

Islamic
Correspondence
Course



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Part 1
LESSON ONE - GOOD MANNERS

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) explained the most important objective of his mission in these words: -

"Indeed I have been sent only to perfect good manners."

In fact the whole religion is based on good manners; Islam in all its ramification (i.e. worship, dealing, jurisprudence and other laws) is concentrated in good manners.

As we have explained in Book One, good manners is an essential part of Islam. This part includes those deeds that are liked in Islam and those that are disliked.

In the following lessons we shall show some of those deeds that are obligatory to every Muslim and those that are optional.

Part 2
LESSON TWO - OBLIGATORY ACTS

(1) To Do Good Deeds with Sincerity and honesty:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Indeed, all deeds depend upon their intentions."

(2) Depending Upon God:

God had declared: "... .. and upon God you should rely if you are true believers" (65:3).

(3) To Do Justice (To Refrain From Oppression) The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated:

"One's faith cannot be perfected until one has three qualities: to help others even when he himself is in need; equality and justice between himself and his fellow beings, greeting much with salam."

(4) To Do Good To Both Parents God has ordered:

"And God has ordered that you should not worship anyone but Him alone, and to do good to parents. If one of them attains old age before your eyes, or both, do not utter even "Fie"; nor must you be angry with them; and speak to them with utmost respect. Lower your wing of humility with kindness to them and say, 'My Lord! Have Mercy on them (My parents) as they nursed me in my childhood.'" (17:23-24)

(5) To Look After One's Blood Relations:

God has enjoined: "... .. and fear God, in Whose name you importune one another, and (be mindful) of kinship; Verily God is watchful over you." (4:1)

(6) To Help Each Other In Good Deeds:

God has ordered: "... .. and help one another in righteousness and piety, and help not one another in sin and aggression." (5:2)

(7) To Reconcile People: God has declared:

"So fear God and set aright matters between yourselves and obey God and His Apostle if you are believers." (8:2) "Indeed, the believers are but brethren, so make peace among the brethren and fear (the wrath of) God that you be blessed with mercy." (49:10)

(8) Truth: God has stated:

"... .. God certainly knows those who are truthful and He certainly knows those that are liars." (29:3) God has ordered us to "be always with the truthful ones." (9:119)

Part 3
LESSON THREE - GOOD DEEDS

(1) Cultivating Good Habits:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Indeed! amongst the believers the one who has perfected his faith is one who has good habits."

(2) Acquiring Knowledge:

God has declared that "Verily only those of His servants fear God. who are endued with knowledge." (35:28) The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: "One seeking knowledge (a student) is loved by God, by the angels, by the Prophets and only a good person will like religious knowledge."

(3) BraveryThe Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said:

"It does not befit a man of faith to be a miser or a coward In the Qur'an, God praises the people of faith thus: "Muhammad is the Apostle of God and those who are with him are vehement against the infidels." (48:29)

(4) Humility:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Indeed, humility exalts a man's position with God.

Thus, be humble and God will shower you with mercy."

(5) Mercy and Gentleness:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: "The erudition of a man of faith is mixed with politeness for education without politeness is useless."

(6) To Deal Well with People:

Imam Jafer As-Sadiq (a.s.) has declared, "A Muslim is a brother to a Muslim and does not oppress, deceive, abandon, backbite, betray or deprive him."

(7) Generosity:God has declared:

"... .. As for him who gives (alms) and guards (himself against evil) and believes in the Best (of all religions, Islam), We will smoothen for him then the path unto bliss." (92:5-7) The Prophet (s.a.w.) has said, "A generous person is a friend to God, and a miser an enemy of God."

(8) Leading a Moral Life:

(Controlling One's urges, especially sexual): The Prophet (s.a.w.) has declared: "Whosoever protects his stomach from eating the unlawful, his sexual organs from doing what is unlawful act, and his tongue from saying what is forbidden, has guarded himself well and his place is in Paradise."

(9) Helping the Weak:

God has said, "And in their property was a share due to the beggar and the destitute." (51:19)

Part 4
LESSON FOUR -GOOD DEEDS

(10) To Salute Aloud:

Greeting aloud means raising one's voice sufficiently to be heard and not silently that one be said not to have uttered the greetings.

(11) Patience:

God has said, "... .. and give glad tidings to the patient ones who, when misfortune befalls them, say, 'Verily we are God's and verily to Him we shall return'. Those are the ones upon whom are the blessings from their Lord and (His) Mercy; and they are the ones that are (rightly) guided. (2:156-157) Also He has said: "... .. Verily the patient ones will be paid their recompense without any account." (39:10)

(12) To Entertain:

Feeding people causes mercy to be showered upon one and the removal of calamities. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: "Any guest who comes to a place brings his sustenance with him from the heavens, and when he eats food God forgives his hosts."

(13) Forgiveness:

God has declared: "... .. and if you forgive, overlook and cover up (their ills) then verily God is Oft-Forgiving, The Most Merciful." (64:14)

(14) Fulfilling People's Needs:

The Holy Prophet has declared: "Whoever fulfills the needs of his Muslim brother, is akin to one who has worshipped God his whole lifetime."

(15) Equity:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: "Whatever one likes for oneself, he must like for others. Do justice amongst your wives if you have more than one and do not favour any one of them particularly." God has declared: "The (way to) blame is against those who do injustice unto the people and transgress in the earth unjustly; these, for them shall be a painful chastisement." (42:42)

(16) Fearing God:

Fear God and abstain from all evil. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "A few Deeds with fear of God are better than many deeds without fear of God."

(17) Cleanliness:

The Holy Prophet has declared: "Cleanliness and purity is part of faith." Imam Ali Ridha (a.s.) has said: "To be pure and clean is amongst the habits of the Prophets."

(18) Modesty:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Modesty (a sense of shame) is part of faith." Whosoever is without shame (doing as he pleases) is not a Muslim.

(19) Marriage:

Marriage is in the tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.). The Holy Prophet has declared: "He who gets married has already safeguarded half of his faith; so he should remain on guard about the other half by fearing God."

(20) Cheerfulness:God has said:

"Thus it is a mercy of God that you are lenient unto them. Had you been severe and hard-hearted they surely would have dispersed away from you." (3:158)

(21) Respecting Others:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: "Respect the elders for their age; treat the young with kindness and love, and your equals as you would like to be treated."

(22) Thanking God:God has declared:

"... .. and he who is grateful, verily he is grateful for his own self, and whoever is ungrateful, then verily My Lord is Self-Sufficient and Bounteous." (27:40) God has stated, "What has God to do to torment you, if you are grateful and you believe? While God is the Appreciator (of worth) and all-Knowing." (4:147) God has declared: "If you are grateful I will increase (My favours) unto you, and if you be ungrateful, Verily My torment is indeed severe." (14:7)

Part 5
LESSON FIVE - FORBIDDEN ACTS

(1) Rebelling Against and Disobeying Parents:

In Hadith Qudsi, God has said: "I swear by my Honour and by my Omnipotence that anyone who does not obey his parents even if he comes with the deeds of the Prophets in front of me, I will never accept them."

(2) Fornication/Adultery:God has warned:

"And do not approach fornication (and adultery). Verily, it is a shameful act and an evil way (opening to many other evils)" (17:32)

(3) Sodomy:God has declared:

"Verily ye come to men in lust instead of women; nay, ye are a transgressor people." (7:81) "And whosoever disobeys God and His Apostle and transgresses His limits, he will be thrown into Hell-Fire to abide therein and for him shall be a shameful torment." (4:14)

(4) Lesbianesim:

The ruling for this is like that of sodomy and it is one of those acts that have been severely condemned by God and His Prophets. A tribe "As-habur-Ras" was exterminated (by punishment from Allah) for this abnormality, just as the people of Sodom were exterminated because of Sodomy.

(5) Drinking Liquor:God has declared:

"O you who believe! Verily, intoxicants and games of chance (dedications of) stones (i.e. idols) and (divination by) arrows, are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork, so stay away from it so that you may be successful." (5:90)

(6) Gambling:

It is as bad as drinking liquor. God has joined it with drinking in the verse of the Qur'an quoted in No. 5 above (i.e. 5:90).

(7) Eating dead flesh and Swine and other forbidden Animals:God has stated:

"Verily, verily He has but prohibited that which dies of itself and blood and the swineflesh and whatever has other than God's name invoked." (2:173)

(8) Devouring Other People's Property:

God has warned: "O you believers! devour not each other's property among yourselves unlawfully except that be trading by mutual consent." (4:29)

(9) Bribery:God has declared:

"You will see many of them vying with sin and exceeding the limits, and their eating what is foul; certainly evil is what they have been doing." (5:62) Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.) has said, "God has cursed one who takes bribe, one who gives bribe and one who causes bribe to be given."

Part 6
LESSON SIX - FORBIDDEN ACTS

(10) Foresaking Duties:

Here duty means duty towards God, towards the Prophet (s.a.w.) and of Muslims towards one another. To miss any one of these is a sin.

(11) Stealing:

Stealing is a universal sin. God has declared: "As for the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their (right) hands; as a recompense for what they (two) have earned, as an exemplary punishment from God." (5:38)

(12) Pimping and helping in adultery of One's wife:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said, "A DAY-YUS' will neither enter heaven nor smell its scent." He was asked what is a DAYYUS? He replied, "It is that husband who very well knows (and feels no shame) that his wife sleeps with others."

(13) Lying:

Lying is forbidden and is a great sin. Imam Mohammed alBaquir (a.s.) has said, "Indeed, God has put locks upon every evil and the key to these locks is drinking; and lying is worse than drinking."

(14) Backbiting and Creating Discord:

God has stated: "... .. and let not some of you backbite the others; What! would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?" (49:12)

(15) Usury:

God has warned: "Those who take interest they say, 'trade is only like (earning) interest', whereas God has decreed trade lawful and has forbidden interest." (2:275)

(16) Murder:

God has stated: "And whosoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense shall be Hell, he shall abide therein and God's wrath shall be on him and His curse; and (there) is prepared for him a great torment." (4:93)

(17) Embezzlement:

"God has declared: "Verily God does not love those who embezzle." (8:58) "Verily God doth ward off (the mischief of infidels) from those

who believe: Verily, God loveth not any of the unfaithful, ungrateful (ones)." (22:38)

(18) Oppression:

God has warned: "And do not think God to be heedless of what the unjust ones do. He only respites them to a day when the eyes shall be fixed upon (Staring up with terror)." (14:42)

Part 7
LESSON SEVEN - FORBIDDEN ACTS

(19) Extravagance:

God has said: "... .. eat and drink and commit not excesses; verily He (God) does not love extravagants." (7:31)

(20) Snobbery:

God has declared: "O, you who believe! let not men laugh at (other) men to (scorn) who perhaps may be better than them; nor let women laugh at other women who perhaps may be better than these... .." (49:11)

(21) Annoying People:

God has warned: "And those who annoy believing men and believing women without their having earned it, indeed they bear the guilt of slander and a manifest sin." (33:58) The Prophet has declared: "A Muslim is he from whose hands and tongue Muslims are safe."

(22) Betraying Secrets:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "The conversation between two people is a trust; so if you betray it you are not trustworthy." So to betray one's secret is a big sin. A secret can be person's shortcoming or any other matter, but it is after all a secret.

(23) Hoarding:

Hoarding of food (needed by people) with intention of selling it at higher price is a great sin. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) stating, "a hoarder of food is one who is cursed by God."

(24) Looking at Forbidden Women:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has explained: "A look is an arrow from the arrows of Satan. One who refrains from looking for fear of God, he will be filled with faith (Iman) whose taste he will feel in his heart/' God has enjoined in the Qur'an: "Say unto believing men that they should cast their eyes down (and not look at what is forbidden) And say unto believing women to cast down their eyes and guard their Private Parts." (24:30)

(25) Attending Dance and Cinema:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has forbidden us to attend any place where evil is being performed and where what is forbidden takes place. In the

cinema one is subjected to music and obscene words and deeds; and these are forbidden in Islam as has been explained in this book.

(26) Singing and Listening to Music:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "One who plays a 'musical instrument' will rise in the Day of Judgement with a dark face and will have a guitar of fire in his hands. Above him will be 70,000 angels of punishment each carrying a sickle and beating him on the head and face with it. Anyone who sings will rise blind, deaf and dumb. Likewise the fornicator. The same fate will befall those who play a pipe and the tambourine."

Part 8
LESSON EIGHT - FORBIDDEN ACTS

(27) Masturbation:

Masturbation is forbidden and is a sin. It brings a lot of harm to one's physique.

(28) Breach of Promise:

One of the signs of faith according to the Prophet: "One who when gives promise fulfills it. Whoever does not fulfil his promise is not of the faith."

(29) Wearing of Golden ring and Ornaments by men:

It is forbidden for a man to wear any golden ornament even if it is mixed with other metals.

(30) Cheating:

It is forbidden to hide the defect of a thing one sells to another person.

(31) Adulterating:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) stated: "Whoever adulterates a thing and sells it to his Muslim brother is not of us." (32) Spying In Other People's Affairs: God has said in the Qur'an: "O you who believe! avoid suspicion, for verily suspicion (in) some (cases) is a sin, and do not spy." (49:12)

(33) Abusing and Recriminations:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "It is a vice to abuse or accuse another believer."

(34) Indecent Dressing by Women:

Wearing indecent dress which shows the parts of the body has become very common nowadays. But it is strictly forbidden in Islam. God has stated, "And stay in your abodes and do not display your finery like the display of the ignorance of the past." (33:33)

(35) To Help the Oppressor:

God has declared: "... .. and help (one another) in righteousness and piety, and do not help (one another) in sin and aggression." (5:2) God has said: "And think not God to be heedless of what the unjust ones do. He only respiteth them to a day when the eyes shall be fixed open (staring up with terror)." (14:42)

(36) To Rule Against Islamic Laws:

God has stated: "... .. and whoever does not judge by what God has sent down, those are the infidels." (5:44) "And whosoever does not judge by the Rules God has sent down, these then are the transgressors." (5:47)

Part 9
LESSON NINE - BAD HABITS

(1) Bad Manners:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated:

"Bad manners spoil the (good) deeds of a person in the same way as vinegar spoils honey."

(2) Niggardliness:

God has declared: "And let not those who are niggardly in giving what God has granted them of His Grace reckon it is good for them; That which they have been niggardly of, shall shortly be clung to their necks on the Day of Resurrection." (13:179)

(3) Envy:

God has stated: "And do not covet that by which God has raised some of you above others; for men shall have of what they earn and women shall have of what they earn, and ask God of His Grace; Verily God is (very well) in the Know of all things." (4:32) God has said: "Or do they envy the people for what God has given them of His grace." (4:54) The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Envy devours goodness like firewood is consumed by fire."

(4) Cowardice:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "It does not become a believer to be niggardly or cowardly." But to fear God and leave off sins is the sign of a good man.

(5) Lack of Courage:

A person lacking in moral force and enterprise is amongst the bad ones, so is the one whose energies are directed towards evil ways. One must keep away from such ways.

(6) Treachery And Enmity:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Anyone who has even a little tendency of cheating and vengefulness in his heart will be resurrected by God with people of the Times of Ignorance" (i.e. the Non-believers before the advent of Islam).

(7) Vengeance:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has declared: "I swear in the name of Him who has my life in His hands, there are three things that are most holy: one's wealth is never decreased by giving alms (so, do give alms), one

never will regret who has forgiven him (for the sake of God) who has oppressed him, (because Allah will elevate his status on the Day of Judgment); and whoever begins to beg, God opens the doors of poverty for him." God has stated: "If you do good openly or conceal it, or pardon an evil, then verily, God is Oft-Forgiving, Powerful." (4:149)

8. Complaining When In Distress:

This is a most undesirable trait and its opposite is Patience and Forebearance. God rewards patience.

Part 10
LESSON TEN - BAD HABITS

(9) Boasting:

On the day the Prophet captured Mecca he stood before the people and proclaimed: "O you People! God has removed from you the empty boast and pride of pedigree of the Times of Ignorance; Indeed, you are all from Adam and Adam issued forth from dust. The Best of you is the one who most fears God."

(10) Love of Leadership, Honour and Wealth:

God has declared: "That abode in the hereafter, We assign it for those who intend not to exult themselves in the earth, nor (to make) mischief (therein); and the end is (best) for the pious ones. Whosoever desireth life of this world and its pomp, We shall pay them (the recompense for) their deeds therein, they shall suffer not any loss. These are they for whom there is nothing in the hereafter but (the Hell) fire, and vain shall be (all) that they wrought in it, and vain shall be what they were doing." (11:15-16)

(11) Greed:

It is a good sign to be "greedy" in doing good deeds, but to be greedy of food and in accumulating wealth is undesirable. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Two greedy persons are never satiated; those greedy of acquiring knowledge and those greedy of accumulating wealth."

(12) Haste:

There is a proverb that goes: "Haste is Waste." The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has explained: "Haste is from Satan and patience from God."

(13) Laziness:

Laziness is a very bad habit. A lazy person always misses many a good thing and is always in trouble. God has declared: "And that there is naught for man but what he has striven for." (53:39)

(14) Blabbering:

God has stated: "He does not pronounce a word but unto him is a watcher ready (to record it)." (50:18)

(15) Vain Talks:

In the Qur'an it is stated by God in connection with the Day of Judgement that when the sinners will be asked: "What has brought you into Hell?" They will say we were not of those who offered the

regular prayers (to God) and we used not to feed the poor and we used to talk vanities with vain talkers." (74:42-45)

(16)Self-Humiliation:

One who belittles himself is ridiculed and lacks courage. Imam Jaafer-as-Sadiq (a.s.) has explained, "Indeed, God has left to a believer all his dealings except to belittle himself for hasn't it been stated in the Qur'an, 'But for God is all honour and for His Apostle and for the believers, but the hypocrites know (it) not.'" (63:8)

Part 11
LESSON ELEVEN - BAD HABITS

(17) Pride:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Whoever harbours even a grain of pride in his heart will not enter Heaven." Prophet Moses (a.s.) declared: "Verily I take refuge with my Lord and your Lord from every arrogant one who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning." (40:27)

(18) Forgetfulness:

Forgetfulness is a bad habit and can bring harm to one and many others. In the Qur'an, God has warned those who are forgetful: "Indeed We have created for hell many of the jinns and the men; They have hearts (but) they understand not with it; and they have eyes (but) they see not with it; and they have ears (but) they hear not with it; they are like cattle, nay more astray; These are they the headless ones." (7:179)

(19) Rudeness:

A person always faces difficulties for he heeds not what he says, nor does he bother about whom he insults and this produces grave results.

(20) Doubtfulness:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Doubtfulness ensues from Satan." In the Qur'an God has declared: "Say I seek refuge from the evil of the slinking whisperer, who whispers into the breasts (hearts) of the people." (114:4-5)

(21) Uncleanliness:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: "Don't remain unclean but you must be clean for cleanliness is part of faith." An English saying aptly goes: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

(22) Cruelty:

God in His conversation with Prophet Musa (a.s.) told him: "Whoever is hard-hearted (cruel) is away from me."

(23) Deceitfulness and Cunning:

God has declared: "... .. and the life of this world is not but a provision of vanity." (3:185) "... .. verily the promise of God is true, so let not the life of the world beguile you; nor let the deceiver (Satan) deceive you concerning God." (31:33)

(24) Injuring (Other's Feelings):

"A kind word and pardon is better than charity that is followed by injury, and verily God is Self Sufficient, the Most Forbearing." (2:263) "O you who believe! render not your charities worthless by (reminding) obligation and injury (laid on them)." (2:264)

Part 12
LESSON TWELVE - MANNERS OF
GREETING - (SALAAM)

Islamic teachings require its followers to maintain goodwill, brotherhood, love, asking after one another's health, helping one another and to remove all evil amongst them.

We shall explain what Islamic Sheriat has taught about good manners, to greet one another to create love. Who ever greets his fellow breaks his own pride (Pride is a bad habit which leads one to Hell). Whoever replies to a greeting exalts him and considers him better than himself and both are amply rewarded. Our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) has explained :-

"MAA AHDAL MUSLIMU LI-AKHIYHI HADIYYA-TAN AFDHALA-MIN KALIMATI HIKMATIN TAZIY-DUHUU HUDAN WATARUDDUHUU AN RADAA."

"There is no better gift a Muslim can present to his brother than wise words which will give him some more guidance and stop him from going astray".

We must cultivate the habit of greeting each other and shaking hands (in Islamic way) and enquiring after each other's health as has been stated by our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) thus:-

"AWLAN-NAASI BIL-LAAHI TA-AALA WABIRASUULIHI MAN BADA-A BIS-SA-LAAMI."

(He who takes the initiative to greet is better in the consideration of God and His Prophet). According to an authentic tradition, our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) guided his companions to possess the following seven qualities:-

1. To visit the sick.
2. To join in the funeral procession (Tashyiy-ul-Janazah).
3. Whoever swears to affirm his words, they be accepted.
4. Whoever sneezes, he be prayed for.
5. To rescue and help the oppressed.
6. To greet whomsoever one meets
7. To accept an invitation (except that which is unlawful).

Another authentic tradition has it that our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) stated that in Paradise there are transparent houses which will be awarded to those of his followers who possess the following qualities:-

1. One who converses with people respectfully
2. One who entertains people to food
3. One who offers salutations aloud
4. One who wakes up in the thick of the night to offer prayers to God when everyone else is asleep.

Then he added that saluting aloud has been recommended so that one does not become stingy in saluting his fellow Muslim.

Our Sixth Imam, Hazrat Imam Jaafer-as-Sadiq (a.s.) has stated thus: One of the signs of humility in a Muslim is that he salutes aloud every one he meets.

Our Prophet, Muhammad (s.a.w.) has stated: "Do not reply to a person who speaks to you without first saluting you."

"Whoever comes to you without saluting you do not entertain him to food until he salutes."

"The laziest of all is one who cannot beg or supplicate from God."

"The niggardliest of all is one who does not greet others."

"Anyone who leaves a gathering by bidding a salutation, if those that remain behind speak good things, then he is included in the reward and if they speak evil he won't be included amongst them."

We have explained the traditions emanating from our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and Imam Jaafer-as-Sadique (a.s.) as regards the benefits of salutations. Now let us see what God says in the Qur'an:-

"WAIDHAA-HUYIYTUM BI TAHIYYATIN FA HAYYUU-BI-AHSANA MINHAA AU RUDDUHHAA"

When you are saluted, reply in a better manner or likewise. For example, when you are saluted thus:-

(ASSALAAMU ALAYKUM) or (SALAAMUNALAIKUM) the better reply is: (ALAYKUMUS-SALAAM WARAH-MATUL LAAHI WA BARAKAATUH). If you can't reply thus then say: (ALAYKUMUS-SALAAM).

Our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) has said thus:- Whoever salutes you (Assalaamu Alaykum) he will be rewarded ten times. Whoever salutes you (Assalaamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wabarakaatuhu) will be rewarded thirty times.

Part 13
LESSON THIRTEEN - ISLAMIC
MANNERS OF EATING FOOD

When you eat do so with humility as befits a slave (of Allah). Pick up small morsels, chew well and then ingest. Don't eat food while it is steaming hot; nor should you blow it with the mouth. If you are in a hurry fan it or leave it until it has cooled.

When you eat do not look at your companion to see how he eats. Do not eat with less than three fingers. Take a morsel from the plate in front of you and do not extend your hand to pick up a morsel from your companion's plate.

Start your meal by eating a little salt and finish it likewise. By doing thus, you will save yourself from seventy two kinds of diseases amongst which are madness, leprosy, skin disease or pain in the throat, teeth or stomach, as is given in the tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.). Eat with your right hand, start by saying BismiLaah and end with Alhamdu-Lil-Laah.

There is a tradition emanating from our second Imam, Hazrat Imam Hasan ibn Ali (a.s.), stating: "Certain manners are compulsory for every Muslim to know when he sits down to eat. Four of these are obligatory i.e.

- (a & b). To know and be thankful to God for granting you the 'rizque';
 - (c) To say Bismillah when you start eating;
 - (d) to thank God for granting you the health to be able to eat that food.
- Four are optional (sunnat):
- (a) to wash hands before and after eating;
 - (b) to sit leaning on the left;
 - (c) to chew until the food is softened; and
 - (d) not to look at your companion in the face.

There is a tradition emanating from our First Imam, Hazrat Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) instructing our second Imam Al-Hasan (a.s.), thus: "Shall I teach you four good habits which if you adopt will never necessitate your going to a doctor?" He replied in the affirmative. The Imam said:- "

- (1) Do not sit down to eat if you are not hungry
- (2) Leave off eating while you are still hungry
- (3) Chew well until the food is softened
- (4) Before going to bed make your toilet."

It is recommended that when you wash your hands before eating, do not wipe them but let them remain wet, for by doing so, you are

increasing the blessing in the food. When you wash your hands after food, it is recommended that you pass your hands over your eyes and face and this will save you from eye-disease. The following supplication (Dua) is recommended while doing this:-

AL HAMDU LIL-LAA-HIL LADHI HADAA-NAA WA AT-AMANA-NAA WA SAQAA-NAA, WA KUL-LA BALAA-IN SAA-LIHIN AB-LAA-NAA.

Part 14
LESSON FOURTHEN - MANNERS OF
DRINKING WATER

It is forbidden to eat and drink out of a pot made of gold or silver.

When drinking water do not gulp it down at once, but sip it in three parts (i.e. drink, then wait a moment, then drink, then wait a moment and then drink). If a drinking vessel has a chip broken don't drink from there nor should you drink from the handle side; for people do not usually wash those places for fear of cutting themselves. During the day it is better to drink while standing and at night while sitting.

Our Sixth Imam, Hazrat Imam Jaafar As-Sadique (a.s.) has said: "When a person says BIS-MIL-LAAH before drinking water and then after a sip says AL-HAMDU-LIL-LAAH and then drinks a little again by saying BIS-MIL-LAAH and after drinking says AL-HAMDU-LIL-LAAH, thus doing three times, the water that has gone in his stomach will praise God and he will get its reward."

Do not drink a lot of water for it causes illness. Drink enough to satiate thirst. There is nothing better than water, for water is the life of everything, as God says in the Qur'an:

WA JA-ALNAA MINAL MAAI KUL-LA SHAY-IN HAI (And We made every living thing from water). Thus water is life. To see a waterfall removes sorrows.

TO GIVE WATER IS BEST FORM OF CHARITY

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "The best aim is giving water to a thirsty person." The first person to be rewarded on the Day of Judgement will be the one who offered water to drink.

Our Sixth Imam, Hazrat Imam Jaafer Sadique (a.s.) has said: "Whoever gives water to a thirsty man where there is water, the reward of his act is equivalent to freeing one slave; and one who gives water to a thirsty man where there is no water, the reward is akin to giving life to one person, and one who gives life to one person it is like giving life to all people."

A companion of our Sixth Imam, Daud Riqqui relates that he was with the Imam when he ordered water. After he had taken water the Imam began crying and then said:-

"O Daud, May God curse all who martyred Imam Husain bin Ali (a.s.). How the memory of Husain arouses sorrow. Whenever I drink cool water I remember my grandfather Imam Husain (a.s.); and whoever recalls the thirst of Imam Husain (a.s.) when drinking cool water and to curse all those who concluded in martyring Imam Husain (a.s.), gets one hundred thousand rewards and his one hundred thousand sins are forgiven, and his position is exalted one hundred thousand times in Paradise and God will resurrect him with a bright face."

So when you finish drinking water say thus:

"SWALAWATUL-LAAHI ALAL HUSAINI WA AHLI BAY-TIHI WA AS-HAA-BIH, WA LAANA-TUL-LAAHI ALAA QATA-LATIL HUSAINI WA AADAA-IH."

Part 15
LESSON FIFTEEN - MANNERS OF
DRESS AND DRESSING:

How to Wear and Take Off Dresses:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has declared: "It does not become a man to stay naked at any time of the day or night."

Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has said: "When a man is naked he is easily tempted and this is what the Satan wants in order to lead him astray. When one sits among people it is undesirable to remove clothing from the thighs for this shows lack of manners. When you take off your clothes say Bismillah and if you don't, the Djinns wear those clothes until the next morning."

Imam Musa al-Kadhim (a.s.) was asked as to what he thought about one who has clothes enough to become a luxury; He replied that even if he had twenty pairs of clothes, they are not a luxury provided he uses them all.

Amirul Mumeenin Ali (a.s.) has stated, "Clean clothes remove sorrow and cause one's prayers to be acceptable for the cleanliness."

Imam Jaafer As-Sadique (a.s.) has said: "A man is saved from becoming proud if he puts patches in his clothes, mends his shoes and carries the food for home consumption himself."

" Neatness and Manners of Dressing

It is obligatory upon everyone to dress neatly and well, according to his means. If he has limited means he should not be pre-occupied in pursuing neatness beyond his lawful means, because it will spoil his worship.

If God has given you the means, then use it in dressing well and neatly. It is not a sign of piety to put on torn and dirty dresses if you have the means. God is happy with the creature that shows His Blessings by dressing well according to his means.

Part 16
LESSON SIXTEEN - MANNERS OF
SLEEPING

When to Sleep

It is abominable to sleep between the break of dawn and sunrise, between the prayers of Maghrib (Dusk) and Isha (night), and after Asr prayers. During hot season, it is recommended to sleep before the Noon prayers and between (Noon) Dhohr and Asr (Afternoon) prayers.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has declared, 'The earth complains to God about three things: (a) when innocent blood is being spilt on it; (b) when water falls on it from an adulterer/fornicator's body when bathing on it and (c) when one sleeps during sunrise.'

There is a tradition from Imam Jaafer-as-Sadique (a.s.): "Sleeping at dawn is harmful, for it stops sustenance, changes the colour of one's face to yellow and takes out its beauty. To sleep then is bad for at that time the Bani Israel were getting sustenance of 'Manna' and roasted bird and whoever slept missed it."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Any Muslim who continues sitting on his prayer-mat from dawn to sunrise (engaged in worship, prayer, remembrance of God and recitation of Qur'an and Dua) will be saved by God from Hell Fire." Another tradition states that doing so would earn him a reward of performing a (Sunnat) Hajj and his sins will be forgiven.

Chapter **1**

ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS COURSE BOOK FOUR

Student's Name

..

Student's Number: IRC/

Date of Writing Answers... ..

QUESTIONS 1:

(a) What was the main aim of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)? Give a hadith (tradition/Statement) to support this.

(b) Write down the ayat (Quranic verse) that shows that all Muslims are brothers to each other. (c) Write down the hadith showing the importance of doing good to one another.

QUESTION 2:

Write down an ayat or a hadith to show the importance of the following:-

- (a) to deal well with both the parents
- (b) to depend upon God
- (c) Generosity
- (d) To be Educated
- (e) To have Modesty

QUESTION 3:

Show an ayat or hadith which points to the evil of the following :-

- (a) Scorn other people
- (b) To hide essential goods in order to sell at a higher price
- (c) To fornicate
- (d) To drink liquor

- (e) To lie

QUESTION 4:

Narrate an ayat or a hadith to show the evil of the following:-

- (a) to take bribes
- (b) to adulterate
- (c) to steal
- (d) to create discord
- (e) to abuse and to revile

QUESTION 5:

Write down the ayat or hadith to explain the wickedness of the following—

- (a) Envy
- (b) To show off, bragging
- (c) Laziness
- (e) Pride

QUESTION 6:

(a) Write down the manner of eating as explained by Imam Hasan bin Ali (a.s.)

(b) What would you utter before and after drinking water?

(c) What is the thawab (reward) of performing wudhu before going to bed?

(d) Write down one hadithi to show the goodness of saluting/greeting a Muslim.

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IN THE AGE OF INFORMATION
IGNORANCE IS A CHOICE

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let him claim it wherever he finds it"*

Imam Ali (as)