

Enjoining Righteousness and Forbidding Evil



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All thanks are to Allâh, Who directed His *Auliya'* (loyal friends) to perform the actions that He likes and prefers. His just destiny delivered to the people of disobedience their just fate He gives aid and support to those who obey and fear Him, and feel anger for His Anger and pleasure for His Pleasure. I thank and praise Him for the tremendous bounties and guidance He granted His slaves and for His favors, kindness and compassion. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allâh Alone, without partners, a testimony from he who knows Allâh and serves none else. I also bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is Allâh's slave and Messenger, whom He has chosen, sent as a Messenger and ordered to obey and fear Him and shun the obedience of the disbelievers and hypocrites. O Allâh! grant Your best blessings and mercy on Your slave and Messenger, Muhammad, and on his progeny, Companions and all those who followed him and dedicated their support and loyalty to him.

O people! Fear Allâh and know that He keeps perfect watch over you. Revere His commands and never disobey Him. Know that enjoining good and forbidding evil is one of the greatest duties and tasks entrusted to Muslims. Why is it that we witness a general trend of ignoring and abandoning the duty of enjoining righteousness and forbidding evil, which Allâh has ordained and commanded? Why do so many Muslims ignore this duty and abandon it? Is it because of their feebleness and weakness, or because they dare disobey Allâh? Is it because they feel safe from Allâh's plan, torment, anger and painful punishment? Do they not know that fulfilling the honorable duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil ensures their happiness and safety and earns them immunity from Allâh's punishment and torment? Hence, what is the reason behind this laziness and ignoring of this duty, while satisfying lusts and desires, and thus, daring to commit what angers the Creator of the heavens and earth? Know that this evil

behavior warrants removing Allâh's blessings and receiving torments and disasters. Have they not heard Allâh's statement:

﴿لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ۝ كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُكْرِمِ فَعْلُوهُ لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ۝ تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ﴾

“Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Dawûd (David) and ‘Esâ (Jesus), scn of Maryam (Mary). That was because they disobeyed (Allâh and the Messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from *Al-Munkar* (wrong, evildoing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do. You see many of them taking the disbelievers as their *Auliya’* (protectors and helpers). Evil indeed is that which their own selves have sent forward before them; for that (reason) Allâh’s Wrath fell upon them, and in torment they will abide.” (5:78-80)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ! لَتَأْمُرَنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَلَتَأْخُذَنَّ عَلَى يَدِ السَّفِيهِ، وَلَتَأْطُرُنَّهُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ أَطْرًا، أَوْ لَيَضْرِبَنَّ اللَّهُ بِقُلُوبِ بَعْضِكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ثُمَّ يَلْعَنُكُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَهُمْ».

“By He in Whose Hand is Muhammad’s life! You will enjoin righteousness, forbid evil, restrain the hands of the fools and compel them to adhere by the truth, or Allâh will divide your hearts from each other and then curse you as He cursed them (Jews and Christians).”

In addition, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يَقُولُ: مُرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَإِنْهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ قَبْلَ

أَنْ تَدْعُونِي فَلَا أُجِيبُكُمْ، وَتَسْتَصْرِؤُنِي فَلَا أَنْصُرُكُمْ، وَتَسْأَلُونِي فَلَا أُعْطِيكُمْ».

“O people! Verily, Allâh the Exalted said, ‘Enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, before a time comes when you will invoke Me, but I will not respond to your invocation, seek My help, but I will not help you, and ask Me, but I will not give you.’”

In another *Hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«وَمَا تَرَكَ قَوْمٌ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ إِلَّا لَمْ تَرْفَعْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَلَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ دُعَاؤُهُمْ».

“No people abandoned enjoining good and forbidding evil, except that their (good) deeds will not be ascended (to Allâh) and their supplications will not be accepted (by Him).”

In a *Mursal Hadith* from Al-Hasan Al-Basri, where the name of the Companion is missing, it was reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:¹

«لَا تَرَالِ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ تَحْتَ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ وَفِي كَفِّهِ مَا لَمْ يَمَالِءْ قُرَاؤُهَا أُمَرَآهَا وَمَا لَمْ يَزُكْ صَلَاحًا وَفَجَارَهَا، وَمَا لَمْ يَهْنُ شِرَارُهَا خِيَارَهَا، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ رَفَعَ اللَّهُ يَدَهُ عَنْهُمْ ثُمَّ سَلَطَ عَلَيْهِمْ جَبَابِرَتَهُمْ فَسَأَمُوهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ ثُمَّ ضَرَبَهُمْ بِالْفَاقَةِ وَالْفَقْرِ».

“This *Ummah* (Muslim nation) will be included in Allâh’s mercy and care, until, and unless, its *Qurrâ* (readers of the Qur’ân and scholars) compromise (in religion) with its leaders, its righteous recommend its evil doers, and its evil members humiliate its righteous members. When they do this, Allâh’s

¹ **Editor Note:** A *Mursal Hadith* is actually considered an unauthentic *Hadith* that is not confirmed to be a statement of the Prophet by itself. This is because the narrator of the *Hadith* (in this case Al-Hasan) never met the Prophet and therefore could not have related anything directly from him. Scholars use these narrations to support their arguments if there are similar authentic narrations with the same meaning. However, the *Mursal* narrations, in general, are not to be considered prophetic statements.

Hand will no longer bestow His care on them, He will allow the tyrants to inflict them with severe torment and He will encompass them all with poverty and meekness.”

In another *Mursal Hadith* from Al-Hasan, the Prophet ﷺ was reported to have said:

«إِذَا أَظْهَرَ النَّاسُ الْعِلْمَ وَضَيَّعُوا الْعَمَلَ وَتَحَابَّوْا بِاللِّسَنِ وَتَبَاغَضُوا بِالْقُلُوبِ وَتَقَاطَعُوا الْأَرْحَامَ وَتَرَكُوا الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّى أَبْصَارَهُمْ».

“If people declare their knowledge (to show off), abandon performing good deeds, love each other by words but hate each other in heart, sever their ties of kinship and abandon enjoining righteousness and forbidding evil, then Allāh will curse them and bring deafness to their ears and blindness to their eyes.”

Ibn Mas‘ud رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«بِئْسَ الْقَوْمُ قَوْمٌ لَا يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَا يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَبِئْسَ الْقَوْمُ قَوْمٌ يَجْهَلُونَ مَنْ يَأْمُرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَبِئْسَ الْقَوْمُ قَوْمٌ لَا يَقُومُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ، وَبِئْسَ الْقَوْمُ قَوْمٌ يَسِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنُ فِيهِمْ بِالتَّقِيَّةِ وَالْكِتْمَانِ».

“Worst are they the people who do not enjoin righteousness and forbid evil. Worst are they, the people who shun those who enjoin righteousness and forbid evil. Worst are they the people who do not establish justice. Worst are they the people with whom the believer fears danger from them and has to hide his Faith.”

Fear Allāh, O Allāh’s slaves. Those who are heedless should wake up from their sleep and heedlessness. Mend the shortcoming you fell into and your ignoring Allāh’s command. Establish Allāh’s Law in action, statements and knowledge. Fulfill what you were commanded to do and refrain from all that you were prohibited. Do not fear any blame when you do this. Be sincere and purify your hearts. Beware of the evil

ways that direct to other than the good conduct I am advising you to adhere by. Otherwise, you will succumb to the evil plots of Satan, his whispers and deceit, and you will say, what you do not do. Fill the rest of your life with seeking Allâh’s forgiveness, repenting and going back to Him. Feel sorrow and grief and refrain from your errors. Dedicate your energy and vitality to obeying the King, the All-Knower of all that exists, before a time comes when a terrible fate might befall you, that will be beyond your ability to withstand. Surely, you will remember and be reminded of what I am now saying to you, and I relate all of my affairs to Allâh, and He has full knowledge of the slaves:

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ ءَامَنُوا وَأَتَّقُوا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝ أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَن يَأْتِيَهُم بَأْسُنَا بَيْنَتَا وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ۝ أَوْ آمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَن يَأْتِيَهُم بَأْسُنَا ضُحًى وَهُمْ يُلْعَبُونَ ۝ أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴾

“And if the people of the towns had believed and had the *Taqwâ* (piety), certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they belied. So We took them (with punishment) for what they used to earn. Did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment by night while they were asleep? Or, did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment in the forenoon while they were playing? Did they then feel secure against the Plan of Allâh? None feels secure from the Plan of Allâh except the people who are the losers.” (7:96-99)

May Allâh direct all of us to the blessings of the Glorious Qur’ân and benefit us all, with whatever is in it of the *Âyat* and Wise *Dhikr*. I say this and ask Allâh the Great, and the Most Honored for forgiveness for me, you and all Muslims for every sin. Invoke Him for forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.¹

¹ *Al-Khutab Al-Minbariyah*, Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Latif Al-Shaikh, p. 51