

Virtues Of Charity In Islam
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The Virtues of Charity

1. It is mentioned in a Hadith that generosity is a great attribute of Allah Ta'ala. In other words, Allah Ta'ala is extremely generous.

2. It is mentioned in a Hadith that the servant of Allah gives a small piece of bread as charity. In the sight of Allah Ta'ala that small piece increases to such an extent that it equals the size of *Mt. Uhud*. In other words, Allah Ta'ala increases the reward that one would have received for the small piece of bread to such an extent that he receives the reward equal to *Mt. Uhud*. We should therefore not concern ourselves with how much we give. Instead, we should give in charity whatever we are capable of giving.

3. It is mentioned in a Hadith that you should save yourself from hell even if it means giving a few dry dates in charity. That is, even if you have very little, give it in charity. Do not be under the misconception that how will such a meagre amount be of any benefit. This meagre amount will also be a means of deliverance from hell.

4. It is mentioned in a Hadith that you should seek sustenance from Allah Ta'ala by spending in His path. In other words, by your giving charity, Allah Ta'ala will grant you *barakah* in your sustenance.

5. It is mentioned in a Hadith that charitable deeds save one from calamities, discreet and undisclosed charity cools the anger of Allah Ta'ala, and having good relations with one's relatives and family members increases one's lifespan.

If a person feels that by doing good deeds openly and publicly, others will also be prompted to do the same, then in such a case it will be preferable for him to do such deeds publicly. But if this is not the case, then it will be preferable for him to do them secretly. In both cases, the pre-condition is that there must be no other reason for carrying them out publicly or privately.

6. It is mentioned in a Hadith that the beggar has a right over the person whom he asks even if he comes begging on a horse. In other words, if a beggar comes begging on a horse, even then he should be given something because it is apparent that he is most probably in some dire need for him to come begging. In such circumstances one should not think that how can this beggar be really in need if he can afford to come on a horse. However, if it has been established through some means that this person is not in need and that he has made begging his occupation,

then it will be *haraam* to give anything to such a person. It is also *haraam* for such a person to go around begging. Understand this well.

7. It is mentioned in a Hadith that Allah Ta'ala is noble and He loves nobility. He loves good character and good manners, and dislikes evil character and evil mannerisms. In other words, He loves the person who shows lofty character in doing good deeds (such as spending in charity, saving himself from degradation, enduring difficulties on account of others, etc.) and He dislikes despicable ethics and habits (such as lack of vigour and courage in matters of the *Deen*.)

8. It is mentioned in a Hadith that charity cools the heat of the grave and that the person who gives in charity will be granted shade on the day of judgement. In other words, through the *barakah* of charity, the heat of the grave will become cool and the person will be granted some shade on the day of judgement.

9. It is mentioned in a Hadith that Allah Ta'ala has chosen special servants of His in order to fulfil the needs of other people. People are dependent on such special servants for the fulfilment of their needs. In other words, these people are in such dire need, that they are forced to go to these special servants and Allah Ta'ala has chosen them for this purpose. These special servants who fulfil the needs of poor people will be saved from the punishment of Allah Ta'ala.

10. It is mentioned in a Hadith that Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam addressed Hadrat Bilaal radiallahu anhu saying : "Spend O Bilal, and don't ever have any fear of any decrease from the Master (Owner) of the *arsh*." That is, spend freely on appropriate occasions and do not fear poverty from Allah Ta'ala. In the above Hadith, the *arsh* is attributed to the ownership of Allah despite His being the sole owner of everything else as well. The *arsh* has been specifically mentioned because it is one of the great creations of Allah Ta'ala and to illustrate to us that if such a great creation is under His control, we should not fear poverty and difficulty from Him. Can anyone ever imagine that such a powerful king as He will deny us even two pieces of bread? Such type of thinking is preposterous.

The above Hadith in no way means that a person should spend so lavishly that he is left bankrupt and in financial problems. The focus of this Hadith is that those who are strong-hearted and have the strength to exercise patience should spend as much as they wish in noble deeds. Such people are not troubled by difficulties. They understand very well that they will receive whatever has been written down for them. By their spending in charity they will not experience any decrease, instead they will experience *barakah* in their sustenance. Persons who are endowed with such fervour and zeal are permitted to spend as much as they wish in charity and other noble deeds on condition that they do not usurp the rights of anyone in doing so. However, those who are weak-hearted and do not have the strength to exercise patience and fear problems in the future and feel that their intention will be corrupted, such people should only spend on necessary occasions such as *zakaat*, *sadaqatul fitr*, and on humanitarian grounds.

Once Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu presented his entire wealth to Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam so that it could be utilised in the path of Allah. Upon seeing all this wealth Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam asked him if he left anything behind at home or not. Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu replied that he left behind Allah and His Rasul sallallahu alayhi wa sallam and nothing else. Rasulullah

sallallahu alayhi wa sallam accepted all this wealth because he knew that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu was strong-hearted, full of fervour, and extremely desirous of spending in the path of Allah Ta'ala. He did not fear any evil consequences. On the other hand, Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam refused to accept a small amount of gold that was brought by another Sahabi radiallahu anhu because he knew that the latter was not as strong-hearted as Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu.

11. It is mentioned in a Hadith that a beggar came begging to a woman. At that moment the woman only had a morsel of food which was already in her mouth. She took that morsel out of her mouth and gave it to the beggar. After some time, a child was born to this woman. When the child grew a little older, a wolf came and snatched the child away. The woman came out of her house running behind the wolf and at the same time shouting for help. Allah Ta'ala sent an angel and ordered him to free the child from the wolf's mouth. Allah Ta'ala added : "Also convey My salaams to that woman and inform her that I did this in return for the morsel of food which she had given to that beggar."

This is the *barakah* of charity that the child's life was saved and the woman was also rewarded. We should give charity abundantly so that we may live in this world and in the hereafter in peace and comfort.

12. It is mentioned in a Hadith that the person who directs someone towards a good deed will also receive the same reward as the person who carries out that good deed. In other words, if a person cannot be of assistance himself, but directs the needy person towards someone who could be of some help to him, then this person will also receive the same reward as those who helped that poor person.

13. It is mentioned in a Hadith that there were three persons. One of them had 10 *dinars* out of which he gave one *dinar* in charity. The second person had 10 *awqiyahs* out of which he gave one *awqiyah* in charity. The third person had 100 *awqiyahs* out of which he gave 10 *awqiyahs* in charity. All three will receive the same reward because each one of them gave 10% of whatever he possessed. In other words, although some of them apparently gave more than the others, Allah Ta'ala will reward them according to their intentions. Since each one of them gave 10% of his wealth, they will all be rewarded equally.

14. It is mentioned in a Hadith that the reward for giving one *dirham* has exceeded the reward for giving 100 000 *dirhams*. An explanation of this is that a person had two *dirhams* out of which he gave one *dirham* in charity. On the other hand, there was another person who had a lot of wealth. From all this wealth of his, he gave 100 000 *dirhams*. The difference in reward between these two persons is that despite the first person possessing only two *dirhams*, he gave half of all his wealth in charity, i.e. one *dirham*. As for the second person, despite his giving 100 000 *dirhams* in charity, he received a lesser reward because this 100 000 *dirhams* which he gave were less than half his entire wealth. How merciful Allah Ta'ala is! We should value this mercy of His at all times. Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam never ever refused a beggar. When he had anything to give, he would give it without hesitation. If he did not have anything, he promised the person that he will give him when he receives something. He and his family never ate bread made of wheat for two days consecutively. How merciless we are that despite having the means we do not help our fellow Muslim brothers. Instead, we are prepared to hoard for ourselves.

15. It is mentioned in a Hadith that a beggar at the door of a *Mumin* (believer) is actually a gift from Allah Ta'ala. It is obvious that a gift has to be gladly accepted especially if that gift is from Allah Ta'ala. Therefore, we should help the beggar as much as we can.

16. It is mentioned in a Hadith that you should give in charity and cure your sick through charity because charity repels sicknesses and diseases and it increases your life and your good deeds.

17. It is mentioned in a Hadith that no *wali* (close friend) of Allah Ta'ala was born except through generosity and good habits. In other words, generosity and good habits are most definitely found in the *auliyaa'*, i.e. the close friends of Allah Ta'ala.

Glossary

Explanation of Islamic Terms

Arsh : The throne of Allah Ta'ala.

Banu Isra'eel : Literally means the children of Isra'eel. It refers to the progeny of Hadrat Ya'qub alayhis salaam.

Barakah : Literally means "blessings". It refers to the experiencing of abundance in things which are apparently insignificant or little, both in value and amount.

Burqah : A head covering worn by women.

Dua : Invocation to Allah, supplication, prayer, request, plea.

Durood : The sending of salutations upon Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam.

Eid ul-Ad'haa : The 10th of Zil Hijjah. Literally means "the festival of sacrifice". It is referred to as ad'haa because it is on this day that animals are sacrificed in the name of Allah and for His pleasure alone.

Eid ul-Fitr : The first day of Shawwaal. Literally means "feast of breaking the Ramadaan fast". It is referred to as fitr because it is on this day that the month-long Ramadaan fast comes to an end.

Fard : Literally means "compulsory". In Islam it refers to those acts and things which are compulsory on a Muslim. Abandoning or abstaining from a fard act is a major sin. Rejecting a fard act amounts to kufr.

Ghayr mahram : Refers to all those people with whom marriage is permissible. Based on this, it is also incumbent to observe purdah with all ghayr mahrams.

Haid : Monthly periods or menstruation experienced by a woman.

Hoor : Large-eyed women of paradise promised to the believers.

Ibaadah : Literally means "worship". In Islam it refers to all those acts with which one renders worship to Allah Ta'ala.

Iddah : In Islamic law it refers to the period of waiting during which a woman may not remarry after being widowed or divorced.

Iftaar : The time of opening one's fast. This time commences immediately after sunset.

Ihraam : Two pieces of unstitched cloth which are donned by the person performing hajj or umrah.

Jumu'ah masjid : Refers to the masjid in which jumu'ah salaah is offered. It is also referred to as a jaame masjid. It is generally the main masjid in a town or city.

Kafir : Literally means a "disbeliever". In Islam it refers to one who rejects Allah and does not believe in Muhammad sallallahu alayhi wa sallam as the final messenger of Allah.

Kaffarah : Literally means "penance, atonement, expiation". In Islamic law it refers to redemption from the omission of certain religious duties by a material donation or a ritual act.

Kalaam-e-majeed : Refers to the Holy Quran.

Kalimah : Refers to the basic tenet of Islam, i.e. bearing witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

Kuffaar : Plural of kaafir.

Kufr : Refers to the state of disbelief.

Kurta : An Urdu word meaning "shirt". However, due to constant usage, it refers to the long flowing robe worn by Muslim men and which has come to be regarded as an Islamic dress.

Lungi : A loin cloth worn by men especially in eastern countries. A lungi is wrapped around the waist and extends up to the ankles.

Mahram : Refers to the person with whom marriage is not permissible and with whom strict purdah is not incumbent.

Makruh : That which is disliked or detestable but not forbidden.

Meelad : Literally means "birth, birthday". In this context it refers to the birthday celebrations held in respect for Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam. In most cases these celebrations are innovations which are accompanied by many other evils.

Miswaak : A thin stick or twig which is used to clean the teeth.

Mt. Uhud : Name of a mountain outside Madinah.

Muharram : The first month of the Islamic calendar.

Mustahab : That which is preferable or desirable.

Nafl : That which is optional.

Nifaas : Refers to the flowing of blood after child-birth.

Purdah : An Urdu word meaning "seclusion". It is an equivalent of the Arabic word "hijaab". Refers to the seclusion of women from strangers. There are different stages of purdah, the highest of which is that the woman should not come out of her home except for a valid Islamic reason.

Qada : Literally means "carrying out or fulfilling". In Islamic jurisprudence it refers to fulfilling or completing those duties that one may have missed due to some reason or the other.

Qiblah : The direction in which one faces when offering salaah.

Qiyaamah : The day of resurrection.

Qurban : Literally means "sacrifice". In Islam it refers to the sacrificing of animals solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala on the day of eid ul-ad'haa and the two days following it.

Rajab : The seventh month of the Islamic calendar.

Rakaat : Literally means "bending of the torso from an upright position". In kitaabus salaah it refers to one unit of salaah which comprises of the standing, bowing, and prostrating postures.

Ramadaan : The ninth month of the Islamic calendar.

Sadaqah : Literally means "charity". This word is also used as an equivalent of zakaat.

Sadaqatul fitr : Refers to the charity that is given on or prior to the day of eid ul-fitr. For further details, refer to the chapter on sadaqatul fitr.

Sajdah : The act of prostrating.

Salaam : Literally means "peace". In salaah it refers to the saying of "*as salaamu alaykum wa rahmatullah*" which denotes the end of the salaah. It is also a way of greeting among Muslims.

Satr : An Urdu word derived from the Arabic "sitr", which means "cover, shield". In the Urdu context it refers to that area of the body which has to be covered. It is also referred to as the "aurah".

Sehri : Refers to the meal partaken before dawn by the person who intends fasting. For further details refer to the chapter on sehri and iftaar.

Sha'baan : The tenth month of the Islamic calendar.

Shirk : Polytheism or ascribing partners to Allah Ta'ala.

Subah saadiq : Literally means "true dawn". It refers to the time when whiteness (brightness) can be noticed on the breadth of the horizon. It is at this time that the time of fajr salaah commences.

Sub'haanallah : Means "glory to Allah".

Sufis : A term used to refer to mystics or saints. Such persons are also known as the auliyaa of Allah, i.e. the close friends of Allah. These are the persons who have dedicated their entire lives in the ibaadah of Allah Ta'ala.

Surmah : Antimony. A black powdery substance that is applied to the eyes. It is sunnah to apply surmah.

Tasbeeh : Saying "sub'haanallah". A rosary that is used to glorify Allah Ta'ala is also called a tasbeeh.

Umrah : Commonly referred to as the lesser pilgrimage. It is similar to hajj with the exception that many of the rites of hajj are left out and that it could be performed throughout the year.

Wajib : Literally means "obligatory". In Islamic jurisprudence it refers to that act which has not been established by an absolute proof. Leaving out a wajib without any valid reason makes one a faasiq and entails punishment.

Zikr : The remembrance of Allah Ta'ala.

Zil Hijjah : The last month of the Islamic calendar.

Zil Qa'dah : The eleventh month of the Islamic calendar.