

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:



**1** Always state the truth. Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Heaven. A person will continue to tell the truth and make sure of the truth until he is recorded with God as truthful.



**2** Do not lie. Lying leads to transgression, and transgression leads to Hell. A person will continue to lie and make sure of lying until he is recorded with God as a liar.<sup>(1)</sup>

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 6094; Muslim, 2607.

### From the Qur'an

- ﴿All who obey God and the Messenger shall be among those upon whom God has bestowed His blessings: the prophets, and those who never deviate from the truth, and the martyrs and the righteous ones. How goodly a company are these!﴾ (4: 69)
- ﴿Believers, have fear of God and be among those who are truthful.﴾ (9:119)
- ﴿Surely the righteous shall be in bliss, (13) while the wicked shall be in a blazing fire.﴾ (82: 13-14)

### The Narrator

Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd ibn Ghāfil ibn Ḥabīb who belonged to the Hudhayl tribe was one of the very early companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). He migrated to Abyssinia, then to Madinah and took part in the Battle of Badr and all other military expeditions with the Prophet. He took care of the Prophet's sandals, helping him to wear them when he moved, and kept them for him when the Prophet took them off and sat down. He died in Madinah in Year 32 or 33 AH, 654 CE.

### Summary

The Prophet (peace be upon him) tells us that truthfulness leads to every good thing and this naturally secures admission into Heaven. A person will habitually continue to tell the truth until he earns the rank of the truthful. By contrast, lying is the way leading to all sorts of sin, which naturally leads to Hell. A person will become a habitual liar until he is labelled as a liar.



# Message and Meaning



The Prophet (peace be upon him) orders his followers and community to be always truthful, because truthfulness leads to righteousness, which covers every good thing. Thus, truthfulness leads a person to Heaven and he is admitted there. A Muslim tells the truth and makes it his continuous habit, stating it in all situations, whether easy or difficult, and this earns him the truthful grade in God's ranking, which in Arabic is *ṣiddīq*.

A *ṣiddīq* is one who always states the truth and does not lie. Thus, when a person continues to tell the truth in all situations, God records him as truthful. He will earn a reputation of being a truthful person and he will be welcomed by people. He will also be known in God's Highest Society with this quality. God will resurrect him among the ones who do not deviate from the truth. This is the second highest grade, preceded only by that of prophets. God says: 'All who obey God and the Messenger shall be among those upon whom God has bestowed His blessings: the prophets, and those who never deviate from the truth, and the martyrs and the righteous ones. How goodly a company are these!' (4: 69) God commands His servants to be truthful and to join those who are always truthful. He says: 'Believers, have fear of God and be among those who are truthful'. (9:119) The Prophet (peace be upon him) mentions that the truthful are the best of all people. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ narrated that the Prophet was asked: 'Who are the best of people?' He said: 'Everyone who is pure at heart, having a truthful tongue'.<sup>(1)</sup>



The Prophet (peace be upon him) then warned against lying. It is at the head of every evil, and it leads to all sorts of corruption and sin. This will ultimately lead to landing the liar in Hell. The Prophet then tells us that when a person becomes a habitual liar, he will be recorded by God as a liar. He will be known to people as such and, thus, people will look unfavourably upon him. He will be marked as such by the Highest Society and then on the Day of Judgement, he will be resurrected among the hypocrites.

The Prophet then mentions that lying is a distinctive characteristic of hypocrites. He says: 'The mark of a hypocrite consists of three characteristics: when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he reneges; and when he is placed in trust, he betrays'.<sup>(2)</sup>

The Prophet (peace be upon him) makes the tongue the primary element in a person's character, whether he is good or bad. God's Messenger says: 'No person's faith is sound unless his heart is sound; and no person's heart is sound unless his tongue is sound'.<sup>(3)</sup>

1 Related by Ibn Mājah, 4216

2 Related by al-Bukhari, 33; Muslim, 59.

3 Related by Ahmad, 13079.



# Implementation

1

Make sure to always say the truth, because this is the quality that separates hypocrisy from sincerity, and it is the fair arbiter between those who will be in Heaven and those who deserve Hell.

2

Truthfulness is the top characteristic in Islam. Therefore, God tells His servants to be among the truthful. He gives the people who obey Him the reward of being resurrected with the truthful. This indicates that they have a very high grade and that they are close to God. This should motivate every Muslim to maintain truthfulness.

3

God has given the tongue a privileged status ahead of all other organs, making its merit very clear by giving it the unique ability to express His oneness. Therefore, a Muslim should not make his tongue familiar with lying. He should make it habitually truthful, because it is what benefits him in both this present life and the life to come. A person's tongue will say what is consistent with its habit, whether true or false.

4

Whoever wants to have a good influence on people must not give them a chance to accuse him of lying or being deceitful. To be truthful earns the merit of being included by God in the record of the truthful and it earns acceptance among people.

5

Saying the truth raises the status of a person in both the present life and the next. Luqmān, who was endowed with wisdom, was asked what enabled him to attain his high status. He said: 'saying the truth, being true to my trust, and my non-interference in what does not concern me'.

6

Truthfulness is an attribute of God, Exalted and Sublime. He says: 'Whose word could be truer than God's?' (4: 87 & 122). We need to emulate this attribute of God's.

7

A person who wants to do good deeds should start by making his speech good, saying only what is true. Truthfulness leads to righteousness. Yūnus ibn 'Ubayd said: 'Whenever I saw a person who is careful about what he says, I soon realized that goodness characterizes all his actions'.



No one should ever think that lying ensures safety. A liar may be able to deceive people and they may believe him, but he cannot deceive God. Therefore, safety is ensured in maintaining truthfulness. When the Prophet went on the Expedition of Tabuk, some people stayed behind. On his return, the hypocrites came forward with their false excuses. However, Ka'b ibn Mālik insisted on telling the truth about his staying behind. The outcome was that God accepted his repentance, revealing Qur'anic verses concerning his case, and these continue to be recited by people. These verses are concluded by the one that says: 'Believers, have fear of God and be among those who are truthful'. (9:119)



God Almighty warns liars that they will be punished in Hell. He says: 'Woe to every lying, sinful person.' (45: 7) God's punishment must be definitely avoided.



The worst type of lying is to lie against God, forbidding what He made lawful and legitimizing what He has forbidden. This is all a case of inventing lies. Hence, God says: 'Do not say – for any false thing you may utter with your tongues – that 'This is lawful and this is forbidden', so as to attribute your lying inventions to God. Indeed those who attribute their lying inventions to God will never be successful. (116) Brief is their enjoyment [of this life], and grievous suffering awaits them [in the life to come]'. (16: 116-117) It is most important for all Muslims that they do not attribute to God's law what they are uncertain of. Instead, they should say: 'God knows best'. When we are asked about something and we do not know the answer, we should tell the questioner to go to scholars who can issue fatwas. This is much better and safer than wrongly attributing something to God.



Everyone should steer away from falsehood, saying no lie, either seriously or in jest. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: 'Woe to the one who lies when he is talking so that people would laugh at what he says. Woe to him! Woe to him!'<sup>(1)</sup>

1 Related by Abu Dāwūd, 4990; al-Tirmidhī, 2315.

