***the earlobes*** (ash-Shama'il 26), and sometimes ***nearly touching his shoulders*** (ash-Shama'il 4).

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and I bathed from one vessel, and his hair ***was longer than the earlobes but did not reach the shoulders***" (ash-Shama'il 25) — hasan chain. Qatadah asked Anas about his hair, and Anas replied: "Neither curly nor straight; it reached his earlobes" (ash-Shama'il 27) — sahih chain.

Scholars explain that he ***did not regularly shave*** his head except during Hajj and 'Umrah. After shaving, the hair grew back longer, so each Companion described its length at the time he saw it. From this, scholars concluded that ***keeping one's hair*** neatly is Sunnah, and shaving it is also permissible.

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LETTING IT FALL, THEN PARTING IT

One important narration explains a change in his hairstyle:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 30

حَدَّثَنَا سُوَيْدُ بْنُ نَصْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْمُبَارَكِ، عَنْ يُونُسَ بْنِ يَزِيدَ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُتْبَةَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ: أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يُسْدِلُ شَعْرَهُ، وَكَانَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ يَفْرِقُونَ رُءُوسَهُمْ، وَكَانَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ يُسْدِلُونَ رُءُوسَهُمْ، وَكَانَ يُحِبُّ مُوَافَقَةَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ فِيمَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ فِيهِ بِشَيْءٍ، ثُمَّ فَرَقَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَأْسَهُ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to let his hair fall forward, while the idolaters used to part their hair and the People of the Book let their hair fall. He liked to agree with the People of the Book in matters about which he had received no command. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ parted his hair."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Suwayd ibn Nasr, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Yunus ibn Yazid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Utbah, from Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 30; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3558 and Sahih Muslim No. 2336.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:30

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

In Makkah, he at first let his hair fall forward like the People of the Book, since they were closer to revealed religion than the idolaters. Then he ***parted his hair in the middle***, and this style remained until the end of his life.

Scholars draw a lesson from this hadith about ***Muslim identity***. In matters without a specific command, he initially inclined towards the People of the Book; later, as the Muslim community grew firm, he set many features that ***distinguished*** Muslims, as with dyeing grey hair (Chapter 6).

This hadith also shows that ***the Shari'ah was revealed gradually***. In matters without revelation, he chose what was closest to the truth; then Allah set clearer rulings. This teaches us to understand the Sunnah by looking at its context and chronology.

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Today, many Muslim men choose to keep their hair short, and that too is permissible. What matters is ***the intention to follow the Sunnah in cleanliness and neatness***, and not imitating styles that symbolise groups opposed to Islamic values.

Behind all this lies a principle the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught clearly: ***"Allah is beautiful and loves beauty"*** (Sahih Muslim 91). Caring for one's hair and appearance is not vanity when it is done modestly; it is part of showing gratitude for the body Allah has entrusted to us.

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FOUR BRAIDS IN MAKKAH

NOTE: FOUR BRAIDS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 28 AND 31)

Umm Hani' bint Abi Talib رضى الله عنها said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Makkah (on the day of its opening) and he had ***four braids***."

Zubayr 'Ali Za'i graded both chains ***weak*** because Mujahid did not hear from Umm Hani'. Yet Shaykh al-Albani graded the same narration in Sunan Abi Dawud (No. 4191) as ***sahih***. This is an example of differing assessments among hadith scholars.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il 28, 31; Sunan Abi Dawud 4191. sunnah.com/shamail:28

If this narration is accepted, it shows that on long journeys his long hair ***was tied or braided*** to keep it neat and protected from dust and wind. It was not excessive adornment, but ***the neatness*** of a traveller.

From this whole chapter we learn that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***cared for his appearance*** — clean, neat, oiled hair — without excess. Cleanliness and neatness are part of a Muslim's character.

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CHAPTER 4: COMBING HIS HAIR

The fourth chapter of ash-Shama'il discusses ***tarajjul*** — combing and grooming the hair. The first narration comes from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها: "I used to comb the hair of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***while I was menstruating***" (ash-Shama'il 32) — sahih chain; also in Sahih al-Bukhari No. 295.

This hadith contains two lessons. First, ***marital affection***: a wife combing her husband's hair, and the husband happily accepting it. Second, ***the purity of a menstruating woman***: her body is not impure, and she may touch, serve and care for her husband as usual.

This teaching differs greatly from the practice of some past societies that isolated menstruating women from their families. Islam ***honours women*** and rejects the idea that menstruation makes a person dirty or lowly.

'A'ishah also narrated that while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was in i'tikaf in the mosque, he would lean his head into her room, and she would comb his hair while menstruating (Sahih al-Bukhari 2028). I'tikaf did not stop him from receiving his wife's affectionate care.

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BEGINNING WITH THE RIGHT

One Sunnah the Messenger of Allah ﷺ held dear was ***beginning with the right*** in good matters:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 34

حَدَّثَنَا هَنَّادُ بْنُ السَّرِيِّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الأَحْوَصِ، عَنِ الأَشْعَثِ بْنِ أَبِي الشَّعْثَاءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ مَسْرُوقٍ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: إِنْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَيُحِبُّ التَّيَمُّنَ فِي طُهُورِهِ إِذَا تَطَهَّرَ، وَفِي تَرَجُّلِهِ إِذَا تَرَجَّلَ، وَفِي انْتِعَالِهِ إِذَا انْتَعَلَ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved to begin with the right in his purification when he purified himself, in combing his hair when he combed it, and in putting on his sandals when he put them on."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Hannad ibn as-Sari, from Abu al-Ahwas Sallam ibn Sulaym, from al-Ash'ath ibn Abi ash-Sha'tha', from Abu ash-Sha'tha' (his father), from Masruq, from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 34; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 168 and Sahih Muslim No. 268.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:34

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Scholars explain the rule: in ***noble and clean*** matters — ablution, putting on clothes and sandals, combing hair, eating, drinking, entering the mosque — the right comes first. In the opposite matters — entering the toilet, removing sandals, leaving the mosque — the left comes first.

This Sunnah is small, but it turns ***every daily movement*** into worship. A Muslim who puts on the right shoe first in following the Sunnah earns reward in the most ordinary act. Teach it to children from a young age.

The Sunnah of beginning with the right also teaches us about ***blessing***. Scholars note that the right hand is used for noble things as a mark of respect for Allah's blessings, while the left is for cleaning impurities. It is a discipline that shapes a Muslim's manners from childhood.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also taught in another hadith: "When one of you eats, let him eat with his right hand, and when he drinks, let him drink with his right hand" (Sahih Muslim 2020). This Sunnah will be discussed further in the book on eating and drinking.

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NOT OVERDOING GROOMING

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept his hair neat, but ***did not overdo*** grooming. 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal رضى الله عنه narrated: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade combing the hair ***except now and then***" (ash-Shama'il 35).

NOTE: THE GRADES OF THESE NARRATIONS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 33, 35, 36)

Zubayr 'Ali Za'i graded all three narrations ***weak in chain***. Narration 33 (he oiled his hair so much that his head-cloth looked like an oil-seller's cloth) is weak because of the narrator Yazid ar-Raqashi.

Yet narration 35 (forbidding combing except now and then) is also in Sunan Abi Dawud No. 4159, and Shaykh al-Albani graded it ***sahih***. Its meaning is also supported by other hadiths forbidding excess in adornment.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il 33, 35, 36; Sunan Abi Dawud 4159. sunnah.com/abudawud:4159

Scholars explain "now and then": combing is not forbidden, but ***adornment should not become a main preoccupation***, wasting time and resembling those obsessed with appearance. Islam teaches ***balance***: neat and clean, but not obsessed with looks.

This lesson is very relevant in the age of social media, when many spend hours on their appearance. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught us to ***care for ourselves moderately***, and spend our time on more meaningful things.

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CHAPTER 5: HIS GREY HAIRS

The fifth chapter of ash-Shama'il discusses the ***grey hairs*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The sahih narrations agree that he had ***very few***. Anas رضى الله عنه counted them:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 38

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مَنْصُورٍ، وَيَحْيَى بْنُ مُوسَى، قَالا: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: مَا عَدَدْتُ فِي رَأْسِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَلِحْيَتِهِ، إِلا أَرْبَعَ عَشْرَةَ شَعَرَةً بَيْضَاءَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"I counted no more than fourteen white hairs on the head and beard of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Mansur and Yahya ibn Musa, from 'Abd ar-Razzaq, from Ma'mar ibn Rashid, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 38.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:38

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Qatadah asked Anas: "Did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ dye his hair?" Anas replied: ***"He did not reach that stage; his grey was only at his temples.*** But Abu Bakr dyed his hair with henna and katam" (ash-Shama'il 37) — sahih chain.

Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه added an interesting detail: ***"When he oiled his hair, the grey did not show; when it was not oiled, a little showed"*** (ash-Shama'il 39) — sahih chain. Ibn 'Umar said his grey hairs were ***"about twenty"*** (ash-Shama'il 40) — hasan.

The figures 14, about 17 and about 20 do not contradict; each Companion counted at a different time, and some gave round numbers. What is certain is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died at 63 with hair ***almost entirely black*** — a sign of the health and vigour Allah granted him.

Grey hair also has an honoured place in Islam. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Do not pluck out grey hairs, for they are ***the light of a Muslim*** on the Day of Resurrection" (Sunan Abi Dawud 4202 — hasan sahih). So grey hair is nothing to be ashamed of, but a sign of a life spent in Islam.

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"HUD AND ITS SISTERS"

Though his grey hairs were few, the Companions noticed them and asked. Abu Juhayfah رضى الله عنه said: "They said: 'O Messenger of Allah, we see that you have gone grey.' He replied: ***'Hud and its sisters have made me grey"*** (ash-Shama'il 42) — hasan.

NOTE: IBN 'ABBAS'S NARRATION (ASH-SHAMA'IL 41)

In Ibn 'Abbas's narration, Abu Bakr said: "O Messenger of Allah, you have gone grey." He said: "What made me grey were ***Hud, al-Waqi'ah, al-Mursalat, 'Amma yatasa'alun and Idha ash-shamsu kuwwirat***."

Zubayr 'Ali Za'i graded its chain weak due to inconsistency in Abu Ishaq's narration, but the same narration in Jami' at-Tirmidhi (No. 3297) is graded ***sahih*** by the Darussalam reviewers and Shaykh al-Albani.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il 41–42; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3297. sunnah.com/tirmidhi:3297

Why Surah Hud? Scholars mention, among the reasons, this verse: ***"So remain on a right course as you have been commanded"*** (Hud 11:112) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 11:112.

The command to ***remain steadfast*** — upright on the straight path without the slightest deviation — is an immense responsibility. Those surahs also tell of the destruction of earlier nations and the terrors of the Last Day. He thought about the fate of his Ummah until its effect showed in his hair. If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was so moved by the Qur'an, what of us?

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CHAPTER 6: DYE

The sixth chapter discusses ***khidab*** — dyeing hair with henna or other substances. There are two kinds of narration that seem to differ: Anas said he ***did not reach*** the stage of dyeing (ash-Shama'il 37), while Abu Hurayrah was asked: "Did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ dye his hair?" He said: ***"Yes"*** (ash-Shama'il 46) — sahih.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 45

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا هُشَيْمٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْمَلِكِ بْنُ عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ إِيَادِ بْنِ لَقِيطٍ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنِي أَبُو رِمْثَةَ، قَالَ: أَتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَعَ ابْنٍ لِي، فَقَالَ: ابْنُكَ هَذَا؟ فَقُلْتُ: نَعَمْ , أَشْهَدُ بِهِ، قَالَ: لا يَجْنِي عَلَيْكَ، وَلا تَجْنِي عَلَيْهِ، قَالَ: وَرَأَيْتُ الشَّيْبَ أَحْمَرَ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Rimthah رضى الله عنه said: I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with my son. He asked: "Is this your son?" I said: "Yes, I bear witness to it." He said: ***"He will not bear your sin, nor will you bear his."*** He said: ***"And I saw that his grey hair was reddish."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani', from Hushaym ibn Bashir, from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr, from Iyad ibn Laqit, from Abu Rimthah Rifa'ah ibn Yathribi at-Taymi رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 45; also Sunan Abi Dawud and Sunan an-Nasa'i.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. At-Tirmidhi said: "This is the best narration on this subject."

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:45

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

At-Tirmidhi himself said Abu Rimthah's narration is ***the best and clearest*** in this chapter. Scholars reconcile the differing narrations: he ***sometimes*** dyed his few grey hairs, or the reddish colour came from ***the perfume*** he used. Anas himself showed some of his hairs that were reddish (ash-Shama'il 48), and Umm Salamah kept some of his dyed hairs (Sahih al-Bukhari 5897).

His words to Abu Rimthah, ***"He will not bear your sin, nor will you bear his"***, are a principle of Islamic justice: each person is responsible for his own deeds. In pre-Islamic society, a son could be killed for his father's crime; Islam abolished that unjust custom.

In another hadith, he encouraged his Ummah ***to dye grey hair***: "The Jews and Christians do not dye, so differ from them" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3462). When Abu Quhafah, Abu Bakr's father, was brought to him with hair white as cotton, he said: ***"Change this colour, but avoid black"*** (Sahih Muslim 2102).

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CHAPTER 7: KOHL

The seventh chapter, the last in this part, discusses ***kohl***. Of the five narrations in this chapter, three are weak and two hasan. The firmest is:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 53

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا بِشْرُ بْنُ الْمُفَضَّلِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ خُثَيْمٍ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: إِنَّ خَيْرَ أَكْحَالِكُمُ الإِثْمِدُ، يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ، وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"The best of your kohl is ithmid; it clears the sight and makes the eyelashes grow."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Bishr ibn al-Mufaddal, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Uthman ibn Khuthaym, from Sa'id ibn Jubayr, from Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 53; also Sunan Abi Dawud No. 3878.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Abu Dawud.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:53

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ithmid is a kind of black kohl stone ground into powder, from the Hijaz and Isfahan. Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما also narrated the same encouragement: "Use ithmid, for it clears the sight and makes the eyelashes grow" (ash-Shama'il 54) — hasan chain.

NOTE: KOHL BEFORE SLEEP (ASH-SHAMA'IL 50–52)

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a kohl container, and applied kohl every night before sleep, ***three times in each eye***. Jabir narrated encouragement to use ithmid before sleep.

Zubayr 'Ali Za'i graded all three narrations ***weak in chain***, because of the narrators 'Abbad ibn Mansur and Muhammad ibn Ishaq. So the number three and the time before sleep cannot be confirmed by firm narrations, though many scholars practise it.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 50–52. sunnah.com/shamail:50

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From this chapter we learn that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***cared for the health*** of his body, including his eyes, by the means known in his time. Wearing kohl is permissible for men, so long as it is not to imitate women or to show off.

This chapter also reminds us that the Sunnah reaches even the small matters of personal care. A Muslim who does such things with the intention of following the Messenger of Allah ﷺ turns ordinary daily habits into acts that bring reward, in sha Allah.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The first seven chapters of ash-Shama'il introduce us to the ***appearance and grooming*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Among the most important lessons:

CHAPTER	KEY LESSON
1. Appearance	Balance; "none more beautiful than him"; a face like the moon
2. Seal of prophethood	A sign of prophethood; Salman's knowledge-based faith
3. Hair	Neat and clean; Muslim identity
4. Combing	Beginning with the right; no excess in grooming
5. Grey hairs	"Hud and its sisters" — the Qur'an's effect on the heart
6. Dye	Each bears his own sin; differing from the People of the Book
7. Kohl	Caring for health by permitted means

A MESSAGE FOR US

We never saw his face, but the Companions have ***lent us their eyes*** through these narrations. May knowing his appearance increase our love, and may Allah grant us the chance to see him in Paradise.

The discussion continues in ***Part 2***: his clothing, leather socks, sandals, ring, sword, armour, turban, lower garment, walk, sitting and reclining — chapters 8 to 22 of ash-Shama'il. And Allah knows best.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Arabic terms below appear throughout this book. Knowing them makes it easier to follow the narrations and the explanations of the scholars, and to continue studying ash-Shama'il in its commentaries.

TERM	MEANING
Shama'il	Qualities and manners; the field of narrations on the Prophet's appearance and character
Khatam an-nubuwwah	The seal of prophethood between his shoulders
Sanad (isnad)	The chain of narrators through which a hadith reaches us
Matn	The text of a hadith, after its chain
Sahih	Authentic: a connected chain of upright, precise narrators, free of hidden defects
Hasan	Good: like sahih, but with a narrator of slightly lesser precision
Da'if	Weak: missing one of the conditions of acceptance
Tarajjul	Combing and grooming the hair
Khidab	Dyeing grey hair, e.g. with henna and katam
Katam	A plant used with henna to give a darker dye
Kohl / ithmid	Eye powder; ithmid is a black kohl stone ground into powder
Hullah	A matching two-piece garment (upper and lower wrap)
Sahabah	The Companions who met the Prophet ﷺ as believers and died as Muslims

The grades sahih, hasan and da'if are the judgements of hadith scholars on a chain of narration. A weak chain does not always mean the meaning is wrong; it may be supported by other narrations, as this book has noted in several places.

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PART TWO

The Garment He Loved Most

Chapters 8–22 of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah

His Clothing, Khuffs, Sandals, Ring, Sword, Armour, Turban, Izar, Walk, Sitting and Reclining

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THE GARMENT HE LOVED MOST

In the first book, we came to know the ***appearance*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ through the words of the Companions who saw him. This second book brings us a step closer: ***what he wore, how he walked, sat and reclined***. It follows chapters 8 to 22 of ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** by ***Imam at-Tirmidhi***.

These chapters contain ***77 narrations*** about his clothing (the qamis, the hibarah, robes and the izar), his khuffs and sandals, his ring and its inscription, his sword, armour, helmet, turban, his walk, his head-cover, how he sat, his cushion and how he reclined. As in the first book, sahih and hasan narrations are presented in Hadith boxes, while weak narrations are explained in Note boxes.

Why do these small matters matter? Because Allah made the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***an excellent example*** in ***all*** of life — not only in prayer and worship, but also in how he put on his sandals, chose his clothes and sat in a gathering. In these small matters lie great lessons in ***simplicity, cleanliness and humility***.

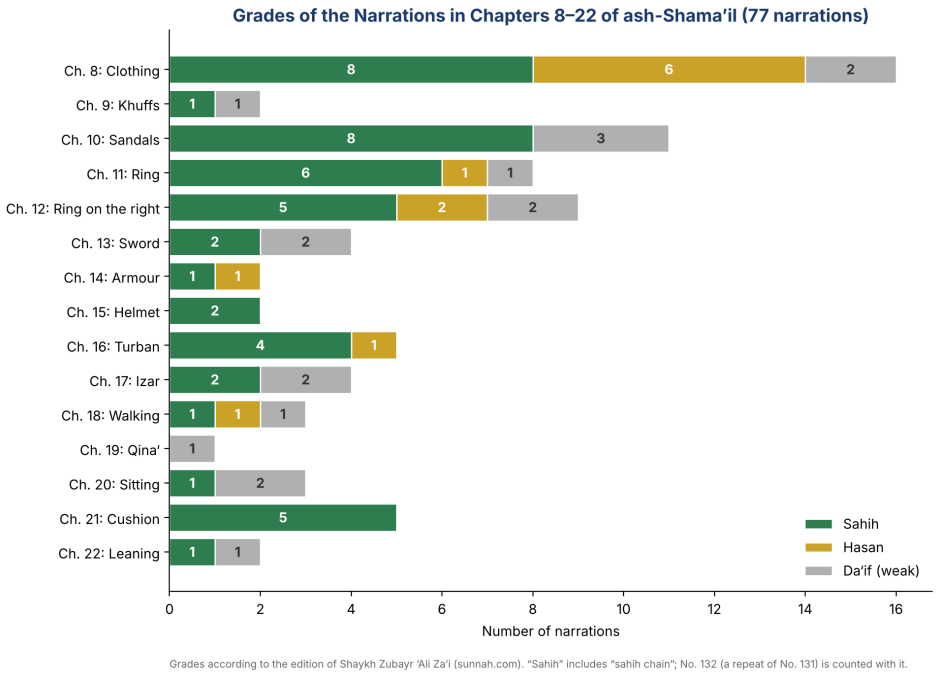


Figure 2: The grades of the narrations in chapters 8–22 of ash-Shama'il.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this book is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box, based on the edition of Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i as shown on sunnah.com. Of the 77 narrations in these chapters, about three-quarters are sahih or hasan.

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CLOTHING IN ISLAM

Before looking at the clothing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we need to understand ***the place of clothing in Islam***. Allah mentions clothing as one of His great blessings to the children of Adam:

SURAH AL-A'RAF 7:26

يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ قَدۡ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمۡ لِبَاسٗا يُوَٰرِي سَوۡءَٰتِكُمۡ وَرِيشٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ٢٦

O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will remember.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/7:26

This verse mentions ***three kinds of clothing***: clothing that covers the body, clothing as adornment, and ***the clothing of righteousness***. The first two are outward garments, while the third is the garment of the heart. Ibn Kathir explains that the clothing of righteousness is faith and righteous deeds — and that is the best clothing Tafsir Ibn Kathir 7:26.

Allah also commands us to dress well for worship: ***"take your adornment at every masjid"*** (Al-A'raf 7:31) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 7:31.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also explained that loving good clothing ***is not arrogance***. When he said that no one with an atom's weight of pride in his heart will enter Paradise, a man asked about one who likes his clothes and sandals to be good. He replied: ***"Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. Pride is rejecting the truth and looking down on people"*** (Sahih Muslim 91).

So the measure of clothing in Islam is not whether it is expensive or cheap, but whether it is ***clean, modest, not wasteful and not proud***. This is what we will see in the life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ throughout this book.

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CHAPTER 8: HIS CLOTHING

The eighth chapter of ash-Shama'il is titled ***"What has come about the clothing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It is the longest chapter in this part, with ***16 narrations***: eight sahih, six hasan and two weak (Figure 2).

From these narrations we learn the kinds of clothing he wore: the ***qamis*** (a long sewn shirt with sleeves), the ***izar*** (a lower wrap), the ***rida'*** (an upper wrap), the ***hibarah*** (a striped Yemeni cloth), the ***burdah*** (a thick mantle), the ***jubbah*** (robe) and the ***'imamah*** (turban). Most of these were the ordinary clothes of the Arabs of that time.

This gives an important lesson: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not invent special clothing*** for himself that set him apart from people. He wore what his people wore, while keeping the conditions of the Shari'ah. Scholars conclude that local clothing is permissible so long as it covers the body, is clean and does not imitate clothing specific to another religion.

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THE QAMIS: HIS FAVOURITE GARMENT

The first narration in this chapter comes from his wife, ***Umm Salamah*** رضى الله عنها, who knew his habits at home:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 55

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ حُمَيْدٍ الرَّازِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْفَضْلُ بْنُ مُوسَى، وَأَبُو تُمَيْلَةَ، وَزَيْدُ بْنُ حُبَابٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْمُؤْمِنِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ بُرَيْدَةَ، عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ أَحَبَّ الثِّيَابِ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم الْقَمِيصُ.

TRANSLATION:

Umm al-Mu'minin Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The garment most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the qamis (a long shirt)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Humayd ar-Razi, from al-Fadl ibn Musa and Abu Tumaylah and Zayd ibn Hubab, from 'Abd al-Mu'min ibn Khalid, from 'Abdullah ibn Buraydah, from Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 55; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1762.

GRADE: HASAN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. At-Tirmidhi graded it hasan in his Jami'.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:55

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Why was the qamis preferred? Scholars explain that the qamis ***covers the body better*** and is easier to wear than a wrap that must be wound around. In one piece it covers the whole body, and does not slip off while moving. This shows that he chose clothing for its ***usefulness***, not for show.

Asma' bint Yazid رضى الله عنها mentioned the length of his sleeve: ***"The sleeve of the qamis of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached the wrist"*** (ash-Shama'il 58) — hasan chain. Sleeves that are not too long make ablution and work easier, and do not trail like the clothes of the proud.

Mu'awiyah ibn Qurrah narrated from his father that when he came to pledge allegiance, ***the button of the Prophet's qamis was open***, so he put in his hand and touched the seal of prophethood (ash-Shama'il 59) — sahih chain. This shows his qamis had buttons at the chest, and that he did not mind his Companions coming close to him.

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In many Muslim lands today, the long shirt — called a thobe, a jubbah or a baju kurung in different regions — still carries the memory of this Sunnah, while each people keeps its own style. What matters is not the name of the garment, but that it is modest, clean and worn with a good intention.

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THE SUPPLICATION FOR NEW CLOTHES

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not let a blessing pass without gratitude — including when putting on new clothes:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 61

حَدَّثَنَا سُوَيْدُ بْنُ نَصْرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ الْمُبَارَكِ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ إِيَاسٍ الْجُرَيْرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي نَضْرَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ، قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، إِذَا اسْتَجَدَّ ثَوْبًا سَمَّاهُ بِاسْمِهِ عِمَامَةً أَوْ قَمِيصًا أَوْ رِدَاءً، ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ كَمَا كَسَوْتَنِيهِ، أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَهُ وَخَيْرَ مَا صُنِعَ لَهُ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّهِ وَشَرِّ مَا صُنِعَ لَهُ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه said: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ put on a new garment, he would name it — a turban, a shirt or a cloak — and then say: ***"Allahumma laka al-hamdu kama kasawtanihi, as'aluka khayrahu wa khayra ma suni'a lahu, wa a'udhu bika min sharrihi wa sharri ma suni'a lahu."*** (O Allah, to You belongs all praise, as You have clothed me with it. I ask You for its good and the good of what it was made for, and I seek refuge in You from its evil and the evil of what it was made for.)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Suwayd ibn Nasr, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Sa'id ibn Iyas al-Jurayri, from Abu Nadrah, from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 61; also Sunan Abi Dawud No. 4020 and Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1767.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Shaykh al-Albani graded it sahih in Sunan Abi Dawud.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:61

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This supplication contains ***three things***: praise of Allah as the Giver of clothing, asking for the good of the garment and the good of what it was made for, and seeking refuge from its evil. The good of a garment is when it is used in obedience; its evil is when it leads to pride, waste or sin.

Notice too that he ***named the garment*** — a turban, a shirt or a cloak. This shows he appreciated each blessing specifically, not only in general. Teaching children this supplication when they put on new clothes, for example on Eid, is a beautiful way to plant gratitude from a young age.

This supplication also reminds us that clothing is ***a trust***. We will be asked about every garment we wear: where it came from, and what it was used for. Clothing bought with lawful wealth and worn with the intention of covering oneself and showing Allah's blessing becomes worship.

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THE HIBARAH AND RED-STRIPED CLOTH

Besides the qamis, another garment is mentioned as one he ***loved most***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 63

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ: كَانَ أَحَبَّ الثِّيَابِ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، يَلْبَسُهُ الْحِبَرَةُ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"The garment most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to wear was the hibarah (a striped Yemeni cloth)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Mu'adh ibn Hisham, from Hisham ad-Dastuwa'i (his father), from Qatadah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 63; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5813.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:63

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

How are these two narrations reconciled — Umm Salamah mentioning the qamis, and Anas the hibarah? Scholars explain that ***the qamis is a style of garment***, while ***hibarah is a type of cloth***. His qamis may itself have been made of hibarah. Or each Companion mentioned what he most often saw him wearing.

Hibarah is a ***striped*** cotton cloth from Yemen, usually red or green. That is why the Companions said he wore a ***"red hullah"***: Abu Juhayfah said, "I saw the Prophet ﷺ wearing a red hullah, as if I could see the shine of his shins," and Sufyan said, "I think it was a hibarah" (ash-Shama'il 64) — sahih.

Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما said: "I never saw anyone ***more handsome in a red hullah*** than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" (ash-Shama'il 65) — sahih. We met these words in the first book; they show that neat clothing adds radiance to its wearer, without any need for excess.

NOTE: ON THE COLOUR RED

Some scholars disliked ***all-red*** clothing for men, based on some narrations. So they reconciled the evidence by saying that his red hullah was ***red-striped cloth***, not entirely red. This is the view of Ibn al-Qayyim and many scholars. Other scholars permitted red without restriction. This is a difference of opinion in a secondary matter.

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REFERENCES:
Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad, chapter on clothing; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, Book of Clothing.

Whatever the colour, the lesson is the same: he wore what was clean, modest and pleasing, and he did not make colour a sign of piety. Piety lies in the heart and in deeds; clothing simply follows the guidance of the Shari'ah and the customs of one's people.

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WHITE, GREEN AND BLACK

The narrations in this chapter mention several colours of his clothing. Abu Rimthah رضى الله عنه said: ***"I saw the Prophet ﷺ wearing two green garments"*** (ash-Shama'il 66) — sahih chain.

On white, Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that he said: ***"Wear white clothes, for they are among the best of your clothes, and shroud your dead in them"*** (ash-Shama'il 68) — hasan chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 994) — hasan. White symbolises cleanliness; dirt shows easily on it, so its wearer is encouraged to keep clean.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها mentioned black: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out one morning wearing a garment of black hair"*** (ash-Shama'il 70) — hasan. A woollen wrap (mirt) is a simple, thick garment, suited to cold weather. He also wore black in the form of a turban, as we will see in Chapter 16.

NOTE: FADED SAFFRON-DYED WRAPS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 67)

Qaylah bint Makhramah said that she saw the Prophet ﷺ wearing two worn wraps that had once been dyed with saffron but whose colour had faded. This narration is part of a long story.

Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Yet its meaning — that he wore old, simple clothes — agrees with the sahih narrations about his simplicity.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 67 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:67

This variety of colours shows that he ***did not restrict himself to one colour***. He wore white, green, black and red-striped cloth. What matters is that the clothing is clean, modest and does not imitate clothing specific to other groups.

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A BYZANTINE ROBE WITH NARROW SLEEVES

One interesting narration shows his openness to clothing from outside Arabia:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 71

حَدَّثَنَا يُوسُفُ بْنُ عِيسَى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يُونُسُ بْنُ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنِ الشَّعْبِيِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ بْنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، لَبِسَ جُبَّةً رُومِيَّةً، ضَيِّقَةَ الْكُمَّيْنِ.

TRANSLATION:

'Urwah ibn al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah narrated from his father رضى الله عنه: ***"The Prophet ﷺ wore a Byzantine robe with narrow sleeves."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Yusuf ibn 'Isa, from Waki', from Yunus ibn Abi Ishaq, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i (his father), from ash-Sha'bi, from 'Urwah ibn al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, from al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah (his father) رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 71; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1768; similar in Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5798.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Its meaning is in Sahih al-Bukhari (a Syrian cloak).

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:71

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This robe was made by the Byzantines — not Muslims — yet he wore it. Scholars conclude that ***clothing made by non-Muslims may be worn***, so long as it is pure and is not a garment that is a specific religious symbol. In Sahih al-Bukhari, al-Mughirah mentions that he wore ***a Syrian cloak*** and drew his arms out from beneath it to perform ablution because its sleeves were narrow (Sahih al-Bukhari 5798).

Narrow sleeves suit ***travel and battle***. This shows he chose clothing according to the needs of the situation: loose clothes at home, and practical clothes when travelling.

Anas رضى الله عنه also mentioned that when he was ill, he came out leaning on Usamah ibn Zayd, wearing ***a coarse cotton cloth*** wrapped around him, and led them in prayer (ash-Shama'il 60) — sahih. Even when ill, he still came out to his Ummah in simple clothing.

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CHAPTER 9: HIS KHUFFS

The ninth chapter mentions ***khuffs*** — leather socks covering the ankles, worn in cold weather or on journeys. The sahih narration is:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 73

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ زَكَرِيَّا بْنِ أَبِي زَائِدَةَ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَيَّاشٍ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنِ الشَّعْبِيِّ، قَالَ: قَالَ الْمُغِيرَةُ بْنُ شُعْبَةَ: أَهْدَى دِحْيَةُ لِلنَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم خُفَّيْنِ، فَلَبِسَهُمَا وَقَالَ إِسْرَائِيلُ: عَنْ جَابِرٍ، عَنْ عَامِرٍ، وَجُبَّةً فَلَبِسَهُمَا حَتَّى تَخَرَّقَا لا يَدْرِي النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، أَذَكَّى هُمَا أَمْ لا.

TRANSLATION:

Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه said: ***"Dihyah gave the Prophet ﷺ a pair of khuffs (leather socks), and he wore them"*** — and in Isra'il's narration: "and a robe" — ***"and he wore them until they were worn through, without the Prophet ﷺ knowing whether their leather came from a slaughtered animal or not."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Yahya ibn Zakariyya ibn Abi Za'idah, from al-Hasan ibn 'Ayyash, from Abu Ishaq ash-Shaybani, from ash-Sha'bi, from al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 73; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1769.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. At-Tirmidhi explained that Abu Ishaq in this chain is Abu Ishaq ash-Shaybani.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:73

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows that he ***accepted gifts*** from his Companion, Dihyah al-Kalbi — the Companion we met in the first book, whose form Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ sometimes took. Accepting a gift and wearing it was his way of gladdening the giver.

He wore them ***until they were worn through***. This shows he did not discard things that could still be used. And he did not ask whether the leather came from a slaughtered animal — scholars take the lesson that ***things are presumed pure*** unless there is proof otherwise, and tanned leather is pure.

From such khuffs also comes the ruling of ***wiping over khuffs*** in ablution, narrated by many Companions. It is a concession (rukhsah) that makes things easier for the Ummah, especially in cold seasons and on journeys.

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NOTE: KHUFFS FROM THE NEGUS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 72)

Buraydah narrated that the Negus, king of Abyssinia, gave the Prophet ﷺ a pair of plain black khuffs, and he wore them, then performed ablution and wiped over them.

Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, though Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi also narrated it and some scholars graded it hasan. The ruling of wiping over khuffs itself is ***established*** by sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 72 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:72

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CHAPTER 10: HIS SANDALS

The tenth chapter mentions his ***sandals (na'l)*** — leather sandals with straps. Anas رضى الله عنه was asked what the sandals of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were like, and he replied: ***"They had two straps"*** (ash-Shama'il 74) — sahih chain. Abu Hurayrah also said the same (ash-Shama'il 78) — sahih.

'Isa ibn Tahman said that Anas once brought out to them ***a pair of hairless sandals with two straps***, and Thabit told them these were the sandals of the Prophet ﷺ (ash-Shama'il 76) — sahih chain. Anas kept his sandals as a keepsake — a sign of how much the Companions loved everything he left behind.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 77

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مُوسَى الأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْمَقْبُرِيُّ، عَنْ عُبَيْدِ بْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، أَنَّهُ قَالَ لابْنِ عُمَرَ: رَأَيْتُكَ تَلْبَسُ النِّعَالَ السِّبْتِيَّةَ، قَالَ: إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَلْبَسُ النِّعَالَ الَّتِي لَيْسَ فِيهَا شَعَرٌ، وَيَتَوَضَّأُ فِيهَا، فَأَنَا أُحِبُّ أَنْ أَلْبَسَهَا.

TRANSLATION:

'Ubayd ibn Jurayj said to Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما: "I see you wearing sibtiyyah sandals (of tanned, hairless cowhide)." He replied: ***"I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wearing sandals with no hair on them, and he performed ablution in them, so I love to wear them."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Musa al-Ansari, from Ma'n ibn 'Isa, from Malik ibn Anas, from Sa'id ibn Abi Sa'id al-Maqburi, from 'Ubayd ibn Jurayj, from Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 77; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 166.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:77

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما was known as the Companion who ***most eagerly imitated*** the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, even in small matters such as the kind of sandals. His answer was simple: "I saw him wear them, so I love to wear them." This is ***love proven by following***.

This hadith also shows that he ***performed ablution while wearing*** those sandals — washing his feet with the sandals still on, since sibtiyyah sandals are open. This shows the ease of the religion.

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Ibn 'Umar's love for even small details is a model for us: love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is shown not only in words and poetry, but in shaping our daily habits after his, one small Sunnah at a time.

The care of the Companions for his sandals also teaches us how to treat what the Prophet ﷺ left behind: not as objects to be venerated for their own sake, but as reminders that move us to follow him. Anas kept his sandals, yet what he passed on most faithfully were the narrations that tell us how he lived.

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THE ETIQUETTE OF FOOTWEAR

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ not only wore sandals, but also taught ***the etiquette of wearing them***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 80

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مُوسَى الأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ أَبِي الزِّنَادِ، عَنِ الأَعْرَجِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: لا يَمْشِينَّ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي نَعْلٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، لِيُنْعِلْهُمَا جَمِيعًا، أَوْ لِيُحْفِهِمَا جَمِيعًا.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Let none of you walk in one sandal. Let him wear them both or take them both off."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Musa al-Ansari, from Ma'n ibn 'Isa, from Malik ibn Anas, from Abu az-Zinad, from al-A'raj, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 80; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5856 and Sahih Muslim No. 2097.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:80

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Why is walking in one sandal forbidden? Scholars mention several wisdoms: it ***upsets balance*** and can cause slipping; it is ***unfair*** to the two feet; and it ***goes against neatness*** and can draw people's stares. Islam cares even about matters this small.

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه also narrated that he said: ***"When one of you puts on sandals, let him begin with the right; and when he takes them off, let him begin with the left"*** (ash-Shama'il 83) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5855). This continues the Sunnah of beginning with the right that we learned in the first book.

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrated that he ***forbade eating with the left hand and walking in one sandal*** (ash-Shama'il 82) — sahih. The two prohibitions are mentioned together because both concern ***manners and completeness*** in daily matters.

NOTE: "THE FIRST TO TIE A SINGLE KNOT" (ASH-SHAMA'IL 85)

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This narration states that the sandals of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Abu Bakr and 'Umar had two straps, and the first to tie a single knot was 'Uthman. Its chain is ***very weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, so it cannot be relied upon.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 85 — very weak chain. sunnah.com/shamail:85

CHAPTER 11: HIS RING

The eleventh chapter tells of the ***ring*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Interestingly, this ring was made not as adornment, but for ***the purpose of calling to Islam***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 91

حَدَّثَنَا نَصْرُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْجَهْضَمِيُّ أَبُو عَمْرٍو، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا نُوحُ بْنُ قَيْسٍ، عَنْ خَالِدِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَتَبَ إِلَى كِسْرَى وَقَيْصَرَ وَالنَّجَاشِيِّ، فَقِيلَ لَهُ: إِنَّهُمْ لا يَقْبَلُونَ كِتَابًا، إِلا بِخَاتَمٍ، فَصَاغَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، خَاتَمًا حَلْقَتُهُ فِضَّةٌ، وَنُقِشَ فِيهِ: مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated: ***"The Prophet ﷺ wrote to Chosroes, Caesar and the Negus. He was told: They do not accept a letter unless it bears a seal.*** So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a ring made with a band of silver, ***and engraved on it: Muhammad Rasul Allah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Nasr ibn 'Ali al-Jahdami, from Nuh ibn Qays, from Khalid ibn Qays, from Qatadah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 91; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5872 and Sahih Muslim No. 2092.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:91

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

After the Treaty of Hudaybiyah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent letters calling to Islam to ***the kings of the world***: Chosroes (king of Persia), Caesar (the Byzantine emperor) and the Negus (king of Abyssinia). Those kings did not accept unsealed letters, so he had a seal ring made. This shows he ***took into account the customs and protocol*** of those he invited, for the success of the call.

Anas رضى الله عنه described how the ring was engraved: ***"Muhammad" on one line, "Rasul" on one line, and "Allah" on one line*** (ash-Shama'il 90) — sahih. Scholars mention that it was arranged from bottom to top, so that the name of Allah would be ***at the very top***, out of reverence. Anas also said: "It is as if I can still see the whiteness of that ring on his hand" (ash-Shama'il 89) — sahih.

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The ring was made ***of silver, including its stone*** (ash-Shama'il 88) — sahih; in another narration its stone is said to be Abyssinian (ash-Shama'il 86) — sahih. Silver is a metal permitted to men for rings, whereas gold is forbidden, as we will see.

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THE RING THAT FELL INTO THE WELL OF ARIS

The ring of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has a long story after his death. Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a silver ring made; it was in his hand, then in the hand of Abu Bakr, then of 'Umar, then of 'Uthman, ***until it fell into the well of Aris***. Its engraving was "Muhammad Rasul Allah" (ash-Shama'il 93) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5879).

This ring became ***the official seal of the Islamic state*** for three caliphs. In al-Bukhari's narration, 'Uthman was sitting at the well of Aris and took off the ring and was fiddling with it, and it fell. They searched for it for three days with 'Uthman, draining the well, but did not find it (Sahih al-Bukhari 5879).

Some scholars saw this event as ***a sign*** of the beginning of trials in 'Uthman's rule, for many troubles followed. However, this is only a reflection, not a text. The certain lesson is this: the most precious thing left by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is not an object, but ***his Sunnah and teaching***, which remain preserved to this day.

NOTE: REMOVING THE RING IN THE TOILET (ASH-SHAMA'IL 92)

Anas narrated that when the Prophet ﷺ entered the toilet, he removed his ring — because the name of Allah was engraved on it. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Yet many scholars still encourage removing things bearing the name of Allah when entering the toilet, out of reverence for His name.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 92 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:92

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CHAPTER 12: THE RING ON HIS RIGHT HAND

The twelfth chapter discusses ***which hand*** he wore his ring on. Many Companions narrated that he wore it ***on his right hand***: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (ash-Shama'il 94) — hasan; 'Abdullah ibn Ja'far (ash-Shama'il 97) — sahih; Jabir ibn 'Abdullah (ash-Shama'il 98) — sahih; and Ibn 'Abbas (ash-Shama'il 99) — hasan.

Hammad ibn Salamah said he saw Ibn Abi Rafi' wearing a ring on his right hand and asked about it. Ibn Abi Rafi' said he had seen 'Abdullah ibn Ja'far do so, and 'Abdullah ibn Ja'far said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wore a ring on his right hand" (ash-Shama'il 96) — sahih. This chain shows how ***the Sunnah was inherited through practice***, not only through words.

Ibn 'Umar added that he placed ***the stone of the ring towards his palm***, and he forbade others to engrave the same inscription (ash-Shama'il 100) — sahih. This was because the ring was an official seal; if others copied it, false letters could be made in his name.

NOTE: RIGHT OR LEFT?

Besides the narrations about the right hand, there is also a sahih narration in Sahih Muslim that his ring was ***on the little finger of his left hand***. The narration in ash-Shama'il (No. 101) that al-Hasan and al-Husayn wore rings on the left hand has a weak chain. Scholars conclude that ***both are permissible***; he may have worn it on the right at one time and on the left at another. Imam at-Tirmidhi placed this chapter to show that the right hand is more often narrated.

REFERENCES:

Sahih Muslim, Book of Clothing and Adornment; ash-Shama'il 94–102. sunnah.com/shamail:101

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THE GOLD RING HE THREW AWAY

The last narration in this chapter contains a very important event:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 103

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عُبَيْدِ اللهِ الْمُحَارِبِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ عُقْبَةَ، عَنْ نَافِعٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ: اتَّخَذَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم خَاتَمًا مِنْ ذَهَبٍ، فَكَانَ يَلْبَسُهُ فِي يَمِينِهِ، فَاتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ خَوَاتِيمَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ فَطَرَحَهُ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَقَالَ: لا أَلْبَسُهُ أَبَدًا فَطَرَحَ النَّاسُ خَوَاتِيمَهُمْ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a ring made of gold and wore it on his right hand. Then the people made rings of gold. ***So he ﷺ threw it away and said: "I will never wear it." And the people threw away their rings.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn 'Ubayd al-Muharibi, from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Abi Hazim, from Musa ibn 'Uqbah, from Nafi', from Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 103; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5866 and Sahih Muslim No. 2091.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:103

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

At first, before the prohibition, he wore a gold ring. Then he ***threw it away*** and swore never to wear it again. From this event, and from other hadiths, scholars established that ***gold is forbidden for men to wear***. 'Ali رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade wearing silk and gold rings (Sahih Muslim 2078).

Notice ***the effect of his example***: as soon as he threw away his ring, the Companions at once threw away their gold rings without waiting for further explanation. This is ***the obedience of the Companions*** — they followed his actions just as they followed his words.

This hadith also teaches leaders, parents and teachers: ***people copy what they see***. If a leader lives in luxury, people will live in luxury. If a leader is modest, people will learn modesty. Example is stronger than a thousand words of advice.

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Note also his ***firmness***: he did not merely say that gold was disliked; he threw the ring away and swore never to wear it. When a matter of the religion became clear, he acted decisively, and the Companions followed at once.

The ruling remains today: men should not wear gold rings or gold jewellery, while a silver ring is permitted. Women, by contrast, may wear gold and silk, as other hadiths make clear. A Muslim man who wishes to wear a ring can follow the Sunnah with a simple silver ring, worn without pride.

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CHAPTER 13: HIS SWORD

The thirteenth chapter mentions the ***sword*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"The pommel of the sword of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was made of silver"*** (ash-Shama'il 104) — sahih.

Sa'id ibn Abi al-Hasan al-Basri also narrated the same (ash-Shama'il 105) — sahih.

Scholars take from this hadith that ***decorating weapons with a little silver is permissible***. The sword is a tool of jihad and defence; decorating it slightly shows appreciation for the tool used to defend the religion and the Ummah.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a leader ***ready to defend his Ummah***. He did not seek war, but when attacked, he himself went to the battlefield and was at the front line. The Companions said that when the fighting grew fierce, they would take shelter behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT THE SWORD (ASH-SHAMA'IL 106–107)

The narration that he entered Makkah on the day of the Conquest with a sword decorated with gold and silver (No. 106), and the narration of Ibn Sirin who made his sword like that of Samurah ibn Jundub, said to imitate the sword of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (No. 107), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. What is established is that its pommel was of silver.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 106–107 — weak chains. sunnah.com/shamail:106

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CHAPTER 14: HIS ARMOUR

The fourteenth chapter tells of his ***armour*** on the Day of Uhud — a very hard day in the sirah:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 109

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو سَعِيدٍ عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ الأَشَجُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يُونُسُ بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ عَبَّادِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ، عَنِ الزُّبَيْرِ بْنِ الْعَوَّامِ، قَالَ: كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَوْمَ أُحُدٍ دِرْعَانِ، فَنَهَضَ إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَلَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ، فَأَقْعَدَ طَلْحَةَ تَحْتَهُ، وَصَعِدَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم حَتَّى اسْتَوَى عَلَى الصَّخْرَةِ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، يَقُولُ: أَوْجَبَ طَلْحَةُ.

TRANSLATION:

Az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam رضى الله عنه said: ***"On the Day of Uhud the Prophet ﷺ was wearing two coats of mail.*** He rose to climb a large rock but could not. So he had Talhah sit beneath him, and the Prophet ﷺ climbed until he stood upright on the rock." He said: I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: ***"Talhah has made (Paradise) due for himself."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu Sa'id 'Abdullah ibn Sa'id al-Ashajj, from Yunus ibn Bukayr, from Muhammad ibn Ishaq, from Yahya ibn 'Abbad ibn 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'Abbad ibn 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr (his grandfather), from az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 109; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1692.

GRADE: HASAN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:109

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wore ***two coats of mail*** — even though he was certain of Allah's help. This teaches us that ***trust in Allah does not cancel effort***. A believer strives as much as he can, then leaves the result to Allah. As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid also narrated that he wore two coats of mail on the Day of Uhud (ash-Shama'il 110) — sahih.

Allah Himself mentions armour as a blessing: ***"garments which protect you from your [enemy in] battle"*** (An-Nahl 16:81) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 16:81.

The story of ***Talhah ibn 'Ubaydillah*** رضى الله عنه is very moving. He was wounded and heavy with two coats of mail, so Talhah bent down and made himself a step so that he could climb onto the rock. Because

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of this sacrifice, he said: ***"Talhah has made (Paradise) due"***. On the Day of Uhud, Talhah also shielded him with his hand until his hand was paralysed.

The story also shows that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ shared the hardships of his Companions in his own body: at Uhud his tooth was broken (Sahih al-Bukhari 4073), yet he continued to lead and protect them until the battle ended.

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CHAPTER 15: HIS HELMET

The fifteenth chapter mentions the ***helmet (mighfar)*** he wore when entering Makkah on the day of its Conquest:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 112

حَدَّثَنَا عِيسَى بْنُ أَحْمَدَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ وَهْبٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي مَالِكُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، دَخَلَ مَكَّةَ عَامَ الْفَتْحِ، وَعَلَى رَأْسِهِ الْمِغْفَرُ، قَالَ: فَلَمَّا نَزَعَهُ جَاءَهُ رَجُلٌ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: ابْنُ خَطَلٍ مُتَعَلِّقٌ بِأَسْتَارِ الْكَعْبَةِ، فَقَالَ: اقْتُلُوهُ، قَالَ ابْنُ شِهَابٍ: وَبَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، لَمْ يَكُنْ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُحْرِمًا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered Makkah in the year of the Conquest with a helmet (mighfar) on his head.*** When he took it off, a man came and said: Ibn Khatal is clinging to the coverings of the Ka'bah. He said: Kill him." Ibn Shihab said: It has reached me that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not in ihram that day.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Isa ibn Ahmad al-'Asqalani, from 'Abdullah ibn Wahb, from Malik ibn Anas, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 112; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1846 and Sahih Muslim No. 1357.

GRADE: SAHIH, AGREED UPON — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:112

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows that during ***the Conquest of Makkah***, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered prepared — wearing a helmet — because fighting was possible. Yet Allah opened Makkah almost without bloodshed, and he forgave its people with his famous words.

Ibn Khatal was among ***a very small few*** excluded from the general amnesty. He had embraced Islam, then killed a Muslim who served him, then apostatised and composed poetry to insult the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. His offence was a grave crime whose punishment had been decided, not merely disbelief.

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Ibn Shihab's words that he ***was not in ihram*** that day show a fiqh ruling: one who enters Makkah for the needs of war is not obliged to enter ihram. We discussed this story further in The Prophet's Sirah series (the Conquest of Makkah).

The helmet and the turban of that day also remind us of his gratitude: he entered the city that had driven him out not with boasting, but reciting Surah al-Fath on his camel, as 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal reported (Sahih al-Bukhari 4281).

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CHAPTER 16: HIS TURBAN

The sixteenth chapter mentions the ***turban ('imamah)*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 113

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ سَلَمَةَ (ح) حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي الزُّبَيْرِ، عَنْ جَابِرٍ، قَالَ: دَخَلَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، مَكَّةَ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ، وَعَلَيْهِ عِمَامَةٌ سَوْدَاءُ.

TRANSLATION:

Jabir رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah on the day of the Conquest wearing a black turban."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi; and by another route: Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Waki' — both from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Abu az-Zubayr, from Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 113; also Sahih Muslim No. 1358.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:113

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

On the same day he entered Makkah, some narrations mention a helmet and some a black turban. Scholars reconcile them: he ***entered wearing the helmet***, then ***took it off*** and wore a black turban when he addressed the people. 'Amr ibn Hurayth said his father saw him ***giving a sermon wearing a black turban*** (ash-Shama'il 115) — sahih chain; also (Sahih Muslim 1359).

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: ***"When the Prophet ﷺ wore a turban, he let its end hang between his shoulders"*** (ash-Shama'il 116) — hasan; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1736). Ibn 'Umar himself did so, and his students inherited it.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما mentioned that he gave a sermon wearing a turban that was ***dasma'*** — with traces of hair oil on it (ash-Shama'il 117) — sahih. This shows the turban was worn in everyday life, not kept as an untouched ornament.

NOTE: THE RULING ON WEARING A TURBAN

Scholars differ on whether wearing a turban is ***a Sunnah of worship*** that is encouraged, or ***a Sunnah of custom*** — the usual dress of the Arabs which he wore. Many scholars hold that it is custom, so wearing it out of love for him is good, but one who does not wear it is not blamed. What matters is covering the head modestly and without pride.

REFERENCES:

Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad, chapter on clothing.

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CHAPTER 17: HIS IZAR

The seventeenth chapter mentions his ***izar (lower garment)***. The first narration is very moving:

Abu Burdah said: 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها brought out to us ***a patched cloak and a coarse izar***, and said:

"The soul of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was taken in these two" (ash-Shama'il 118) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5818).

Imagine: the leader of a state covering the whole Arabian Peninsula, to whom spoils and zakah flowed, ***died in patched and coarse clothing***. He gave wealth away to others, and chose to live simply. 'A'ishah kept those garments and showed them so that the Ummah would know ***what his life was truly like***.

This does not mean Islam tells us to wear poor clothing. He also wore fine clothes when receiving guests and on Eid. But it teaches that ***his heart was not attached to the world***. Clothing is only a means; what lasts is the clothing of righteousness.

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THE HEMLINE AND THE DANGER OF PRIDE

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also showed with his own hand ***where the hem of the izar*** should be:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 121

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الأَحْوَصِ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ مُسْلِمِ بْنِ نَذِيرٍ، عَنْ حُذَيْفَةَ بْنِ الْيَمَانِ، قَالَ: أَخَذَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، بِعَضَلَةِ سَاقِي أَوْ سَاقِهِ، فَقَالَ: هَذَا مَوْضِعُ الإِزَارِ، فَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ فَأَسْفَلَ، فَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ فَلا حَقَّ لِلإِزَارِ فِي الْكَعْبَيْنِ.

TRANSLATION:

Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took hold of the muscle of my calf — or his own calf — and said: ***"This is the place of the izar (lower garment). If you refuse, then lower. If you refuse, the izar has no right over the ankles."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Abu al-Ahwas, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from Muslim ibn Nadhir, from Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 121; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1783.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. At-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih in his Jami'.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:121

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith sets ***three levels***: the best is ***mid-calf***; if not, ***a little lower***; and what is forbidden is ***going below the ankles***. He taught in a very practical way — holding the calf and pointing to the place — so that there would be no confusion.

Why is the hemline so important? Because in that time, ***letting one's garment trail*** was a sign of the proud rich. He said: ***"Whatever of the izar is below the ankles is in the Fire"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5787). And: "Allah will not look on the Day of Resurrection at one who drags his garment out of pride" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5784).

In the same hadith, Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said: "One side of my izar slips down unless I take care of it."

He replied: ***"You are not one of those who do it out of pride"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5784). From this, many scholars explain that the severe warning is specific to one who does it ***deliberately out of pride***, while other scholars still dislike it in general. The safest is to follow the level he showed.

Allah says about the attitude behind all this: ***"do not walk through the earth exultantly"*** (Luqman 31:18) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 31:18.

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NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ON THE IZAR (ASH-SHAMA'IL 119–120)

The narration of a man told from behind to raise his garment because "it is more pious and lasts longer", to whom he said "Do you not have an example in me?" (No. 119), and the narration of 'Uthman wearing his izar to mid-calf and saying "This is how my companion's izar was" (No. 120), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Their meaning is supported by the sahih hadith of Hudhayfah above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 119–120 — weak chains. sunnah.com/shamail:119

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CHAPTER 18: HOW HE WALKED

The eighteenth chapter describes ***how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ walked***. The most beautiful narration comes from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 122

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ لَهِيعَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي يُونُسَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: وَلَا رَأَيْتُ شَيْئًا أَحْسَنَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَأَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تَجْرِي فِي وَجْهِهِ، وَمَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَسْرَعَ فِي مِشْيَتِهِ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَأَنَّمَا الأَرْضُ تُطْوَى لَهُ إِنَّا لَنُجْهِدُ أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنَّهُ لَغَيْرُ مُكْتَرِثٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: ***"I never saw anything more beautiful than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ — it was as if the sun were moving in his face. And I never saw anyone faster in his walk than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ — as if the earth were folded up for him.*** We would exert ourselves, while he showed no strain."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Ibn Lahi'ah, from Abu Yunus (Sulaym ibn Jubayr), from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 122; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3648.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:122

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Abu Hurayrah describes two things: his ***face***, radiant as if the sun moved in it, and his ***stride***, so fast that it was as if the earth were folded for him. Even young Companions had to exert themselves to keep up with him.

'Ali رضى الله عنه said: ***"When the Prophet ﷺ walked, he leaned forward as if descending a slope"*** (ash-Shama'il 124) — hasan. Such a stride is that of one who is ***energetic and purposeful*** — neither lazily dragging the feet, nor strutting.

This way of walking matches the description of the servants of Allah in the Qur'an: ***"those who walk upon the earth easily"*** (Al-Furqan 25:63) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 25:63.

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Scholars explain that ***fast does not mean hasty***, and ***calm does not mean slow***. He walked with a strong, quick stride, yet full of calm and humility. Luqman also advised his son: "And be moderate in your pace" (Luqman 31:19).

His quick yet unhurried walk also shows that he valued time. He did not waste it in idleness, yet he never lost his dignity. A believer today can learn from this to move with purpose — to the mosque, to work and to the service of others — without rushing in a way that harms or alarms anyone.

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CHAPTER 19: HIS HEAD-COVER

NOTE: THE HEAD-COVER OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ (ASH-SHAMA'IL 125)

The nineteenth chapter contains only one narration: Anas said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***often wore a qina'*** (a head-cover cloth), as if his garment were that of an oil-seller.

Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i because of the narrator Yazid ar-Raqashi. Yet there is a sahih narration in Sahih al-Bukhari that on the day of the Hijrah, he came to Abu Bakr's house ***with his head covered*** (muqanna'), at an hour he did not usually come.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 125 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:125

A qina' is a cloth covering the head and part of the face, usually ***to protect from the sun's heat***, dust or cold. In the Hijrah story, he covered his head because he went out in the heat of midday, and also ***so as not to be recognised*** by enemies searching for him (Sahih al-Bukhari 3905).

Imam at-Tirmidhi included this chapter even though its narration is weak, because the method of the hadith scholars of that time was ***to gather all narrations with their chains***, leaving the reader to judge. We, with the help of the editors, can distinguish what is established from what is not — a great blessing for later generations.

From this chapter we learn that covering the head in heat or in certain situations is ***a sensible practice***, and that his clothing was always suited to need — not for show, but for protection.

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CHAPTER 20: HOW HE SAT

The twentieth chapter describes ***how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sat and lay down***. The sahih narration is:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 127

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْمَخْزُومِيُّ، وَغَيْرُ وَاحِدٍ، قَالُوا: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عَبَّادِ بْنِ تَمِيمٍ، عَنْ عَمِّهِ، أَنَّهُ رَأَى النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مُسْتَلْقِيًا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ وَاضِعًا إِحْدَى رِجْلَيْهِ عَلَى الأُخْرَى.

TRANSLATION:

'Abbad ibn Tamim narrated from his paternal uncle ('Abdullah ibn Zayd رضى الله عنه): ***"That he saw the Prophet ﷺ lying on his back in the mosque, placing one of his legs over the other."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Sa'id ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Makhzumi, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from az-Zuhri, from 'Abbad ibn Tamim, from 'Abdullah ibn Zayd ibn 'Asim (his uncle) رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 127; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 475.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:127

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows that he ***rested in the mosque*** in a relaxed way — lying on his back with one leg over the other. In his time, the mosque was not only a place of prayer, but also a place to gather, learn and rest. Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib mentioned that 'Umar and 'Uthman also did so (Sahih al-Bukhari 475).

Scholars reconcile this hadith with another that forbids lying with one leg over the other (Sahih Muslim 2099): the prohibition is ***if it could expose the body***, while it is permitted if one remains covered. This is an example of how scholars ***understand hadith as a whole***.

NOTE: SITTING HUMBLY (ASH-SHAMA'IL 126, 128)

Qaylah bint Makhramah said she saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sitting ***squatting in great humility*** in the mosque, so that she trembled with awe (No. 126). Abu Sa'id said he sat in the mosque clasping his knees with his hands (No. 128).

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No. 126 has a ***weak chain***, and No. 128 a ***very weak*** one, according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Sitting with the knees clasped (ihtiba') is itself established in other narrations.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 126, 128. sunnah.com/shamail:126

CHAPTER 21: HIS CUSHION

The twenty-first chapter mentions the ***cushion*** he leaned on. Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه said: ***"I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reclining on a cushion on his left side"*** (ash-Shama'il 129) — sahih chain.

Leaning on a cushion while sitting is ordinary and permitted. But one narration in this chapter shows that he ***changed his posture*** when mentioning something very important. Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه narrated that he asked: "Shall I tell you of the greatest of the major sins?" They said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." He said: "Associating partners with Allah and disobeying parents." (ash-Shama'il 130) — sahih.

Then, having been reclining, he ***sat up*** and said: ***"And false speech — or false testimony."*** He kept repeating it until the Companions said to themselves: "If only he would stop" (Sahih al-Bukhari 2654).

This change of posture is the ***body language*** of a skilled teacher. He sat up to show how grave the sin of lying and false testimony is — a sin easily committed and often taken lightly, yet one that destroys justice and relations between people.

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"I DO NOT EAT WHILE RECLINING"

In the same chapter, there is a saying of his about ***the etiquette of eating***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 131

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شَرِيكٌ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الأَقْمَرِ، عَنْ أَبِي جُحَيْفَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: أَمَّا أَنَا، فَلا آكُلُ مُتَّكِئًا.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Juhayfah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"As for me, I do not eat while reclining."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Sharik ibn 'Abdullah, from 'Ali ibn al-Aqmar, from Abu Juhayfah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 131; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5398 and Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1830.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:131

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He repeated it twice in another narration: "I do not eat while reclining, I do not eat while reclining" (ash-Shama'il 132). Scholars explain that eating while reclining was the way of ***the luxurious and of kings***, who eat a lot and at length. He ate sitting like a servant.

In another narration outside ash-Shama'il, he said: ***"I eat as a servant eats, and I sit as a servant sits"*** (graded sahih by al-Albani in as-Silsilah as-Sahihah No. 544). The meaning is the same: ***humility in daily matters***. This Sunnah of eating will be discussed further in the third book, in sha Allah, in the chapters on his eating and drinking.

From a health perspective, many medical practitioners also advise ***eating while sitting upright*** rather than reclining or lying down, as it is better for digestion. This Sunnah, which is at root about manners and humility, turns out to be good for the body as well.

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CHAPTER 22: LEANING ON SOMETHING ELSE

The twenty-second chapter, the last in this part, mentions him ***leaning on a Companion*** when ill. Anas رضى الله عنه said: The Prophet ﷺ was ill, and he came out ***leaning on Usamah ibn Zayd***, wearing a coarse cotton cloth wrapped around him, and led them in prayer (ash-Shama'il 134) — sahih.

This happened in ***the last days*** of his life. Though ill and weak, he still strove to come out to the mosque to be with his Ummah. Usamah ibn Zayd was the son of Zayd ibn Harithah, the freed slave whom he loved — and it was on him that he leaned.

NOTE: AL-FADL IBN 'ABBAS AND THE HEADBAND (ASH-SHAMA'IL 135)

Al-Fadl ibn 'Abbas related that he went in to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during the illness in which he died,

and on his head was a yellow band. He asked al-Fadl to bind his head, then leaned on his shoulder and went into the mosque.

This narration has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. That he bound his head in illness and leaned on his family and Companions is established in other sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 135 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:135

From this chapter we learn his ***humility***: the great leader of the Ummah was not ashamed to lean on others when weak. We also learn ***the loyalty of the Companions***, always ready to be his support. May we too be a support for our parents and the weak around us.

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SIMPLICITY IN DRESS

If we gather all the narrations in this book, a clear picture forms: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ dressed ***cleanly, neatly and simply***. He did not wear ragged clothes to show off asceticism, nor luxurious clothes to boast.

He warned about ***clothing of fame***: "Whoever wears a garment of fame (to show off), Allah will clothe him in a similar garment on the Day of Resurrection" (Sunan Abi Dawud 4029) — hasan (al-Albani). Clothing of fame is clothing worn so that people will look and talk about it — whether too luxurious or too shabby.

Today, when fashion changes every season and advertising pushes us to buy more than we need, his Sunnah in dress is very relevant: ***buy what is enough, keep it clean, wear it until it wears out, and be grateful for every piece***. This is clothing that brings blessing.

In the end, all this returns to the words of Allah: ***"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:21) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:21.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Chapters 8 to 22 of ash-Shama'il introduce us to the ***clothing, adornment and way of life*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Among the most important lessons:

CHAPTER	KEY LESSON
8. Clothing	The qamis and hibarah; the prayer for new clothes; white clothing
9–10. Khuffs and sandals	Wear until worn out; begin with the right; not one sandal
11–12. Ring	A silver ring for da'wah; gold forbidden for men
13–15. Sword, armour, helmet	Trust in Allah with effort; Talhah's sacrifice
16–17. Turban and izar	The hem at mid-calf; avoid pride
18–19. Walking and head-cover	A quick yet calm and humble stride
20–22. Sitting and reclining	Not eating while reclining; a teacher's body language

A MESSAGE FOR US

Our clothing can become worship if we wear it with the intention of following the Sunnah, covering ourselves and being grateful. But remember the words of Allah: ***the clothing of righteousness — that is best***. May Allah adorn us with the clothing of righteousness in this world, and the clothing of Paradise in the Hereafter.

The discussion continues in ***Part 3***: how he ate and drank, his favourite food and drink, perfume, how he spoke, laughed and joked — the next chapters of ash-Shama'il. And Allah knows best.

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PART THREE

What an Excellent Condiment

Chapters 23–31 of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah

How He Ate, His Bread, Accompaniments, Words at Meals, His Cup, Fruit, Drinks and How He Drank

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WHAT AN EXCELLENT CONDIMENT

In the last two books, we came to know the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his clothing.

This third book brings us to ***his table***: what he ate and drank, how he ate, and what he said before and after eating. It follows chapters 23 to 31 of ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** by ***Imam at-Tirmidhi***.

These chapters contain ***78 narrations***. Chapter 25 alone, on the food he ate with bread, contains 34 narrations — the most of any chapter so far. As in the previous books, sahih and hasan narrations are presented in Hadith boxes, while weak narrations are explained in Note boxes.

The picture that emerges is very moving: the leader of the Ummah who ***often spent the night hungry***, who never ate at a dining table, yet was always ***grateful*** for every morsel — whether a piece of barley bread with vinegar, or a single date.

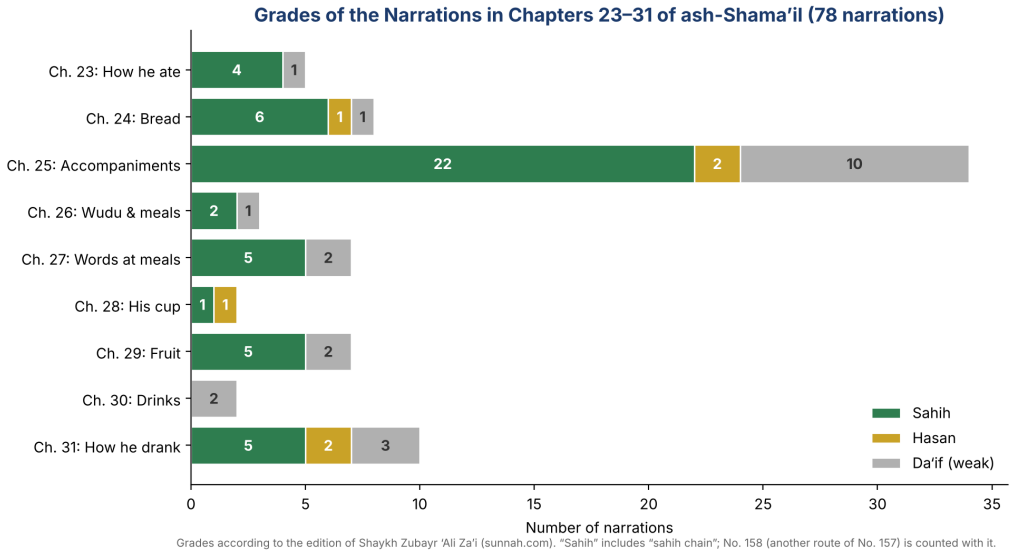


Figure 3: The grades of the narrations in chapters 23–31 of ash-Shama'il.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this book is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box, based on the edition of Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i as shown on sunnah.com. Of the 78 narrations in these chapters, nearly three-quarters are sahih or hasan.

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EATING AND DRINKING IN ISLAM

Eating and drinking are needs of every human being. But in Islam, they can also become ***worship*** when done with the right intention and proper manners. Allah says:

SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:172

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقۡنَٰكُمۡ وَٱشۡكُرُواْ لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمۡ إِيَّاهُ تَعۡبُدُونَ ١٧٢

O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:172

This verse contains ***two commands***: eat from the good things, and be grateful to Allah. Ibn Kathir explains that lawful and good food helps a person to worship, and gratitude is a sign that worship is truly for Allah Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:172.

Allah also invites us to reflect on our food: ***"Then let mankind look at his food"*** ('Abasa 80:24) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 80:24.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught ***moderation*** in eating: "The son of Adam fills no vessel worse than his stomach. A few morsels that keep his back upright are enough for the son of Adam. If he must, then one third for his food, one third for his drink and one third for his breath" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2380) — sahih.

The chapters of this book will show how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***lived these principles*** in daily life: eating little, eating what was available, not criticising food, beginning with the name of Allah and ending with praise of Him.

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CHAPTER 23: HOW HE ATE

The twenty-third chapter of ash-Shama'il is titled ***"What has come about how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ate"***. It contains five narrations: four sahih and one weak (Figure 3).

Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated that ***"the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ate with three fingers, and licked them afterwards"*** (ash-Shama'il 140) — sahih. Eating with three fingers — the thumb, index and middle fingers — is a sign of ***not being greedy***. The morsels are small, eating is slow, and food is enjoyed calmly.

This chapter also repeats his words: "As for me, I do not eat while reclining" (ash-Shama'il 138) — sahih. We discussed this hadith in the second book (the chapter on his cushion); Imam at-Tirmidhi repeats it here because it relates directly to ***the etiquette of eating***.

NOTE: LICKING THE FINGERS THREE TIMES (ASH-SHAMA'IL 136)

This narration says that he licked his fingers ***three times***. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. What is established is that he licked ***his three fingers***, as in the other sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 136 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:136

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LICKING THREE FINGERS

One Sunnah that may seem small, but which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept carefully:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 137

حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْخَلَالُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَفَّانُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا أَكَلَ طَعَامًا لَعِقَ أَصَابِعَهُ الثَّلاثَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"When the Prophet ﷺ ate food, he would lick his three fingers."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Khallal, from 'Affan ibn Muslim, from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 137; also Sahih Muslim No. 2034.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:137

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Why lick the fingers? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself explained the wisdom: ***"You do not know in which part of your food the blessing lies"*** (Sahih Muslim 2033). The blessing may be in what remains on the fingers or the plate. So a Muslim does not let it go to waste.

In the same narration in Sahih Muslim, he also said: when a morsel falls, ***remove any dirt from it and eat it***, and do not leave it for Satan (Sahih Muslim 2034). This teaches us ***to value provision*** — not wasting even a single morsel.

In an age when much food is thrown away every day, this Sunnah is very relevant. Taking only what is enough, finishing what is on the plate, and valuing every grain of rice is how we ***bring this Sunnah to life***.

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EATING HUNCHED FROM HUNGER

The last narration in this chapter opens our eyes to ***the real life*** he lived:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 141

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْفَضْلُ بْنُ دُكَيْنٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُصْعَبُ بْنُ سُلَيْمٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ، يَقُولُ: أُتِيَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِتَمْرٍ فَرَأَيْتُهُ يَأْكُلُ وَهُوَ مُقْعٍ مِنَ الْجُوعِ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"Some dates were brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and I saw him eating while sitting hunched up from hunger."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani', from al-Fadl ibn Dukayn, from Mus'ab ibn Sulaym, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 141; also Sahih Muslim No. 2044.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:141

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ — leader of the Ummah, Messenger of Allah — ***sat hunched from hunger***, eating the dates brought to him. Sitting hunched (iq'a') here is an uncomfortable posture, a sign that he ate quickly out of need, not for the enjoyment of a feast.

In another narration in Muslim, Anas mentions that he ate those dates ***sitting hunched*** (Sahih Muslim 2044). This hunger was not because no wealth came in, but because he ***gave wealth away*** to others and chose a simple life.

This hadith comforts the poor: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also knew hunger. And it reminds the rich: ***do not forget to be grateful*** and to share, for the most honoured of people once sat hunched from hunger.

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CHAPTER 24: HIS BREAD

The twenty-fourth chapter tells of the ***bread*** he ate. Bread was the staple food, and the narrations in this chapter show how simple his life was:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 148

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنَ يَزِيدَ يُحَدِّثُ، عَنِ الأَسْوَدِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: مَا شَبِعَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِنْ خُبْزِ الشَّعِيرِ يَوْمَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ حَتَّى قُبِضَ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never ate his fill of barley bread for two days in a row until he passed away."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Yazid, from al-Aswad ibn Yazid, from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 148; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 2357.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:148

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها also said: "The family of Muhammad ﷺ never ate their fill of barley bread two days in a row until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away" (ash-Shama'il 142) — sahih chain. Abu Umamah said: "There was never any barley bread left over in the house of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" (ash-Shama'il 143) — sahih chain.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما added: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would spend several nights in a row hungry; he and his family would find no supper, and most of their bread was barley bread"*** (ash-Shama'il 144) — sahih chain. 'A'ishah also said to 'Urwah: "We would see the new moon, then the new moon, then the new moon — three new moons in two months — and no fire was lit in the houses of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." When asked what they lived on, she said: "The two black things: dates and water" (Sahih al-Bukhari 6459).

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NO TABLE, NO THIN BREAD

Not only was his food simple, but ***the way*** he ate was also simple:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 146

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ يُونُسَ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ: مَا أَكَلَ نَبِيُّ اللهِ عَلَى خِوَانٍ، وَلا فِي سُكُرُّجَةٍ، وَلا خُبِزَ لَهُ مُرَقَّقٌ قَالَ: فَقُلْتُ لِقَتَادَةَ: فَعَلامَ كَانُوا يَأْكُلُونَ؟ قَالَ: عَلَى هَذِهِ السُّفَرِ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Prophet of Allah ﷺ never ate at a dining table (khiwan), nor from small dishes (sukurrujah), and thin bread was never baked for him."*** (Yunus said:) I asked Qatadah: "Then on what did they eat?" He said: "On these leather mats (sufrah)."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Mu'adh ibn Hisham, from Hisham ad-Dastuwa'i (his father), from Yunus al-Iskaf, from Qatadah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 146; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5386.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:146

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

A ***khiwan*** is a raised dining table, the custom of the rich and of the Persian kings. ***Sukurrujah*** are small dishes for various side dishes and appetisers. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used neither; he ate on a ***sufrah***, a leather mat spread on the floor.

Sahl ibn Sa'd رضى الله عنه was asked: "Did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ eat fine flour (white bread)?" He said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never saw fine flour until he met Allah"*** (ash-Shama'il 145) — hasan chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5413). They would blow on the barley flour, so what flew away flew away, and the rest was kneaded.

NOTE: 'A'ISHAH'S TEARS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 147)

Masruq related that 'A'ishah served him food and said: "I do not eat my fill of any food and wish to weep, except that I weep," remembering the state of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he left this world. Its chain is

weak according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Yet its meaning — 'A'ishah's sorrow at remembering his simple life — agrees with the sahih narrations of this chapter.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 147 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:147

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CHAPTER 25: WHAT HE ATE WITH BREAD

The twenty-fifth chapter is the longest in this part: ***"What has come about the condiments of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***, with ***34 narrations***. It lists the foods eaten with bread: vinegar, olive oil, gourd, meat, chicken, honey, sweets, dates and more.

Idam (condiment) in Arabic is anything eaten with bread to make it easier to swallow and tastier — vinegar, oil, broth, meat or dates. At that time, bread was the main food, and the condiment only a small addition.

From this list we learn an important principle: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***ate what was available***. He did not refuse lawful food, nor did he strain to find food that was not there. Abu Hurayrah said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***never criticised food***. If he liked it, he ate it; if not, he left it" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5409).

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"WHAT AN EXCELLENT CONDIMENT VINEGAR IS"

It is from this chapter that the title of this part is taken. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ praised the simplest of foods:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 150

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَهْلِ بْنِ عَسْكَرٍ، وَعَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، قَالا: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ حَسَّانَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ بِلالٍ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: نِعْمَ الإِدَامُ الْخَلُّ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"What an excellent condiment vinegar is."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Sahl ibn 'Askar and 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ad-Darimi, from Yahya ibn Hassan, from Sulayman ibn Bilal, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 150; also Sahih Muslim No. 2051.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:150

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Vinegar is not a luxury food; it is the condiment of the poor. Yet he ***praised it***. Jabir رضى الله عنه narrated the same saying (ash-Shama'il 152) — sahih. In Sahih Muslim, Jabir relates that he asked his family about a condiment, and they said: "We have nothing but vinegar." He asked for it and ate with it, saying: "What an excellent condiment vinegar is."

Scholars draw two lessons: ***first***, praising the food that is available, however simple, as a sign of gratitude and to gladden one's family. ***Second***, contentment (qana'ah) with what Allah gives. Whoever is grateful for little, Allah will bless.

An-Nu'man ibn Bashir رضى الله عنه said to the people: "Do you not now eat and drink whatever you wish? I saw your Prophet ﷺ, and ***he could not find even poor-quality dates (daqal) to fill his stomach***" (ash-Shama'il 151) — sahih.

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NOTE: "A HOUSE WITH VINEGAR" (ASH-SHAMA'IL 172)

Umm Hani' narrated that he asked whether there was any food, and she said there was nothing but dry bread and vinegar. He said: "Bring it. A house with vinegar is not poor." Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, but the praise of vinegar is established in the sahih narrations above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 172 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:172

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OLIVE OIL: A BLESSED TREE

Another food he praised is ***olive oil***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 157

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ مُوسَى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَسْلَمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: كُلُوا الزَّيْتَ وَادَّهِنُوا بِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ.

TRANSLATION:

'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Eat olive oil and anoint yourselves with it, for it comes from a blessed tree."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Yahya ibn Musa, from 'Abd ar-Razzaq, from Ma'mar ibn Rashid, from Zayd ibn Aslam, from Aslam (his father), from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 157; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1851.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Shaykh al-Albani graded it sahih.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:157

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The olive tree is mentioned in the Qur'an as a blessed tree: ***"a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west"*** (An-Nur 24:35) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 24:35.

Abu Usayd رضى الله عنه also narrated the same saying (ash-Shama'il 156) — sahih. He commanded two things: ***eating it*** and ***anointing with it*** (applying it to the body and hair). Olive oil was food, medicine and a conditioner for skin and hair in that time.

Modern nutritional research also finds that olive oil is rich in ***monounsaturated fats*** and antioxidants, and it is the basis of the Mediterranean diet associated with heart health. This agrees with his encouragement, though we eat it chiefly to follow the Sunnah and to be grateful for Allah's blessing.

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THE GOURD HE LOVED

There was one food that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved so much that the Companions remembered it:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 159

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالا: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالك، قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعْجِبُهُ الدُّبَّاءُ فَأُتِيَ بِطَعَامٍ، أَوْ دُعِيَ لَهُ فَجَعَلْتُ أَتَتَبَّعُهُ، فَأَضَعُهُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ لِمَا أَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ يُحِبُّهُ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ liked gourd. So when food was brought, or he was invited to a meal, I would look for it and place it in front of him, because I knew he liked it."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far and 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Qatadah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 159.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:159

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Notice ***Anas's love*** for him: he would look for the gourd in the dish and place it in front of him, knowing he liked it. This is the manner of a servant who loves his master — noticing what he likes and providing it unasked.

This hadith also shows that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as a human being, ***had favourite foods***. Liking a food does not contradict asceticism. What matters is not to overindulge and not to criticise food one does not like.

Gourd (dubba') is a cheap and easily found vegetable, soft and light on the stomach. His choice shows that his favourite food was not an expensive one, but an ordinary food found around him. Many Muslims to this day cook gourd because he loved it — a small way of showing love.

Gourd also appears in the story of the Prophet Yunus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: Allah caused a gourd plant to grow over him when he was cast onto the shore, weak and ill, to shade and protect him (As-Saffat 37:146). Some scholars mention this as one more reason the Companions came to love it as he did.

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NOTE: GOURD TO INCREASE THE MEAL (ASH-SHAMA'IL 160)

Hakim ibn Jabir narrated from his father that he saw gourd being cut up beside him and asked: "What is this?" He said: "We increase our food with it." Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 160 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:160

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A TAILOR'S INVITATION

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted invitations from ordinary people, including a tailor:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 161

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ مَالِكِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ أَبِي طَلْحَةَ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ، يَقُولُ: إِنَّ خَيَّاطًا دَعَا رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، لِطَعَامٍ صَنَعَهُ، قَالَ أَنَسٌ: فَذَهَبْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، إِلَى ذَلِكَ الطَّعَامِ، فَقَرَّبَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم خُبْزًا مِنْ شَعِيرٍ، وَمَرَقًا فِيهِ دُبَّاءٌ وَقَدِيدٌ، قَالَ أَنَسٌ: فَرَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَتَتَبَّعُ الدُّبَّاءَ حَوَالَيِ الْقَصْعَةِ فَلَمْ أَزَلْ أُحِبُّ الدُّبَّاءَ مِنْ يَوْمِئِذٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said that a tailor invited the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to a meal he had made. Anas said: I went with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to that meal. He served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ barley bread and a broth with gourd and dried meat. Anas said: ***"I saw the Prophet ﷺ picking out the gourd from around the bowl, and I have loved gourd ever since that day."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Malik ibn Anas, from Ishaq ibn 'Abdullah ibn Abi Talhah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 161; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5379.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:161

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows his ***humility***: the leader of the Ummah accepted the invitation of a tailor, and ate what was served — barley bread and gourd broth. He did not refuse the invitations of the poor, nor did he look down on a simple meal.

Notice too the words of Anas: ***"I have loved gourd ever since that day."*** Love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made Anas love what he loved. This is a sign of true love: ***the heart loves what the beloved loves***.

In al-Bukhari's narration, the tailor served the food and then ***went back to his work*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5420). He was not offended; he ate happily. This shows that he did not demand special treatment, and indeed respected people at work.

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SWEETS AND HONEY

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها mentioned two kinds of food that he loved:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 162

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الدَّوْرَقِيُّ، وَسَلَمَةُ بْنُ شَبِيبٍ، وَمَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالُوا: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُحِبُّ الْحَلْوَاءَ وَالْعَسَلَ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ loved sweets and honey."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Ibrahim ad-Dawraqi and Salamah ibn Shabib and Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Abu Usamah, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 162; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5431.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:162

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Honey is mentioned in the Qur'an as a healing: ***"in which there is healing for people"*** (An-Nahl 16:69) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 16:69.

Halwa' (sweets) here means any sweet food, such as dates mixed with milk or flour. Scholars note that liking sweet food is ***human nature***, and he did not deny it. What is forbidden is excess that harms oneself.

Today, when excess sugar causes many diseases, his Sunnah teaches ***balance***: enjoying sweet things in moderation, especially from natural sources such as honey and dates, without going beyond limits.

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ROASTED MEAT

Meat was not his daily food, but when it was available, he ate it gladly:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 165

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مِسْعَرٌ، عَنْ أَبِي صَخْرَةَ جَامِعِ بْنِ شَدَّادٍ، عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ، عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ، قَالَ: ضِفْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ، فَأُتِيَ بِجَنْبٍ مَشْوِيٍّ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ الشَّفْرَةَ فَجَعَلَ يَحُزُّ، فَحَزَّ لِي بِهَا مِنْهُ، قَالَ: فَجَاءَ بِلاَلٌ يُؤْذِنُهُ بِالصَّلاَةِ فَأَلْقَى الشَّفْرَةَ، فَقَالَ: مَا لَهُ تَرِبَتْ يَدَاهُ؟، قَالَ: وَكَانَ شَارِبُهُ قَدْ وَفَى، فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَقُصُّهُ لَكَ عَلَى سِوَاكٍ أَوْ قُصَّهُ عَلَى سِوَاكٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه said: I was a guest with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one night. A roasted side of meat was brought, and he took the knife and began cutting, and cut some of it for me. ***Then Bilal came to tell him of the prayer, so he put down the knife*** and said: "What is wrong with him? May his hands be in the dust!" And his moustache had grown long, so he said to him: "I will trim it for you over a siwak," or "Trim it over a siwak."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Waki', from Mis'ar ibn Kidam, from Abu Sakhrah Jami' ibn Shaddad, from al-Mughirah ibn 'Abdullah, from al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 165; also Sunan Abi Dawud No. 188.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Shaykh al-Albani graded it sahih in Sunan Abi Dawud.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:165

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith contains several lessons. ***First***, he cut the meat himself and ***served his guest*** by cutting some for al-Mughirah. ***Second***, when the call to prayer was made, he at once put down the knife and prepared for prayer. In al-Bukhari's narration, he then prayed without renewing his ablution (Sahih al-Bukhari 5408).

Third, he noticed Bilal's appearance and told him to trim his moustache — a sign that he cared about ***the cleanliness and neatness*** of his Companions. The expression "taribat yadahu" is a common Arabic phrase, not a real prayer against him.

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه mentioned that meat was brought to him and he was given ***the foreleg (dhira')***, which he liked, so he bit from it (ash-Shama'il 166) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 3340). 'Abdullah

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ibn Ja'far narrated that he said: "The best meat is the meat of the back" (ash-Shama'il 170) — hasan chain.

NOTE: NARRATIONS ABOUT THE FORELEG (ASH-SHAMA'IL 167–169)

The narration of Ibn Mas'ud that he was poisoned through a foreleg (No. 167) and the narration of 'A'ishah that the foreleg was not his favourite meat, but he rarely had meat and hurried to it because it cooked quickly (No. 169), both have ***weak chains***. The narration of Abu 'Ubayd (No. 168) has a weak chain but the hadith is ***hasan*** through other routes. The event of his being poisoned at Khaybar is itself established in sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 167–169. sunnah.com/shamail:167

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CHICKEN AND FOWL

Zahdam al-Jarmi related that they were with ***Abu Musa al-Ash'ari*** رضى الله عنه when chicken was served.

A man refused to eat because he had seen chickens eat filth, and had sworn not to eat it. Abu Musa said: ***"Come near, for I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ eating chicken"*** (ash-Shama'il 153) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5517).

This story teaches us ***not to forbid what Allah has made lawful*** on the basis of feelings alone. Chicken is lawful; if a chicken has eaten filth, scholars discuss the ruling of ***jallalah*** (animals whose food is mostly filth), but ordinary chicken remains lawful to eat. Another narration mentions that the man was from Banu Taymillah, and Abu Musa still invited him to come near and eat (ash-Shama'il 155) — sahih chain.

NOTE: THE MEAT OF A BUSTARD (ASH-SHAMA'IL 154)

Safinah, the freed servant of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, narrated that he ate the meat of a bustard with him.

Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Still, wholesome birds are generally lawful to eat.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 154 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:154

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THARID AND THE VIRTUE OF 'A'ISHAH

Tharid is bread torn into pieces and soaked in meat broth — the food most valued by the Arabs because it is filling, soft and nourishing. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used it as a comparison:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 173

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ مُرَّةَ، عَنْ مُرَّةَ الْهَمْدَانِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى الأَشْعَرِيِّ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: فَضْلُ عَائِشَةَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ كَفَضْلِ الثَّرِيدِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الطَّعَامِ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"The superiority of 'A'ishah over other women is like the superiority of tharid over all other food."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from 'Amr ibn Murrah, from Murrah al-Hamdani, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 173; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3411.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:173

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This comparison is very beautiful: just as tharid combines ***the goodness of bread and meat***, 'A'ishah combined many virtues — knowledge, understanding, intelligence and her place as the most beloved wife. She narrated more than two thousand hadiths and was a reference for the Companions in religious knowledge.

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated the same saying (ash-Shama'il 174) — sahih chain. In al-Bukhari's narration, it is preceded by: "Many men reached perfection, and none of the women reached perfection except Asiyah the wife of Pharaoh and Maryam the daughter of 'Imran" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3411).

This hadith also shows how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***taught through comparisons*** close to his listeners' lives. He took the food most valued by the Arabs to explain the virtue of a woman — a way easy to understand and to remember.

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MEALS AND WEDDING FEASTS

Several narrations in this chapter tell of his ***meals and wedding feasts***. Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a wedding feast for Safiyyah with dates and sawiq (roasted barley flour)"*** (ash-Shama'il 176) — sahih. The wedding feast of the leader of a state was a very simple meal.

Jabir رضى الله عنه related that he visited a woman of the Ansar who slaughtered a sheep for him; he ate from it, then a dish of fresh dates was served, and he ate from it. Then he performed ablution for the Zuhr prayer and prayed, then ate again from what was left of the sheep, and prayed 'Asr ***without renewing his ablution*** (ash-Shama'il 179) — sahih.

Anas رضى الله عنه also mentioned that he ***liked what was left at the bottom of the dish*** (ash-Shama'il 183) — sahih. This agrees with the Sunnah of not wasting: he did not leave leftovers in the dish, but finished them. Abu Hurayrah saw him perform ablution after eating dried curd (aqit), then eat from a shoulder of mutton and pray without ablution (ash-Shama'il 175) — sahih chain; scholars explain that the obligation of ablution after eating food cooked by fire was abrogated.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT MEALS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 177–178)

The narration of Salma about the dish he liked (No. 177) and the narration of Jabir that he said "It is as if they knew that we love meat" (No. 178), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 177–178. sunnah.com/shamail:177

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"THEN I AM FASTING"

A beautiful narration shows how he faced ***a house with no food***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 181

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا بِشْرُ بْنُ السَّرِيِّ، عَنْ سُفْيَانَ، عَنْ طَلْحَةَ بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ بِنْتِ طَلْحَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أُمِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَأْتِينِي فَيَقُولُ: أَعِنْدَكِ غَدَاءٌ؟ فَأَقُولُ: لا قَالَتْ: فَيَقُولُ: إِنِّي صَائِمٌ قَالَتْ: فَأَتَانِي يَوْمًا، فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، إِنَّهُ أُهْدِيَتْ لَنَا هَدِيَّةٌ، قَالَ: وَمَا هِيَ؟ قُلْتُ: حَيْسٌ، قَالَ: أَمَا إِنِّي أَصْبَحْتُ صَائِمًا، قَالَتْ: ثُمَّ أَكَلَ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها, said: The Prophet ﷺ would come to me and ask: "Do you have any lunch?" I would say: "No." He would say: ***"Then I am fasting."*** One day he came, and I said: "O Messenger of Allah, we have been given a gift." He asked: "What is it?" I said: "Hays (a mix of dates, ghee and dried curd)." He said: "I began this morning fasting." Then he ate.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Bishr ibn as-Sari, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Talhah ibn Yahya, from 'A'ishah bint Talhah, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 181; also Sahih Muslim No. 1154.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:181

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

When there was no food, he ***did not become angry or complain***. He made it an opportunity for worship — intending a voluntary fast. This is the attitude of a believer: every situation becomes a way of drawing closer to Allah.

This hadith is also ***evidence in fiqh***: a voluntary fast may be intended in the morning if one has eaten nothing since dawn, and one fasting voluntarily may break the fast for a need or good reason, such as accepting a gift. This is the ease in voluntary worship.

Notice too his habit of ***asking his wife*** gently, "Do you have any food?", without demanding or criticising. He did not burden his wife, but accepted the state of the house with contentment. This is a great lesson for husbands in the home.

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CHAPTER 26: ABLUTION AND MEALS

The twenty-sixth chapter discusses ***ablution at meals***. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out of the toilet and food was brought to him. They asked: "Shall we not bring you water for ablution?" He said: ***"I have only been commanded to perform ablution when I stand for prayer"*** (ash-Shama'il 184) — sahih chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1847) and (Sahih Muslim 374).

In another narration he said: "Am I about to pray, that I should perform ablution?" (ash-Shama'il 185) — sahih chain. This hadith shows that ablution is ***not obligatory*** before eating. Yet washing the hands before and after eating remains a good practice for cleanliness.

NOTE: THE BLESSING OF FOOD IN THE TORAH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 186)

Salman said he read in the Torah that the blessing of food is washing after it, and he said: "The blessing of food is washing before it and washing after it." Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Ablution here means washing the hands, not the ablution for prayer.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 186 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:186

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CHAPTER 27: BISMILLAH BEFORE EATING

The twenty-seventh chapter gathers ***his words before and after eating***. The most famous narration is his advice to a child:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 189

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ الصَّبَّاحِ الْهَاشِمِيُّ الْبَصْرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الأَعْلَى، عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، أَنَّهُ دَخَلَ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَعِنْدَهُ طَعَامٌ، فَقَالَ: ادْنُ يَا بُنَيَّ، فَسَمِّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى، وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ، وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ.

TRANSLATION:

'Umar ibn Abi Salamah رضى الله عنه went in to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while food was before him, and he said: ***"Come near, my son. Mention the name of Allah the Exalted, eat with your right hand, and eat from what is in front of you."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Abdullah ibn as-Sabbah al-Hashimi, from 'Abd al-A'la, from Ma'mar ibn Rashid, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'Umar ibn Abi Salamah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 189; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5376.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:189

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'Umar ibn Abi Salamah was his stepson, the son of Umm Salamah. In al-Bukhari's narration, he said: "I was a boy under the care of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and ***my hand used to wander around the dish***" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5376). He corrected him gently — "my son" — and taught him ***three manners***: mentioning the name of Allah, eating with the right hand, and eating from what is near.

If one forgets to mention the name of Allah at the start of a meal, he taught: "Let him say: ***Bismillahi awwalahu wa akhirahu***" (in the name of Allah at its beginning and its end) (ash-Shama'il 188) — sahih chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1858).

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها related that he was eating with six Companions when a Bedouin came and finished the food in two mouthfuls. He said: ***"Had he mentioned the name of Allah, it would have sufficed you***

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all" (ash-Shama'il 192) — sahih chain. ***Bismillah*** brings a blessing that makes a little food enough for many.

Notice also ***how he taught children***. He did not scold 'Umar ibn Abi Salamah in front of people, pull his hand away, or shame him. He called him "my son", then taught him in short, clear words. 'Umar himself said that from that day on, that was how he ate. A gentle correction stays in the heart longer than harsh anger.

Parents can make mealtimes ***times of teaching***: eating together as a family, saying Bismillah aloud so the children hear, eating with the right hand, and taking from what is near. These small manners, repeated every day, become lasting character.

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THE SUPPLICATION AFTER EATING

When he finished eating, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***praised Allah***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 191

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا ثَوْرُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ، عَنْ خَالِدِ بْنِ مَعْدَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ، قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا رُفِعَتِ الْمَائِدَةُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ، يَقُولُ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ، غَيْرَ مُوَدَّعٍ، وَلَا مُسْتَغْنًى عَنْهُ رَبَّنَا.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه said: When the food was removed from in front of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he would say: ***"Al-hamdu lillahi hamdan kathiran tayyiban mubarakan fih, ghayra muwadda'in wa la mustaghnan 'anhu rabbana."*** (All praise is due to Allah, abundant, good and blessed praise; praise that is not bid farewell to, and that we never cease to need, O our Lord.)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Thawr ibn Yazid, from Khalid ibn Ma'dan, from Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 191; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5458.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:191

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This supplication carries deep meaning. The praise is ***"not bid farewell to"*** — we do not say goodbye to Allah's blessing, for we will keep needing it. And ***"we never cease to need it"*** — we always depend on Allah for the next provision.

This supplication teaches ***a sense of servanthood***: each time he finishes eating, a believer acknowledges that the food came from Allah, and that he will keep needing Him. It saves the heart from pride and from feeling self-sufficient.

Think how many are involved in bringing a plate of food to us: the farmer who planted, the rain that fell, the sun that shone, the trader who sold and the hands that cooked. All of them are moved by Allah. So praise after eating is an acknowledgement that ***every morsel is provision from Him***, not merely the fruit of our own effort.

This supplication is a little long, but easy to memorise if repeated after every meal. Begin with the shortest — ***"Alhamdulillah"*** — then add a little at a time until the full wording he taught becomes a habit.

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NOTE: "WHO FED US AND GAVE US DRINK" (ASH-SHAMA'IL 190)

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated the supplication: "Praise be to Allah who fed us and gave us drink, and made us Muslims." Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Yet its meaning is good, and praising Allah after eating is established in sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 190 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:190

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ALLAH IS PLEASED WITH PRAISE

This chapter ends with a hadith that gives great hope:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 193

حَدَّثَنَا هَنَّادٌ، وَمَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالاَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ زَكَرِيَّا بْنِ أَبِي زَائِدَةَ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَرْضَى عَنِ الْعَبْدِ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ الأَكْلَةَ، أَوْ يَشْرَبَ الشَّرْبَةَ فَيَحْمَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Allah is pleased with the servant who eats a morsel and praises Him for it, or drinks a drink and praises Him for it."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Hannad ibn as-Sari and Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Abu Usamah, from Zakariyya ibn Abi Za'idah, from Sa'id ibn Abi Burdah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 193; also Sahih Muslim No. 2734.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:193

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Imagine: ***the pleasure of Allah*** — what every believer seeks most — can be gained by a very simple act: eating a morsel or drinking a sip, then saying ***"Alhamdulillah"***. It needs no wealth, effort or much time.

This hadith changes ***how we see food***. Food is not merely filling the stomach, but an opportunity to give thanks. Every meal — breakfast, lunch, dinner, even a sip of water — can be a reason for Allah to be pleased with us.

Teach children to say ***"Bismillah"*** before eating and ***"Alhamdulillah"*** after. These two light words, practised from childhood, become a habit that brings Allah's pleasure throughout life.

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CHAPTER 28: HIS CUP

The twenty-eighth chapter mentions his ***cup***. Thabit said that Anas brought out to them ***a thick wooden cup, mended with iron***, and said: "O Thabit, this is the cup of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" (ash-Shama'il 194) — hasan chain.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 195

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، قَالَ: أَنْبَأَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ عَاصِمٍ، قَالَ: أَنْبَأَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، قَالَ: أَنْبَأَنَا حُمَيْدٌ، وَثَابِتٌ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: لَقَدْ سَقَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، بِهَذَا الْقَدَحِ الشَّرَابَ كُلَّهُ، الْمَاءَ، وَالنَّبِيذَ، وَالْعَسَلَ، وَاللَّبَنَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"I gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ every kind of drink in this cup (qadah): water, nabidh (date infusion), honey and milk."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ad-Darimi, from 'Amr ibn 'Asim, from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Humayd at-Tawil and Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 195; also Sahih Muslim No. 2008.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:195

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

His cup was ***of wood*** — not gold or silver. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade drinking from vessels of gold and silver, for they are for the disbelievers in this world and for the believers in the Hereafter. This simple cup was used for every kind of drink: water, nabidh, honey and milk.

Nabidh is water in which dates or raisins have been soaked to sweeten it, drunk before it turns sour or intoxicating. It is a nourishing, refreshing drink. Anas kept that cup lovingly — as a remembrance of him.

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CHAPTER 29: FRUIT

The twenty-ninth chapter mentions the ***fruit*** he ate. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ used to eat watermelon with fresh dates"*** (ash-Shama'il 197) — sahih. In Abu Dawud's narration, he explained: "The heat of this is broken by the coolness of that, and the coolness of that by the heat of this" (Sunan Abi Dawud 3836) — hasan.

'Abdullah ibn Ja'far رضى الله عنهما said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ used to eat cucumber with fresh dates"*** (ash-Shama'il 196) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5440). These combinations show ***his wisdom*** in balancing food: sweet, "warm" dates balanced by cooling, watery cucumber and watermelon.

NOTE: CUCUMBERS AND ORNAMENTS FROM BAHRAIN (ASH-SHAMA'IL 201–202)

Ar-Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidh related that she brought him a tray of fresh dates and cucumbers, and he gave her a handful of ornaments that had come from Bahrain. Both narrations have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. That he ate cucumber with dates is established in the narration of 'Abdullah ibn Ja'far above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 201–202. sunnah.com/shamail:201

Modern nutrition also encourages ***variety*** in fruits and vegetables. Dates are rich in energy and fibre, while cucumber and watermelon are rich in water. The combinations he chose suited the hot climate of Arabia.

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THE PRAYER OVER THE FIRST FRUIT

When the first fruit of the season was brought to him, he did not eat it at once:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 200

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ مَالِكِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ (ح) وَحَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مُوسَى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ سُهَيْلِ بْنِ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: كَانَ النَّاسُ إِذَا رَأَوْا أَوَّلَ الثَّمَرِ جَاءُوا بِهِ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَإِذَا أَخَذَهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي ثِمَارِنَا، وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِي مَدِينَتِنَا، وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِي صَاعِنَا وَفِي مُدِّنَا، اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَبْدُكَ وَخَلِيلُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ، وَإِنِّي عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ، وَإِنَّهُ دَعَاكَ لِمَكَّةَ، وَإِنِّي أَدْعُوكَ لِلْمَدِينَةِ، بِمِثْلِ مَا دَعَاكَ بِهِ لِمَكَّةَ وَمِثْلِهِ مَعَهُ، قَالَ: ثُمَّ يَدْعُو أَصْغَرَ وَلِيدٍ يَرَاهُ، فَيُعْطِيهِ ذَلِكَ الثَّمَرَ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: When the people saw the first fruit (of the season), they brought it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When he took it, he said: ***"O Allah, bless us in our fruits, bless us in our city, and bless us in our sa' and our mudd.*** O Allah, Ibrahim is Your servant, Your intimate friend and Your prophet, and I am Your servant and Your prophet. He prayed to You for Makkah, and I pray to You for Madinah for the like of what he prayed for Makkah, and as much again." ***Then he would call the youngest child he saw and give him that fruit.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id; and by another route: Ishaq ibn Musa al-Ansari, from Ma'n ibn 'Isa — both from Malik ibn Anas, from Suhayl ibn Abi Salih, from Abu Salih (his father), from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 200; also Sahih Muslim No. 1373.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:200

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith contains ***two beauties***. First, he ***prayed for blessing*** for Madinah — for its fruits, its city and its measures — just as Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ prayed for Makkah. To this day, the dates of Madinah are known for their blessing.

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Second, he ***gave the first fruit to the youngest child***. He did not keep it for himself, though the first fruit is the most eagerly awaited. This shows ***his love for children*** and his habit of preferring others.

Parents can bring this Sunnah to life: when buying new fruit, ***give the little children first***, and teach them to pray for blessing. Children who are given priority with love grow up with generous souls.

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CHAPTER 30: HIS DRINKS

The thirtieth chapter mentions the ***drinks*** he liked. This chapter contains only two narrations, and both have ***weak chains***:

NOTE: HIS FAVOURITE DRINKS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 203–204)

'A'ishah said: "The drink most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was ***sweet, cold water***" (No. 203). Ibn

'Abbas related that he and Khalid ibn al-Walid went in with him to Maymunah, and milk was served; he drank, then asked Ibn 'Abbas, who was on his right, whether he would give his turn to Khalid. Ibn 'Abbas said: "I will not prefer anyone over your leftover drink." He then taught the supplication for drinking milk (No. 204).

Zubayr 'Ali Za'i graded both chains ***weak***. Yet the etiquette of ***giving first to the one on the right*** when serving drink is established in Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim, and the supplication for drinking milk is narrated by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi with a chain some scholars graded hasan.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 203–204 — weak chains. sunnah.com/shamail:203

Though this chapter's narrations are weak, their meaning is close to human nature: cool, sweet water is a great blessing, especially in a hot land. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said that the first blessing a person will be asked about on the Day of Resurrection is: "Did We not make your body healthy and give you cool water to drink?" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3358) — sahih.

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CHAPTER 31: HOW HE DRANK

The thirty-first chapter, the last in this part, describes ***how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ drank***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 209

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، وَيُوسُفُ بْنُ حَمَّادٍ، قَالا: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَارِثِ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ أَبِي عِصَامٍ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم: كَانَ يَتَنَفَّسُ فِي الإِنَاءِ ثَلاثًا إِذَا شَرِبَ، وَيَقُولُ: هُوَ أَمْرَأُ، وَأَرْوَى.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated: ***"When the Prophet ﷺ drank, he would breathe three times (outside) the vessel, and say: It is more wholesome and more thirst-quenching."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id and Yusuf ibn Hammad, from 'Abd al-Warith ibn Sa'id, from Abu 'Isam, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 209; also Sahih Muslim No. 2028.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:209

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He drank in ***three sips***, breathing outside the vessel between each one. In al-Bukhari's narration, he forbade ***breathing into the vessel*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5630). So "breathing three times in the vessel" means drinking in three parts, moving the vessel away from the mouth to breathe.

He himself mentioned the wisdom: ***"It is more wholesome and more thirst-quenching."*** Drinking slowly gives the body time to absorb the water, prevents choking, and stops one from drinking too much at once. Anas himself practised it and said the Prophet did so (ash-Shama'il 212) — sahih chain.

He also taught us to ***drink with the right hand*** (Sahih Muslim 2020) and to begin with the name of Allah. These small manners, taken together, turn the ordinary act of drinking into rewarded worship.

Try practising this Sunnah the next time we drink: sit down, say Bismillah, hold the cup in the right hand, drink in three sips while breathing outside the cup, then say ***Alhamdulillah***. An ordinary sip of water becomes an act of worship filled with five Sunnahs at once.

NOTE: TWO BREATHS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 210)

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Ibn 'Abbas narrated that when he drank, he took two breaths. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. What is established is three times, as in the sahih narrations above.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 210 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:210

DRINKING WHILE STANDING

The same chapter contains several narrations that he ***drank while standing***. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ drank Zamzam water while standing"*** (ash-Shama'il 205) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 1637). 'Amr ibn Shu'ayb narrated from his father, from his grandfather: "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ drink both standing and sitting" (ash-Shama'il 206) — hasan chain.

'Ali رضى الله عنه performed a light ablution at ar-Rahbah, then drank while standing and said: "This is how I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do it" (ash-Shama'il 208) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5615).

Kabshah also related that he drank from the mouth of a hanging waterskin while standing, and she cut off its mouth to keep it (ash-Shama'il 211) — hasan chain.

NOTE: PROHIBITION AND PERMISSION OF DRINKING WHILE STANDING

In Sahih Muslim there is a hadith ***forbidding drinking while standing*** (Sahih Muslim 2026). Scholars reconcile these proofs: the prohibition is ***makruh tanzih*** (better avoided), and he drank standing ***to show that it is permitted***, or out of need, such as in a crowded place (Zamzam) or from a hanging waterskin. So ***drinking while sitting is better***, and drinking while standing is not a sin.

REFERENCES:

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Chapters 23 to 31 of ash-Shama'il introduce us to the ***meals and table manners*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Among the most important lessons:

CHAPTER	KEY LESSON
23. How he ate	Three fingers; licking the fingers; not reclining
24. Bread	Barley bread; often hungry; no dining table
25. Condiments	Praising vinegar; olive oil; gourd; never criticising food
26. Ablution and meals	Ablution is for prayer, not for eating
27. Words at meals	Bismillah; eating with the right; Alhamdulillah
28–30. Cup, fruit, drinks	A wooden cup; the first fruit for a child
31. How he drank	Three sips; sitting is better

A MESSAGE FOR US

We live in an age of abundant food, while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ often spent the night hungry. May we not forget ***to be grateful***, not ***waste***, and always ***share*** with those in need. Begin every meal with Bismillah, and end it with Alhamdulillah.

The discussion continues in ***Part 4***: his perfume, speech, laughter, joking, poetry, night conversation, sleep and worship — the next chapters of ash-Shama'il. And Allah knows best.

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APPENDIX: A CHECKLIST OF MEAL MANNERS

Here is a summary of the meal manners of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ discussed in this book, with their sources. This list can be printed and placed in the kitchen or by the dining mat as a reminder for the whole family.

MANNER	SOURCE
Before eating, saying Bismillah	Sahih al-Bukhari 5376
If forgotten: "Bismillahi awwalahu wa akhirahu"	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1858
Eating and drinking with the right hand	Sahih Muslim 2020
Eating from what is near	Sahih al-Bukhari 5376
Not eating while reclining	ash-Shama'il 138
Eating with three fingers and licking them afterwards	ash-Shama'il 140
Picking up a fallen morsel, removing any dirt and eating it	Sahih Muslim 2034
Never criticising food	Sahih al-Bukhari 5409
Not filling the stomach: a third for food, a third for drink, a third for breath	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2380
Praising Allah after eating and drinking	ash-Shama'il 193
Drinking in three sips and not breathing into the vessel	Sahih al-Bukhari 5630
Drinking while sitting (preferred)	Sahih Muslim 2026
Giving the first fruit to a child	ash-Shama'il 200

Begin with two or three manners, practise them until they become habits, then add the next. A small Sunnah done consistently is more beloved to Allah than a great deed that is abandoned.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Arabic terms below appear throughout this book. Knowing them makes it easier to follow the narrations and the explanations of the scholars, and to continue studying ash-Shama'il in its commentaries.

TERM	MEANING
Idam	Anything eaten with bread as a condiment: vinegar, oil, broth, meat, dates
Khiwan	A raised dining table, the custom of the wealthy and of kings
Sukurrujah	Small dishes for side dishes and appetisers
Sufrah	A leather mat spread on the floor to eat on
Iq'a'	Sitting hunched or squatting, as he did when eating out of hunger
Tharid	Bread torn into pieces and soaked in meat broth
Sawiq	Roasted barley flour, mixed with water or fat
Hays	A mixture of dates, ghee and dried curd
Aqit	Dried curd made from milk
Dhira'	The foreleg (shoulder) of a sheep or goat
Dubba'	Gourd, a soft vegetable he loved
Halwa'	Sweet food in general
Daqal	Poor-quality dates
Jallalah	An animal whose food is mostly filth
Walimah	The wedding feast
Nabidh	Water in which dates or raisins were soaked, drunk before it ferments
Qadah	A drinking cup
Qirbah	A waterskin made of leather
Qana'ah	Contentment with what Allah has given
Makruh tanzih	Disliked, better avoided, but not sinful
Sahih / Hasan / Da'if	Grades of a chain: authentic, good, weak

Many of these words describe a simple life: a leather mat instead of a table, barley instead of fine flour, a wooden cup instead of silver. The vocabulary itself reminds us how plain the table of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was.

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PART FOUR

His Laughter Was a Smile

Chapters 32–40 of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah

His Perfume, Speech, Laughter, Joking, Poetry, Night Conversation, the Hadith of Umm Zar', Sleep and Worship

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HIS LAUGHTER WAS A SMILE

In the last three books, we came to know the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his clothing and his table. This fourth book brings us closer still to ***his person***: his fragrance, how he spoke, laughed and joked, his attitude to poetry, the stories told at night, his sleep and his worship. It follows chapters 32 to 40 of ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** by ***Imam at-Tirmidhi***.

These chapters contain ***66 narrations***. Chapter 40 alone, on his worship, contains 25. Chapter 38 contains only one hadith, yet it is among the longest in the book: the story of ***eleven women*** who described their husbands. As in the previous books, sahih and hasan narrations are presented in Hadith boxes, while weak narrations are explained in Note boxes.

The picture that emerges is very beautiful: a Prophet ***whose laughter was a smile***, who joked yet never lied, who asked a small child about his little bird, and who stood in prayer at night until his feet swelled — then said: ***"Should I not be a grateful servant?"***

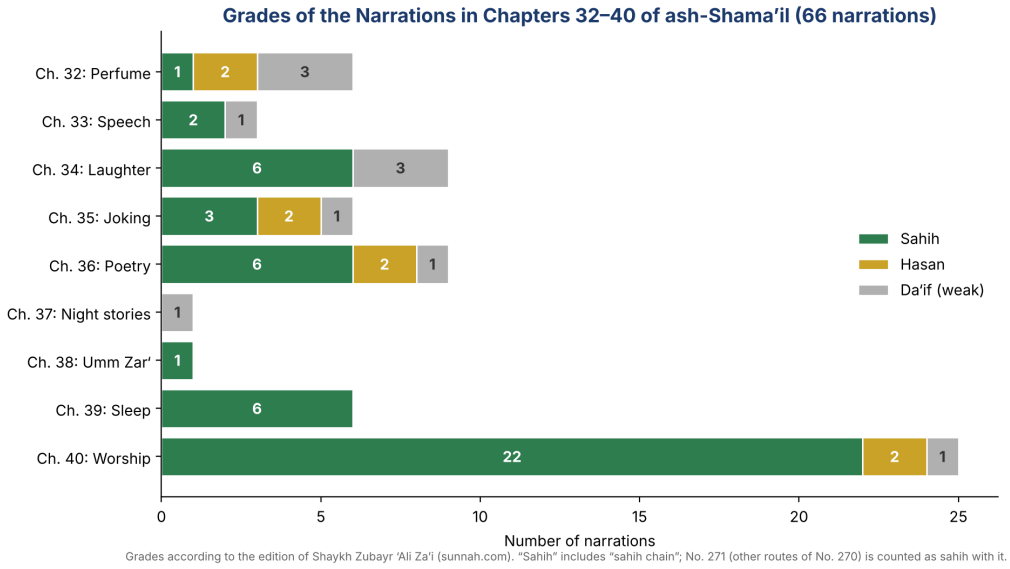


Figure 4: The grades of the narrations in chapters 32–40 of ash-Shama'il.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this book is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box, based on the edition of Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i as shown on sunnah.com. Of the 66 narrations in these chapters, more than four-fifths are sahih or hasan.

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A GREAT MORAL CHARACTER

Before we come to know his smile, his words and his worship, let us hear how Allah Himself praised His Messenger:

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 praise comes from Allah, not from people. Ibn Kathir relates that when 'A'ishah was asked about the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, she said: ***"His character was the Qur'an"*** — he practised its commands and avoided its prohibitions, as though the Qur'an lived in him Tafsir Ibn Kathir 68:4.

The chapters of this book show that character in small daily matters: he ***never refused a gift of perfume***, spoke slowly and clearly, greeted his Companions with a smile, joked with children and the poor, appreciated good poetry, listened attentively to his wife's stories, and slept and woke with remembrance of Allah.

This noble character is also rooted in ***worship***. His smile by day was never separate from his prostration by night. That is why the last chapter of this book, on his worship, is the key to understanding the chapters before it: a heart close to Allah radiates gentleness to people.

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CHAPTER 32: HIS PERFUME

The thirty-second chapter of ash-Shama'il is titled ***"What has come about the perfume of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It contains six narrations: one sahih, two hasan and three weak (Figure 4).

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a sukkah (perfume container) from which he scented himself"*** (ash-Shama'il 215) — hasan chain; also (Sunan Abi Dawud 4162).

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 216

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَزْرَةُ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ ثُمَامَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: كَانَ أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ، لا يَرُدُّ الطِّيبَ، وَقَالَ أَنَسٌ: إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَانَ لا يَرُدُّ الطِّيبَ.

TRANSLATION:

Thumamah ibn 'Abdullah said: Anas ibn Malik never refused perfume. And Anas said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ never refused perfume."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from 'Azrah ibn Thabit, from Thumamah ibn 'Abdullah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 216; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 2582.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:216

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Perfume is ***a gift light to carry but great in meaning***. Refusing it may hurt the giver, while accepting it burdens no one. That is why he never refused it, and Anas — his servant for ten years — inherited this Sunnah in his own life.

He also said: ***"Women and perfume have been made dear to me from your world, and the comfort of my eye has been placed in prayer"*** (Sunan an-Nasa'i 3939) — hasan. Notice the order: perfume is mentioned among the things of this world he loved, but his ***true delight*** was prayer.

Scholars note that wearing perfume, especially when going to the mosque and meeting people, is part of a Muslim's ***cleanliness and good appearance***. A pleasant scent delights the angels and people, while an unpleasant smell may trouble the worshipper beside us.

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"THREE THINGS NOT TO BE REFUSED"

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrated that he said: ***"Three things are not refused: cushions, oil (perfume) and milk"*** (ash-Shama'il 217) — hasan chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2790). All three were gifts commonly offered to a guest as a sign of honour, and refusing them could seem ungrateful.

This hadith teaches ***the manners of receiving hospitality***. When a host offers a cushion to lean on, a drink of milk or perfume, accept it gladly. It pleases the host and strengthens brotherhood. Today, this Sunnah can be revived by accepting refreshments and small gifts with a cheerful face.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT PERFUME (ASH-SHAMA'IL 218–221)

The narration of Abu Hurayrah that ***men's perfume*** is that whose scent is apparent and colour hidden, while women's perfume is that whose colour is apparent and scent hidden (No. 218–219), the narration of Abu 'Uthman an-Nahdi about sweet basil that should not be refused because it is from Paradise (No. 220), and the narration of Jarir before 'Umar (No. 221) — all have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, and No. 221 is very weak.

Yet the meaning of No. 218 is acted on by many scholars on the basis of other evidence: women are forbidden to wear strong perfume when going out past unrelated men, while men are encouraged to wear fragrant perfume.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 218–221. sunnah.com/shamail:218

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CHAPTER 33: HOW HE SPOKE

The thirty-third chapter describes ***how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke***. It is short — only three narrations — but rich in lessons:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 222

حَدَّثَنَا حُمَيْدُ بْنُ مَسْعَدَةَ الْبَصْرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حُمَيْدُ بْنُ الأَسْوَدِ، عَنْ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: مَا كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَسْرُدُ سَرْدَكُمْ هَذَا، وَلَكِنَّهُ كَانَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِكَلامٍ بَيِّنٍ فَصْلٍ، يَحْفَظُهُ مَنْ جَلَسَ إِلَيْهِ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not speak rapidly, one word after another, the way you speak. Rather, he spoke in clear, distinct words, so that whoever sat with him could memorise them."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Humayd ibn Mas'adah al-Basri, from Humayd ibn al-Aswad, from Usamah ibn Zayd al-Laythi, from az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 222; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3639.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:222

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a teacher, and a good teacher speaks to be ***understood***, not to appear clever. In al-Bukhari's narration, 'A'ishah mentions that he spoke so clearly that ***if someone wished to count his words, he could count them*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3568).

Anas رضى الله عنه added: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to repeat his words three times so that they would be understood"*** (ash-Shama'il 223) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 95). This repetition was not because his listeners were slow, but because important matters must ***be delivered*** correctly. Teachers, parents and preachers can follow this method.

NOTE: THE DESCRIPTION OF HIND IBN ABI HALAH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 224)

Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali asked his maternal uncle, Hind ibn Abi Halah, to describe how he spoke. Hind said that he was always thoughtful, long in silence, did not speak without need, spoke in brief words rich in meaning

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(jawami‘ al-kalim), honoured blessings however small and never criticised food. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr ‘Ali Za’i. Yet much of its meaning is supported by other sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama’il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 224 — weak chain (Zubayr ‘Ali Za’i). sunnah.com/shamail:224

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CHAPTER 34: HIS LAUGHTER

The thirty-fourth chapter describes ***the laughter of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. It is from this chapter that the title of this part is taken:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 227

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ خَالِدٍ الْخَلَالُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ السَّيْلَحَانِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا لَيْثُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ أَبِي حَبِيبٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ، قَالَ: مَا كَانَ ضَحِكُ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِلا تَبَسُّمًا.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn al-Harith رضى الله عنه said: ***"The laughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was nothing but a smile."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Khalid al-Khallal, from Yahya ibn Ishaq as-Saylahini, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from Yazid ibn Abi Habib, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Harith ibn Jaz' رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 227; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3642.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:227

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

His laughter was ***a smile***, not loud, roaring laughter. This does not mean he was gloomy; rather he was always cheerful, but his cheerfulness was adorned with ***calm and dignity***. He also said: "Do not laugh much, for much laughter deadens the heart" (Sunan Ibn Majah 4193) — hasan.

A smile is also ***charity***. He said: "Your smiling in the face of your brother is charity" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1956). It is the easiest charity: it needs no wealth and tires no one, yet it gladdens the heart of whoever sees it.

His smile was not a mask for difficulty. He smiled while carrying the burdens of leadership, poverty and loss. That is why his smile is a lesson in ***inner contentment***: a heart at peace with Allah finds it easy to smile at people, even on hard days. Let us practise this Sunnah first at home, with our spouses, children and parents, before we practise it with strangers.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT HIS SMILE (ASH-SHAMA'IL 225–226)

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The narration of Jabir ibn Samurah that his shins were slender and his laughter was only a smile, so that when you looked at him "you would think he wore kohl though he did not" (No. 225), and the narration of 'Abdullah ibn al-Harith: "I have not seen anyone who smiled more than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" (No. 226)

— both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. The meaning of his smile is established in the sahih narration above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 225–226. sunnah.com/shamail:225

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"HE NEVER SAW ME WITHOUT SMILING"

A Companion from Yemen, Jarir ibn 'Abdullah al-Bajali, remembered one thing that never changed whenever he met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 229

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاوِيَةُ بْنُ عَمْرٍو، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا زَائِدَةُ، عَنْ بَيَانٍ، عَنْ قَيْسِ بْنِ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ جَرِيرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ، قَالَ: مَا حَجَبَنِي رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مُنْذُ أَسْلَمْتُ، وَلا رَآنِي إِلا ضَحِكَ.

TRANSLATION:

Jarir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never kept me from seeing him since I embraced Islam, and he never saw me without smiling."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani', from Mu'awiyah ibn 'Amr, from Za'idah ibn Qudamah, from Bayan ibn Bishr, from Qays ibn Abi Hazim, from Jarir ibn 'Abdullah al-Bajali رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 229; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3035.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:229

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Jarir was the chief of his people who embraced Islam in the last years of the Prophet's life. Yet he was never kept from entering, and ***every time the Prophet saw him, he smiled***. Imagine how Jarir felt: every meeting was greeted with a joyful face. This is how he ***won people's hearts***.

In al-Bukhari's narration, Jarir added that he complained he could not sit firmly on a horse, so the Prophet struck his chest and prayed: "O Allah, make him firm and make him a guide who is rightly guided" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3035). His smile came with ***care and supplication***.

Imam at-Tirmidhi repeats the same narration through another route (ash-Shama'il 230) — sahih. The lesson is clear: greet family, friends and guests with a smile. A sincere smile can be the beginning of good relationships and effective da'wah.

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LAUGHING UNTIL HIS MOLARS SHOWED

Though his laughter was usually a smile, there were times when he laughed ***until his molars showed***. Interestingly, most of these narrations relate to ***the vastness of Allah's mercy***. Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrated his words about a man brought forward on the Day of Resurrection. His minor sins are shown to him, while his major sins are hidden. He admits them all in fear, then it is said: "Replace each of his bad deeds with a good deed."

The man then says: ***"I have sins that I do not see here!"*** Abu Dharr said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ laugh until his molars showed" (ash-Shama'il 228) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 190). The man who had been afraid now asks for his major sins to be shown too — because they will be turned into good deeds!

Ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه narrated the story of ***the last person to come out of the Fire***. He is told to enter Paradise but thinks it is already full. Then he is told: "Make a wish," and he is given what he wished for ***and ten times this world***. He says: "Are You mocking me, while You are the King?" Ibn Mas'ud said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ laugh until his molars showed" (ash-Shama'il 231) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 6571).

NOTE: LAUGHTER AT THE BATTLE OF THE TRENCH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 233)

The narration of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas that he laughed at the Battle of the Trench when Sa'd shot an enemy hiding behind a shield has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 233 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:233

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ALLAH MARVELS AT A SERVANT WHO SEEKS FORGIVENESS

'Ali ibn Rabi'ah related that he saw 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه mount his riding animal. When he put his foot in the stirrup, he said ***Bismillah***; when he had settled on it, he said ***Alhamdulillah***, then the supplication for riding, then praised Allah three times and declared His greatness three times, then said: "Glory be to You, I have wronged myself, so forgive me, for none forgives sins but You."

This supplication for riding is taken from the Qur'an: ***"Exalted is He who has subjected this to us"*** (Az-Zukhruf 43:13) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 43:13.

Then 'Ali laughed. When asked why, he said he had seen the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do the same and then laugh, and he said: ***"Your Lord marvels at His servant when he says: Forgive me my sins — knowing that none forgives sins but He"*** (ash-Shama'il 232) — sahih; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3446).

His laughter here was ***laughter of joy*** at Allah's mercy. A servant who admits his sins and knows that only Allah forgives has truly known his Lord. This hadith also teaches us ***the supplication for travel*** — practise it every time we get into a car, on a motorcycle or on a plane.

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CHAPTER 35: HIS JOKING

The thirty-fifth chapter describes ***the joking of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. He joked, but his joking had one condition he never broke:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 236

حَدَّثَنَا عَبَّاسُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الدُّورِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ شَقِيقٍ، قَالَ: أَنبأَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ الْمُبَارِكِ، عَنِ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ سَعِيدٍ الْمَقْبُرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، إِنَّكَ تُدَاعِبُنَا، قَالَ: إِنِّي لا أَقُولُ إِلا حَقًّا.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: They (the Companions) said: "O Messenger of Allah, you joke with us." He said: ***"Indeed, I say nothing but the truth."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Abbas ibn Muhammad ad-Duri, from 'Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn Shaqiq, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Usamah ibn Zayd al-Laythi, from Sa'id ibn Abi Sa'id al-Maqburi, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 236; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 1990.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:236

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Companions were somewhat surprised: how could a Prophet joke? He explained that his joking ***never contained a lie***. This is the dividing line between permitted and forbidden joking. He said: "Woe to the one who speaks and lies to make people laugh" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2315).

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that he once called him: ***"O you with two ears!"*** (ash-Shama'il 234) — hasan.

It was a truthful joke — everyone has two ears — but said warmly to a boy who served him. Some scholars say it was also praise for Anas, who ***listened well***.

Truthful joking has ***great benefits***: it brightens the atmosphere, strengthens relationships and removes people's fear of their leader. But it must not hurt, insult or belittle others.

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ABU 'UMAYR AND HIS LITTLE BIRD

Among his most touching jokes was his joking with ***a small child***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 235

حَدَّثَنَا هَنَّادُ بْنُ السَّرِيِّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي التَّيَّاحِ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ: إِنْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، لَيُخَالِطُنَا حَتَّى يَقُولَ لأَخٍ لِي صَغِيرٍ: يَا أَبَا عُمَيْرٍ، مَا فَعَلَ النُّغَيْرُ؟

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to mix with us so closely that he would say to my little brother: O Abu 'Umayr, what happened to the nughayr (little bird)?"***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Hannad ibn as-Sari, from Waki', from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu at-Tayyah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 235; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 6129.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:235

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Abu 'Umayr was Anas's little brother, a small child who had a little bird (nughayr). When the bird died and he was sad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke to him with ***rhyming*** words — "Ya Aba 'Umayr, ma fa'alan-nughayr?" — to comfort him. The leader of the Ummah made time for a child's sadness.

Scholars wrote whole books about this short hadith and drew ***dozens of lessons*** from it: it is permissible to call a child by a kunyah (Abu so-and-so), to joke with children, for children to play with birds, and a leader should mix with his people.

Parents and grandparents can follow this Sunnah: ***care about a child's world*** — their toys, their pets and their small joys. Children who feel valued grow up confident and caring.

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THE CAMEL'S OFFSPRING AND ZAHIR

Anas رضى الله عنه related that a man asked him for a mount. He said: "I will give you ***a she-camel's offspring*** to ride." The man was puzzled: "O Messenger of Allah, what can I do with a camel's offspring?" He said: ***"Does a she-camel give birth to anything but camels?"*** (ash-Shama'il 237) — sahih chain. This joke was entirely true: even a grown camel is the "offspring" of its mother.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 238

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مَنْصُورٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَادِيَةِ كَانَ اسْمُهُ زَاهِرًا، وَكَانَ يُهْدِي إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، هَدِيَّةً مِنَ الْبَادِيَةِ، فَيُجَهِّزُهُ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَخْرُجَ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم: إِنَّ زَاهِرًا بَادِيَتُنَا وَنَحْنُ حَاضِرُوهُ وَكَانَ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُحِبُّهُ وَكَانَ رَجُلًا دَمِيمًا، فَأَتَاهُ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، يَوْمًا وَهُوَ يَبِيعُ مَتَاعَهُ وَاحْتَضَنَهُ مِنْ خَلْفِهِ وَهُوَ لا يُبْصِرُهُ، فَقَالَ: مَنْ هَذَا؟ أَرْسِلْنِي فَالْتَفَتَ فَعَرَفَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَجَعَلَ لا يَأْلُو مَا أَلْصَقَ ظَهْرَهُ بِصَدْرِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم حِينَ عَرَفَهُ، فَجَعَلَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، يَقُولُ: مَنْ يَشْتَرِي هَذَا الْعَبْدَ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، إِذًا وَاللَّهِ تَجِدُنِي كَاسِدًا، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم: لَكِنْ عِنْدَ اللهِ لَسْتَ بِكَاسِدٍ أَوْ قَالَ: أَنْتَ عِنْدَ اللهِ غَالٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه related that a man from the desert named Zahir used to bring gifts from the desert to the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ would provide for him when he wanted to leave. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Zahir is our desert, and we are his town." The Prophet ﷺ loved him, and he was a plain-looking man. One day the Prophet ﷺ came to him while he was selling his goods, and embraced him from behind so that he could not see him. He said: "Let me go! Who is this?" Then he turned and recognised the Prophet ﷺ, and once he recognised him, he kept pressing his back against the Prophet's chest. The Prophet ﷺ began to say: "Who will buy this slave?" He said: "O Messenger of Allah, then by Allah you will find me unsellable goods." The Prophet ﷺ said: ***"But in the sight of Allah you are not unsellable,"*** or he said: ***"In the sight of Allah you are precious."***

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CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Mansur, from 'Abd ar-Razzaq, from Ma'mar ibn Rashid, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 238.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:238

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Zahir was a Bedouin who was ***plain-looking*** and poor. Yet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved him, joked with him in the middle of the market and embraced him from behind. When Zahir belittled himself — "I am unsellable goods" — he lifted his spirit: ***"In the sight of Allah you are precious."***

This hadith teaches that ***a person's worth is not in looks or wealth***. He honoured those whom society looked down on, and used joking as a way to gladden their hearts. Zahir brought produce from the desert as gifts, and the Prophet repaid him with provisions to take home — a relationship of mutual giving.

NOTE: THE OLD WOMAN AND PARADISE (ASH-SHAMA'IL 239)

Al-Hasan al-Basri narrated that an old woman asked him to pray that she enter Paradise. He said: "No old woman will enter Paradise." She turned away weeping, and he explained that she would not enter it as an old woman, for Allah makes the people of Paradise young again (Al-Waqi'ah 56:35–37). This narration is ***mursal with a weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, though its meaning agrees with those verses.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 239 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:239

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CHAPTER 36: POETRY

The thirty-sixth chapter gathers ***his sayings about poetry***. Allah denies that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a poet:

"We did not give Prophet Muhammad, knowledge of poetry, nor is it befitting for him" (Ya-Sin 36:69) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 36:69.

Yet this does not mean he hated all poetry. Poetry is simply speech: ***the good is praised, the bad is blamed***. He praised poetry that was true and wise:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 241

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ الثَّوْرِيُّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ عُمَيْرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ كَلِمَةٍ قَالَهَا الشَّاعِرُ، كَلِمَةُ لَبِيدٍ: أَلَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مَا خَلَا اللَّهَ بَاطِلُ، وَكَادَ أُمَيَّةُ بْنُ أَبِي الصَّلْتِ أَنْ يُسْلِمَ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"The truest words ever spoken by a poet are the words of Labid: Indeed, everything other than Allah is vanishing."*** And Umayyah ibn Abi as-Salt almost became a Muslim.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr, from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 241; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3841.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:241

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Labid ibn Rabi'ah was a famous Arab poet of the pre-Islamic era who later embraced Islam. His verse — ***"Indeed, everything other than Allah is vanishing"*** — sums up the reality of tawhid: only Allah endures, all else will perish. In another narration he called it ***the most poetic words*** spoken by the Arabs (ash-Shama'il 247) — sahih.

Umayyah ibn Abi as-Salt was a poet whose verse was full of tawhid and wisdom, yet he ***did not embrace Islam***. Ash-Sharid رضى الله عنه related that he rode behind the Prophet and recited a hundred verses of

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Umayyah, and after each verse the Prophet said: "Go on," then said: "He almost became a Muslim" (ash-Shama'il 248) — sahih. Knowledge and beautiful words are not enough without ***faith***.

NOTE: THE VERSE OF IBN RAWAHAH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 240)

'A'ishah was asked whether he ever quoted poetry. She said he sometimes quoted the verse of Ibn Rawahah: "And news will come to you from one you did not equip." Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 240 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:240

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VERSE ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Sometimes he spoke rhythmic words like verse, without intending to compose poetry. Jundub ibn Sufyan رضى الله عنه narrated that his finger was struck by a stone and bled, and he said: ***"Are you anything but a finger that bled? And it is in the path of Allah that you suffered"*** (ash-Shama'il 242) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 2802).

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 244

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ الثَّوْرِيُّ، قَالَ: أَنْبَأَنَا أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ، عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ: أَفَرَرْتُمْ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَا أَبَا عُمَارَةَ؟ فَقَالَ: لا وَاللَّهِ مَا وَلَّى رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَلَكِنْ وَلَّى سَرَعَانُ النَّاسِ، تَلَقَّتْهُمْ هَوَازِنُ بِالنَّبْلِ، وَرَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، عَلَى بَغْلَتِهِ، وَأَبُو سُفْيَانَ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ آخِذٌ بِلِجَامِهَا، وَرَسُولُ اللهِ يَقُولُ: أَنَا النَّبِيُّ لا كَذِبْ أَنَا ابْنُ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبْ.

TRANSLATION:

Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما was asked by a man: "Did you all flee from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (at Hunayn), O Abu 'Umarah?" He said: "No, by Allah! The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not turn back. Rather, the hasty ones among the people turned back when the Hawazin met them with arrows. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was on his white mule, and Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib was holding its bridle, while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was saying: ***I am the Prophet, no lie! I am the son of 'Abd al-Muttalib!***"

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 244; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 2864.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:244

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Battle of Hunayn took place after the conquest of Makkah. The Muslim army was very large, and some ***took pride in their numbers***. When ambushed by the arrows of Hawazin, many retreated. But the

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Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood firm on his mule, even ***advancing towards the enemy*** while calling out: "I am the Prophet, no lie!"

His words were rhythmic, but they came out spontaneously, not as composed poetry. They show his extraordinary ***courage***: he announced his name and lineage clearly so the enemy would know him, without fear. This courage came from ***perfect reliance*** on Allah, for he was certain of His promise.

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HASSAN IBN THABIT AND IBN RAWAHAH

Poetry was also used ***to defend Islam***. During 'Umrat al-Qada', 'Abdullah ibn Rawahah walked in front of the Prophet reciting verses at the idolaters. 'Umar rebuked him for reciting poetry before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and in the Sanctuary, and he said: ***"Leave him, O 'Umar, for it strikes them faster than a shower of arrows"*** (ash-Shama'il 245) — hasan chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2847).

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had ***a pulpit set up in the mosque for Hassan ibn Thabit***, and he would stand on it praising and defending the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in verse, and he said: ***"Allah supports Hassan with the Holy Spirit as long as he defends the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"*** (ash-Shama'il 249) — hasan chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2846).

Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه said: "I sat with the Prophet ﷺ more than a hundred times. His Companions would recite poetry to one another and recall things from the days of ignorance, while he was silent, ***and sometimes smiled with them***" (ash-Shama'il 246) — sahih; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2850). His gatherings were not stiff; they were warm, yet always restrained.

The lesson: art and beautiful words can be ***tools of da'wah and the defence of truth***. Today, poetry, nasheeds, writing and media can play the same role — as long as their content is true and does not distract from Allah.

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CHAPTER 37: NIGHT CONVERSATION

The thirty-seventh chapter is titled ***"What has come about the night conversation of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. In general, he ***disliked talking after 'Isha'*** so as not to be late rising for the night prayer and Fajr (Sahih al-Bukhari 568). Yet good and beneficial conversation, especially with family, was allowed.

NOTE: THE TALE OF KHURAFAH (ASH-SHAMA'IL 251)

'A'ishah narrated that he told his wives a story one night, and one of them said: "This is like the tale of Khurafah!" He explained that Khurafah was a man of Banu 'Udhrah who was captured by the jinn, then returned and told of the wonders he had seen. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. The phrase "the tale of Khurafah" later became a proverb for an astonishing story.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 251 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:251

Though this narration is weak, this chapter opens the door to a sahih and very beautiful hadith in the next chapter — a story told by 'A'ishah to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which he ***listened to attentively*** until the end.

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CHAPTER 38: THE HADITH OF UMM ZAR‘

The thirty-eighth chapter contains only one hadith: ***the hadith of Umm Zar‘***. ‘A’ishah رضى الله عنها related that ***eleven women*** sat together and agreed to hide nothing about their husbands (ash-Shama’il 252) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5189). Each woman described her husband in rhyming Arabic full of imagery.

One husband is described as ***the meat of a lean camel on a mountain top*** — hard to climb and not worth taking. Another is too tall and ill-natured: if his wife speaks she is divorced, if she keeps silent she is left hanging. Others are praised: ***like the night of Tihamah*** — neither hot nor cold, neither frightening nor tiresome.

The eleventh woman, ***Umm Zar‘***, described her husband Abu Zar‘ with the longest praise: he honoured her with jewellery and food, respected her family, and his home was full of comfort. But one day Abu Zar‘ divorced her and married another woman. Umm Zar‘ later married a generous man, yet she said: ***all his gifts did not equal the smallest vessel of Abu Zar‘***.

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"I AM TO YOU AS ABU ZAR' WAS"

When 'A'ishah had finished her story, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to her: ***"I am to you as Abu Zar' was to Umm Zar'."*** (ash-Shama'il 252). This is the climax of the story: he chose the most beloved husband in the tale, and expressed his love for his wife in the most beautiful way.

Scholars note that he likened himself to Abu Zar' in ***love and generosity***, not in divorce. He never divorced 'A'ishah, and she remained his wife until he passed away in her arms.

This hadith is full of ***lessons for married life***. First, he ***listened to his wife's long story*** to the end without tiring. Second, he expressed his love in clear words. Third, the story reminds us that it is a husband's character — generosity, gentleness and respect — that a wife remembers, not merely wealth.

This Sunnah is very relevant today, when many couples sit together but are busy with their phones. Make time to ***listen and talk*** with your spouse, and do not be shy to express love — for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself did so.

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CHAPTER 39: HIS SLEEP

The thirty-ninth chapter describes ***the sleep of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. Sleep is a great blessing from Allah:

"made your sleep [a means for] rest" (An-Naba' 78:9) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 78:9.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 253

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا إِسْرَائِيلُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ، عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، كَانَ إِذَا أَخَذَ مَضْجَعَهُ وَضَعَ كَفَّهُ الْيُمْنَى تَحْتَ خَدِّهِ الأَيْمَنِ، وَقَالَ: رَبِّ قِنِي عَذَابَكَ يَوْمَ تَبْعَثُ عِبَادَكَ.

TRANSLATION:

Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما related: ***"When the Prophet*** ﷺ ***lay down in his bed, he would place his right palm under his right cheek and say: Rabbi qini 'adhabaka yawma tab'athu 'ibadak (My Lord, protect me from Your punishment on the Day You resurrect Your servants)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Isra'il ibn Yunus, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from 'Abdullah ibn Yazid al-Khatmi, from al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 253; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3399.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:253

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He slept ***on his right side***, with his right palm under his right cheek. In another narration he said "yawma tajma'u 'ibadak" (on the Day You gather Your servants) (ash-Shama'il 254) — sahih. This supplication reminds us that ***sleep resembles death***, and waking resembles resurrection.

Doctors also say that sleeping on the right side ***eases the work of the heart*** and helps digestion for many people. Yet we practise it chiefly because it is the Sunnah, and every Sunnah practised with the right intention turns our sleep into ***an act of worship***.

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SUPPLICATIONS BEFORE AND AFTER SLEEP

Before sleeping and after waking, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said a short supplication with very deep meaning:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 255

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ رِبْعِيِّ بْنِ حِرَاشٍ، عَنْ حُذَيْفَةَ، قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا أَوَى إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ، قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ بِاسْمِكَ أَمُوتُ وَأَحْيَا، وَإِذَا اسْتَيْقَظَ، قَالَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَمَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ.

TRANSLATION:

Hudhayfah رضى الله عنه said: When the Prophet ﷺ went to his bed, he would say: ***"Allahumma bismika amutu wa ahya (O Allah, in Your name I die and I live)."*** And when he woke up, he would say: ***"Al-hamdu lillahil-ladhi ahyana ba'da ma amatana wa ilayhin-nushur (Praise be to Allah who gave us life after He had caused us to die, and to Him is the resurrection)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from 'Abd ar-Razzaq, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr, from Rib'i ibn Hirash, from Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 255; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 6312.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:255

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This supplication contains ***awareness of death and resurrection***. Every night we temporarily "die", and every morning Allah brings us back to life. So a new day is ***a new chance*** Allah gives — a chance to repent, to do good and to be grateful.

He also praised Allah for ***the basic blessings*** before sleeping:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 258

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حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مَنْصُورٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَفَّانُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، كَانَ إِذَا أَوَى إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ، قَالَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَكَفَانَا وَآوَانَا، فَكَمْ مِمَّنْ لا كَافِيَ لَهُ وَلا مُؤْوِيَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه related that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to his bed, he would say: ***"Al-hamdu lillahil-ladhi at'amana wa saqana wa kafana wa awana, fa kam mimman la kafiya lahu wa la mu'wi (Praise be to Allah who fed us and gave us drink, sufficed us and gave us shelter. How many there are who have no one to suffice them and no one to shelter them)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Mansur, from 'Affan ibn Muslim, from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 258; also Sahih Muslim No. 2715.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:258

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This supplication teaches us to count blessings: ***food, drink, sufficiency and shelter***. Then he remembered those who lack them — many have no shelter. This supplication grows ***gratitude and empathy*** every night before we close our eyes.

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THE THREE QULS BEFORE SLEEP

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها described what he did every night before sleeping:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 256

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْمُفَضَّلُ بْنُ فَضَالَةَ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، أُرَاهُ عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، إِذَا أَوَى إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ جَمَعَ كَفَّيْهِ فَنَفَثَ فِيهِمَا، وَقَرَأَ فِيهِمَا: قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ وَ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ وَ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ، ثُمَّ مَسَحَ بِهِمَا مَا اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ، يَبْدَأُ بِهِمَا رَأْسَهُ وَوَجْهَهُ وَمَا أَقْبَلَ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ، يَصْنَعُ ذَلِكَ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"Every night, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to his bed, he would put his palms together, blow into them and recite into them: Qul huwallahu ahad, Qul a'udhu bi rabbil-falaq and Qul a'udhu bi rabbin-nas. Then he would wipe with them whatever he could of his body, beginning with his head, his face and the front of his body. He did that three times."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from al-Mufaddal ibn Fadalah, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 256; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5017.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:256

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

These three surahs — ***al-Ikhlas, al-Falaq and an-Nas*** — are known as al-Mu'awwidhat, the surahs of protection. Al-Ikhlas affirms tawhid, al-Falaq seeks refuge from the evil of creatures and sorcery, and an-Nas seeks refuge from the whispers of Satan. He made them ***a fortress*** before sleep.

His method should also be noted: ***joining the palms, blowing, reciting, then wiping the body*** starting from the head and face, three times. It is an easy practice, taking less than two minutes, and can be taught to children from a young age.

He also taught other manners before sleep: ***shaking out the bed*** first, because we do not know what may be on it (Sahih al-Bukhari 6320), and reciting Ayat al-Kursi, through which a person is guarded by Allah until morning (Sahih al-Bukhari 2311).

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HOW HE LAY DOWN

Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه related that when the Prophet ﷺ stopped to rest at night on a journey, ***he lay on his right side***. But when he stopped just before dawn, he would ***raise his forearm and rest his head on his palm*** (ash-Shama'il 259) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 683).

Scholars explain the wisdom: lying with the head on the palm makes sleep ***not too deep***, so that he would not miss the Fajr prayer. This shows he ***planned his sleep*** to protect the prayer — an important lesson for those of us who often oversleep.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that he slept until he snored, then Bilal came to call him to prayer, and he got up and prayed ***without renewing his ablution*** (ash-Shama'il 257) — sahih. This is specific to the prophets, for as he said, ***his eyes slept but his heart did not*** (ash-Shama'il 269). For us, deep sleep breaks ablution.

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CHAPTER 40: HIS WORSHIP

The fortieth chapter, the last in this part, describes ***the worship of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. It begins with a very famous hadith:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 260

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، وَبِشْرُ بْنُ مُعَاذٍ، قَالا: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَوَانَةَ، عَنْ زِيَادِ بْنِ عِلاقَةَ، عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ، قَالَ: صَلَّى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، حَتَّى انْتَفَخَتْ قَدَمَاهُ، فَقِيلَ لَهُ: أَتَتَكَلَّفُ هَذَا، وَقَدْ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَكَ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ؟ قَالَ: أَفَلا أَكُونُ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا.

TRANSLATION:

Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed until his feet became swollen.

It was said to him: "Do you burden yourself with this, when Allah has forgiven your past and future sins?" He said: ***"Should I not be a grateful servant?"***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id and Bishr ibn Mu'adh, from Abu 'Awanah, from Ziyad ibn 'Ilaqah, from al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 260; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1130.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:260

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Companions thought worship was ***a way to earn forgiveness***, so one already forgiven need not strive so hard. But he taught a higher meaning: worship is also ***an expression of gratitude***. The more blessings Allah gives, the greater the duty to give thanks.

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated the same event (ash-Shama'il 261) — hasan chain; and (ash-Shama'il 262) — sahih. In al-Bukhari's narration, the one who asked was 'A'ishah herself, and he replied: "Should I not love to be a grateful servant?" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4837).

This hadith answers why we worship. Not only out of fear of Hell or hope for Paradise, but also out of ***love and thanks*** to Allah who has given everything. Worship born of gratitude feels light, even when the feet swell.

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HIS NIGHT PRAYER

The night prayer (qiyam al-layl) is worship Allah commanded His Messenger in particular: ***"from [part of] the night, pray with it as additional [worship] for you"*** (Al-Isra' 17:79) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 17:79.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 263

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنِ الأَسْوَدِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ، عَنْ صَلاةِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِاللَّيْلِ؟ فَقَالَتْ: كَانَ يَنَامُ أَوَّلَ اللَّيْلِ ثُمَّ يَقُومُ، فَإِذَا كَانَ مِنَ السَّحَرِ أَوْتَرَ، ثُمَّ أَتَى فِرَاشَهُ، فَإِذَا كَانَ لَهُ حَاجَةٌ أَلَمَّ بِأَهْلِهِ، فَإِذَا سَمِعَ الأَذَانَ وَثَبَ، فَإِنْ كَانَ جُنُبًا أَفَاضَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَاءِ، وَإِلا تَوَضَّأَ وَخَرَجَ إِلَى الصَّلاةِ.

TRANSLATION:

Al-Aswad ibn Yazid said: I asked 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها about the night prayer of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

She said: ***"He would sleep at the beginning of the night, then rise (to pray). When it was the time before dawn, he prayed witr.*** Then he would come to his bed, and if he had need (of his wife), he would go to her. When he heard the call to prayer, he would spring up. If he was in a state of major impurity, he would bathe; otherwise he would perform ablution and go out to the prayer."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from al-Aswad ibn Yazid, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 263; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1146.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:263

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith describes his ***night schedule***: sleeping early, rising in the night to pray, praying witr before dawn, resting briefly, then rising at once on hearing the call to prayer. This schedule balances ***the rights of the body, of the family and of Allah***.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما once spent the night at the house of his maternal aunt, Maymunah. He saw the

Prophet rise in the middle of the night, ***wipe the sleep from his face***, recite ***the last ten verses of Surah Al 'Imran***, perform ablution from a hanging waterskin, then pray (ash-Shama'il 264) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 183). Those verses begin with reflection on the creation of the heavens and the earth:

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"in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs" (Al 'Imran 3:190) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:190.

He also taught us to ***begin the night prayer with two light rak'ahs*** (ash-Shama'il 267) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 768). Zayd ibn Khalid al-Juhani, who watched his night prayer, described two light rak'ahs, then two very long rak'ahs, then rak'ahs that grew shorter, until ***thirteen rak'ahs*** (ash-Shama'il 268) — sahih chain; also (Sahih Muslim 765).

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ELEVEN BEAUTIFUL, LONG RAK'AHS

How many rak'ahs was his night prayer? 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها, who knew best his state at home, answered:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 269

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مُوسَى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْمَقْبُرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، أَنَّهُ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّهُ سَأَلَ عَائِشَةَ، كَيْفَ كَانَتْ صَلاَةُ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي رَمَضَانَ؟ فَقَالَتْ: مَا كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لِيَزِيدَ فِي رَمَضَانَ وَلا فِي غَيْرِهِ عَلَى إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً، يُصَلِّي أَرْبَعًا، لا تَسْأَلْ عَنْ حُسْنِهِنَّ، وَطُولِهِنَّ، ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي أَرْبَعًا لا تَسْأَلْ عَنْ حُسْنِهِنَّ وَطُولِهِنَّ، ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي ثَلاثًا، قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، أَتَنَامُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُوتِرَ؟ فَقَالَ: يَا عَائِشَةُ، إِنَّ عَيْنَيَّ تَنَامَانِ، وَلا يَنَامُ قَلْبِي.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman asked 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها: "How was the prayer of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Ramadan?" She said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never prayed more than eleven rak'ahs, in Ramadan or at other times. He would pray four — do not ask about their beauty and length — then he would pray four — do not ask about their beauty and length — then he would pray three."*** 'A'ishah said: I said: "O Messenger of Allah, do you sleep before praying witr?" He said: ***"O 'A'ishah, my eyes sleep, but my heart does not sleep."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Musa al-Ansari, from Ma'n ibn 'Isa, from Malik ibn Anas, from Sa'id ibn Abi Sa'id al-Maqburi, from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 269; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1147.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:269

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'A'ishah did not stress ***the number***, but ***the quality***: "do not ask about their beauty and length." His eleven rak'ahs were not hurried; each was filled with long recitation, lengthy bowing and prostration, and deep humility.

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Other narrations mention different numbers: ***eleven rak'ahs*** with a single rak'ah of witr, after which he lay on his right side (ash-Shama'il 270) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 736); ***nine rak'ahs*** (ash-Shama'il 272) — sahih; and ***thirteen rak'ahs*** (ash-Shama'il 265) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 1138). Scholars explain that the number varied with circumstances, and the thirteen include the two light opening rak'ahs or the Sunnah of Fajr.

If he missed the night prayer because of sleep or illness, ***he made it up during the day with twelve rak'ahs*** (ash-Shama'il 266) — sahih. This shows how he kept up a regular practice. He also said that the deeds most beloved to Allah are ***those done consistently, even if little***.

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LONG STANDING AND ONE VERSE ALL NIGHT

Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه once prayed the night prayer with him. He began with a takbir glorifying Allah, then recited ***Surah al-Baqarah***; his bowing was almost as long as his standing, and his prostration almost as long as his bowing (ash-Shama'il 274) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 772).

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 276

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي وَائِلٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، قَالَ: صَلَّيْتُ لَيْلَةً مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَلَمْ يَزَلْ قَائِمًا حَتَّى هَمَمْتُ بِأَمْرِ سُوءٍ قِيلَ لَهُ: وَمَا هَمَمْتَ بِهِ؟ قَالَ: هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَقْعُدَ وَأَدَعَ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه said: I prayed with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one night, ***and he kept standing until I almost did something bad.*** He was asked: "What did you almost do?" He said: ***"I almost sat down and left the Prophet ﷺ."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Sulayman ibn Harb, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from al-A'mash, from Abu Wa'il, from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 276; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1135.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:276

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ibn Mas'ud was a strong and learned Companion, yet he ***could barely keep up*** with the length of the Prophet's standing. He called his thought of sitting "something bad", because leaving the imam in prayer is discourteous. This shows the Prophet's extraordinary ***spiritual strength***.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood (in prayer) with one verse of the Qur'an one night"*** (ash-Shama'il 275) — sahih chain. In the narration of Abu Dharr, the verse was the last verse of the supplication of the Prophet 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ (Sunan an-Nasa'i 1010):

"if You forgive them - indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise" (Al-Ma'idah 5:118) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 5:118.

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He repeated one verse all night because he was ***reflecting on its meaning*** and out of love for his Ummah. This is the true way of reading the Qur'an: not merely finishing pages, but ***living*** each verse.

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PRAYING WHILE SEATED

As he grew older, he sometimes ***prayed voluntary prayers seated***. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها related that he recited while seated, and when about thirty or forty verses of his recitation remained, he stood and recited them standing, then bowed and prostrated (ash-Shama'il 278) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 1118).

'Abdullah ibn Shaqiq asked 'A'ishah about his voluntary prayers. She said he prayed ***long nights standing and long nights seated***; if he recited standing, he bowed and prostrated from standing, and if he recited seated, he bowed and prostrated from sitting (ash-Shama'il 279) — sahih chain.

Hafsah رضى الله عنها added that he prayed voluntary prayers seated and ***recited the surah slowly and distinctly***, so that it seemed longer than a surah that was actually longer (ash-Shama'il 280) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 733). 'A'ishah said: "He did not pass away until most of his (voluntary) prayer was done seated" (ash-Shama'il 281) — sahih chain.

The lesson is very comforting for the elderly and the infirm: ***worship is adapted to one's ability***. Voluntary prayers may be done seated, and what matters is to keep them up with humility. Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.

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THE REGULAR SUNNAH PRAYERS

Besides the night prayer, he kept up ***the regular Sunnah prayers (rawatib)*** — voluntary prayers that accompany the obligatory ones:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 282

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ نَافِعٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ: صَلَّيْتُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، رَكْعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ الظُّهْرِ، وَرَكْعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَهَا، وَرَكْعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْمَغْرِبِ فِي بَيْتِهِ، وَرَكْعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْعِشَاءِ فِي بَيْتِهِ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: ***"I prayed with the Prophet ﷺ two rak'ahs before Zuhr and two after it, two rak'ahs after Maghrib in his house, and two rak'ahs after 'Isha' in his house."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani', from Isma'il ibn Ibrahim (Ibn 'Ulayyah), from Ayyub as-Sakhtiyani, from Nafi', from Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 282; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1172.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:282

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Hafsah رضى الله عنها added that he prayed ***two light rak'ahs when dawn broke*** while the muezzin was calling (ash-Shama'il 283) — sahih chain. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها mentioned two rak'ahs before Zuhr and two after it, two after Maghrib, two after 'Isha' and two before Fajr (ash-Shama'il 285) — sahih chain. In total, ***ten to twelve rak'ahs*** a day.

Notice too the phrase ***"in his house"***. He offered some of his voluntary prayers at home so that the house would be filled with worship and the children would see an example. He said: "Offer some of your prayers in your houses, and do not make them like graves" (Sahih al-Bukhari 432).

'Asim ibn Damrah asked 'Ali رضى الله عنه about his voluntary prayers in the daytime. 'Ali said: "You will not be able to do it," then explained that he prayed two rak'ahs when the sun was as high in the east as it is at 'Asr, four when it was as high as at Zuhr, four before Zuhr and two after it, and four before 'Asr (ash-Shama'il 286) — hasan chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 599).

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NOTE: THE EIGHT RAK'AHS IBN 'UMAR REMEMBERED (ASH-SHAMA'IL 284)

The narration of Ibn 'Umar that he remembered eight voluntary rak'ahs of the Prophet, and that Hafsah told him about the two rak'ahs before Fajr which he had not seen himself, has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Its meaning is supported by the sahih narrations No. 282–283 above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 284 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:284

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Chapters 32 to 40 of ash-Shama'il introduce us to the ***daily character and worship*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Among the most important lessons:

CHAPTER	KEY LESSON
32. Perfume	Never refusing perfume; three gifts not refused
33. Speech	Clear, slow and repeated three times
34. Laughter	Laughter as a smile; joy at Allah's mercy
35. Joking	Joking without lies; valuing the humble
36. Poetry	True verse praised; art for the truth
37–38. Night talk	Listening to one's wife; expressing love
39. Sleep	On the right side; supplications and the three Quls
40. Worship	Night prayer out of gratitude; rawatib at home

A MESSAGE FOR US

His gentle character by day came from ***a close bond with Allah*** by night. If we want to be people who smile easily, are patient and generous, let us begin by improving our worship — even two rak'ahs before sleep. May Allah adorn us with the character of His Prophet.

The discussion continues in ***Part 5***: his Duha prayer, voluntary prayers at home, fasting, recitation of the Qur'an, weeping, bedding, humility and character — the next chapters of ash-Shama'il. And Allah knows best.

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APPENDIX: A CHECKLIST OF DAILY SUNNAHS

Here is a summary of the daily Sunnahs of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ discussed in this book, with their sources. This list can be printed and placed in the bedroom or family room as a reminder.

SUNNAH	SOURCE
Accepting gifts of perfume and wearing perfume	Sahih al-Bukhari 2582
Speaking clearly and repeating what is important	Sahih al-Bukhari 95
Greeting people with a smile	Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 1956
Joking without lying	ash-Shama'il 236
Saying the supplication for riding	Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 3446
Listening to and talking with one's spouse	Sahih al-Bukhari 5189
Shaking out the bed before lying down	Sahih al-Bukhari 6320
Reciting al-Ikhlas, al-Falaq and an-Nas, then wiping the body	Sahih al-Bukhari 5017
Sleeping on the right side with supplication	ash-Shama'il 253
The supplication on waking	Sahih al-Bukhari 6312
Beginning the night prayer with two light rak‘ahs	Sahih Muslim 768
Keeping the rawatib prayers, some of them at home	Sahih al-Bukhari 1172

Begin with the Sunnahs before sleep — the three Quls and the sleep supplication — because they are easy and done every night. Once they become a habit, add two rak‘ahs of night prayer before sleep or before dawn.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Arabic terms below appear throughout this book. Knowing them makes it easier to follow the narrations and the explanations of the scholars, and to continue studying ash-Shama'il in its commentaries.

TERM	MEANING
'Itr / Tib	Perfume, fragrance
Sukkah	A perfume container or a type of fragrant compound
Jawami' al-kalim	Brief words with vast meaning
Tabassum	Smiling
Nawajidh	The molar teeth, shown in broad laughter
Mizah / Du'abah	Joking, light-hearted teasing
Nughayr	A small bird (diminutive of nughar)
Kunyah	A name beginning with Abu or Umm
Shi'r	Poetry, verse
Rajaz	A short rhythmic metre used in work and battle
Ruh al-Qudus	The Holy Spirit, i.e. Jibril
Samar	Night conversation
Khurafah	A man whose wondrous tales became a proverb
Mu'awwidhat	The surahs of refuge: al-Ikhlas, al-Falaq, an-Nas
Qiyam al-layl / Tahajjud	The night prayer
Witr	The odd-numbered prayer that closes the night prayer
Rak'ah	One unit of prayer
Rawatib	Regular Sunnah prayers before or after obligatory prayers
Tartil	Slow, distinct recitation of the Qur'an
Sahih / Hasan / Da'if	Grades of a chain: authentic, good, weak

Many of these words describe the inner life of the Prophet ﷺ: a smile rather than loud laughter, true words even in jest, and nights spent in tahajjud and witr. The vocabulary itself is a summary of his character.

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PART FIVE

He Never Said No

Chapters 41–49 of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah

The Duha Prayer, Voluntary Prayer at Home, Fasting, Recitation, Weeping, His Bed, Humility, Character and Modesty

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HE NEVER SAID NO

In the last four books, we came to know the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his clothing, his table, his smile and his sleep. This fifth book brings us to his ***daily worship and character***: the Duha prayer, voluntary prayer at home, fasting, recitation of the Qur'an, weeping, his bed, his humility, his noble character and his modesty. It follows chapters 41 to 49 of ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** by ***Imam at-Tirmidhi***.

These chapters contain ***71 narrations***. Chapter 43 on his fasting contains 16, and chapter 48 on his character contains 15. As in the previous books, sahih and hasan narrations are presented in Hadith boxes, while weak narrations are explained in Note boxes.

The picture that emerges is very moving: a Prophet who ***slept on a leather mattress stuffed with fibre***, wept on hearing the Qur'an, milked his own sheep, never said "uff" to his servant in ten years, and ***never said "no"*** to anyone who asked him.

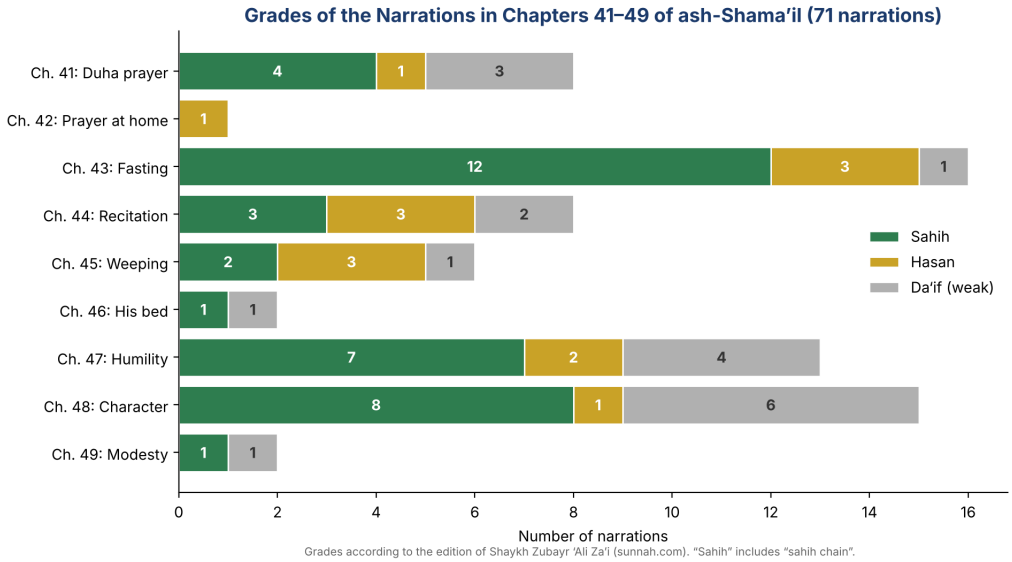


Figure 5: The grades of the narrations in chapters 41–49 of ash-Shama'il.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this book is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box, based on the edition of Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i as shown on sunnah.com. Of the 71 narrations in these chapters, nearly three-quarters are sahih or hasan.

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A KIND AND MERCIFUL MESSENGER

Allah describes His Messenger with qualities that are the theme of this book:

SURAH AT-TAWBAH 9:128

لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/9:128

This verse mentions ***four qualities***: he is from among us, our suffering weighs on him, he is eager for our good, and he is kind and merciful to the believers. Ibn Kathir explains that he deeply wished for his Ummah to be guided and saved from punishment Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:128.

These qualities appear clearly in the chapters of this book. His ***mercy*** is seen in his tears when his grandchild died. His ***eagerness for our good*** is seen when he chose deeds that were easy and continual, so that his Ummah would not be burdened. And his ***gentleness*** is seen in how he treated his servant, his wives, children and the poor.

This book also shows the balance in his life: much worship, but never burdensome; detachment from the world, yet accepting gifts and invitations; dignified, yet deeply ***humble and modest***.

This verse also contains two of Allah's names given to him: ***Ra'uf*** (most kind) and ***Rahim*** (most merciful). Some scholars note that no other prophet is described with two of Allah's names together in one verse like this.

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CHAPTER 41: HIS DUHA PRAYER

The forty-first chapter of ash-Shama'il is titled ***"The Duha Prayer"***. It contains eight narrations: four sahih, one hasan and three weak (Figure 5). Duha is a voluntary prayer performed after the sun has risen until just before it passes its zenith.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 287

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلَانَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ الطَّيَالِسِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ الرِّشْكِ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مُعَاذَةَ، قَالَتْ: قُلْتُ لِعَائِشَةَ: أَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُصَلِّي الضُّحَى؟ قَالَتْ: نَعَمْ، أَرْبَعَ رَكَعَاتٍ، وَيَزِيدُ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

TRANSLATION:

Mu'adhah said: I asked 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها: "Did the Prophet ﷺ pray Duha?" She said: ***"Yes, four rak'ahs, and he would add whatever Allah, Mighty and Majestic, willed."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Yazid ar-Rishk, from Mu'adhah al-'Adawiyyah, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 287; also Sahih Muslim No. 719.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:287

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows that his Duha prayer was ***four rak'ahs***, and he added as Allah willed. This gives us flexibility: Duha may be prayed as two, four, six or eight rak'ahs, according to one's ability.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها was also asked by 'Abdullah ibn Shaqiq whether he regularly prayed Duha. She said: ***"No, except when he returned from a journey"*** (ash-Shama'il 290) — sahih chain. Scholars reconcile these narrations: he sometimes prayed it and sometimes left it, ***so that it would not be thought obligatory*** for his Ummah, and each Companion reported what he saw.

NOTE: SIX RAK'AHS OF DUHA (ASH-SHAMA'IL 288)

The narration of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ prayed six rak'ahs of Duha has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Yet more than four rak'ahs of Duha is established in other sahih narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 288 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:288

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The Duha time is also when people are busy with worldly affairs: trading, working and studying. Setting aside a few minutes for two or four rak'ahs then is ***a sign of a heart that does not forget Allah*** amid busyness. It is also an easy way to begin the day with blessing.

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EIGHT RAK'AHS IN THE HOUSE OF UMM HANI'

The most famous narration about his Duha prayer comes from his cousin, Umm Hani' bint Abi Talib:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 289

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ مُرَّةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي لَيْلَى، قَالَ: مَا أَخْبَرَنِي أَحَدٌ، أَنَّهُ رَأَى النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُصَلِّي الضُّحَى إِلا أُمَّ هَانِئٍ، فَإِنَّهَا حَدَّثَتْ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، دَخَلَ بَيْتَهَا يَوْمَ فَتْحِ مَكَّةَ فَاغْتَسَلَ فَسَبَّحَ ثَمَانِيَ رَكَعَاتٍ مَا رَأَيْتُهُ صلى الله عليه وسلم، صَلَّى صَلاةً قَطُّ أَخَفَّ مِنْهَا، غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ كَانَ يُتِمُّ الرُّكُوعَ وَالسُّجُودَ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla said: No one told me that he saw the Prophet ﷺ pray Duha except Umm Hani' رضى الله عنها. She related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered her house on the day of the conquest of Makkah, ***bathed and prayed eight rak'ahs.*** I never saw him pray a lighter prayer than it, yet he completed the bowing and prostration.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from 'Amr ibn Murrah, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla, from Umm Hani' bint Abi Talib.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 289; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 1176.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:289

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This took place on ***the day of the conquest of Makkah***, the greatest victory in Islamic history. Yet he did not celebrate it with festivities, but by ***bathing and praying eight rak'ahs***. Some scholars call it a prayer of thanks for victory.

Notice too that the prayer was ***light yet complete***: its bowing and prostration were still performed fully. This teaches that a light prayer does not mean rushing so as to lose calmness (tuma'ninah). The quality of each pillar is still kept.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT DUHA (ASH-SHAMA'IL 291–293)

The narration of Abu Sa'id that he sometimes prayed Duha until they thought he would never leave it, and left it until they thought he would never pray it (No. 291), and the narration of Abu Ayyub about four rak'ahs when

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the sun passed its zenith (No. 292–293), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. The meaning of four rak'ahs after the zenith is established in the sahih narration No. 294 below.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 291–293. sunnah.com/shamail:291

This story also shows the standing of ***Umm Hani'*** as a trusted narrator. Much knowledge of his practice at home reached us through the women of his family. This shows the great role of women in ***preserving the Sunnah***.

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WHEN THE GATES OF HEAVEN OPEN

Besides Duha, he also prayed four rak'ahs at a special time — ***just after the sun passed its zenith***, before the Zuhr prayer:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 294

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمِ بْنِ أَبِي الْوَضَّاحِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْكَرِيمِ الْجَزَرِيِّ، عَنْ مُجَاهِدٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ السَّائِبِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَانَ يُصَلِّي أَرْبَعًا بَعْدَ أَنْ تَزُولَ الشَّمْسُ قَبْلَ الظُّهْرِ وَقَالَ: إِنَّهَا سَاعَةٌ تُفْتَحُ فِيهَا أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ، فَأُحِبُّ أَنْ يَصْعَدَ لِي فِيهَا عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn as-Sa'ib رضى الله عنه related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to pray four rak'ahs after the sun passed its zenith, before Zuhr, and said: ***"It is an hour in which the gates of heaven are opened, and I love that a righteous deed of mine should ascend in it."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, from Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn Abi al-Waddah, from 'Abd al-Karim al-Jazari, from Mujahid, from 'Abdullah ibn as-Sa'ib رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 294; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 478.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:294

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He chose ***a noble time*** for righteous deeds: the time when the gates of heaven open. This teaches us to be mindful of blessed times — the last third of the night, between the adhan and iqamah, Friday — and to fill them with worship.

'Ali رضى الله عنه also mentioned that he prayed four rak'ahs before Zuhr when the sun passed its zenith, and ***lengthened them*** (ash-Shama'il 295) — hasan. These four rak'ahs before Zuhr are among the voluntary prayers he kept up, as we saw in the chapter on the regular Sunnah prayers in the previous book.

The time just after noon is hot and busy, when many rest or finish their affairs. Choosing that time for prayer shows that he ***put Allah first*** before his own comfort. We can follow him by keeping the four voluntary rak'ahs before Zuhr, even at work.

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CHAPTER 42: VOLUNTARY PRAYER AT HOME

The forty-second chapter contains only one narration, but its meaning is very clear:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 296

حَدَّثَنَا عَبَّاسٌ الْعَنْبَرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ صَالِحٍ، عَنِ الْعَلاءِ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ، عَنْ حَرَامِ بْنِ مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنْ عَمِّهِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَنِ الصَّلاةِ فِي بَيْتِي وَالصَّلاةِ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، قَالَ: قَدْ تَرَى مَا أَقْرَبَ بَيْتِي مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ، فَلأَنْ أُصَلِّيَ فِي بَيْتِي أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أُصَلِّيَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، إِلا أَنْ تَكُونَ صَلاةً مَكْتُوبَةً.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Sa'd رضى الله عنه said: I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about praying in my house and praying in the mosque. He said: ***"You see how close my house is to the mosque. Yet praying in my house is dearer to me than praying in the mosque, except for the obligatory prayer."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Abbas al-'Anbari, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Mu'awiyah ibn Salih, from al-'Ala' ibn al-Harith, from Haram ibn Mu'awiyah, from 'Abdullah ibn Sa'd رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 296; also Sunan Ibn Majah No. 1378.

GRADE: HASAN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:296

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

His house was right next to the Prophet's Mosque — a mosque where prayer is worth a thousand times more. Yet he still ***preferred to pray voluntary prayers at home***. This shows how great the virtue is of bringing the home to life with prayer.

He said: "Offer some of your prayers in your houses, and do not make them like graves" (Sahih al-Bukhari 432). A house in which no prayer is ever offered is likened to a grave — silent of remembrance. Voluntary prayer at home is also ***further from showing off*** and is a living example for children.

Yet the exception is clear: ***the obligatory prayers*** should be prayed in the mosque in congregation by men. So the Sunnah is: the obligatory prayer in the mosque, and most of the voluntary prayers at home.

For women, he explained that their prayer at home is better. So a Muslim home should have ***a place for prayer*** — even a small corner with a prayer mat — where the family prays voluntary prayers, reads the Qur'an and remembers Allah.

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CHAPTER 43: HIS FASTING

The forty-third chapter describes ***the fasting of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. Allah made the fast of Ramadan obligatory:

"Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship" (Al-Baqarah 2:185) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:185.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 297

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ شَقِيقٍ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ، عَنْ صِيَامِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَتْ: كَانَ يَصُومُ حَتَّى نَقُولَ قَدْ صَامَ، وَيُفْطِرُ حَتَّى نَقُولَ قَدْ أَفْطَرَ قَالَتْ: وَمَا صَامَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، شَهْرًا كَامِلا مُنْذُ قَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ إِلا رَمَضَانَ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Shaqiq said: I asked 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها about the fasting of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. She said: ***"He would fast until we said: He keeps fasting. And he would not fast until we said: He keeps not fasting."*** She also said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never fasted a complete month since he came to Madinah except Ramadan."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Hammad ibn Zayd, from Ayyub as-Sakhtiyani, from 'Abdullah ibn Shaqiq, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 297; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 768.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:297

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

His voluntary fasting ***did not follow a fixed schedule***. Sometimes he fasted in succession until the Companions thought he would not stop, and sometimes he did not fast until they thought he would not fast. This shows ***balance*** and adapting to circumstances — da'wah, travel and campaigns.

Anas رضى الله عنه added a beautiful description: ***"You would not wish to see him praying at night except that you would see him, nor sleeping except that you would see him"*** (ash-Shama'il 298) — sahih. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما also mentioned that he never fasted a whole month other than Ramadan (ash-Shama'il 299) — sahih.

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Voluntary fasting also ***trains patience and self-control***. One who is used to voluntary fasting finds it easier to guard the tongue, the gaze and the emotions. That is why he called fasting a shield that protects a person from sin.

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THE MONTH OF SHA'BAN

Of all months besides Ramadan, ***Sha'ban*** was the one in which he fasted most. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"I never saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ fast in any month more than he fasted in Sha'ban. He fasted it except for a little; indeed, he fasted all of it"*** (ash-Shama'il 301) — hasan chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 1969).

Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها said: "I never saw the Prophet ﷺ fast two consecutive months except Sha'ban and Ramadan" (ash-Shama'il 300) — sahih; and 'A'ishah repeated the same meaning (ash-Shama'il 305) — sahih. Scholars explain that "all of it" means most of it, since he never fasted a whole month besides Ramadan.

Fasting in Sha'ban is ***a preparation*** for Ramadan, like the voluntary prayer before the obligatory one. It trains body and soul, so that when Ramadan arrives, we are ready to worship wholeheartedly.

In another narration, he explained that Sha'ban is a month ***many people neglect***, lying between Rajab and Ramadan, and in it deeds are raised to Allah. Worshipping while others are heedless has a special value.

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MONDAY, THURSDAY AND THREE DAYS A MONTH

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ made a point of fasting on Monday and Thursday"*** (ash-Shama'il 304) — sahih chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 745). He explained the reason:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 306

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَاصِمٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ رِفَاعَةَ، عَنْ سُهَيْلِ بْنِ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: تُعْرَضُ الأَعْمَالُ يَوْمَ الاثْنَيْنِ وَالْخَمِيسِ، فَأُحِبُّ أَنْ يُعْرَضَ عَمَلِي وَأَنَا صَائِمٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه related that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"Deeds are presented (to Allah) on Monday and Thursday, and I love that my deeds be presented while I am fasting."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Yahya, from Abu 'Asim, from Muhammad ibn Rifa'ah, from Suhayl ibn Abi Salih, from Abu Salih Dhakwan (his father), from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 306; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 747.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:306

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Every week, our deeds ***are presented to Allah*** twice. He wanted his deeds presented in the best state — while fasting. This instils awareness that every deed of ours is recorded and seen by Allah.

He also fasted ***three days every month***. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud mentioned three days at the start of the month (ash-Shama'il 302) — hasan, while 'A'ishah said he did not fix particular days (ash-Shama'il 303) — sahih. Fasting three days a month equals the reward of fasting the whole year, since every good deed is rewarded tenfold.

NOTE: FASTING THE DAYS OF THE WEEK (ASH-SHAMA'IL 307)

The narration of 'A'ishah that he fasted Saturday, Sunday and Monday in one month, and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in another, has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 307 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:307

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Monday also has its own merit: he mentioned that it was the day he was born and the day revelation first came to him. So fasting on Monday is also ***an expression of gratitude*** for the blessing of the Prophet's birth and the blessing of revelation.

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THE DAY OF 'ASHURA'

The fast of ***'Ashura'*** (10 Muharram) has a long history, beginning even before Islam:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 308

حَدَّثَنَا هَارُونُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ الْهَمْدَانِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدَةُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ عَاشُورَاءُ يَوْمًا تَصُومُهُ قُرَيْشٌ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَصُومُهُ، فَلَمَّا قَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ صَامَهُ وَأَمَرَ بِصِيَامِهِ، فَلَمَّا افْتُرِضَ رَمَضَانُ كَانَ رَمَضَانُ هُوَ الْفَرِيضَةُ وَتُرِكَ عَاشُورَاءُ، فَمَنْ شَاءَ صَامَهُ وَمَنْ شَاءَ تَرَكَهُ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"'Ashura' was a day the Quraysh used to fast in the days of ignorance, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also fasted it. When he came to Madinah, he fasted it and commanded that it be fasted.*** When Ramadan was made obligatory, Ramadan became the duty and 'Ashura' was left: whoever wished fasted it, and whoever wished left it."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Harun ibn Ishaq al-Hamdani, from 'Abdah ibn Sulayman, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 308; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 2002.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:308

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The fast of 'Ashura' was once ***obligatory*** in early Islam, then its obligation was abrogated when Ramadan was prescribed. Yet it remains ***a highly recommended voluntary fast***. In Muslim's narration, he said that the fast of 'Ashura' expiates the sins of the previous year.

This hadith also shows ***gradualness*** (tadarruj) in legislation: Allah eases things for His servants by introducing matters step by step. This agrees with the verse that Allah intends ease, not hardship.

In another narration, he resolved to fast the ***ninth day*** of Muharram as well, to differ from the practice of the People of the Book. So scholars encourage fasting on the 9th and 10th of Muharram. 'Ashura' is also the day Allah saved the Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ from Pharaoh, and he fasted it in gratitude.

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"EVEN IF IT IS LITTLE"

'Alqamah asked 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها whether the Messenger of Allah ﷺ singled out particular days for worship. She said: ***"His deeds were continual. Which of you is able to do what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to do?"*** (ash-Shama'il 309) — sahih. This principle is summed up in the following hadith:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 311

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو هِشَامٍ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ الرِّفَاعِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ فُضَيْلٍ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ، وَأُمَّ سَلَمَةَ، أَيُّ الْعَمَلِ كَانَ أَحَبَّ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قَالَتَا: مَا دِيمَ عَلَيْهِ، وَإِنْ قَلَّ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Salih said: I asked 'A'ishah and Umm Salamah: "Which deed was dearest to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" They both said: ***"That which is done continually, even if it is little."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu Hisham Muhammad ibn Yazid ar-Rifa'i, from Muhammad ibn Fudayl, from al-A'mash, from Abu Salih Dhakwan, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers and Umm Salamah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 311; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 2856.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:311

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها related that a woman who ***did not sleep at night*** for worship was with her, and he said: "Do the deeds you are able to do. By Allah, Allah does not grow weary until you grow weary" (ash-Shama'il 310) — sahih. Excessive worship is soon abandoned, while moderate worship can be kept up for a lifetime.

He also said: "The deeds most beloved to Allah are those done continually, even if little" (Sahih al-Bukhari 6464). Two rak'ahs of Duha every day are better than eight rak'ahs once and then abandoned. ***Consistency matters more than quantity.***

This principle applies in every area of life: reading a few verses of the Qur'an every day, giving a little charity every week, or remembering Allah after every prayer. Small deeds done ***steadfastly*** grow great when gathered over a lifetime.

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NIGHT PRAYER WITH 'AWF IBN MALIK

The chapter on fasting closes with a narration about his ***night prayer***. 'Awf ibn Malik رضى الله عنه related that he was with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one night. He used the siwak, performed ablution, then prayed. 'Awf stood with him. He began with ***Surah al-Baqarah***; whenever he passed a verse of mercy, he paused and asked for it, and whenever he passed a verse of punishment, he paused and sought refuge (ash-Shama'il 312) — sahih.

Then he bowed for as long as he had stood, glorifying: ***"Subhana dhil-jabaruti wal-malakuti wal-kibriya'i wal-'azamah"*** (Glory be to the Possessor of might, dominion, grandeur and majesty), and prostrated for as long. Then he recited Surah Al 'Imran, and surah after surah in every rak'ah.

This narration teaches how to ***interact with the Qur'an*** in prayer: not merely reading, but pausing, asking and seeking refuge according to the meaning of the verses. Though we cannot read as long as he did, we can begin with short surahs whose meanings we understand.

The glorification he recited in bowing and prostration — ***"Subhana dhil-jabaruti wal-malakuti wal-kibriya'i wal-'azamah"*** — can be memorised and used in our voluntary prayers. It glorifies Allah with four attributes of His greatness, and reminds us how small we are before Him.

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CHAPTER 44: HIS RECITATION

The forty-fourth chapter describes ***the recitation of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. Allah commanded him:

"recite the Qur'an with measured recitation" (Al-Muzzammil 73:4) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 73:4.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 314

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا وَهْبُ بْنُ جَرِيرِ بْنِ حَازِمٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لأَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ: كَيْفَ كَانَتْ قِرَاءَةُ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ فَقَالَ: مَدًّا.

TRANSLATION:

Qatadah said: I asked Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه: "How was the recitation of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?"

He said: ***"He would lengthen (the long vowels)."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Wahb ibn Jarir ibn Hazim, from Jarir ibn Hazim (his father), from Qatadah, from Anas ibn Malik.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 314; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5045.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:314

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

His recitation was ***drawn out (madd)***, meaning he lengthened the long vowels to their proper measure. In al-Bukhari's narration, Anas gave an example: he lengthened "Bismillah", lengthened "ar-Rahman" and lengthened "ar-Rahim" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5045). This is the basis of the science of ***tajwid*** we learn today.

Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها described his recitation as ***clear, letter by letter*** (ash-Shama'il 313) — hasan chain. She also mentioned that he ***paused at every verse***: reciting "Al-hamdu lillahi rabbil-'alamin", pausing, then "Ar-rahmanir-rahim", pausing, then "Maliki yawmid-din" (ash-Shama'il 315) — hasan chain.

Slow, clear recitation gives time to ***reflect on the meaning***. The Qur'an is not to be finished quickly, but to be pondered. A Muslim who reads one page with tartil and understanding may benefit more than one who reads a whole juz' in haste.

Parents can bring this Sunnah to life by ***sending their children to learn tajwid*** and reading the Qur'an with them at home. The voices of children reciting the Qur'an with tartil are among the most beautiful adornments of a home.

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QUIETLY AND ALOUD

'Abdullah ibn Abi Qays asked 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها whether his recitation at night was quiet or aloud. She said: ***"He did both; sometimes quietly and sometimes aloud."*** 'Abdullah said: "Praise be to Allah who made the matter broad" (ash-Shama'il 316) — sahih.

Allah also taught a middle way: ***"do not recite [too] loudly in your prayer or [too] quietly but seek between that an [intermediate] way"*** (Al-Isra' 17:110) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 17:110.

Umm Hani' رضى الله عنها said: "I used to hear the recitation of the Prophet ﷺ at night while I was on my bed" (ash-Shama'il 317) — hasan. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said his recitation was sometimes heard by those in the room while he was inside the house (ash-Shama'il 320) — hasan chain. His voice was moderate: heard by those near, yet not disturbing.

NOTE: A BEAUTIFUL VOICE (ASH-SHAMA'IL 319)

Qatadah said: "Allah did not send any prophet except that he had a handsome face and a beautiful voice, and your Prophet ﷺ had a handsome face and a beautiful voice, and he did not over-chant." Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 319 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:319

Reciting quietly suits times when others are sleeping or praying, while reciting aloud can lift the spirit and drive away drowsiness. He chose according to ***the situation***, and this is wisdom in worship.

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RECITATION ON THE DAY OF THE CONQUEST

On the day of his greatest victory, what did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recite? 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal رضى الله عنه witnessed it:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 318

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ قُرَّةَ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ اللهِ بْنَ مُغَفَّلٍ، يَقُولُ: رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، عَلَى نَاقَتِهِ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ، وَهُوَ يَقْرَأُ: إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ، قَالَ: فَقَرَأَ وَرَجَّعَ، قَالَ: وَقَالَ مُعَاوِيَةُ بْنُ قُرَّةَ: لَوْلاَ أَنْ يَجْتَمِعَ النَّاسُ عَلَيَّ لأَخَذْتُ لَكُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ الصَّوْتِ أَوْ قَالَ: اللَّحْنِ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal رضى الله عنه said: ***"I saw the Prophet ﷺ on his she-camel on the day of the conquest of Makkah, reciting: Inna fatahna laka fathan mubina, liyaghfira lakallahu ma taqaddama min dhanbika wa ma ta'akhkhar (Al-Fath 48:1–2)."*** He said: He recited with a gentle trill in his voice (tarji'). Mu'awiyah ibn Qurrah said: "Were it not that people would gather around me, I would show you that tone."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Mu'awiyah ibn Qurrah, from 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 318; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 4835.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:318

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He entered Makkah — the city that had driven him out — not with proud cheering, but ***reciting Surah al-Fath*** on his camel. That surah speaks of a clear victory and Allah's forgiveness. Victory was tied to ***gratitude and seeking forgiveness***, not arrogance.

He also ***modulated his voice*** (tarji') while reciting. This shows that beautifying the voice in reciting the Qur'an is Sunnah, as long as it does not break the rules of tajwid. Mu'awiyah ibn Qurrah, a narrator of this hadith, was so moved that he wished to imitate that tone, but feared that people would gather around him.

On that same day he forgave the people of Makkah who had harmed him for years. The recitation of Surah al-Fath and his vast pardon show that true victory is ***the victory of the heart*** — a heart humble before Allah and generous towards people.

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CHAPTER 45: HIS WEEPING

The forty-fifth chapter describes ***the weeping of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. His weeping was not loud, but the weeping of a humble heart:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 321

حَدَّثَنَا سُوَيْدُ بْنُ نَصْرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ الْمُبَارَكِ، عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ مُطَرِّفٍ وَهُوَ ابْنُ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ الشِّخِّيرِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: أَتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ يُصَلِّي، وَلِجَوْفِهِ أَزِيزٌ كَأَزِيزِ الْمِرْجَلِ مِنَ الْبُكَاءِ.

TRANSLATION:

Mutarrif ibn 'Abdullah ibn ash-Shikhkhir related from his father رضى الله عنه that he said: ***"I came to the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ ***while he was praying, and from his chest came a sound like the bubbling of a boiling pot, from weeping."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Suwayd ibn Nasr, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Mutarrif ibn 'Abdullah ibn ash-Shikhkhir, from 'Abdullah ibn ash-Shikhkhir (his father) رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 321; also Sunan an-Nasa'i No. 1214.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:321

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

A sound like ***a boiling pot*** describes weeping held within the chest. He wept in prayer out of ***fear and love of Allah***. This shows that humility in prayer is not mere stillness, but a heart truly present before Allah.

He said in a famous hadith that among the seven who will be shaded by Allah on the Day of Resurrection is ***one who remembers Allah in private and his eyes overflow with tears***. Weeping for Allah is a sign of a living heart.

Scholars mention that among the causes of a hard heart are much laughter, much eating and heedlessness of death. So to soften the heart, we can ***read the Qur'an understanding its meaning***, visit graves and remember Allah alone at night.

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"RECITE TO ME"

A very moving event took place when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked a Companion to recite the Qur'an to him:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 322

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاوِيَةُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ عُبَيْدَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: اقْرَأْ عَلَيَّ فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، أَقْرَأُ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَيْكَ أُنْزِلَ، قَالَ: إِنِّي أُحِبُّ أَنْ أَسْمَعَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِي، فَقَرَأْتُ سُورَةَ النِّسَاءِ، حَتَّى بَلَغْتُ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلاءِ شَهِيدًا، قَالَ: فَرَأَيْتُ عَيْنَيْ رَسُولِ اللهِ تَهْمِلاَنِ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me: "Recite the Qur'an to me." I said: "O Messenger of Allah, shall I recite it to you when it was revealed to you?" He said: "I love to hear it from someone else." So I recited Surah an-Nisa' until I reached the verse: "Wa ji'na bika 'ala ha'ula'i shahida" (and We bring you as a witness over these). ***He said: Then I saw the eyes of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ flowing with tears.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Mu'awiyah ibn Hisham, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from al-A'mash, from Ibrahim an-Nakha'i, from 'Abidah as-Salmani, from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 322; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 4582.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:322

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The verse that made him weep was: ***"we bring you, [O Muhammad] against these [people] as a witness"*** (An-Nisa' 4:41) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:41.

He wept as he pictured the Day of Resurrection, when he will be ***a witness over his Ummah***. That weeping came from his ***love and concern*** for us — in keeping with the quality Allah mentioned: our suffering weighs on him.

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This hadith also teaches ***the manners of listening to the Qur'an***. He who received the revelation still loved to hear it from others. Listening attentively to recitation can open the heart in a way different from reading it oneself.

Ibn Mas'ud was among the Companions most skilled in reciting the Qur'an. The Prophet once said that whoever wished to recite the Qur'an fresh as it was revealed should recite like Ibn Umm 'Abd — that is, Ibn Mas'ud. So his request was also ***an honour*** to his Companion.

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TEARS OF MERCY

He also wept out of ***mercy*** for creation. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنهما related that during a solar eclipse, he prayed with very long standing, bowing and prostration, then wept and prayed: ***"My Lord, did You not promise that You would not punish them while I am among them? Did You not promise that You would not punish them while they seek forgiveness?"*** (ash-Shama'il 323) — hasan; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 1044).

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما related that he held his dying granddaughter, and she passed away in his arms.

When Umm Ayman wept, he said: ***"This is not (forbidden) weeping; it is mercy. The believer is in good in every state; his soul is drawn out from within him while he praises Allah"*** (ash-Shama'il 324) — hasan chain.

Anas رضى الله عنه saw him sitting by the grave of his daughter with ***tears flowing*** (ash-Shama'il 326) — hasan chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 1285). And when his son Ibrahim died, he said: "The eye weeps and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303).

NOTE: KISSING 'UTHMAN IBN MAZ'UN (ASH-SHAMA'IL 325)

The narration of 'A'ishah that he kissed 'Uthman ibn Maz'un after his death while weeping has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. That he wept at the death of loved ones is established in the sahih narrations above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 325 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:325

The lesson: weeping at a death ***is not a sign of weak faith***, but a sign of a merciful heart. What is forbidden is wailing, screaming and saying words that show discontent with Allah's decree.

The eclipse hadith also teaches that natural phenomena such as eclipses ***are not tied to anyone's death or birth***, but are signs of Allah's power. He rejected the superstitions of the days of ignorance and taught his Ummah to remember Allah, supplicate and give charity when they see one.

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CHAPTER 46: HIS BED

The forty-sixth chapter describes ***the bed of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ — a very brief picture of a very simple life:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 327

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُجْرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُسْهِرٍ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَ: إِنَّمَا كَانَ فِرَاشُ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، الَّذِي يَنَامُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَدَمٍ، حَشْوُهُ لِيفٌ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The bed of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on which he slept was only of tanned leather, stuffed with palm fibre."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Ali ibn Hujr, from 'Ali ibn Mushir, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 327; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 6456.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:327

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The leader of a state slept on ***leather stuffed with palm fibre***. No soft mattress, no raised bed. In another narration, 'Umar رضى الله عنه wept on seeing the marks of the mat on his side, and he asked: "Are you not content that they have this world and we have the Hereafter?"

NOTE: THE MATTRESS FOLDED FOUR TIMES (ASH-SHAMA'IL 328)

Hafsah related that his mattress was a coarse woollen cloth folded in two. One night they folded it in four to make it softer, and in the morning he asked that it be restored, because its softness had kept him from the night prayer. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. The simplicity of his bed is established in the sahih narration above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 328 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:328

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This simplicity was not because he ***could not afford*** more, but by ***choice***. He could have lived in luxury, but chose not to be attached to the world. A bed that is too comfortable can make one heavy to rise at night.

Today many spend a great deal on mattresses and furniture. There is no harm in sleeping comfortably, but this Sunnah reminds us not to ***go to excess*** and not to let worldly comfort keep us from rising for Fajr and the night prayer.

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CHAPTER 47: HIS HUMILITY

The forty-seventh chapter describes ***the humility of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. It begins with his instruction that his Ummah not over-praise him:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 329

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، وَسَعِيدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْمَخْزُومِيُّ، وَغَيْرُ وَاحِدٍ، قَالُوا: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تُطْرُونِي كَمَا أَطْرَتِ النَّصَارَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ، إِنَّمَا أَنَا عَبْدٌ، فَقُولُوا: عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ.

TRANSLATION:

'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Do not over-praise me as the Christians over-praised ('Isa) the son of Maryam. I am only a servant, so say: The servant of Allah and His Messenger."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani' and Sa'id ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Makhzumi, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from az-Zuhri, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Utbah, from Ibn 'Abbas, from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 329; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3445.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:329

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This instruction is vital ***to protect tawhid***. The Christians praised the Prophet 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ until they regarded him as the son of God. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ closed that door: he is ***the servant of Allah and His Messenger***. Our highest love for him must never raise him above the station of a servant.

The title ***"servant of Allah"*** is the noblest of titles. Allah mentioned him by this title at the greatest events: the Night Journey ("who took His servant by night") and the revelation of the Qur'an ("who sent down the Criterion upon His servant").

Humility also means ***accepting the truth*** from anyone and not looking down on others. He said that whoever humbles himself for Allah, Allah raises him. The higher a person's position, the more he needs to be humble.

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AMONG ORDINARY PEOPLE

His humility was seen in how he mixed with ***ordinary people***. Anas رضى الله عنه related that a woman (of limited understanding) came and said: "I have a need of you." He said: ***"Sit in whichever street of Madinah you wish, and I will sit with you"*** (ash-Shama'il 330) — sahih chain.

He also ***accepted invitations*** even when the meal was only barley bread and oil that had turned, and when he died, his armour was still pledged to a Jew for food he had bought (ash-Shama'il 332) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 2509). He said: "If I were given a sheep's trotter as a gift, I would accept it, and if I were invited to eat a trotter, I would accept" (ash-Shama'il 336) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 5178).

Jabir رضى الله عنه said that he came to visit him when he was ill ***on foot***, riding neither mule nor horse (ash-Shama'il 337) — hasan. Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah ibn Salam said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ named me Yusuf, ***sat me on his lap and stroked my head***" (ash-Shama'il 338) — sahih chain. And Anas repeated the story of the tailor who invited him to eat (ash-Shama'il 340) — sahih.

> **NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT HUMILITY (ASH-SHAMA'IL 331, 333, 339)**
>
> The narration that he visited the sick, attended funerals, rode a donkey and accepted the invitations of slaves (No. 331), and the narration that he performed Hajj on a worn saddle with a cloth worth less than four dirhams while praying: "O Allah, make it a Hajj without showing off or seeking fame" (No. 333, 339), all have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. Yet the meaning of his humility is established in many sahih narrations.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 331, 333, 339. sunnah.com/shamail:331

His armour pledged to a Jew also shows that he ***dealt justly*** with non-Muslims, and that borrowing does not lower one's honour as long as one intends to repay. It also shows how little wealth he had when he passed away.

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HE DISLIKED PEOPLE STANDING FOR HIM

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"There was no one more beloved to them (the Companions) than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Yet when they saw him, they did not stand, because they knew he disliked it"*** (ash-Shama'il 334) — sahih; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2754).

He did not want to be glorified like kings whose subjects stood stiffly before them. The Companions honoured him by ***obeying and loving*** him, not by ceremony. Scholars distinguish between standing to glorify (which is disliked) and rising to welcome an arriving guest (which is allowed).

NOTE: HIND IBN ABI HALAH'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS GATHERINGS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 335)

Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali asked his uncle Hind ibn Abi Halah about the Prophet's manner in gatherings. Hind said that he sat wherever there was space, gave everyone in the gathering their share of attention, and no one felt that another was more honoured than he. Its chain is ***weak*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, but much of its meaning is supported by other narrations.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 335 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:335

Today this Sunnah can be revived by leaders, teachers and respected people: ***not demanding special treatment***, sitting among the people, and letting others feel at ease around them. True dignity comes from character, not ceremony.

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IN HIS HOME

What was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ like at home? 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها gave a very simple picture:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 341

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ صَالِحٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاوِيَةُ بْنُ صَالِحٍ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ عَمْرَةَ، قَالَتْ: قِيلَ لِعَائِشَةَ: مَاذَا كَانَ يَعْمَلُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي بَيْتِهِ؟ قَالَتْ: كَانَ بَشَرًا مِنَ الْبَشَرِ، يَفْلِي ثَوْبَهُ، وَيَحْلُبُ شَاتَهُ، وَيَخْدُمُ نَفْسَهُ.

TRANSLATION:

'Amrah said: 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها was asked: "What did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do in his house?" She said: ***"He was a human being like other human beings: he would clean his garment, milk his sheep and serve himself."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Abdullah ibn Salih, from Mu'awiyah ibn Salih, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Ansari, from 'Amrah bint 'Abd ar-Rahman, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 341.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:341

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The noblest Messenger of Allah ***did his own housework***: cleaning his garment, milking his sheep and serving his own needs. In al-Bukhari's narration, 'A'ishah said: "He would be busy ***helping his family***, and when the time for prayer came, he would go out to pray" (Sahih al-Bukhari 676).

This is a great lesson for ***husbands and fathers***. Helping with housework does not lower a man's dignity; it is the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. A family that helps one another will feel peace and love at home.

Notice too that he ***served himself***. He did not burden his wives with his personal needs, even though he was a very busy leader. This shows his respect for his family and his sense of responsibility for himself.

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CHAPTER 48: HIS CHARACTER

The forty-eighth chapter describes ***the character of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. The closest witness was Anas ibn Malik, who served him from childhood:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 344

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيد، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا جَعْفَرُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ الضُّبَعِيُّ، عَنْ ثَابِت، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِك، قَالَ: خَدَمْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَشْرَ سِنِينَ، فَمَا قَالَ لِي أُفًّ قَطُّ، وَمَا قَالَ لِشَيْءٍ صَنَعْتُهُ، لِمَ صَنَعْتَهُ، وَلا لِشَيْءٍ تَرَكْتُهُ، لِمَ تَرَكْتَهُ؟ وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، مِنْ أَحْسَنِ النَّاسِ خُلُقًا، وَلا مَسَسْتُ خَزًّا وَلا حَرِيرًا، وَلا شَيْئًا كَانَ أَلْيَنَ مِنْ كَفِّ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَلا شَمَمْتُ مِسْكًا قَطُّ، وَلا عِطْرًا كَانَ أَطْيَبَ مِنْ عَرَقِ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"I served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years, and he never once said "uff" to me. He never said about something I did: Why did you do it? Nor about something I left: Why did you leave it?*** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the best of people in character. I never touched silk or anything softer than the palm of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and I never smelled musk or perfume more fragrant than the sweat of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Ja'far ibn Sulayman ad-Duba'i, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 344; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 2015.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:344

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ten years is a long time, and a boy will surely make many mistakes. Yet he ***never said "uff"***, never asked "why did you do that?" or "why did you not do it?" He taught with ***patience and love***, not with anger and blame.

Anas also mentioned ***the softness of his hand and the fragrance of his sweat***. This is not merely a physical description, but a picture of how his whole person — outward and inward — was beautiful and pleasant. Parents, teachers and employers can follow how he treated those in his care.

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NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT HIS CHARACTER (ASH-SHAMA'IL 342–343)

The narration of Zayd ibn Thabit that he would talk with the Companions about this world, the Hereafter and food according to their topic of conversation (No. 342), and the narration of 'Amr ibn al-'As that he addressed him with such attention that he thought he was the best Companion (No. 343), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 342–343. sunnah.com/shamail:342

Allah Himself praised his character: "And indeed, you are of a great moral character" (Al-Qalam 68:4). He also said that he was sent ***to perfect noble character***. So character is not merely an ornament of religion, but part of the purpose of his mission.

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FORGIVING, NOT AVENGING

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not obscene, nor did he deliberately utter obscenities, nor shout in the markets, nor repay evil with evil; rather, he would pardon and forgive"*** (ash-Shama'il 346) — sahih chain; also (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2016).

She also said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never struck anything with his hand, except when fighting in the path of Allah, and never struck a servant or a woman"*** (ash-Shama'il 347) — sahih; also (Sahih Muslim 2328). This utterly refutes the notion that Islam permits violence against wives and workers.

'A'ishah added: "I never saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ avenge a wrong done to himself, ***as long as Allah's sacred limits were not violated***. But when Allah's limits were violated, he was the angriest of people for it. And he was never given a choice between two matters except that he chose the easier, as long as it was not a sin" (ash-Shama'il 348) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 3560).

The greatest example of his forgiveness was on ***the day of the conquest of Makkah***, when he granted safety and pardon to the people of Makkah who had been his enemies for years. This is the character that wins hearts, and people then entered Islam in crowds.

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GENTLE WITH EVERYONE

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها related that a man asked permission to see him. He said: "What a bad brother of his tribe." Yet when the man came in, he ***spoke to him gently***. After he left, 'A'ishah asked about it, and he said: ***"O 'A'ishah, the worst of people are those whom people avoid for fear of their evil"*** (ash-Shama'il 349) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 6032).

This hadith teaches the difference between ***mudarah*** (gentleness for the sake of good) and ***mudahanah*** (flattery that sacrifices religion). He was gentle with a man of bad character to ward off his harm and perhaps soften his heart, without the slightest compromise of the truth.

> **NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT HIS GENTLENESS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 345, 350)**
>
> The narration of Anas that he rarely confronted a man with a trace of saffron directly, but asked others to tell him (No. 345), and the long description by al-Husayn of his manners in gatherings (No. 350), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 345, 350. sunnah.com/shamail:345

His gentleness was also recorded by Allah: "So by mercy from Allah, you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you" (Al 'Imran 3:159). ***Gentleness draws people near; harshness drives them away.***

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HE NEVER SAID NO

It is from this chapter that the title of this part is taken. The ***generosity*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was described by Jabir رضى الله عنه in one short sentence:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 351

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْمُنْكَدِرِ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ جَابِرَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللهِ، يَقُولُ: مَا سُئِلَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، شَيْئًا قَطُّ فَقَالَ: لا.

TRANSLATION:

Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنهما said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was never asked for anything and said: No."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir, from Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 351; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 6034.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:351

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

If he had something, he gave it. If not, he ***promised or prayed***, but never refused harshly. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of people with good, and he was most generous in Ramadan when Jibril met him to study the Qur'an. At that time he was more generous than the free-blowing wind"*** (ash-Shama'il 352) — sahih; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 6).

Anas رضى الله عنه said: "The Prophet ﷺ never stored anything for the next day" (ash-Shama'il 353) — hasan. And 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: "The Prophet ﷺ would accept gifts and repay them" (ash-Shama'il 356) — sahih chain; also (Sahih al-Bukhari 2585). Repaying gifts strengthens love and honours the giver.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT HIS GENEROSITY (ASH-SHAMA'IL 354–355)

The narration of 'Umar about a man who asked, and the Prophet told him to buy on credit in the Prophet's name (No. 354), and the narration of ar-Rubayyi' about ornaments given in return for a gift of dates and cucumbers (No. 355), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i.

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REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 354–355. sunnah.com/shamail:354

We may not be able to give as he did, but we can follow ***its spirit***: never turning away a person who asks harshly, giving even a little, and increasing charity especially in Ramadan.

His generosity came from ***certainty in Allah***. He did not fear poverty from giving, for he was certain that provision is in Allah's hand and that charity does not decrease wealth. This certainty is what kept his hand always open.

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CHAPTER 49: HIS MODESTY

The forty-ninth chapter describes ***the modesty of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 357

حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ غَيْلاَنَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ اللهِ بْنَ أَبِي عُتْبَةَ، يُحَدِّثُ عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ، قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَشَدَّ حَيَاءً مِنَ الْعَذْرَاءِ فِي خِدْرِهَا، وَكَانَ إِذَا كَرِهَ شَيْئًا عَرَفْنَاهُ فِي وَجْهِهِ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه said: ***"The Prophet*** ﷺ ***was more modest than a maiden in her seclusion. When he disliked something, we would know it from his face."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, from Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Qatadah, from 'Abdullah ibn Abi 'Utbah, from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 357; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3562.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:357

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

A maiden living behind a curtain is usually very shy. Yet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ — a leader, commander and teacher — was shyer still. This modesty never stopped him from conveying the truth, but it kept him from ***unbecoming words and deeds***.

Notice too that when he ***disliked something***, the Companions could see it in his face. He did not need to scold; the change in his face was enough of a rebuke. He said: "Modesty is a branch of faith."

NOTE: MODESTY IN THE HOME (ASH-SHAMA'IL 358)

The narration of 'A'ishah about the modesty kept between him and his wife has a ***weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. His modesty in general is established in the sahih narration of Abu Sa'id above.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 358 — weak chain (Zubayr 'Ali Za'i). sunnah.com/shamail:358

True modesty makes a person ***shy before Allah*** more than before people. It moves one to guard one's gaze, tongue and deeds even when alone, knowing that Allah always sees.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Chapters 41 to 49 of ash-Shama'il introduce us to the ***daily worship and character*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Among the most important lessons:

CHAPTER	KEY LESSON
41–42. Duha and home prayer	Four rak'ahs of Duha; voluntary prayer at home
43. Fasting	Sha'ban, Monday and Thursday, 'Ashura'; continual even if little
44. Recitation	Tartil, madd and pausing at each verse
45. Weeping	Weeping for Allah and out of mercy
46–47. Bed and humility	Servant of Allah and His Messenger; helping the family
48. Character	Never saying "uff"; forgiving; generous
49. Modesty	Shyer than a maiden behind her curtain

A MESSAGE FOR US

The character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is not only to be admired, but to be ***practised little by little***.

Choose one deed from this book — two rak'ahs of Duha, fasting on Monday, helping with housework, or never saying "uff" to a child — and keep it up, even if small. May Allah make us an Ummah its Prophet is proud of.

The book is completed with ***Part 6***, the final part: his cupping, his names, his livelihood, his age, his passing, his inheritance and seeing him in a dream — the closing chapters of ash-Shama'il. And Allah knows best.

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APPENDIX: A CHECKLIST OF WORSHIP AND CHARACTER

Here is a summary of the worship and character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ discussed in this book, with their sources. This list can be printed and used as a weekly guide for the whole family.

PRACTICE	SOURCE
Praying two to four rak'ahs of Duha	Sahih Muslim 719
Praying voluntary prayers at home	Sahih al-Bukhari 432
Fasting on Monday and Thursday	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 745
Fasting three days every month	ash-Shama'il 303
Fasting much in Sha'ban	Sahih al-Bukhari 1969
Fasting 'Ashura'	Sahih al-Bukhari 2002
Deeds done continually, even if little	Sahih al-Bukhari 6464
Reciting the Qur'an with tartil, pausing at each verse	ash-Shama'il 315
Listening to the Qur'an from others	Sahih al-Bukhari 4582
Helping with housework	Sahih al-Bukhari 676
Never saying "uff" or blaming	Sahih al-Bukhari 6038
Forgiving and choosing the easier way	Sahih al-Bukhari 3560
Not turning away one who asks	Sahih al-Bukhari 6034
Accepting gifts and repaying them	Sahih al-Bukhari 2585

Choose one act of worship and one trait of character to begin this week. Once they become habits, add the next. This is the meaning of his words: the deeds most beloved to Allah are those done continually, even if little.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Arabic terms below appear throughout this book. Knowing them makes it easier to follow the narrations and the explanations of the scholars, and to continue studying ash-Shama'il in its commentaries.

TERM	MEANING
Duha	The voluntary morning prayer, after sunrise until before noon
Nafl / Tatawwu'	A voluntary act of worship
Rawatib	Regular Sunnah prayers before or after the obligatory prayers
Sha'ban	The eighth month, before Ramadan
'Ashura'	The tenth day of Muharram
Tartil	Slow, measured recitation of the Qur'an
Madd	Lengthening the long vowels in recitation
Tarji'	A gentle modulation of the voice in recitation
Tajwid	The rules of correct Qur'anic recitation
Khushu'	Humility and presence of heart in prayer
Tawadu'	Humility
Mudarah	Gentleness with people to ward off harm, without compromising religion
Mudahanah	Flattery that sacrifices religion
Haya'	Modesty, a sense of shame that prevents wrong
Siwak	A tooth-stick used to clean the teeth
Tuma'ninah	Calmness and stillness in each pillar of prayer
Sahih / Hasan / Da'if	Grades of a chain: authentic, good, weak

Many of these words describe a balanced life: worship that is continual rather than excessive, recitation that is slow and reflective, and character marked by humility, gentleness and modesty.

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PART SIX

Like a Page of the Mushaf

Chapters 50–56 of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah

His Cupping, Names, Livelihood, Age, Passing and Inheritance, and Seeing Him in a Dream

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LIKE A PAGE OF THE MUSHAF

In the last five books, we came to know the appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his clothing, his table, his smile, his sleep, his worship and his character. This sixth book is ***the final one***. It brings us to the closing chapters of ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah*** by ***Imam at-Tirmidhi***, chapters 50 to 56: his cupping, his names, his livelihood, his age, his passing, his inheritance and seeing him in a dream.

These chapters contain ***55 narrations*** as listed on sunnah.com. Two of them are only notes about narrators, so ***53 narrations*** are graded. Chapter 54 on his passing is the longest, with 14 narrations. As in the previous books, sahih and hasan narrations are presented in Hadith boxes, while weak narrations are explained in Note boxes.

This book touches the heart in a different way. We see a Prophet who ***was cupped and paid the cupper fairly***, whose family went a month without lighting a cooking fire, who died at sixty-three ***resting on his wife's chest***, and who ***left not a single dinar***. Yet he left something far more precious: the Qur'an, the Sunnah and knowledge.

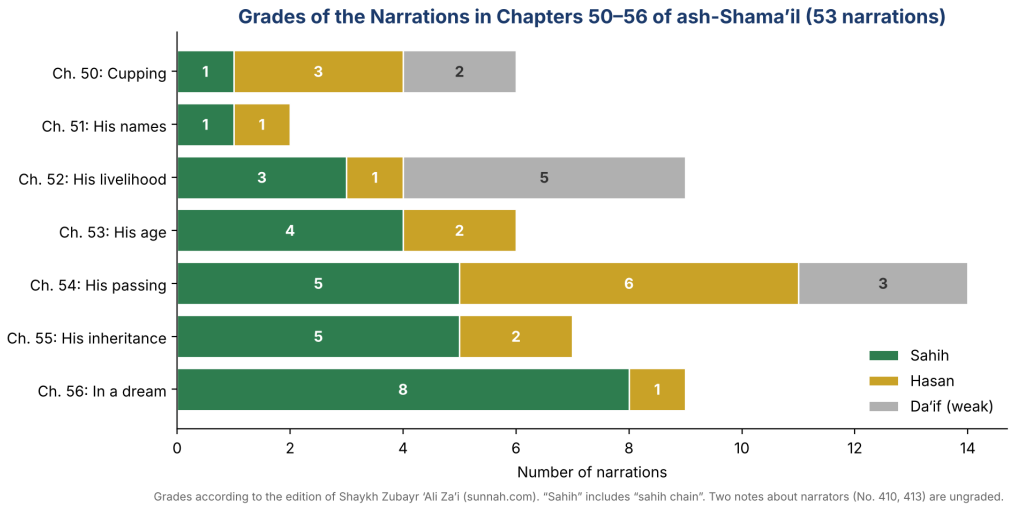


Figure 6: The grades of the narrations in chapters 50–56 of ash-Shama'il.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this book is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box, based on the edition of Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i as shown on sunnah.com. Of the 53 graded narrations in these chapters, 43 are sahih or hasan — about four-fifths.

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MUHAMMAD IS ONLY A MESSENGER

This final book opens with the verse that Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه recited on the day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died:

SURAH ALI 'IMRAN 3:144

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ ٱلرُّسُلُ ۚ أَفَإِيْن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ ٱنقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَٰبِكُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا ۗ وَسَيَجْزِى ٱللَّهُ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/3:144

This verse was revealed after the Battle of Uhud, when a false rumour spread that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had been killed and some people lost heart. Ibn Kathir explains that Allah taught the believers that ***this religion does not depend on the life of any human being***, even if he is a Messenger Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:144.

Eight years later, the same verse calmed the whole Ummah. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ truly died and 'Umar رضى الله عنه could not accept it, Abu Bakr stood and said: "Whoever worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad has died. And whoever worshipped Allah, Allah is Ever-Living and does not die." Then he recited this verse (Sahih al-Bukhari 3668).

This is the theme of this book. We will see that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was ***fully human***: he fell ill and sought treatment, went hungry and was patient, grew older and finally died. But he was also ***the Messenger of Allah***: his names show his rank, his inheritance is knowledge, and whoever sees him in a dream has truly seen him.

The verse ends with a promise: Allah will reward ***the grateful***. Being grateful for the blessing of the Messenger ﷺ means holding firmly to his teaching after he is gone. May this final book increase our gratitude and love for him.

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CHAPTER 50: HIS CUPPING

The fiftieth chapter of ash-Shama'il is titled ***"The Cupping of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It contains six narrations: one sahih, three hasan and two weak (Figure 6). Cupping (al-hijamah) is a traditional treatment that draws blood through cups placed on the skin.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 359

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُجْرٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، عَنْ حُمَيْدٍ، قَالَ: سُئِلَ أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ عَنْ كَسْبِ الْحَجَّامِ، فَقَالَ: احْتَجَمَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، حَجَمَهُ أَبُو طَيْبَةَ، فَأَمَرَ لَهُ بِصَاعَيْنِ مِنْ طَعَامٍ، وَكَلَّمَ أَهْلَهُ فَوَضَعُوا عَنْهُ مِنْ خَرَاجِهِ، وَقَالَ: إِنَّ أَفْضَلَ مَا تَدَاوَيْتُمْ بِهِ الْحِجَامَةُ، أَوْ إِنَّ مِنْ أَمْثَلِ دَوَائِكُمُ الْحِجَامَةَ.

TRANSLATION:

Humayd said: Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه was asked about the earnings of a cupper. He said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was cupped; Abu Taybah cupped him. He ordered that he be given two sa' of food, and he spoke to his masters, so they reduced the levy they took from him.*** And he said: The best remedy you use is cupping — or: among the best of your remedies is cupping."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Ali ibn Hujr, from Isma'il ibn Ja'far, from Humayd at-Tawil, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 359; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 5696.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:359

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith shows that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***sought medical treatment***, though he was the Prophet with the greatest trust in Allah. Treatment does not contradict reliance on Allah; it is part of taking the means that he taught.

Notice too his ***fairness and compassion*** towards Abu Taybah, a slave who worked as a cupper. He paid him two sa' of food, and even spoke to his masters to lighten his levy. He did not merely pay him, but also ***stood up for a weak worker***.

The hasan narrations in this chapter strengthen the same meaning. 'Ali رضى الله عنه said that he was cupped and told 'Ali to give the cupper his fee (ash-Shama'il 360). Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said that he

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was cupped on the two veins at the side of the neck and between the shoulders, and gave the cupper his fee — ***"and had it been unlawful, he would not have given it"*** (ash-Shama'il 361). This is also narrated by al-Bukhari (Sahih al-Bukhari 2103).

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrated that he asked the cupper how much his levy was. When he said three sa', he ***reduced it by one sa'*** and gave him his fee (ash-Shama'il 362) — hasan. This teaches us to care about the burdens of those who serve us.

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CUPPING: SUNNAH AND MODERN RESEARCH

He was also cupped while in ihram, as Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was cupped while he was in ihram" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1835). This shows that cupping was a common treatment in his life, at home or on a journey.

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS ABOUT CUPPING (ASH-SHAMA'IL 363–364)

The narration of Anas that he was cupped ***on the seventeenth, nineteenth and twenty-first*** of the month (No. 363), and the narration that he was cupped on the top of the foot while in ihram at Malal (No. 364), both have ***weak chains*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. So we do not set specific dates as a confirmed Sunnah on the basis of these narrations.

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How does modern medicine view cupping? A systematic review of 14 randomised clinical trials on wet cupping found ***promising evidence*** for muscle and joint pain, such as low back pain and neck pain. Yet the researchers stressed that ***better-quality trials are still needed*** (Al-Bedah et al., 2016).

Another review set out the types of cupping and the ***possible side effects***, such as bruising, wounds and infection if hygiene is poor (Aboushanab & AlSanad, 2018). So whoever wishes to be cupped should go to ***a qualified practitioner***, and speak to a doctor if they have an illness or are taking medication.

The bigger lesson of this chapter is ***the attitude towards treatment***: he used the treatment known in his time, paid its practitioner fairly, and said: "Allah has not sent down any disease without sending down its cure" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5678). Islam encourages its followers to seek medicine and medical knowledge, with hearts that rely on Allah.

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CHAPTER 51: HIS NAMES

The fifty-first chapter gathers ***the names of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. It contains two narrations: one sahih and one hasan. These names are not mere titles, but describe ***his mission and rank***.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 365

عن سَعِيدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْمَخْزُومِيُّ، وَغَيْرُ وَاحِدٍ، قَالُوا: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرِ بْنِ مُطْعِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: إِنَّ لِي أَسْمَاءً، أَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، وَأَنَا أَحْمَدُ، وَأَنَا الْمَاحِي الَّذِي يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِيَ الْكُفْرَ، وَأَنَا الْحَاشِرُ الَّذِي يُحْشَرُ النَّاسُ عَلَى قَدَمِي، وَأَنَا الْعَاقِبُ الَّذِي لَيْسَ بَعْدَهُ نَبِيٌّ.

TRANSLATION:

Muhammad ibn Jubayr ibn Mut'im reported from his father رضى الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"I have several names. I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am al-Mahi, through whom Allah erases disbelief, I am al-Hashir, behind whom the people will be gathered, and I am al-'Aqib, after whom there is no prophet."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Sa'id ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Makhzumi, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from az-Zuhri, from Muhammad ibn Jubayr ibn Mut'im, from Jubayr ibn Mut'im (his father) رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 365; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3532.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:365

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Muhammad means the one who is much praised, and ***Ahmad*** means the one who praises Allah the most. The name Ahmad is mentioned in the Qur'an as glad tidings brought by the Prophet 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

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SURAH AS-SAFF 61:6

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦﴾

And [mention] when Jesus, the son of Mary, said, "O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad." But when he came to them with clear evidences, they said, "This is obvious magic."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/61:6

Ibn Kathir explains that the Prophet 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was the last prophet of the Children of Israel, and he gave news of ***the prophet who would come after him***, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ Tafsir Ibn Kathir 61:6.

Al-Mahi (the Eraser) means that Allah erases disbelief through him. ***Al-Hashir*** (the Gatherer) means people will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection after him. And ***al-'Aqib*** (the Last) means there is no prophet after him. Each of these names invites us to reflect on his place in human history and in the Hereafter.

Whoever is named Muhammad or Ahmad should strive so that ***his character matches his name***: praising Allah much and being praised for his goodness. A good name is a prayer, and it reminds its bearer of the noblest example.

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THE PROPHET OF MERCY AND THE SEAL OF THE PROPHETS

Hudhayfah رضى الله عنه narrated that he met the Prophet ﷺ in one of the streets of Madinah, and he said: "I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am ***the Prophet of Mercy***, ***the Prophet of Repentance***, I am al-Muqaffi (the one who followed the earlier prophets), I am al-Hashir, and the Prophet of the Great Battles" (ash-Shama'il 366) — hasan chain. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrated a very similar list (Sahih Muslim 2355).

The name ***Prophet of Mercy*** matches the words of Allah:

SURAH AL-ANBIYA' 21:107

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحۡمَةٗ لِّلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ١٠٧

And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/21:107

Ibn Kathir explains that whoever accepts this mercy and is grateful for it will be happy in this world and the Hereafter Tafsir Ibn Kathir 21:107. His mercy reached the believers, children, the poor, slaves and even animals — as we saw in the previous books.

The names ***al-'Aqib*** and ***al-Muqaffi*** match the verse that declares him the seal of all the prophets:

SURAH AL-AHZAB 33:40

مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَآ أَحَدٖ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمۡ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٗا ٤٠

Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/33:40

He described himself with a beautiful parable: the prophets are like a fine house except for the place of one missing brick; people walk around it and say, "If only this brick were put in place!" He said: ***"I am that brick, and I am the seal of the prophets"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3535).

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CHAPTER 52: HIS LIVELIHOOD

The fifty-second chapter is titled ***"The Livelihood of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***, that is, how he and his family lived day to day in terms of food and wealth. It contains nine narrations: three sahih, one hasan and five weak.

This chapter opens with al-Nu'man ibn Bashir رضى الله عنهما reproaching the people of his time: "Do you not now eat and drink as you please? I saw your Prophet ﷺ, ***and he could not find even poor-quality dates to fill his stomach***" (ash-Shama'il 370) — sahih chain (Sahih Muslim 2977).

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 371

حَدَّثَنَا هَارُونُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدَةُ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: إِنْ كُنَّا آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ نَمْكُثُ شَهْرًا مَا نَسْتَوْقِدُ بِنَارٍ، إِنْ هُوَ إِلا التَّمْرُ وَالْمَاءُ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"We, the family of Muhammad, would spend a whole month without lighting a fire (for cooking). It was nothing but dates and water."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Harun ibn Ishaq al-Hamdani, from 'Abdah ibn Sulayman, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (his father), from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 371; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 6458.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:371

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

A month without fire in the kitchen meant no bread baked and no dish cooked. There were only ***"the two black things"***: dates and water. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها told her nephew 'Urwah that they would see ***three new moons in two months*** without a fire being lit in the houses of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (Sahih al-Bukhari 2567).

This simplicity was not because he could not obtain wealth. Spoils and gifts came to him, but he ***gave them away to others***. He prayed: ***"O Allah, make the provision of the family of Muhammad just enough to live on"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6460).

This gives us the right measure of blessing. We who today have full kitchens and stocked refrigerators should be ***more grateful***, avoid waste, and remember those who still live on dates and water.

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MADE TO FEAR FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

His hardship was not only in food. In the early days of the call in Makkah, he faced ***threats and persecution*** alone:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 376

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا رَوْحُ بْنُ أَسْلَمَ أَبُو حَاتِمٍ الْبَصْرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا ثَابِتٌ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: لَقَدْ أُخِفْتُ فِي اللهِ وَمَا يَخَافُ أَحَدٌ، وَلَقَدْ أُوذِيتُ فِي اللهِ وَمَا يُؤْذَى أَحَدٌ، وَلَقَدْ أَتَتْ عَلَيَّ ثَلَاثُونَ مِنْ بَيْنِ لَيْلَةٍ وَيَوْمٍ، وَمَا لِي وَلِبِلَالٍ طَعَامٌ يَأْكُلُهُ ذُو كَبِدٍ، إِلا شَيْءٌ يُوَارِيهِ إِبِطُ بِلَالٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"I have been made to fear for the sake of Allah when no one else was made to fear, and I have been harmed for the sake of Allah when no one else was harmed. Thirty days and nights passed over me when Bilal and I had no food that any living creature could eat, except a little that Bilal could hide under his armpit."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ad-Darimi, from Rawh ibn Aslam, from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 376; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 2472.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:376

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He mentions three hardships: ***fear, harm and hunger***. All were endured "for the sake of Allah", when there were not yet many believers to share the burden. Bilal رضى الله عنه, a former slave tortured for his faith, was his companion in that hunger.

Abu Talhah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Companions complained to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ of hunger and showed their stomachs with a stone tied to each. Then ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ showed his stomach with two stones tied to it*** (ash-Shama'il 372) — hasan chain. Tying a stone to the stomach was how the Arabs held back the pain of hunger.

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The same happened while digging the trench in the Battle of the Trench. Jabir رضى الله عنه related that when the Companions came upon a huge rock, he rose to break it, ***with a stone tied to his stomach***, and they had not tasted food for three days (Sahih al-Bukhari 4101).

A leader ***hungrier than his followers*** — this was the leadership of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He never asked others to be patient while he himself was full. This lesson matters greatly for parents, teachers and leaders: show patience in deeds, not only in words.

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HUNGER SHARED WITH HIS COMPANIONS

One of the most beautiful stories of his hunger is narrated by Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه in Sahih Muslim. One day or night, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out and found Abu Bakr and 'Umar رضى الله عنهما outside too. He asked: "What has brought you out at this hour?" They said: "Hunger, O Messenger of Allah." He said: ***"By the One in whose hand is my soul, what brought you out has brought me out too"*** (Sahih Muslim 2038).

The three of them went to the house of a man of the Ansar. His wife welcomed them joyfully, and the man came with a bunch of dates and then slaughtered a sheep. After they had eaten and drunk, he said: ***"You will surely be asked about this blessing on the Day of Resurrection. Hunger brought you out of your homes, and you did not return until you received this blessing"*** (Sahih Muslim 2038).

NOTE: WEAK NARRATIONS IN THE CHAPTER ON LIVELIHOOD (ASH-SHAMA'IL 373–375, 377–378)

The ash-Shama'il version of the story above, which names the Ansari man ***Abu al-Haytham ibn at-Tayyihan*** and adds long details about a servant and advice (No. 373), has ***a weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i. So too narrations No. 374, 375, 377 and 378 about his food and hardship. The core of the story — hunger, and the blessing asked about on the Day of Resurrection — is established in Sahih Muslim No. 2038.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 373–378. sunnah.com/shamail:373
Sahih Muslim No. 2038. sunnah.com/muslim:2038

This story teaches two things. First, ***hunger is no shame***; the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his two best Companions were hungry together. Second, every blessing — even just dates, meat and cool water — ***will be asked about*** by Allah: were we grateful for it?

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CHAPTER 53: HIS AGE

The fifty-third chapter is titled ***"The Age of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It contains six narrations: four sahih and two hasan. There is no weak narration in this chapter.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 379

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا رَوْحُ بْنُ عُبَادَةَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا زَكَرِيَا بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ دِينَارٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ: مَكَثَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِمَكَّةَ ثَلاثَ عَشْرَةَ سَنَةً يُوحَى إِلَيْهِ، وَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ عَشْرًا، وَتُوُفِّيَ وَهُوَ ابْنُ ثَلاثٍ وَسِتِّينَ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***"The Prophet ﷺ stayed in Makkah for thirteen years receiving revelation, and in Madinah for ten. He died at the age of sixty-three."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani', from Rawh ibn 'Ubadah, from Zakariyya ibn Ishaq, from 'Amr ibn Dinar, from Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 379; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3652.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:379

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith sums up the whole period of prophethood: ***thirteen years in Makkah*** — years of calling, persecution and patience — and ***ten years in Madinah*** — years of building a society, striving and completing the law. In only twenty-three years, he transformed Arabia and left an Ummah that carried Islam to the whole world.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها also said: "The Prophet ﷺ died at the age of sixty-three" (ash-Shama'il 381) (Sahih al-Bukhari 3536). And Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه once said in a sermon: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died at sixty-three, as did Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and I am now sixty-three" (ash-Shama'il 380) — sahih chain.

Notice the words of Mu'awiyah: it is as if he ***hoped his end would match*** the age of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his two best Companions. This shows how much the Companions loved him, wishing to resemble him in everything, even age.

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The age of sixty also reminds us of his words: "The lifespans of my Ummah are between sixty and seventy, and few exceed that" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3550). Whoever has reached this age should increase his provision for the Hereafter.

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SIXTY-THREE YEARS

There are also two hasan narrations stating that he died at ***sixty-five***: from Ibn 'Abbas (ash-Shama'il 382) and from Daghfal ibn Hanzalah (ash-Shama'il 383). And Anas رضى الله عنه gives the figure sixty in the following hadith:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 384

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مُوسَى الأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنٌ، حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ، عَنْ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَهُ، يَقُولُ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، لَيْسَ بِالطَّوِيلِ الْبَائِنِ، وَلا بِالْقَصِيرِ، وَلا بِالأَبْيَضِ الأَمْهَقِ، وَلا بِالآدَمِ، وَلا بِالْجَعْدِ الْقَطَطِ، وَلا بِالسَّبْطِ، بَعَثَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى رَأْسِ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً، فَأَقَامَ بِمَكَّةَ عَشْرَ سِنِينَ، وَبِالْمَدِينَةِ عَشْرَ سِنِينَ، وَتَوَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَأْسِ سِتِّينَ سَنَةً، وَلَيْسَ فِي رَأْسِهِ وَلِحْيَتِهِ عِشْرُونَ شَعَرَةً بَيْضَاءَ.

TRANSLATION:

Rabi'ah ibn Abi 'Abd ar-Rahman heard Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه say: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was neither very tall nor short, neither pale white nor dark brown, and his hair was neither tightly curled nor straight. ***Allah the Exalted sent him at the end of forty years. He stayed in Makkah ten years and in Madinah ten years, and Allah took him at the end of sixty years, with not even twenty white hairs on his head and beard."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ishaq ibn Musa al-Ansari, from Ma'n ibn 'Isa, from Malik ibn Anas, from Rabi'ah ibn Abi 'Abd ar-Rahman, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 384; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 3547.

GRADE: SAHIH CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:384

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Scholars explain that the strongest view is ***sixty-three years***, since it is narrated by many Companions with the most authentic chains. Anas's narration of sixty is only ***a round figure*** that drops the extra years, as was the Arab custom. The narration of sixty-five may count the year of birth and the year of death as full years.

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Anas's hadith also mentions something moving: ***not even twenty white hairs*** on his head and beard. In the first book we saw how few his grey hairs were. This shows that he died still strong and radiant, not in frail old age.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما also narrated that he was ***sent at the age of forty*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3902). This gives hope to everyone: forty is not an end, but can be ***the beginning*** of the most meaningful life. Allah Himself mentions forty as the age of maturity in Surah al-Ahqaf, verse 15.

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CHAPTER 54: HIS PASSING

The fifty-fourth chapter is titled ***"The Passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It is the longest in this part, with fourteen narrations: five sahih, six hasan and three weak. We begin with the final moments witnessed by Anas رضى الله عنه:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 386

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَمَّارٍ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ حُرَيْثٍ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، وَغَيْرُ وَاحِدٍ، قَالُوا: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ: آخِرُ نَظْرَةٍ نَظَرْتُهَا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، كَشْفُ السِّتَارَةِ يَوْمَ الاثْنَيْنِ، فَنَظَرْتُ إِلَى وَجْهِهِ كَأَنَّهُ وَرَقَةُ مُصْحَفٍ، وَالنَّاسُ خَلْفَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ، فَكَادَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يَضْطَرِبُوا، فَأَشَارَ إِلَى النَّاسِ أَنِ اثْبُتُوا، وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ يَؤُمُّهُمْ وَأَلْقَى السِّجْفَ، وَتُوُفِّيَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِنْ آخِرِ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: ***"The last look I had at the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was when he lifted the curtain on Monday. I looked at his face, and it was like a page of the Mushaf,*** while the people were praying behind Abu Bakr. The people were about to stir (in joy), so he signalled to them to stay in place, while Abu Bakr led them. Then he let down the curtain, ***and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died at the end of that day."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Abu 'Ammar al-Husayn ibn Hurayth and Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from az-Zuhri, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 386; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 680.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:386

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This is the origin of this part's title: ***"like a page of the Mushaf"***. Scholars explain that Anas likened his face to a page of the Mushaf for ***its beauty, purity and light***. Though gravely ill, his face still shone.

In al-Bukhari's narration it is mentioned that when he saw the people in rows behind Abu Bakr, ***he smiled and laughed*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 680). The last sight that gladdened him was ***his Ummah praying in congregation***. That was the fruit of twenty-three years of striving.

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His signal to the people to ***stay in place*** and keep praying behind Abu Bakr is also full of meaning. He wanted his Ummah to continue worshipping without depending on his presence. The prayer does not stop when he is gone.

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HIS FINAL ILLNESS

The final illness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began some days before his death. When it grew heavy, he asked his wives' permission ***to be nursed in 'A'ishah's house***, and they all agreed. He went to 'A'ishah's house supported by two men, al-'Abbas and another, ***his feet dragging on the ground*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4442).

Notice ***his fairness to his wives*** even in grave illness. He did not simply move to the house of his most beloved wife, but asked permission from them all. His character did not change even when his body was very weak.

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه visited him while he had a high fever and said: "O Messenger of Allah, you have a very high fever." He replied: ***"Yes, I have the fever of two men among you."*** Ibn Mas'ud asked: "Is that because you will have a double reward?" He said: "Yes. No Muslim is afflicted with any harm, even the prick of a thorn, but that Allah expiates his sins because of it, as a tree sheds its leaves" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5648).

This hadith is ***a comfort to everyone who is ill***. Pain is not a sign that Allah dislikes someone; the prophets were the most severely tested of people. For the believer, every pain borne with patience ***sheds sins*** and increases reward.

From his illness we learn ***the etiquette of visiting the sick***: Ibn Mas'ud came, spoke gently and asked with love. Visiting the sick, praying for them and giving them hope is a Sunnah of great reward.

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RESTING ON 'A'ISHAH'S CHEST

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها related his final moment briefly:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 387

حَدَّثَنَا حُمَيْدُ بْنُ مَسْعَدَةَ الْبَصْرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمُ بْنُ أَخْضَرَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَوْنٍ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنِ الأَسْوَدِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: كُنْتُ مُسْنِدَةً النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، إِلَى صَدْرِي أَوْ قَالَتْ: إِلَى حِجْرِي فَدَعَا بِطَسْتٍ لِيَبُولَ فِيهِ، ثُمَّ بَالَ، فَمَاتَ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"I was supporting the Prophet ﷺ against my chest*** — or she said: in my lap — and he called for a basin to urinate in. Then he urinated, ***and then he died."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Humayd ibn Mas'adah al-Basri, from Sulaym ibn Akhdar, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Awn, from Ibrahim an-Nakha'i, from al-Aswad ibn Yazid, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 387; also Sunan an-Nasa'i No. 33.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. That he died resting on 'A'ishah's chest is also narrated by al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:387

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

In al-Bukhari's narration, 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها counted it among Allah's favours upon her: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***died in her house, on her day, resting against her chest***, and Allah joined her saliva with his at the very end, when she softened a siwak for him (Sahih al-Bukhari 4449).

To the very end, he kept ***cleanliness*** — asking for a basin and using the siwak. Cleanliness is no small matter in Islam; it is part of faith, and he kept it until his last breath.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها also narrated that, when he was healthy, he had said that no prophet dies until he is shown his place in Paradise and then given the choice. At the very end, he lifted his gaze upwards and said: ***"O Allah, (I choose) the Highest Companion (ar-Rafiq al-A'la)"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4463). Those were his last words.

He chose ***meeting Allah*** over staying in this world. For the believer, death is not a frightening end, but a door to the Highest Companion, the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous.

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THE AGONIES OF DEATH

Though he was beloved to Allah, he still felt ***the pain of death***:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 388

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ , حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنِ ابْنِ الْهَادِ، عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ سَرْجِسَ، عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ: رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَهُوَ بِالْمَوْتِ وَعِنْدَهُ قَدَحٌ فِيهِ مَاءٌ، وَهُوَ يُدْخِلُ يَدَهُ فِي الْقَدَحِ، ثُمَّ يَمْسَحُ وَجْهَهُ بِالْمَاءِ، ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى مُنْكَرَاتِ أَوْ قَالَ: عَلَى سَكَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as he was dying. Beside him was a cup of water. He would put his hand in the cup and then wipe his face with the water, saying: O Allah, help me through the agonies of death."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from Yazid ibn al-Had, from Musa ibn Sarjis, from al-Qasim ibn Muhammad, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 388; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 978.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. A similar meaning is narrated by al-Bukhari (No. 6510).

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:388

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

In al-Bukhari's narration, he wiped his face with water, saying: ***"La ilaha illallah, truly death has its agonies"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6510). His prayer teaches us to ***ask Allah's help*** for the hardest moment in every human life.

Seeing that pain, 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"I no longer envy anyone an easy death, after seeing how hard the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was"*** (ash-Shama'il 389) — hasan. A hard death is not a sign of Allah's anger; for the prophets, it ***raises rank*** and reward.

Fatimah رضى الله عنها too could not hold back her grief seeing her father. She said: "Oh, the distress of my father!" He replied: ***"There will be no distress for your father after today"*** (ash-Shama'il 398) — hasan (Sahih al-Bukhari 4462). These words are full of tenderness: he comforted his daughter while he himself was suffering.

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From this chapter we learn to ***prepare for death***: to remember La ilaha illallah often, to pray for ease in the agonies of death, and to comfort the family we leave behind. He said: "Whoever's last words are La ilaha illallah will enter Paradise" (Sunan Abi Dawud 3116).

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HIS FINAL COUNSELS

In the last days of his illness, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left several ***important counsels*** for his Ummah.

These counsels are not in the chapters of ash-Shama'il, but are narrated in authentic hadith collections, and they complete the picture of his final days.

'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه said that among the last words spoken by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were:

"The prayer, the prayer! And fear Allah regarding those whom your right hands possess" (Sunan Abi Dawud 5156). Two things he repeated: ***the right of Allah*** through prayer, and ***the right of the weak*** under our care.

Jabir رضى الله عنه heard him say three days before his death: ***"Let none of you die except while thinking well of Allah"*** (Sahih Muslim 2877). This counsel suits his final moments perfectly: he himself chose the Highest Companion, full of hope in Allah's mercy.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated that in his final illness he warned about earlier peoples who ***took the graves of their prophets as places of worship*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1330). He guarded the purity of tawhid to the very end, so that his Ummah would not exalt him beyond his station as the servant and Messenger of Allah.

These counsels show what mattered most to him in his final moments: ***tawhid, prayer, thinking well of Allah and mercy to the weak***. This is a summary of the religion he brought over twenty-three years.

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ABU BAKR KISSED HIM

When the news of his death spread, Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه came from his home in as-Sunh, entered 'A'ishah's room, and uncovered his face:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 391

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، وعياش العنبرى , وسوار بن عبد الله , وغير واحد , قالوا: أخبرنا يحيي بن سعيد , عن سفيان الثورى , عن موسى بن أبي عائشة , عن عبيد الله , عن ابن عباس وعائشة: أن أبا بكر قبل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بعدما مات.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas and 'A'ishah رضى الله عنهما reported: ***"Abu Bakr kissed the Prophet ﷺ after he had died."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Musa ibn Abi 'A'ishah, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Utbah, from Ibn 'Abbas and 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 391; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 4455.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:391

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها added in another narration that Abu Bakr placed his mouth between his eyes, put his hands on his forearms, and said: ***"O Prophet! O sincere friend! O beloved friend!"*** (ash-Shama'il 392) — hasan chain. He also said: "May my father and mother be ransomed for you, you were good in life and in death" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3668).

Abu Bakr showed two things that day: ***deep love*** and ***firm faith***. He wept and kissed him, but then went out calmly to steady the Ummah with the Qur'an. He also recited the words of Allah:

SURAH AZ-ZUMAR 39:30

إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/39:30

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Ibn Kathir explains that this verse reminds that ***all people will die***, including the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and all will gather before Allah Tafsir Ibn Kathir 39:30. This is what brought 'Umar رضى الله عنه to his senses, as if he had never heard the verse before.

The lesson for us: ***weeping at the death of a loved one is not forbidden***; he himself wept when his son Ibrahim died (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303). What is forbidden is wailing and despair. Grief accompanied by patience and contentment is the way of Abu Bakr.

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WHEN MADINAH GREW DARK

Anas رضى الله عنه described the difference between the day he arrived in Madinah and the day he died:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 393

حَدَّثَنَا بِشْرُ بْنُ هِلَالٍ الصَّوَّافُ الْبَصْرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا جَعْفَرُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: لَمَّا كَانَ الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي دَخَلَ فِيهِ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم الْمَدِينَةَ أَضَاءَ مِنْهَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ، فَلَمَّا كَانَ الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي مَاتَ فِيهِ أَظْلَمَ مِنْهَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ، وَمَا نَفَضْنَا أَيْدِينَا مِنَ التُّرَابِ، وَإِنَّا لَفِي دَفْنِهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، حَتَّى أَنْكَرْنَا قُلُوبَنَا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***"On the day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered Madinah, everything in it shone. And on the day he died, everything in it became dark.*** We had not yet shaken the dust from our hands, while we were still burying him ﷺ, before we found our hearts had changed."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Bishr ibn Hilal as-Sawwaf, from Ja'far ibn Sulayman ad-Duba'i, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 393; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 3618.

GRADE: HASAN CHAIN — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:393

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Scholars explain that "light" and "darkness" here are ***spiritual light and darkness***: the joy, guidance and tranquillity when he arrived, and the grief and loss when he left. The Companions' hearts also changed — not because their faith decreased, but because ***they had lost the light that had always illuminated them***.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died on a Monday"*** (ash-Shama'il 394) — sahih. Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه himself asked 'A'ishah on what day he died, and she answered: Monday; and Abu Bakr hoped that he too would die on that day (Sahih al-Bukhari 1387).

NOTE: NARRATIONS ABOUT THE BURIAL (ASH-SHAMA'IL 390, 395–396)

The narration of Abu Bakr that ***"no prophet dies except that he is buried where he died"*** (No. 390) has ***a weak chain*** according to Zubayr 'Ali Za'i, but he graded ***the hadith hasan*** because of other supporting routes.

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The narrations about his burial on the night of Wednesday (No. 395) and on Tuesday (No. 396) have ***weak chains***. What is certain is that he was buried in 'A'ishah's room, where he died.

REFERENCES:
ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 390, 395–396. sunnah.com/shamail:390

The Companions' grief is a lesson for us who never saw him. They felt an immense loss because they ***knew him closely***. The more we come to know him through books like ash-Shama'il, the deeper our love for him grows.

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LONGING FOR HIM

After his death, the Companions deeply ***missed*** him. Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that Abu Bakr said to 'Umar: "Let us visit Umm Ayman as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to visit her." When they arrived, Umm Ayman wept. They said: "What is with Allah is better for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." She replied: ***"I do not weep because I do not know that, but because revelation has been cut off from the heavens"*** (Sahih Muslim 2454). And the two of them wept with her.

Notice that Abu Bakr and 'Umar ***continued his practice***: visiting Umm Ayman, the woman who had cared for him since childhood. The best way to miss someone is to continue the good he used to do.

For us who came later, there is good news. A man asked him when the Hour would be. He asked: "What have you prepared for it?" He said: "Nothing, except that I love Allah and His Messenger." He said: ***"You will be with those you love."*** Anas said: "We were never so happy with anything" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3688).

Anas added in that narration: "I love the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and I hope to be with them because of my love for them, even though my deeds are not like theirs." True longing for him is a longing that ***moves us to act***, so that we may be worthy of being gathered with him.

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ABU BAKR LEADS THE PRAYER

The longest narration in this chapter comes from Salim ibn 'Ubayd رضى الله عنه, a Companion from the People of the Suffah (ash-Shama'il 397) — sahih chain. He related that he fainted in his illness, then came round and asked: "Has the prayer time come?" They said: "Yes." He said: ***"Tell Bilal to call the adhan, and tell Abu Bakr to lead the people."*** This was repeated several times.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها tried to ask for someone else because her father was soft-hearted and wept easily, but he insisted that ***Abu Bakr*** should lead. The same event is narrated by al-Bukhari (Sahih al-Bukhari 664). The Companions understood the sign: if he was pleased for Abu Bakr to lead their prayer, they would be pleased for Abu Bakr to lead their worldly affairs.

Salim's narration continues with 'Umar unable to accept his death, the arrival of Abu Bakr who recited ***"Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die"***, and finally ***the pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr*** as caliph. Abu Bakr also taught them how to pray over him — ***in groups, one after another*** — and that he should be buried ***in the place where Allah took his soul***, then told his kinsmen to wash him. In the hardest moment, the Companions ***stayed united*** and made sure the Ummah did not split.

The chapter closes with glad tidings for parents who lose children. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that he said: "Whoever of my Ummah has two children who go before him (dying young), Allah will admit him to Paradise because of them." 'A'ishah asked: "And whoever has one?" He said: "And whoever has one, O you who are granted success." She asked: "And whoever has none?" He said: ***"I am the forerunner for my Ummah; they will not be struck by any calamity like the calamity of losing me"*** (ash-Shama'il 399) — hasan chain.

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CHAPTER 55: HIS INHERITANCE

The fifty-fifth chapter is titled ***"The Inheritance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"***. It contains seven narrations: five sahih and two hasan. This chapter answers an important question: what did a Prophet who once led all of Arabia leave behind?

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 400

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حُسَيْنُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا إِسْرَائِيلُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْحَارِثِ، أَخِي جُوَيْرِيَةَ لَهُ صُحْبَةٌ، قَالَ: مَا تَرَكَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِلا سِلاحَهُ، وَبَغْلَتَهُ، وَأَرْضًا جَعَلَهَا صَدَقَةً.

TRANSLATION:

'Amr ibn al-Harith رضى الله عنه, the brother of Juwayriyah (Mother of the Believers), said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left nothing except his weapons, his mule, and a piece of land that he made a charity."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Ahmad ibn Mani', from Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Marrudhi, from Isra'il ibn Yunus, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from 'Amr ibn al-Harith al-Khuza'i رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 400; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 2739.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:400

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Weapons, a white mule and a piece of land already made a charity — that was all. No palace, no store of gold, no estate for his descendants. Indeed, 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها related that ***his armour was still pawned*** to a Jew for thirty sa' of barley when he died (Sahih al-Bukhari 2916).

This fact is very meaningful. A leader with full power could easily gather wealth. But he ***chose to live simply and die simply***, so that no one could ever claim that his call aimed at riches.

The lesson for us: true wealth is ***what we send ahead for the Hereafter***, not what we leave behind in this world. Charity, endowments and beneficial knowledge keep bringing reward even after we are gone.

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WE ARE NOT INHERITED FROM

From this chapter comes an important principle of the Shari'ah, narrated by many Companions:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 403

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا صَفْوَانُ بْنُ عِيسَى، عَنِ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: لا نُورَثُ مَا تَرَكْنَا فَهُوَ صَدَقَةٌ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"We (prophets) are not inherited from.***

What we leave behind is charity."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Safwan ibn 'Isa, from Usamah ibn Zayd al-Laythi, from az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 403; also Sahih al-Bukhari No. 6727.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:403

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The prophets ***are not inherited from like ordinary people***. What they leave becomes charity for the Ummah. Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that he said: "My heirs do not divide dinars. What I leave, after the provision of my wives and the wage of my worker, is charity" (ash-Shama'il 404) (Sahih al-Bukhari 2776).

Fatimah رضى الله عنها once came to Abu Bakr asking for her share of her father's inheritance. Abu Bakr answered that he had heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: "We are not inherited from", but he promised: ***"I will support whomever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ supported, and I will spend on whomever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spent on"*** (ash-Shama'il 401) — hasan chain.

In the caliphate of 'Umar رضى الله عنه, al-'Abbas and 'Ali رضى الله عنهما came to him disputing over that property. 'Umar asked the senior Companions present — among them 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf, az-Zubayr and Sa'd — by Allah: "Do you know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: We are not inherited

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from; what we leave is charity?" They all said: ***"Yes"*** (ash-Shama'il 405) (Sahih al-Bukhari 3094). The hasan narration No. 402 relates the same event (ash-Shama'il 402).

This story teaches ***the trustworthiness of leaders***: Abu Bakr and 'Umar did not take that property for themselves, but managed it as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had — for his family and the good of the Ummah. It also teaches the etiquette of disagreement: ***returning to the words of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ and accepting them with contentment.

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NEITHER DINAR NOR DIRHAM

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها summed up his material inheritance in one sentence:

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 406

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ عَاصِمِ ابْنِ بَهْدَلَةَ، عَنْ زِرِّ بْنِ حُبَيْشٍ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: مَا تَرَكَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم دِينَارًا وَلا دِرْهَمًا وَلا شَاةً وَلا بَعِيرًا، قَالَ: وَأَشُكُّ فِي الْعَبْدِ وَالأَمَةِ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left neither a dinar, nor a dirham, nor a sheep, nor a camel."*** (Zirr said:) And I am unsure whether she mentioned a male or female slave.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from 'Asim ibn Bahdalah, from Zirr ibn Hubaysh, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 406; also Sahih Muslim No. 1635.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. Also narrated by Imam Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:406

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

If he left no dinar or dirham, what was his true inheritance? He answered it himself: ***"The scholars are the heirs of the prophets. The prophets did not leave dinars or dirhams as inheritance; they left knowledge. So whoever takes it has taken an abundant share"*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 3641).

This is the inheritance that reaches us today: ***the Qur'an and the Sunnah***, including the book ash-Shama'il that we studied in these six parts. Every time we read a hadith, practise it and teach it, we are ***taking a share of the inheritance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ***.

This hadith also teaches us not to worry too much about the wealth we will leave our children. More important is ***passing on faith, character and knowledge*** to them. Wealth runs out, but the reward of beneficial knowledge keeps flowing.

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CHAPTER 56: SEEING HIM IN A DREAM

The fifty-sixth chapter, the last of ash-Shama'il, is titled ***"Seeing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a Dream"***.

It contains eleven narrations: eight sahih, one hasan and two notes about narrators. There is no weak narration in this chapter.

HADITH — AL-SYAMA'IL AL-MUHAMMADIYYAH, NO. 407

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ أَبِي الأَحْوَصِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، قَالَ: مَنْ رَآنِي فِي الْمَنَامِ فَقَدْ رَآنِي فَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لا يَتَمَثَّلُ بِي.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"Whoever sees me in a dream has truly seen me, for Satan cannot take my likeness."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from Abu al-Ahwas, from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah, Hadith No. 407; also Jami' at-Tirmidhi No. 2276.

GRADE: SAHIH — graded by Shaykh Zubayr 'Ali Za'i in his edition of ash-Shama'il. A similar meaning is narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/shamail:407

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith is narrated by many Companions: Abu Hurayrah (ash-Shama'il 408) (Sahih al-Bukhari 110), Tariq ibn Ashyam al-Ashja'i (ash-Shama'il 409), Abu Qatadah (ash-Shama'il 414) (Sahih al-Bukhari 6996) and Anas (ash-Shama'il 415) (Sahih al-Bukhari 6994). All carry the same meaning: ***Satan cannot take the likeness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ***, so a dream of seeing him is a true dream.

Scholars explain that such a dream is true ***if what is seen matches his features*** as narrated in authentic hadiths — the very features we studied in the books of ash-Shama'il. So knowledge of his appearance helps a person recognise the dream.

Yet scholars also stress that ***dreams are not a source of law***. Whatever is heard in a dream cannot add to or change the Shari'ah, which is already complete. Seeing him in a dream is glad tidings, not new revelation.

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Kulayb, the father of ‘Asim, heard this hadith from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه, then told Ibn ‘Abbas of his own dream, mentioning that the figure resembled al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali. Ibn ‘Abbas said: ***“Indeed, al-Hasan resembled him”*** (ash-Shama’il 411) — sahih chain. Ibn ‘Abbas tested the dream against the features of the Prophet ﷺ that he knew.

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THE DREAM OF YAZID AL-FARISI

The most detailed story in this chapter is the dream of Yazid al-Farisi, ***a scribe of the Mushaf***. He dreamt of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the time of Ibn 'Abbas and told him. Ibn 'Abbas said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: Satan cannot take my likeness; so whoever sees me in sleep has truly seen me. ***Can you describe the man you saw?***" (ash-Shama'il 412) — hasan chain.

Yazid described a man of ***medium build***, of light brown complexion, with kohl-dark eyes, a beautiful smile and handsome features, his beard filling his face from here to here and covering the top of his chest. Ibn 'Abbas said: ***"Had you seen him while awake, you could not have described him better than this"*** (ash-Shama'il 412).

NOTE: TWO NOTES ABOUT NARRATORS (ASH-SHAMA'IL 410, 413)

Narration No. 410 is the statement of Khalaf ibn Khalifah that he saw 'Amr ibn Hurayth, a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, when he was a little boy. Narration No. 413 is the statement of 'Awf al-A'rabi that ***he was older than Qatadah***. Neither is a hadith about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; they are Imam at-Tirmidhi's notes clarifying the standing of narrators in the chains. So they are not graded.

REFERENCES:

ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah No. 410, 413. sunnah.com/shamail:410

Notice how Ibn 'Abbas ***did not simply accept*** the dream, but asked about the features seen. This is the scholarly attitude of the Companions: they tested everything against what was established from him. And notice how ***ash-Shama'il becomes the measure*** — Yazid's description matched what we learned in the first book.

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THIS KNOWLEDGE IS RELIGION

Imam at-Tirmidhi closes ash-Shama'il with two very meaningful sayings of the scholars. First, 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak said: ***"If you are tested with the office of judge, then hold to the athar (the narrations)"*** (ash-Shama'il 416) — sahih chain.

Second, Muhammad ibn Sirin, a great Successor of Basra, said: ***"This knowledge (of hadith) is religion, so look carefully at whom you take your religion from"*** (ash-Shama'il 417) — sahih chain. Imam Muslim also quoted these words in the introduction to his Sahih.

Why does a book on the qualities of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ close with words about ***care in accepting narrations***? Because every description of him is only meaningful if it is ***truly established***. That is why, in all six parts, every hadith has its grade and chain stated, and weak narrations are set apart in Note boxes.

In the age of social media, Ibn Sirin's words matter more than ever. Many "hadiths" spread without sources. Before sharing, ***check the source and the grade***. Loving the Messenger of Allah ﷺ includes guarding the truth of what is attributed to him, for he said: "Whoever deliberately lies about me, let him take his seat in the Fire" (Sahih al-Bukhari 110).

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SENDING BLESSINGS UPON HIM

Having come to know him through six parts, the most fitting response is ***to send blessings upon him***, as Allah commands:

SURAH AL-AHZAB 33:56

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِيِّۚ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ صَلُّواْ عَلَيۡهِ وَسَلِّمُواْ تَسۡلِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/33:56

Ibn Kathir explains that Allah tells His servants of the rank of His Prophet with Him in the highest heaven: Allah praises him before the angels, and the angels send blessings upon him. Then Allah commands the people of the earth to ***also send blessings and peace*** Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:56.

The reward of sending blessings is very great. He said: ***"Whoever sends blessings upon me once, Allah sends blessings upon him ten times"*** (Sahih Muslim 408). The Companions asked how to send blessings, and he taught them the Ibrahimi blessing: "Allahumma salli 'ala Muhammad wa 'ala ali Muhammad, kama sallayta 'ala Ibrahim wa 'ala ali Ibrahim, innaka Hamidun Majid…" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3370).

Love for him is also part of faith. He said: ***"None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his child and all people"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 15). Blessings recited with a heart that knows him are the most beautiful expression of love.

Make sending blessings part of the daily routine: after prayer, on Fridays, whenever his name is mentioned, and when the heart feels tight. May our blessings be a reason for us to be ***close to him on the Day of Resurrection***.

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SIX PARTS, ONE PORTRAIT

With this part, our journey through ***all 56 chapters*** of ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah is complete. The table below summarises the six parts of this book:

PART	CONTENTS
Part 1: None More Beautiful	Ch. 1–7: appearance, seal of prophethood, hair, grey hairs, dye, kohl
Part 2: The Garment He Loved Most	Ch. 8–22: clothing, khuffs, sandals, ring, sword, armour, turban, walking and sitting
Part 3: What an Excellent Condiment	Ch. 23–31: eating, bread, condiments, words at meals, fruit, drinks
Part 4: His Laughter Was a Smile	Ch. 32–40: perfume, speech, laughter, joking, poetry, sleep, worship
Part 5: He Never Said No	Ch. 41–49: Duha, fasting, recitation, weeping, humility, character, modesty
Part 6: Like a Page of the Mushaf	Ch. 50–56: cupping, names, livelihood, age, passing, inheritance, dreams

Seen together, these six parts form ***one complete portrait***: his appearance (Part 1), his attire (Part 2), his table (Part 3), his company (Part 4), his worship and character (Part 5), and the end of his life and his legacy (Part 6). Imam at-Tirmidhi arranged it so that the reader feels as if ***living alongside him*** from morning to night, from outward to inward.

The purpose of knowing him is not merely more information, but that we ***follow him***, as Allah says: "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern" (Al-Ahzab 33:21). We never saw him, but through ash-Shama'il we can know him as if we had seen him.

May Allah accept this small effort, forgive its shortcomings, and make these six parts ***a bridge of love*** between the reader and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. And may we be gathered with him at the Pool of al-Kawthar, drinking from his noble hand, a drink after which we will never thirst again (Sahih al-Bukhari 6579).

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Here is a summary of the lessons from chapters 50 to 56 of ash-Shama'il:

CHAPTER	MAIN LESSON
50. Cupping	Treatment does not contradict reliance on Allah; pay workers fairly
51. His names	Prophet of mercy, prophet of repentance, seal of the prophets
52. Livelihood	A month without a cooking fire; gratitude for blessings we will be asked about
53. Age	Died at 63; sent at 40
54. Passing	A face like a page of the Mushaf; choosing the Highest Companion
55. Inheritance	No dinar or dirham; his inheritance is knowledge
56. Dreams	Satan cannot take his likeness; this knowledge is religion

A MESSAGE FOR US

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has died, but ***his teaching lives on***. We cannot sit with him in the Prophet's Mosque, but we can sit with his hadiths, practise his Sunnah at home, and send many blessings upon him. Choose one practice from this book and keep it up, even if small.

With this, the book ***The Shama'il of the Prophet ﷺ: As Though We Beheld Him*** is complete. All that is right is from Allah, and every mistake is from the author. May Allah forgive us, our parents and the whole Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. And Allah knows best.

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APPENDIX: A CHECKLIST FOR FOLLOWING HIM

Here is a summary of the practices from this book, with their sources. This list can be printed and used as a guide for oneself and one's family.

PRACTICE	SOURCE
Seeking permitted treatment while relying on Allah	Sahih al-Bukhari 5678
Paying workers fairly	Sahih al-Bukhari 2103
Being grateful for every blessing of food	Sahih Muslim 2038
Living simply and not wasting	Sahih al-Bukhari 6460
Guarding the prayer and being kind to those in our care	Sunan Abi Dawud 5156
Saying La ilaha illallah often	Sunan Abi Dawud 3116
Praying for ease in the agonies of death	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 978
Visiting the sick and being patient in illness	Sahih al-Bukhari 5648
Being patient and not wailing at a death	Sahih al-Bukhari 1303
Giving charity and endowing property	Sahih al-Bukhari 2739
Seeking and passing on knowledge	Sunan Abi Dawud 3641
Checking sources before sharing a hadith	Sahih al-Bukhari 110
Sending blessings upon him every day	Sahih Muslim 408
Loving him above all else	Sahih al-Bukhari 15

Begin with the easiest practice, such as sending blessings ten times after each prayer. Once it becomes a habit, add the next. The deeds most beloved to Allah are those done continually, even if little.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Arabic terms below appear throughout this book. Knowing them makes it easier to follow the narrations and the explanations of the scholars, and to continue studying ash-Shama'il in its commentaries.

TERM	MEANING
Hijamah	Cupping: drawing blood through cups placed on the skin
Sa‘	A measure of volume, about four double handfuls
al-Mahi	The Eraser: through whom Allah erases disbelief
al-Hashir	The Gatherer: people are gathered after him on the Day of Resurrection
al-‘Aqib	The Last: after whom there is no prophet
al-Muqaffi	The one who followed the earlier prophets
Khatam an-Nabiyyin	The Seal of the Prophets
Sakarat al-Mawt	The agonies of death
ar-Rafiq al-A‘la	The Highest Companion, chosen by the Prophet ﷺ at his death
Mushaf	A written copy of the Qur'an
Siwak	A tooth-stick used to clean the teeth
Bay‘ah	A pledge of allegiance
Sadaqah	Charity
Athar	Narrations from the Prophet ﷺ and the early Muslims
Salawat	Sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ
Sahih / Hasan / Da‘if	Grades of a chain: authentic, good, weak

Many of these words describe the end of a life lived for Allah: patience in illness, contentment at death, a legacy of knowledge rather than wealth, and an Ummah that keeps sending blessings upon its Prophet.

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