

An-Nawwas bin Sam'an (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

1

I asked the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) about virtue and sin

2

and he replied, "The essence of virtue is (manifested in) good morals (Akhlaq)

3

whereas sinful conduct is that which turns in your heart (making you feel uncomfortable), and you dislike that it would be disclosed to other people."⁽¹⁾

From the Qur'an

﴿Righteousness does not consist of turning your faces towards the East and the West. But righteous is he who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Scripture, and the prophets. Who gives money, however cherished, to relatives, and orphans, and the needy, and the homeless, and the beggars, and for freeing slaves; those who perform the prayers, and pay the obligatory charity, and fulfill their promises when they promise, and patiently persevere in the face of persecution, hardship, and in the time of conflict. These are the sincere; these are the reverent.﴾ (2: 177)

The Narrator

When Al-Nawwas asked the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about the meaning of "Al-Bir" (righteousness) and "Al-Ithm" (sin), the Prophet informed him that righteousness is reflected in good character and righteous actions. As for sin, it encompasses actions that create doubt, unrest, and fear of others finding out about them.

Summary

Al-Nawwas ibn Sam'an ibn Khalid Al-Kalabi was a resident of Sham (Greater Syria). His father, Sam'an ibn Khalid, embraced Islam and visited the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) where he also accepted Islam. He gifted the Prophet a pair of sandals, which the Prophet accepted and prayed for him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) married the sister of Sam'an to him. However, when she sought refuge from the Prophet (peace be upon him), he divorced her. Al-Nawwas passed away in the year 50 AH.

1 Related by Muslim, 2553.



Message and Meaning

1

Al-Nawwas ibn Sam'an asked the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about "Al-Bir" (righteousness), which encompasses all forms of goodness and virtuous qualities, and about "Al-Ithm" (sin), which includes all forms of evil and immoral actions, both major and minor. He asked about their nature and the signs by which they can be recognized.

2

The Prophet (peace be upon him) informed him that righteousness is reflected in good character, which includes accepting and submitting to the divine commandments with contentment and surrender. It means having no internal resistance or reluctance toward them. When Allah commands you to perform acts of worship such as prayer, charity, fasting, and others, you embrace them with an open heart, willingly obeying His commands and refraining from what He has prohibited. Good character also extends to interactions with others, which includes showing kindness, refraining from harming others, and being patient in the face of harm. It also involves having a pleasant demeanor and a cheerful countenance.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized the virtue of good character, stating that the majority of people who enter Paradise do so because of their good character. He also mentioned that a believer can attain the rank of those who observe fasting and stand in prayer solely through their good character.

3

The Prophet (peace be upon him) then explained the nature of sin. He mentioned that when a person commits a sin, they feel doubt and uncertainty in their heart, and their heart does not find tranquility through that action. Instead, doubt arises, making them fear that it may be a sin, and the one who commits the sin is afraid of being exposed to others.

This is similar to what the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Leave what makes you doubt for what does not make you doubt. Verily, truth brings tranquility, and falsehood brings doubt."

This is a natural inclination that Allah has instilled in the hearts of His servants. Their hearts expand with obedience and acts of worship, while they contract and feel repulsed when committing sins. This is specific to those whose hearts are pure and sound, not corrupted by frequent sins and transgressions. Allah has imprinted on their hearts the recognition of good and the rejection of evil. They do not recognize good deeds and virtues, nor do they denounce evil deeds and sins. Instead, they boast about committing sins and transgressions openly in front of people.

This indicates that the truth and falsehood are not confusing to the discerning believer. Rather, they recognize the truth through the light upon it, and their hearts accept it. They reject falsehood and do not recognize it. This is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "There will be people at the end of my nation who will bring you matters that you and your forefathers have not heard of. So, beware of them and their teachings."

This means that they will present things that the hearts of the believers reject and do not recognize.

Implementation



Be diligent in seeking knowledge, as it is the foundation of understanding. The companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) were not hesitant to ask questions.



If one desires to attain high ranks in Paradise, they should prioritize cultivating good character. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “I guarantee a house in the outskirts of Paradise for those who abandon arguments, even if they are right, and a house in the middle of Paradise for those who refrain from lying, even in jest, and a house in the highest level of Paradise for those who possess good character.” He also stated, “The most beloved and closest to me on the Day of Resurrection are those with the best manners.”



Good character is an integral part of the religion. Those who excel in good character also excel in their religious practice.



Place emphasis on developing good character, as it holds great weight on the scale of deeds. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Nothing will weigh heavier on the scale of a believer on the Day of Resurrection than good character. Indeed, Allah dislikes those who are obscene and vulgar.”



Tranquility and contentment of the heart should not be the sole basis for determining the permissibility (halal) or prohibition (haram) of matters. Rather, adherence to the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah should be the guiding principle. However, a person finds solace and peace of mind in following these teachings, even in the face of differing opinions or personal desires.



The tranquility and ease of the heart can only be experienced by those whose hearts are pure and their innate nature is sound. They are conscious of actions that may be sinful and dislike the idea of others witnessing those actions. However, individuals with corrupted hearts and weakened understanding require guidance in understanding and implementing the legal rulings, rather than being left to their own whims and desires.



A fatwa (religious ruling) alone does not dispel doubts if the seeker lacks an open heart to accept it. If a fatwa is given based on assumptions or personal inclinations without proper legal evidence, it should

