

KHUTBA

Friday 15.04.11

English

Good Conduct

All praise is due to Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions.

Brothers in faith! Fear Allah, obey Him and beware of His punishment.

Fellow Muslims! One of the goals of Islam is the establishment and fulfilment of Allah's rights upon mankind, and the rights of man over his fellow human beings. Allah says that which translates as: ***“Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour, the neighbour farther away, the companion at your side, the traveller, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.”*** [4:36]

Whatever people may be busy in, aside from the goals stated above, such as living their day to day lives, abiding by the law and abstaining from injustice, etc. are only secondary obligations and merely a means to achieve the first and primary objective in life.

Good conduct is the foundation for the fulfilment of one's obligations to Allah and to other human beings. Good conduct increases one's rank in the sight of Allah and erases one's misdeeds. Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, related that she heard the Prophet (saws) saying: ***“A believer achieves by his good conduct the same reward as a person who fasts much and prays (the voluntary prayer) during the night.”*** [Abu Dawood]

The Prophet (saws) also said: ***“Nothing is heavier on the scale of a believing slave (of Allah) on the Day of Resurrection than good conduct. Indeed Allah dislikes the rude and disrespectful.”*** [At-Tirmidhi]

Good conduct includes all commendable characteristics and all other matters which are good according to Islamic Law and sound reason. Some scholars have stated that: “Good conduct is to spread all that which is good and abstain from all that which is evil.” Good conduct entails that one performs all that which Allah has enjoined and abstains from all that which He has forbidden.

One must endeavour to be pious, sincere, patient, forbearing, modest, deliberate, decent, dutiful to one's parents, kind to kith and kin, passionate, courageous, generous, truthful, and gentle, enjoin good and possess good neighbourliness, humbleness and tolerance. One must also abstain from trickery, betrayal, immodesty, disgraceful behaviour, consuming unlawful food and drink, lying, slandering, miserliness, cowardliness, showing-off and self-glorification.

Good conduct benefits a believer in this life and the next, and increases his rank before his Lord. Both good and evil people benefit from their good conduct; but as for the disbeliever, his good conduct will only benefit him in this world and Allah will reward him for it only in this life while on the Last Day, he will receive nothing. Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, narrated that she once said: "O

Messenger of Allah! What do you think about 'Abdullaah bin Jad'aan? For he took care of his guests, looked after the destitute and assisted people through their difficulties; will all this be of any use to him (in the hereafter)?" The Prophet sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam answered: **"No, for he never once said, 'My Lord! Forgive me my sins on the Day of Reckoning' (for he was a disbeliever)."**

Brothers in Islam! Allah enjoins in His Great Book all noble characteristics and forbids all unpleasant ones. The prophetic *Sunnah* also enjoins good conduct and forbids filthy behaviour.

In His Glorious Book, Allah says that which translates as: **"...And do not approach immoralities – what is apparent of them and what is concealed ..."** [6:151] **"Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good and turn away from the ignorant."** [7:199] **"And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend."** [41:34] And He says that which translates as: **"... And lower your wing [i.e., show them kindness] to the believers."** [15:88]

Allah also says which translates as: **"And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace. And those who spend [part of] the night to their Lord, prostrating and standing [in prayer]. And those who say: 'Our Lord! Avert from us the punishment of Hell. Indeed, its punishment is ever adhering; Indeed, it is evil as a settlement and residence. And [they are] those who, when they spend, do so not excessively or sparingly but are ever, between that, [justly] moderate. And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity or kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse..."** [25:63-68] Allah also enjoins that which translates as: **"O you who have believed! Fulfil (your) obligations."** [5:1]

From the *Sunnah*, it is reported that the Prophet (saws) said: **"I am the guarantor of a home in the upper part of Paradise for whomsoever possesses good conduct."** [Abu Dawood] He (saws) also said: **"Shall I not tell you of the person for whom Hell is forbidden? – Hell is forbidden for every person who is tolerant, unpretentious and pleasant."** [At-Tirmidhi]

Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, narrated that the Prophet (saws) said: **"Gentleness does not but adorn one's deeds and when something is devoid of gentleness, it becomes disfigured."** [Muslim] Nawwaas bin Sam'an, may Allah be pleased with him, said: **"I asked the Messenger of Allah (saws) about righteousness and sin and he replied: "Righteousness is good conduct and sin is something that is deeply rooted in your heart which you would not like anybody else to know about.""** [Muslim]

Good conduct is a blessing for a person and their community. It is indicative of progress and a high position in the sight of Allah and it causes one to be loved by others. It gives peace of mind, easiness in one's affairs, earns people's praise and ultimately means success on the Last Day. Bad conduct on the other hand brings curses, removal of blessings, people's hatred, darkness in the grave and misery in this world and the Hereafter.

Fellow Muslims! Emulate our righteous predecessors who possessed noble characteristics and which Allah attests to in His Book when He says that which translates as: **"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer] seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure..."** [48:29]

He also addressed these righteous predecessors when He says that which translates as: ***“You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah...”*** [3:110]

He also says about them that which translates as: ***“Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death], and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter [the terms of their commitment] by any alteration.”*** [33:23]

Everyone from among the *Sahaabah*, may Allah be pleased with them, was a nation by himself in terms of noble characteristics and the abstention of dwelling upon unimportant matters.

However, the example par excellence in noble characteristics and all commendable attributes was of course the Messenger of Allah (saws). Allah confirms this when he says that which translates as: ***“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”*** [33:21] His Lord refined him in the best possible way and he in turn exerted great effort in reforming his nation and teaching them commendable characteristics. In this regard, the Prophet (saws) said: ***“I was only sent to bring good conduct to perfection.”*** [Ahmad] Allah also praises His Prophet greatly when He says that which translates as: ***“And indeed you [O Muhammad] are of a great moral character.”*** [68:4]

Once, Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, was asked of the character of the Prophet (saws), she replied: ***“The Quran was his character.”***

Commenting on this statement, Imam Ibn Katheer, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: ***“(This means) abiding by the injunctions of the Quran in terms of what it enjoins and forbids had become his behaviour and accustomed character. Whatever the Quran enjoined on him, he did and whatever it forbade, he abstained from. He was naturally disposed to generosity, courage, forbearance, forgiveness and all other forms of beautiful conduct.”***

Even before he was commissioned as a Prophet, no fault or defect was recorded against him. ***When revelation first came to him, he (saws) said to his wife Khadeejah, may Allah be pleased with her: “I fear for myself.” Khadeejah, may Allah be pleased with her replied: “No! I swear by Allah that He will never disgrace you for you are kind to your kith and kin; you speak only the truth, you are patient, you take care of your guests and assist others upon the truth.”*** [Bukhari & Muslim]

The above are but a few of the exemplary qualities that he possessed even before he was commissioned as a Prophet. After this, Allah made him a Prophet and completed His favour upon him by increasing him in these qualities and others.

Therefore emulate him, dear Muslims, by adhering to your religion firmly and implementing his commands, and by imitating his good conduct by as much as Allah will permit you to. Follow his path and Sunnah with sincerity and without innovating anything in the religion. Allah says that which translates as: ***“Say [O Muhammad], ‘If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.’”*** [3:31]

Fellow Muslims! Be aware that the prevention of evil through a good word or deed and the spreading of the truth with tact and understanding are praiseworthy and commendable acts. Conversely, cowardly acts of flattery and sycophancy, such as the refusal to speak out for the truth, or turning a blind eye to, or even expressly approving sinful acts are acts of grave misconduct. Allah says that

which translates as: ***“O you who have believed! Bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed.”*** [22:77]

Brothers in faith! Fear Allah as He should be feared and abstain from all that He has forbidden; He has commanded you with that which translates as: ***“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.”*** [16:90] This verse encompasses all noble qualities and prohibits all unsavoury characteristics.

Mu’aadh bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet (saws) said: ***“Fear Allah wherever you are, follow up an evil deed with a good one – and it will erase it - and treat people with good conduct.”*** [At-Tirmidhi] Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said: ***“The Messenger of Allah (saws) was asked which act gains paradise for the people the most and he replied: “Fear of Allah and good conduct.” He was also asked which of act that makes people enter Hell the most and he answered: “The mouth and the private parts.”*** [At-Tirmidhi]

Dear Muslims! Hold fast to the qualities enjoined by your religion and keep to the path of your Prophet (saws) so that you will prosper in this life and the Hereafter.