

Relieving a Believer's Hardships¹

"Whoever relieves a believer of a hardship of this life, Allaah will relieve from him a hardship of the Day of Resurrection..."

The Hadeeth	2
The Explanation of: "Whoever helps a believer with a hardship..."	4
The Explanation of: "...Allaah will help him with a hardship..."	5
The Explanation of: "Whoever shows leniency towards someone in difficulty..."	8
The Explanation of: "Whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allaah will conceal him..."	11
The Explanation of: "And Allaah will continue to aid the servant..."	16
The Explanation of: "Whoever pursues a path seeking knowledge..."	18
The Explanation of: "No group of people gather in one of the houses of Allaah..."	22
The Explanation of: "And whoever is prevented by his deeds will not be hastened..."	28

¹ Taken from Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee's book, "Jaami' Al-'Uloom wal-Hikam", an explanation of the forty-two famous Hadeeths collected by Imaam An-Nawawee. The Hadeeth explained in this book is the thirty-sixth one. [Translator's Note]

The Hadeeth

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رضي الله عنه) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ): مَنْ نَفَسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَسَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ يَسِّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ.

وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ.

وَمَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَيَتَدَارَسُونَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ وَغَشِيَتْهُمْ الرَّحْمَةُ وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ.

وَمَنْ بَطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرَعِ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

“Whoever helps a believer with a hardship from the hardships of this life, Allaah will help him with a hardship from the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. Whoever shows leniency towards someone in difficulty, Allaah will show him leniency in this life and the hereafter. Whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allaah will conceal him in this life and the hereafter. And Allaah will continue to aid the servant as long as the servant aids his brother.

Whoever pursues a path seeking knowledge, Allaah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.

No group of people gather in one of the houses (mosques) of Allaah reciting the book of Allaah and studying it among themselves, except that tranquility descends upon them,

mercy covers them, the angels surround them, and Allaah will mention them to those with Him.

And whoever is prevented by his deeds will not be hastened forward by his lineage.”²

This Hadeeth was recorded by Muslim from the narration of Al-‘Amash, from Abu Saalih, from Abu Hurayrah.

More than one scholar has raised criticisms regarding the Hadeeth’s chain of transmission, from them were Abu Al-Fadhli Al-Harwee and Ad-Daaruuqutnee. Asbaat Ibn Muhammad reported it from Al-‘Amash. He said he heard it from Abu Saalih but it’s clear that Al-‘Amash did not report from Abu Saalih, nor did he mention who narrated it to him. At-Tirmitheeh and others agreed with this chain and some of Al-‘Amash’s companions have added that the Hadeeth has also been reported with the wording:

مَنْ أَقَالَ مُسْلِمًا أَقَالَهُ اللَّهُ عَثْرَتَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Whoever pardons a Muslim, Allaah will pardon his faults on the Day of Resurrection.”³

And in the two authentic collections (“Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree” and “Saheeh Muslim”), there is a similar Hadeeth from Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ
عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبَاتِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Each Muslim is the brother of another Muslim; he neither oppresses him nor betrays him. Whoever remains in the service of his brother, Allaah remains in his service. Whoever relieves a Muslim of a hardship, Allaah will relieve from him a hardship from the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. And whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allaah will conceal him on the Day of Resurrection.”⁴

² **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 2699), At-Tirmitheeh (no. 1425), and Imaam Ahmad. Shaykh Al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic in “Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmitheeh” (no. 1574).

³ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Abu Daawood (no. 3460) and Ibn Maajah (no. 2199). Shaykh Al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic in “Saheeh Sunan Abee Daawood” (no. 2954) and in “Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah” (no. 1786).

⁴ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2442, 6951), Muslim (no. 2580), At-Tirmitheeh (no. 1426), Abu Daawood (no. 4893), and Imaam Ahmad.

The Explanation:

مَنْ نَفَّسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا

“Whoever helps a believer with a hardship from the hardships of this life...”

This is an example of a reward being in accordance and similar to the deed. There are many texts like this such as the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

إِنَّمَا يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الرَّحْمَاءَ

“Allaah only shows mercy to those of His servants who are merciful.”⁵

The Arabic word كُرْبَةً “Kurbah” used in the Hadeeth is any severe hardship that puts a person in great difficulty.

The word نَفَّسَ “Naffasa” meaning “help” or “relieve” is to lessen and decrease some of the burden of such a hardship. The word is derived from the same root as the Arabic word for “breathe” such that when the throat is tight or constricted, its only relief is to help and allow it to breathe.

As for the word فَرَّجَ “Farraja” (as used in the last Hadeeth on pg. 3, footnote no. 4), it’s greater in that it means to actually remove the hardship from a believer. So, by doing this, you remove his hardship and thereby relieve his distress and worry.

So, the reward for helping and relieving (a believer’s hardship) is help and relief (from Allaah), and the reward for actually removing it is likewise removal (of a hardship by Allaah) as in the Hadeeth of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) (pg. 3, footnote no. 4).

⁵ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 1284, 5655, 6655, 7377, 7448), Muslim (no. 923), An-Nasaaee (no. 1868), Abu Daawood (no. 3125), Ibn Maajah (no. 1588), and Ahmad.

The Explanation:

نَفْسَ اللَّهِ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةٌ مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ

“...Allaah will help him with a hardship from the hardships of the Day of Resurrection.”

Regarding the statement, “Allaah will help him with a hardship from the hardships of the Day of Resurrection,” he (ﷺ) didn't say, “...with the hardships of this life and the hereafter,” as he did afterwards in the Hadeeth with showing leniency towards a believer and concealing his faults.⁶ The reason for this, it's said, is because the Arabic word “*Kurbah*” or hardship refers to extreme hardships and great difficulties and no one actually suffers from these types of difficulties in this life, no matter how serious his needs may be such as problems like financial difficulties or faults people would want concealed from which hardly anyone escapes.

It's also said that the reason is because the hardships of this life compared with those of the hereafter are insignificant. So, for this, Allaah saves with Himself the reward for helping with these kinds of hardships so that He may help such a person with the difficulties of the hereafter. This is understood simply by reflecting upon the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ يُسْمِعُهُمُ الدَّاعِيَ وَيَنْفُدُهُمُ الْبَصَرَ وَتَدْنُو الشَّمْسُ، فَيَبْلُغُ النَّاسَ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَالْكَرْبِ مَا لَا يُطِيقُونَ وَلَا يَحْتَمِلُونَ، فَيَقُولُ النَّاسُ أَلَا تَرَوْنَ مَا قَدْ بَلَغَكُمْ؟ أَلَا تَنْظُرُونَ مَنْ يَشْفَعُ لَكُمْ إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ؟

“Allaah will gather the people, the first and last of them, together on one plain so that the caller will be heard by them all, and they will all be seen. The sun will come so close to the people that they will suffer such distress and hardship as they will not be able to tolerate and bear. Then the people will say, ‘Don't you see what situation you're in? Won't you look for someone who can intercede for you with your Lord?’”⁷

⁶ Again, just for ease of reference, the Hadeeth is: “Whoever helps a believer with a hardship from the hardships of this life, Allaah will help him with a hardship from the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. Whoever shows leniency towards someone in difficulty, Allaah will show him leniency in this life and the hereafter. Whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allaah will conceal him in this life and the hereafter.”

⁷ Saheeh: Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 4712), Muslim (no. 194), At-Tirmithee (no. 2434), and Ahmad.

He (ﷺ) then mentioned the rest of this long narration about intercession. The Hadeeth has been recorded by both Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

They also both collected a Hadeeth from 'Aaishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

تُحْشَرُونَ حُفَاةً عُرَاةً غُرْلًا

“You will all be resurrected barefooted, naked, and uncircumcised.”

'Aaishah asked, “Oh Messenger of Allaah, the men and women looking at each other?” So he (ﷺ) replied?

الْأَمْرُ أَشَدُّ مِنْ أَنْ يُهَمَّهُمْ ذَلِكَ

“The situation will be too severe for them to be concerned with that.”⁸

And they collected the Hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) in which he narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said regarding the statement of Allaah (ﻋَﻠَﻴْهِ السَّلَامُ):

﴿يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

The day when mankind will stand before the Lord of all creations.

[Soorah Al-Mutaffifeen, 83:6]

يَقُومُ أَحَدُهُمْ فِي رَشْحِهِ إِلَى أَنْصَافِ أُذُنَيْهِ

“Some of them will be standing in their own sweat up to the middle of their ears.”⁹

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

يَعْرِقُ النَّاسُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يَذْهَبَ عَرْفُهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ سَبْعِينَ ذِرَاعًا وَيُلْجِمُهُمْ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ آذَانَهُمْ

⁸ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 6527) and Muslim (no. 2859).

⁹ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 6531), Muslim (no. 2862), At-Tirmithee (no. 2422, 3335, 3336), Ibn Maajah (no. 4278) and *Imaam* Ahmad.

“The people will sweat so much on the Day of Resurrection that their sweat will sink seventy arm-spans deep into the earth, and it will still rise up until it reaches their ears.” ¹⁰

And the wording in “Saheeh Muslim” is:

إِنَّ الْعَرَقَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَيَذْهَبُ فِي الْأَرْضِ سَبْعِينَ بَاعًا وَإِنَّهُ لَيَبْلُغُ إِلَى أَفْوَاهِ النَّاسِ أَوْ إِلَى آذَانِهِمْ

“Certainly, the sweat will sink into the earth on the Day of Resurrection to the extent of seventy arm-spans and it would still reach up to the people’s mouths or to their ears.” ¹¹

Muslim also collected a Hadeeth from Al-Miqdaad (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ أُذِنَتْ الشَّمْسُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ حَتَّى تَكُونَ قِيدَ مِيلٍ أَوْ اثْنَيْنِ، فَتَصْهَرُهُمُ الشَّمْسُ
فَيَكُونُونَ فِي الْعَرَقِ بِقَدْرِ أَعْمَالِهِمْ، فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَأْخُذُهُ إِلَى عَقْبِيهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَأْخُذُهُ إِلَى رُكْبَتَيْهِ وَمِنْهُمْ
مَنْ يَأْخُذُهُ إِلَى حَقْوِيهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يُلْجِمُهُ إِنْجَامًا

“On the Day of Resurrection, the sun will be brought so near to the servants that it will be only a mile or two (above them). It will cause them so much heat that they will be covered in their own sweat according to their deeds. From them, there will be some whose sweat reaches to their heels, some to their knees, some up to their midsection, and some will be covered completely.” ¹²

¹⁰ Saheeh: Recording by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 6532).

¹¹ Saheeh: Recording by Muslim (no. 2863).

¹² Saheeh: Recorded by Muslim (no. 2864) and At-Tirmitheeh (no. 2421). The actual wording mentioned is from Imaam At-Tirmitheeh.

The Explanation of:

وَمَنْ يَسِّرْ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ يَسِّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

“Whoever shows leniency towards someone in difficulty,
Allaah will show him leniency in this life and the hereafter.”

This is also evident that such difficulties will occur in the hereafter. Allaah clearly described the Day of Resurrection as being a difficult day and that it is anything but easy for people who don't believe in Him. This may also be understood that He may make it easy for other than them. He (ﷺ) says:

﴿وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَسِيرًا﴾

And it will be upon the disbelievers a difficult day.

[Soorah Al-Furqaan, 25:26]

As for showing leniency with someone in this life with difficulties such as financial problems, this usually occurs in two ways: either by allowing someone more time until it is easier for them (to repay a debt, for example), and this is an obligation as Allaah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَإِنْ كَانَتْ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ﴾

**And if someone is in difficulty, then (let there be a) postponement until (a time of)
ease.**

[Soorah Al-Baqarah, 2:280]

Other times, it may occur by a debtor completely foregoing a debt owed to him, or by giving him any assistance that would relieve his financial stress. Both of these actions are greatly virtuous.

In “Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree” and “Saheeh Muslim,” Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

كَانَ تَاجِرٌ يُدَايِنُ النَّاسَ فَإِذَا رَأَى مُعْسِرًا قَالَ لِغُلَامَيْهِ: تَجَاوَزُوا عَنْهُ لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَتَجَاوَزَ عَنَّا: فَتَجَاوَزَ

اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

“There used to be a merchant who would give loans to people. When he would see someone in difficulty, he’d say to his workers, “Give them time and pardon them so that perhaps Allaah will pardon us.” So, Allaah pardoned him.”¹³

They also both collected a Hadeeth from Huthayfah (رضي الله عنه) and Abu Mas’ood Al-Ansaaree (رضي الله عنه) who said they heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying:

مَاتَ رَجُلٌ فَقِيلَ لَهُ: مَا كُنْتَ تَعْمَلُ؟ قَالَ: كُنْتُ أُبَايِعُ النَّاسَ فَآتَجَوَّزُ عَنِ الْمُسِيرِ وَأُخَفِّفُ عَنْهُ

الْمُعْسِرِ فَعُفِّرَ لَهُ

“A man died and was asked, “What did you used to do?” He replied, “I used to do business with people and I would be lenient and give time to the rich (to pay a price or debt) and I would lessen (the price or debt) for the poor.” So he was forgiven.”¹⁴

And in Muslim’s version:

أَنَّ رَجُلًا مَاتَ فَدَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ، فَقِيلَ لَهُ: مَا كُنْتَ تَعْمَلُ؟ فَقَالَ: إِنِّي كُنْتُ أُبَايِعُ النَّاسَ فَكُنْتُ أَنْظِرُ الْمُعْسِرَ

وَأَتَجَوَّزُ فِي السُّكَّةِ أَوْ فِي النَّقْدِ فَعُفِّرَ لَهُ

“A man died and entered Paradise. So, he was asked, “What did you use to do?” He replied, “I used to do business with people and I used to give time for the one in difficulty and I would be lenient with regards to matters of money.” So, he was forgiven.”¹⁵

Abu Mas’ood (رضي الله عنه) also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

¹³ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2078), Muslim (no. 1562), and An-Nasaaee (no. 4695).

¹⁴ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2391).

¹⁵ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 1560).

حُوسِبَ رَجُلٌ مِمَّنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ فَلَمْ يُوجَدْ لَهُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ كَانَ يُخَالِطُ النَّاسَ، وَكَانَ مُوسِرًا فَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ غُلَمَانَهُ أَنْ يَتَجَاوَزُوا عَنِ الْمُعْسِرِ، قَالَ : اللَّهُ (ﷻ) : نَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِدَلِكِ مِنْهُ تَجَاوَزُوا عَنْهُ

“A man before you was taken to account and nothing of good (deeds) was found with him except that he used mix with people. He was a wealthy man and used to instruct his workers to be lenient with and pardon the person in (financial) difficulty. Allaah (ﷻ) said, ‘We are more worthy of that than he is, so pardon him.’”¹⁶

Abu Qataadah (رضي الله عنه) also narrated that he (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يُنَجِّيَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ كَرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلْيُنْفِسْ عَنِ مُعْسِرٍ أَوْ يَضَعْ عَنْهُ

“Whoever would be pleased that Allaah saves him from the hardships of the Day of Resurrection, let him be lenient with someone in difficulty or forego (a debt) for him.”¹⁷

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

مَنْ أَنْظَرَ مُعْسِرًا أَوْ وَضَعَ عَنْهُ أَظَلَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ

“Whoever gives time (to pay) to someone in a difficult situation or foregoes (his debt) and pardons him, Allaah will shade him under His shade.”¹⁸

¹⁶ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 1561) and At-Tirmitheh (no. 1307).

¹⁷ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 1563).

¹⁸ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 3014). At-Tirmitheh also collected a similar Hadeeth (no. 1306) with the wording:

مَنْ أَنْظَرَ مُعْسِرًا أَوْ وَضَعَ لَهُ، أَظَلَّهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تَحْتَ ظِلِّ عَرْشِهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ

“Whoever gives time (to pay) to someone in a difficult situation or foregoes (his debt) and pardons him, Allaah will shade him on the Day of Resurrection under the shade of His throne – a day on which there will be no shade except His.”

Shaykh Al-Albaanee said this Hadeeth is authentic in “Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmitheh” (no. 1052).

The Explanation of:

وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

“Whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allaah will conceal him in this life and the hereafter.”

This is another point that many texts have come with meanings similar to it. Ibn Maajah recorded a Hadeeth from Ibn ‘Abbaas (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ سَتَرَ عَوْرَةَ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ سَتَرَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ كَشَفَ عَوْرَةَ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ كَشَفَ
اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ حَتَّى يَفْضَحَهُ بِهَا فِي بَيْتِهِ

“Whoever conceals the faults of his Muslim brother, Allaah will conceal his faults on the Day of Resurrection. And whoever exposes the faults of his Muslim brother, Allaah will expose his faults even by revealing those he committed in (the privacy of) his home.”¹⁹

It’s reported that some of the Salaf said something similar to: “I have met people having no shameful faults but they began to mention the faults of others, so the people began discovering their faults. And I met people who had faults, yet they used to conceal other people’s faults, so their own faults were forgotten.”

The Hadeeth of Abu Barzah (رضي الله عنه) supports this in that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

يَا مَعْشَرَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِلِسَانِهِ وَلَمْ يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ قَلْبَهُ، لَا تَغْتَابُوا الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا عَوْرَاتِهِمْ، فَإِنَّهُ
مَنْ اتَّبَعَ عَوْرَاتِهِمْ يَتَّبِعِ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ، وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ يَفْضَحْهُ فِي بَيْتِهِ

“Oh you who have believed with your tongues yet faith hasn’t entered your hearts, do not back-bite the Muslims, and don’t seek to discover their faults, for whoever seeks after

¹⁹ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Ibn Maajah (no. 2546) and Al-Albaanee said it is authentic in “Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah” (no. 2063).

their faults, Allaah will seek his faults. And if Allaah seeks after someone's faults, He will expose him even (what he committed) in his home.”²⁰

Imaam At-Tirmitheh collected a Hadeeth with a similar meaning from Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه).²¹

And know that people are two types in this regard:

1. Those whose faults are concealed; nothing of their sins are known. If they make a mistake or sin, it's not permissible to reveal or expose it or even speak about it. That would be the forbidden type of back-biting that has been condemned in the texts. And regarding this, Allaah (ﷻ) said:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ﴾

Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread and publicized among those who believed, there will be for them a painful punishment in this world and in the hereafter.

[Soorah An-Noor, 24:19]

This spreading and publicizing of such immorality from a believer could be regarding something he actually did or something that a person is wrongly accused of while being innocent of it, such as the case with the famous story of the lie against ‘Aaishah, the wife of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Some righteous officials used to instruct those who enjoin the good upon people saying, “Try to conceal the sinners, for publicizing their sins is a means of showing the faults of the people of Islaam. And the most important thing is to conceal people's faults.”

²⁰ **Hasan Saheeh:** Recorded by Abu Daawood (no. 4880) and Imaam Ahmad. Shaykh Al-Albaanee said it is authentic (*Hasan Saheeh*) in “Saheeh Sunan Abee Daawood” (no. 4083).

²¹ The Hadeeth collected by At-Tirmitheh (no. 2032) that Ibn Rajab is referring to is:

يَا مَعْشَرَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ بِلِسَانِهِ وَلَمْ يَفِضْ الْإِيمَانَ إِلَى قَلْبِهِ، لَا تُؤْذُوا الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَلَا تُعَيِّرُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا عَوْرَاتِهِمْ، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ تَتَّبَعَ عَوْرَةَ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ تَتَّبَعَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ، وَمَنْ تَتَّبَعَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ يَفْضَحْهُ وَلَوْ فِي جَوْفِ رَحْلِهِ

“Oh you who have accepted Islaam with their tongue yet faith has not reached their hearts! Do not harm the Muslims, do not humiliate them, and do not seek to discover their faults. Indeed, whoever seeks after the faults of his Muslim brother, Allaah will seek his faults. And if Allaah seeks his faults, He will expose him even if he were in the innermost privacy of his own home.”

Al-Albaanee said this narration is authentic in “Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmitheh” (no. 1655).

Likewise, if a remorseful person comes repenting and admitting his crime, he is not to be exposed or inquired about. Rather, he is ordered to return and conceal his affair as the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed Maa'iz and the *Ghaamidee* woman.²²

²² **Saheeh:** This is a reference to the story in which the Prophet (ﷺ) repeatedly refused to carry out the prescribed punishment upon a companion and kept asking for excuses for him. The Hadeeth is recorded by Muslim (no. 1695) from Sulaymaan Ibn Buraydah who narrated from his father who said:

Maa'iz Ibn Maalik (رضي الله عنه) came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "Oh Messenger of Allaah, purify me (by establishing the prescribed punishment upon me)." He (ﷺ) replied:

وَيْحَكَ ارْجِعْ فَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ وَتُبْ إِلَيْهِ

"Woe to you. Seek forgiveness from Allaah and repent to Him."

He then returned and later came back and said the same thing to which the Prophet (ﷺ) kept saying:

وَيْحَكَ ارْجِعْ فَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ وَتُبْ إِلَيْهِ

"Woe to you. Seek forgiveness from Allaah and repent to Him."

On the fourth time, he (ﷺ) asked him:

فِيمَ أَطَهَّرُكَ؟

"For what should I purify you?"

Maa'iz said, "For committing adultery." So Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) asked:

أَيُّ جُنُونٍ؟

"Is there madness in him?"

He was informed that the man is not crazy. He (ﷺ) further asked:

أَشْرَبَ خَمْرًا؟

"Did he drink alcohol?"

A man stood up to him but did not find the smell of alcohol from him. Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) asked him:

أَزْنَيْتَ؟

"Did you (really) commit adultery?"

He replied, "Yes." He (ﷺ) then instructed that he be stoned. So, the people differed amongst themselves about him into two factions: one saying, "He's ruined! His deeds are lost." And another group saying, "And what repentance could be better than the repentance of Maa'iz? He came (willingly) to the Prophet (ﷺ), put his hand in his hand, and said, 'Kill me by the stone.'" So they remained in that state for two or three days. Then the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) came while they were sitting and he greeted them and sat. He said:

اسْتَغْفِرُوا لِمَاعِزِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ

"Ask for forgiveness for Maa'iz Ibn Maalik."

So they said, "May Allaah forgive Maa'iz Ibn Maalik." Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) then said:

لَقَدْ تَابَ تَوْبَةً لَوْ قُسِمَتْ بَيْنَ أُمَّةٍ لَوَسِعَتْهُمُ

"He repented with such repentance that if it were divided among the entire nation, it would encompass them all."

He (ﷺ) also did not inquire into the affair of the one who came to him saying, “I transgressed the prescribed limit, so establish the punishment upon me.”²³

In the same way, if such a person were to be taken to account for his crime yet the news of which had not reached the leader, then intercession should be made on his part so that he would not inform the leader.

Similarly, there has come a Hadeeth in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

أَقْبِلُوا ذُوبِي الْهَيْئَاتِ عَثَرَاتِهِمْ إِلَّا الْحُدُودَ

“Pardon those of prestigious character of their faults except the prescribed punishments.”²⁴

2. The second type of people with respect to sins is those who are well-known for their sins, those who openly and publicly commit them. They aren't concerned at all with the sins they commit, nor with what people say about them. These are the wicked ones who openly display their sins. Such people do not have the honor of people refraining from back-biting them as has been reported from Al-Hasan Al-Basree and others. Regarding these people, there's no problem with inquiring about their affairs in order to establish the prescribed rulings against them. Some of our

He (ﷺ) did similarly with the pregnant woman who also came to confess committing adultery with Maa'iz.

²³ **Saheeh:** This story was narrated in the Hadeeth collected by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 6823), Muslim (no. 2764), and Abu Daawood (no. 4381). Anas Ibn Maalik (رضي الله عنه) said:

I was with Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) when a man came to him and said, “Oh Messenger of Allaah, I have transgressed the limit, so establish the punishment upon me.” Yet he (ﷺ) did not ask about him (his affair). The prayer time came and he prayed with the Prophet (ﷺ). When the Prophet (ﷺ) finished the prayer, the man stood to him and again said, “Oh Messenger of Allaah, indeed I transgressed the limit so establish the Book of Allaah upon me.” He (ﷺ) replied:

أَلَيْسَ قَدْ صَلَّيْتَ مَعَنَا؟

“Did you not pray with us?”

He answered, “Yes.” He (ﷺ) said:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ غَفَرَ لَكَ ذَنْبَكَ أَوْ قَالَ حَدُّكَ

“Then indeed Allaah has forgiven your sin (or he said) your (transgression of the) limit.”

²⁴ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Abu Daawood (no. 4375) and Al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic in “Saheeh Sunan Abee Daawood” (no. 3679).

companions have explicitly stated this, using as evidence the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to Unays (رضي الله عنه):

وَاعْدُ يَا أُنَيْسُ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ هَذَا فَإِنْ اعْتَرَفَتْ فَارْجُمُهَا

“Go in the morning, Unays, to the wife of this man (she was accused of adultery) and if she confesses, stone her.”²⁵

Also, regarding this type of people, intercession is not to be made on their behalf when taken to account even if the news has not reached the leader. Rather, they are left to have the prescribed penalties pronounced upon them so that their crime is known as a deterrent to others like them.

Imaam Maalik said:

“Whoever is not known for harming the people, yet may have made some errors or mistakes, then there is no problem with interceding and pleading on their behalf as long as their crimes have not already been conveyed to the leader. As for those who are known for their evil and corruption, I don’t like that anyone should intercede or argue on their behalf. Rather they are left to have the sentences carried out upon them.”

Ibn Al-Munthir and others have reported this.

Imaam Ahmad also disliked that crimes should be raised up to the attention of the authorities in every circumstance because often they would not carry out the prescribed punishments as they should. For this he said, “If you know that the ruling will be (correctly) pronounced upon a person, then raise the matter (to the attention of the leaders).” It was mentioned that some people beat a man (as a punishment for a crime) until he died, while killing him wasn’t permissible. If only the person would have repented from the first offense, it would be better for him in that he repents for something between him and Allaah, thereby concealing his own sin. As for a second offense, some people are of the opinion he should do the same. Still, others have said that even upon the first offense, he should come to the leader and confess against himself in what requires a prescribed punishment so that he may be purified (of his crime).

²⁵ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2315), Muslim (no. 1698), At-Tirmithee (no. 1433), and Ibn Maajah (no. 2549).

The Explanation of:

وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

“And Allaah will continue to aid the servant as long as the servant aids his brother.”

And similarly in the narration of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that has already been mentioned (pg. 3):

وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ

“Whoever remains in the service of his brother, Allaah remains in his service.”²⁶

The virtues of fulfilling someone’s needs and helping them have previously been shown in the explanations of the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth Hadeeth.²⁷

Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq (رضي الله عنه) used to milk sheep or goats for a particular neighborhood. When he was appointed as the successor and leader of the Muslims, one of their maids said, “Now, he will not milk them for us.” Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) said, “No, I hope the current position I’ve assumed won’t change anything I used to do,” or he said something similar to this.

They used to assist others in milking because, among the Arabs, it used to be considered improper for women to have to milk their animals. So, when the men were absent, they (the remaining women) needed someone who would milk the animals for them.

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattaab (رضي الله عنه) used to care for the widows and fetch water for them at night. One night, Talhah (رضي الله عنه) saw him entering a woman’s house, so Talhah visited her the next day. He discovered she was elderly, crippled, and blind. He asked her, “What does that man (‘Umar) do for you?” She replied, “This man, ever since such and such time, he has cared for me. He comes to me with whatever I need and he removes any difficulties from me.” Talhah then said (to himself), “May your mother lose you, Talhah! You were actually seeking to discover some faults of ‘Umar?!”

²⁶ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2442, 6951), Muslim (no. 2580), At-Tirmithee (no. 1426), Abu Daawood (no. 4893), and Imaam Ahmad.

²⁷ In the same book, “Jaami’ Al-Uloom wal-Hikam” in which Ibn Rajab explains the rest of Imaam An-Nawawee’s forty-two famous Hadeeth.

Mujaahid said, “I once accompanied Ibn ‘Umar on a journey in order to serve him but instead, he ended up serving me.”

Many righteous people used to make it a condition that they would only allow their companions to accompany them if they agreed to be served by them.

And recorded in the two authentic collections, Anas (رضي الله عنه) said: We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) on a journey. Some of us were fasting and others not. We stopped at a place to rest during a very hot day. Most of us had (sufficient) clothing to shade ourselves, but some people had only their hands to protect them against the sun. Those who were fasting were unable to do anything (from the heat, fasting, exhaustion, etc.). So, those who were not fasting had to establish and provide shelter and water the riding animals. So, Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

ذَهَبَ الْمُفْطِرُونَ الْيَوْمَ بِالْأَجْرِ

“Today, those who were not fasting have gone and taken the rewards.”²⁸

²⁸ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2890), Muslim (no. 1119), and An-Nasaaee (no. 2283).

وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

“Whoever pursues a path seeking knowledge, Allaah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.”

Pursuing a path seeking knowledge includes actually traversing a physical path such as walking to the gatherings of the scholars, and it also includes pursuing a figurative path in that any means leading to the acquisition of religious knowledge would be considered pursuing a path to knowledge. Examples would be memorization, studying, reviewing, research, writing, comprehension, and any other way of obtaining knowledge.

And his (ﷺ) statement, “Allaah will make easy for him a path to Paradise,” could mean that Allaah will make the knowledge he seeks easy for him to learn and the path or means of obtaining it easy too. Surely, religious knowledge is the path leading to Paradise. This ease and facilitation is similar to the verse:

﴿وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ﴾

And We have certainly made the Quraan easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember?

[Soorah Al-Qamar, 54:17]

Some of the *Salaf* have said that anyone who seeks knowledge, Allaah will help him. It may also be understood that Allaah will make it easy for the student of knowledge if he intends by his learning to please Allaah, seeking only His face (ﷻ) and to benefit from it and act upon it. In that way, it becomes a means of his guidance and his entry into Paradise.

Allaah may also facilitate other areas or sciences of knowledge for a student other than what he initially seeks to learn, thereby benefiting him and becoming the means leading him to Paradise. It is said, “Whoever acts upon what he knows, Allaah will cause him to learn more knowledge that he had previously not known of.” Similarly, it’s also said, “The reward of a good deed is another good deed after it.” The statement of Allaah (ﷻ) supports this:

﴿ وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ أَحْتَدَوْا هُدًى ﴾

And Allaah increases those who were guided with (more) guidance.

[Soorah Maryam, 19:76]

And His (ﷺ) statement:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ أَحْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ ﴾

And those who are guided, He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness.

[Soorah Muhammad, 47:17]

Also included in this Hadeeth is that Allaah will make the actual pathway to Paradise easy which is the bridge (over the Fire) leading to it. He will also make the severe and terrifying circumstances before it and after it easy. So, He may help the student of knowledge with these things because he benefitted from his knowledge.

Undoubtedly, religious knowledge is one of the foremost ways leading to Allaah. So, whoever traverses His path without deviating from it, he will reach Allaah (ﷻ) and His Paradise by the nearest and easiest path.

We understand that the paths leading to Paradise will be made easy upon him – all of them (the actual and figurative paths), in this life and the hereafter. There's no way leading a servant to know Allaah and to His pleasure, to success by drawing near to Him, and to conversing with Him in this life and the hereafter except with beneficial knowledge – that which Allaah sent His messengers with and revealed in His books. It is this evidence and support that leads to Allaah. By it (this knowledge), the person becomes correctly guided amongst the darkness of ignorance, doubts, and false beliefs. For this, Allaah has referred to His book as a light because He guides therewith through the darkness. Allaah (ﷻ) says:

﴿ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ ۗ ﴾

﴿ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴾

There has come to you from Allaah a light and a clear book. By it, Allaah guides those who pursue His pleasure to the ways of peace and brings them out of darkness into light, by His permission, and guides them to a straight path.

[Soorah Al-Maaidah, 5:15-16]

The Prophet (ﷺ) likened the carrier of religious knowledge to the one who uses the stars for guidance and direction throughout the night. If the stars become overshadowed, the travelers would lose their direction. So, as long as the correct religious knowledge remains on earth, the people will be guided. And knowledge remaining is dependant upon its carriers and possessors remaining. If those with knowledge and those who support it depart, people would fall back into misguidance as has been mentioned in “Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree” and “Saheeh Muslim” from ‘Abdullaah Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ
يُبْقِ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُءُوسًا جُهَالًا، فَسُئِلُوا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا

“Indeed, Allaah does not take away knowledge by removing it all at once from the servants. Rather, He takes knowledge away by taking the scholars (in death) until there remains no scholar and people accept ignorant leaders. They will question them and they will give religious verdicts with no knowledge, thereby being misguided and misleading others.”²⁹

And one day the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that knowledge will be raised up. So, he was asked (by Ziyaad Ibn Labeed), “How will it be taken from us while we have read the Quraan? By Allaah, we certainly read it and encourage our women and children to read it?” The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

هَذِهِ التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلُ عِنْدَ الْيَهُودِ وَالنَّصَارَى فَمَاذَا تُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ

“Here is the Torah (Tawraah) and the Bible (Injeel) still with the Jews and the Christians; what prevented them?”³⁰

‘Ubaadah Ibn As-Saamit (رضي الله عنه) was asked about this Hadeeth and he said, “If you want, I will inform you of the first thing of knowledge to be taken from people: humility.”

²⁹ **Saheeh:** Recording by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 100), Muslim (no. 2673), At-Tirmithee (no. 2652), Ibn Maajah (no. 52), Imaam Ahmad (6475), and Ad-Daarimee (239).

³⁰ **Saheeh:** Recording by At-Tirmithee (no. 2653) and Ibn Maajah (no. 4048) and Al-Albaanee said it is authentic.

'Ubaadah Ibn As-Saamit said this because knowledge is of two types:

1. That knowledge, the fruits of which are produced within people's hearts. It's the knowledge of Allaah (ﷻ), His names and attributes, and His actions which instill within a person a sense of fear of Him, honor of Him, submission to Him, love of Him, hoping in Him, the willingness to call upon Him and rely upon Him. This is the beneficial knowledge.

2. The second type of knowledge is that which is merely upon the tongue. It's Allaah's evidence in support of you or against you. So, the first thing to be removed of knowledge is the beneficial knowledge which is that inner awareness which resides in the hearts and sets them straight. When this is removed, knowledge will remain only upon the tongue as evidence. People will begin to belittle it and not act in accordance with it, neither the possessor of such knowledge nor others. Then this type of knowledge will also be removed by the removal of those who carry it. At this time, nothing will remain except the Quraan, and only in books. At such time, no one will know its meanings, its rulings, or its laws. Finally, towards the end of time, even the Quraan will be removed. Nothing of it will be found, neither in books nor within people's hearts. Afterwards, the final hour will be established as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ إِلَّا عَلَى شِرَارِ النَّاسِ

“The (final) hour will not be established except upon the worst of people.”³¹

And He (ﷻ) said:

لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى لَا يُقَالَ فِي الْأَرْضِ: اللَّهُ اللَّهُ

“The (final) hour will not be established until the word: ‘Allaah, Allaah’ is not even said on earth.”³²

³¹ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 2949).

³² **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 148).

The Explanation of:

وَمَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَيَتَدَارَسُونَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِلَّا
نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ وَغَشِيَتْهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ وَحَفَّتَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ

عِنْدَهُ

“No group of people gather in one of the houses (mosques) of Allaah reciting the book of Allaah and studying it amongst themselves, except that tranquility will descend upon them, mercy will cover them, the angels will surround them, and Allaah will mention them to those with Him.”

This shows the virtue and preference of sitting in mosques, reciting and studying the Quraan. And this applies to both studying the Quraan as well as teaching it; there's no difference with regards to their virtues.

Recorded in “Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree,” ‘Uthmaan Ibn ‘Affaan (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ

“The best of you are those who learn the Quraan and teach it.”³³

Abu ‘Abdur-Rahmaan As-Sulamee said, “And that is exactly what has caused me to sit right here.” He used to teach the Quraan during the leadership of ‘Uthmaan Ibn ‘Affaan (رضي الله عنه) so much that even word of his teaching reached Al-Hajjaaj Ibn Yoosuf (a leader who came many years later).

³³ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 5027), At-Tirmirhee (no. 2907, 2908, 2909), Abu Daawood (no. 1452), Ibn Maajah (no. 211), and by Ahmad and Ad-Daarimee.

So, although such virtue may be generally applied to other forms of religious knowledge, gathering in the mosques to study the Quraan has explicitly been mentioned here.

And sometimes, even the Prophet (ﷺ) would ask someone else to recite the Quraan so he could listen to his recital as Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) used to recite to him and he (ﷺ) said:

إِنِّي أَحِبُّ أَنْ أَسْمَعَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِي

“Certainly, I like to hear it from someone besides myself.”³⁴

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to also instruct someone to read to him and his companions while they would listen. He would sometimes ask Abu Moosaa, and other times 'Uqbah Ibn 'Aamir (رضي الله عنه).

Most scholars also use, as a general proof to support the virtue of studying the Quraan, the Hadeeth regarding the merits of gathering for the remembrance of Allaah because the Quraan is the best type of remembrance.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَائِكَةً يَطُوفُونَ فِي الطُّرُقِ يَلْتَمِسُونَ أَهْلَ الذُّكْرِ، فَإِذَا وَجَدُوا قَوْمًا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ تَنَادَوْا: هَلُمُّوا إِلَيَّ حَاجَتِكُمْ، فَيَحْفُونَهُمْ بِأَجْنِحَتِهِمْ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا، فَيَسْأَلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ مِنْهُمْ: مَا يَقُولُ عِبَادِي؟ قَالُوا: يَقُولُونَ يُسَبِّحُونَكَ وَيُكَبِّرُونَكَ وَيُحْمَدُونَكَ وَيُمَجِّدُونَكَ، فَيَقُولُ: هَلْ رَأَوْنِي؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: لَا وَاللَّهِ مَا رَأَوْنَا، فَيَقُولُ: وَكَيْفَ لَوْ رَأَوْنِي؟ يَقُولُونَ: لَوْ رَأَوْنَا كَانُوا أَشَدَّ لَكَ عِبَادَةً وَأَشَدَّ لَكَ تَمَجِيدًا وَتَحْمِيدًا وَأَكْثَرَ لَكَ تَسْبِيحًا، يَقُولُ: فَمَا يَسْأَلُونِي؟ قَالَ يَسْأَلُونَكَ الْجَنَّةَ، يَقُولُ: وَهَلْ رَأَوَهَا؟ يَقُولُونَ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ مَا رَأَوَهَا، يَقُولُ: فَكَيْفَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَأَوَهَا؟ يَقُولُونَ: لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَأَوَهَا كَانُوا أَشَدَّ عَلَيْهَا حِرْصًا وَأَشَدَّ لَهَا طَلْبًا وَأَعْظَمَ فِيهَا رَغْبَةً، قَالَ: فَمِمَّ يَتَعَوَّدُونَ؟ يَقُولُونَ: مِنَ النَّارِ، يَقُولُ: وَهَلْ رَأَوَهَا؟ يَقُولُونَ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ مَا رَأَوَهَا، يَقُولُ: فَكَيْفَ لَوْ رَأَوَهَا؟ يَقُولُونَ: لَوْ رَأَوَهَا

³⁴ Saheeh: Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 5049, 5056), Muslim (no. 800), At-Tirmithee (no. 3025), and Abu Daawood (no. 3668).

كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهَا فِرَارًا وَأَشَدَّ لَهَا مَخَافَةً، فَيَقُولُ: فَأَشْهَدُكُمْ أَنِّي قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لَهُمْ، يَقُولُ مَلَكٌ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ: فِيهِمْ فَلَانٌ لَيْسَ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّمَا جَاءَ لِحَاجَةٍ، قَالَ: هُمْ الْجُلَسَاءُ لَا يَشْتَقِي بِهِمْ جَلِيسُهُمْ

Allaah has angels that go from place to place searching for people remembering (talking about) Allaah. So, when they find a particular people mentioning Allaah, they call out (to other angels), “Come here to your objective.” They then envelope them (the people) with their wings reaching to the sky. Their Lord asks them, yet He knows more than they do, “What are My servants saying?” The angels reply, “They are glorifying you (saying: *SubhaanAllaah*), declaring Your greatness (saying: *Allaahu Akbar*), praising You (saying: *Al-Hamdulillaah*), and exalting You.” He asks, “Have they seen Me?” They reply, “No, by Allaah, they have not seen You.” He asks, “And what if they saw Me?” The angels reply, “If they saw You, they would be even stronger in worshipping You, stronger in glorifying and praising You, and they would exalt You even more.” Allaah further asks, “What are they asking of Me?” They reply, “They are asking You for Paradise.” He asks, “And have they seen it?” “No, by Allaah, oh Lord, they have not seen it.” Allaah asks, “What if indeed they had seen it?” The angels answer, “If indeed they had seen it, they would be even more eager for it, even stronger in seeking it, and their desire for it would greatly increase.” Allaah then asks, “From what are they seeking protection?” “From the Fire,” the angels reply. Allaah asks, “And have they seen it?” They answer, “No, by Allaah, oh Lord, they have not seen it.” He says, “And what if they had seen it?” They answer, “If they had seen it, they would be even stronger in fleeing from it, and fear it much more.” Allaah then says, “I call you all to witness that I have forgiven them.” One of the angels says, “There is a person not from among them; he only came for some other need.” He says, “They are all sitting together and because of them, their companions will not be saddened.”³⁵

Imam Muslim also recorded a Hadeeth from Mu’aawiyah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) once came upon a group of his companions sitting together in the mosque, so he asked them:

مَا أَجْلَسَكُمْ؟

“What has caused you to sit?”

They replied, “We have sat to remember and mention Allaah, and praise and thank Him for guiding us to Islaam and bestowing the blessing of it upon us.” He (ﷺ) further asked:

³⁵ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 6408) and Muslim (no. 2689).

اللَّهُ مَا أَجْلَسَكُمْ إِلَّا ذَاكَ؟

“By Allaah, you sat for no other reason than that?”

They said, “By Allaah, that’s the only reason we sat together.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

أَمَّا إِنِّي لَمْ أَسْتَحْلِفْكُمْ تُّهْمَةً لَكُمْ وَلَكِنَّهُ أَتَانِي جِبْرِيلُ فَأَخْبَرَنِي أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَبَاهِي بِكُمْ

الْمَلَائِكَةَ

“As for me, I didn’t ask you to swear because I was accusing you of anything. Rather, Jibreel (the angel Gabriel) came to me and informed me that Allaah (ﷻ) is praising you, boasting of you to the angels.”³⁶

And there are many other Hadeeth with similar meanings.

So, Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) mentions that the reward for those who sit in the mosque to study the book of Allaah is of four types:

1. Tranquility descending upon them. Also, Al-Baraa Ibn ‘Aazib (رضي الله عنه) narrated a Hadeeth in which he said:

A man was once reading Soorah Al-Kahf (no. 18) while he was with his horse. A cloud then covered him and began to encircle and draw closer so much that his horse fled from it. The next morning, he went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him about that to which he (ﷺ) said:

تِلْكَ السَّكِينَةُ تَنْزَلَتْ بِالْقُرْآنِ

“That was the tranquility descending because of (the recitation of) the Quraan.”³⁷

Abu Sa’eed (رضي الله عنه) also narrated that Usayd Ibn Hudhayr (رضي الله عنه) was reciting one night and his horse came to him. He kept reading and then another horse came and then another. He then stopped reciting and said, “I was afraid they would trample upon Yahyaa (his son).” So, he went to them

³⁶ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 2701), At-Tirmitheeh (no. 3379), and An-Nasaaee (no. 5426).

³⁷ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 5011) and Muslim (no. 795).

and noticed a shade over his head with what appeared to be like lamps in it. It began to ascend up into the sky until he could no longer see it. The next morning he mentioned it to the Prophet (ﷺ) who replied:

تِلْكَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كَانَتْ تَسْتَمِعُ لَكَ وَلَوْ قَرَأْتَ لِأَصْبَحَتْ يَرَاهَا النَّاسُ مَا تَسْتَتِرُ مِنْهُمْ

“Those were angels listening to you. If you would have kept reciting, the people would have been able to see that which is (always) hidden from them.”³⁸

2. They will be covered with mercy. Allaah (ﷻ) says:

﴿ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

Indeed, the mercy of Allaah is near to the good-doers.

[Soorah Al-'Araaf, 7:56]

3. The angels will envelope them. This is mentioned in the Hadeeth at hand.

4. Allaah will mention them to those (angels) who are with Him. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي، وَأَنَا مَعَهُ إِذَا ذَكَرَنِي، فَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي نَفْسِي،

وَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي مَلَأٍ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي مَلَأٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُمْ

“Allaah (ﷻ) says, ‘I am as my servant thinks of Me. And I am with him when he mentions Me. If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself, and if he mentions Me in a gathering, I mention him in an even better gathering (i.e. among the angels).’”³⁹

These four virtues are for any group of people who gather to mention and remember Allaah (ﷻ) just as the Hadeeth in “Saheeh Muslim” states in which Abu Hurayrah and Abu Sa’eed both narrate that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

³⁸ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (“Fath Al-Baaree” 9/63) and Muslim (no. 796).

³⁹ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 7405) and Muslim (no. 2675).

لَا يَقْعُدُ قَوْمٌ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ (ﷻ) إِلَّا حَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَعَشِيَّتُهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ، وَنَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ،
وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ

“No people sit and mention Allaah (ﷻ) except that the angels surround them, mercy covers them, tranquility descends upon them, and Allaah will mention them to those (angels) who are with Him.”⁴⁰

Allaah Himself also says:

﴿فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْكُمْ﴾

So remember Me, I will remember you.

[Soorah Al-Baqarah, 2:152]

As for Allaah remembering and mentioning His servant, it is His praise of him among the highest gathering of angels, boasting of them and commending them.

He (ﷻ) also says:

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي

عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

Oh you who believe, remember Allaah with much remembrance. And exalt Him morning and afternoon. It is He who praises you as well as the angels, that He may take you out of the darkness into light.

[Soorah Al-Ahzaab, 33:41-43]

⁴⁰ Saheeh: Recorded by Muslim (no. 2700).

The Explanation of:

وَمَنْ بَطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ

“And whoever is prevented by his deeds will not be hastened forward by his lineage.”

The meaning of this statement is that actions and deeds are the means by which the servant attains whatever levels he may deserve in the hereafter as Allaah says:

﴿وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَةٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا﴾

And for all are levels (resulting) from what they have done.

[Soorah Al-An'aam, 6:132]

So, whoever is prevented from reaching the high levels with Allaah because of his deeds, his (noble) lineage will not benefit him and hasten him forward to them. Allaah (ﷻ) has prescribed and prepared the rewards according to actions, not one's relations. He (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ﴾

So, when the horn is blown, no relationships will there be among them that day, nor will they ask about one another.

[Soorah Al-Muminoon, 23:101]

Allaah has commanded hastiness in seeking His forgiveness and mercy by doing righteous actions as He says:

﴿ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَبِيمِ الْغَيْظِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ

الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۙ

And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden (Paradise) as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous – those who spend during ease and hardship, who restrain anger, and who pardon people. And Allaah loves the good-doers.

[Soorah Aali-'Imraan, 3:133-134]

And He says:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِعَايَةِ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ

هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَاءً آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ ۗ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

Certainly, they who are apprehensive from fear of their Lord, and they who believe in the signs of their Lord, and they who do not associate anything (in worship) with their Lord, and they who give what they give while their hearts are fearful because they will be returning to their Lord – It is those who hasten to good deeds and they outstrip (others) therein.

[Soorah Al-Muminoon, 23:57-61]

In “Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree” and “Saheeh Muslim,” Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated a Hadeeth in which he said that whenever the verse:

﴿ وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ۙ

And warn your closest relatives.

...was revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ), he (ﷺ) said:

يَا مَعْشَرَ قُرَيْشٍ اشْتَرُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ لَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ
اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، يَا عَبَّاسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ لَا أُغْنِي عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، وَيَا صَفِيَّةَ عَمَةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لَا
أُغْنِي عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، وَيَا فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتَ مُحَمَّدٍ سَلِينِي مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ مَالِي لَا أُغْنِي عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ
شَيْئًا

“Oh Quraysh! Purchase your own souls (from Allaah), for I cannot suffice you at all with Allaah. Oh tribe of ‘Abdul-Manaaf, I cannot suffice you at all with Allaah. Oh ‘Abbaas Ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib, I cannot suffice you at all with Allaah. And oh Safiyyah, aunt of Allaah’s messenger, I cannot suffice you at all with Allaah. And oh Faatimah, daughter of Muhammad, ask me for whatever you want of my wealth, but I cannot suffice you at all with Allaah.”⁴¹

This is also attested to by the Hadeeth of ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas (رضي الله عنه) in which he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying:

أَلَا إِنَّ آلَ أَبِي يَعْنِي فُلَانًا لَيْسُوا لِي بِأَوْلِيَاءَ، إِنَّمَا وَلِيِّيَ اللَّهُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“Indeed, the family of my father (meaning any relatives) are not (necessarily) my supporters. Rather, my supporters are only Allaah and the righteous believers.”⁴²

It shows that allegiance with him is not gained merely by relations, no matter how close relatives they may be. It’s only achieved by faith and righteous actions. So, whoever is more complete in faith and deed, then they are greater in alliance with him (ﷺ), regardless of whether they are close relatives or not.

⁴¹ **Saheeh:** Recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 2753), Muslim (no. 206), and An-Nasaaee (no. 3646).

⁴² **Saheeh:** Recorded by Muslim (no. 215).