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Islamic Copywork
An-Nawawi's
Forty Hadith
Part 1

Translated by

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On the authority of the Commander of the Faithful(1), Abu Hafs Umar ibn al-Khattab(2) (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say:

Actions are but by intentions and every man shall have but that which he intended. Thus he whose migration(3) was for Allah and His Messenger, his migration was for Allah and His Messenger, and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his migration was for that for which he has migrated.

It was related by the two Imams of the scholars of Hadith, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismail ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Mughira ibn Bardizdah al-Bukhari and Abu 'l-Hussain Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj ibn Muslim al-Qushairi an-Naisaburi, in their two Sahihs, which are the soundest of the compiled books(4).

(1) Title given to the Caliphs

(2) The second Caliph in Islam

(3) This is a reference to religious migration, in particular to that from Mecca and Medina

(4) i.e. collections of hadith

Hadith 2

Also on the authority of Umar(1)(May Allah be pleased with him), who said:

One day while we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) there appeared before us a man whose clothes were exceedingly black; no signs of journeying were to be seen on him and none of us knew him. He walked up and sat down by the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). Resting his knees against his and placing the palms of his hands on his thighs, he said: O Muhammad, tell me about Islam. The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: Islam is to testify that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, to perform the prayers, to pay the zakat(2), to

(1) i.e. Umar ibn al-Khatab, the second Caliph

(2) Often rendered as “alms-tax” or “poor-due”, it is a tax levied on a man’s wealth and distributed among the poor.

Hadith 2

To make the pilgrimage to the House(3) if you are able to do so. He said: You have spoken rightly, and we were amazed at him asking him and saying that he had spoken rightly. He said: Then tell me about imaan(4). He said: It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and evil thereof. He said: Then tell me about ihsan(5). He said: It is to worship Allah as though you are seeing Him, while you see Him not yet truly He sees you. He said: Then tell me about the Hour(6). He

(3) The Ka'ba and Holy Mosque in Mecca

(4) Imaan is generally rendered as "religious belief" or "faith". However, being a fundamental term in Islam, the Arabic word has been retained.

(5) In this context the word ihsan has a special religious significance and any single rendering of it would be inadequate. Dictionary meanings for ihsan include "right action", "goodness", "charity", "sincerity", and the like. The root also means "to master or be proficient at" and it is to be found in this meaning of Hadith 17 the present collection.

(6) i.e. of the Day of Judgment

Hadith 2

said: The one questioned about it knows no better than the questioner. He said: Then tell me about its signs. He said: That the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress(7) and that you will see the barefooted, naked, destitute herdsmen competing in constructing lofty buildings. Then he took himself off and I stayed for a time. Then he said: O Umar, do you know who the questioner was? I said: Allah and His messenger know best. He said: It was Gabriel, who came to you to teach you your religion.

It was related by Muslim

(7) This phrase is capable of more than one interpretation. Among those given by an-Nawawi in his commentary is that slave-girls will give birth to sons and daughters who will become free and so be the masters of those who bore them. The word *ama*, normally translated "slave-girl", is also capable of meaning any woman in that we are all slaves or servants of God. The words are thus capable of bearing meaning: "When a woman will give birth to her master" i.e. a time will come when children will have so little respect for their mothers that they will treat them as servants.

The commentators point out that here the word *rabba* (mistress) includes the masculine *rabb* (master)

Hadith 3

On the authority of Abu Abd ar-Rahman Abdullah, the son of Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with them both), who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say:

Islam has been built on five (pillars) (1): testifying that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, performing the prayers, paying the zakat (2), making the pilgrimage to the House(3), and fasting in Ramadan.

It was related by al-Bukhari and Muslim

- (1) The word “pillars” does not appear in the Arabic but has been supplied for clarity of meaning. Pillars (arkan) is generally accepted term in this context.
- (2) See Note (2) to Hadith 2
- (3) See Note (3) to Hadith 3

Hadith 4

On the authority of Abu Abd ar-Rahman Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) who said, The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and he is the truthful, the believed, narrated to us:

Verily the creation of each one of you is brought together in his mother's belly for forty days in the form of seed, then he is a clot of blood for a like period, then a morsel of flesh for a like period, then there is sent to him the angel who blows the breath of life into him and who is commanded about four matters(1): to write down his means of livelihood(2), his life span, his actions, and whether happy or unhappy. By Allah, other than Whom there is no God, verily one of you behaves like the

(1) Lit. "words"

(2) The Arabic word rizq also posses such shades of meanings as "daily bread", "fortune", "lot in life", "sustenance provided by Allah", etc

Hadith 4

people of Paradise until there is but an arm's length between him and it, and that which has been written overtakes him and so he behaves like the people of Hell-fire and thus he enters it; and one you behaves like the people of Hell-fire until there is but an arm's length between him and it, and that which has been written overtakes him and so he behaves like the people of Paradise and thus he enters it.

It was related by al-Bukhari and Muslim

Hadith 5

On the authority of the Mother of the Faithful(1), Umm Abdullah `A`isha (may Allah be pleased with her), who said: The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

He who innovates something in this matter of ours that is not of it will have it rejected.

It was related by al-Bukhari and Muslim. In one version by Muslim it reads:

He who does an act which our matter is not (in agreement) with will have it rejected.

(1) A title accorded to any of the Prophet's wives

Hadith 6

On the authority of Abu Abdullah an-Nu'man the son of Bashir (may Allah be pleased with them both), who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say:

That which is lawful is plain and that which is unlawful is plain and between the two of them are doubtful matters clears himself in regard to his religion and his honor, but he who falls into doubtful matters falls into that which is unlawful, like shepherd who pastures around a sanctuary, all but grazing therein. Truly every king has a sanctuary, and truly Allah's sanctuary is His prohibitions. Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be whole, all the body is whole and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased. Truly it is in the heart.

It was related by al-Bukhari and Muslim

Hadith 7

On the authority of Abu Ruqayya Tamim ibn Aus ad-Dari (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

Religion is sincerity(1). We said: To whom? He said: To Allah and His Book, and His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.

It was related by Muslim

(1) The Arabic word *nasiha* has a variety of meanings, the most common being “good advice”, which is obviously unsuitable in the context. It also gives the meaning of “doing justice to a person or situation”, “probitv” “integritv” and the like

Hadith 8

On the authority of the son of Umar (1) (may Allah be pleased with them both) that the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

I have been ordered to fight(2) against people until they testify that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and until they perform the prayers and pay the zakat(3), and if they do so they will have gained protection from me for their lives(4) and property, unless(they do acts that are punishable) in accordance with Islam, and their reckoning will be with Allah the Almighty.

It was related by al-Bukhari and Muslim

(1) See Note(1) to Hadith 2

(2) Islam advocates that conversion be by conviction. The Holy Qur'an says: "No compulsion in religion", and in another passage the Almighty says: "Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way". The waging war is enjoined against certain categories of persons such as those who attack a Muslim country, those who prevent the preaching and spread of Islam by peaceful means, and apostates.

(3) See Note(2) to Hadith 2

(4) Lit. "their blood"

Hadith 9

On the authority of Abu Huraira Abd ar-Rahman ibn Sakhr (may Allah be pleased with him), who said I heard the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say:

What I have forbidden to you, avoid; what I have ordered you (to do), do as much of it as you can. It was only their excessive questioning and their disagreeing with their Prophets that destroyed those who were before you.

It was related by al-Bukhari and Muslim

On the authority of Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him):

Allah the Almighty is good and accepts only that which is good. Allah has commanded the Faithful to do that which he commanded the Faithful to do that which he commanded the Messengers, and the Almighty has said: **“O ye Messengers! Eat of the good things, and do right.”** (Qur’an 23:51) And Allah the Almighty has said: **”O ye who believe! Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you.”**(Qur’an 2:172) Then he mentioned (the case of) a man who, having journeyed far, is disheveled and dusty and who spreads out his hands to the sky (saying): O Lord! O Lord! - while his food is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, his clothing is unlawful, and he is nourished unlawfully, so how can he be answered!

It was related by Muslim.

Hadith 11

On the authority of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and the one much beloved of him(1) (may Allah be pleased with them both), who said:

I memorized from the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him):

Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.

It was related by at-Tirmidhi and an-Nasa'I, at-Tirmidhi saying that it was a good and sound Hadith

- (1) Lit. "and his fragrant flower". The word raihana was used by the Prophet in respect of Al-Hasan and al-Hussain, the sons of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law
- (2) At-Tirmidhi and an-Nasa'I were compilers of two of the six recognized collections of Hadith, the other compilers being: Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Maajah

