

In the Name of Allah
The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

A salary, equal to the effort!

From the Collection
"The Ladder of learned lessons"
Volume 12

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In the Name of Allah
The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Dear, beloved children:

Salāmu Alaykum!

Do you how many stairs we have ascended together, so far, from the ***Ladder of learned lessons***, and to which point, we have reached...?

I do not know how many of these stories have remained in your mind more than the others; and more important than that: how far you have gone to put into practice all these learned lessons, or reached the decision to put them into practice in a very near future, in your life?

In this Twelfth Edition, I have offered you ten more stories, and each of them is a key, which will help you open the various doors that you shall encounter in your later life. However, I do not know which one of them, I shall have to tell you first...

Now, I think it is much better for you to read them yourself! However, in order to keep them in your mind, you could trace a line under the important points that seem essential to you; in that way, if you wish to re-study them in some other time, during your life, you can find them easily, and see the

precious gems that have been hidden in those stories, in just one look...

Stories, such as the event that happened to Abdullāh Ibn-ē Mobārak; or that “Sēyyēdah” woman. The generosity of Abdullāh; or, the story of the poor neighbor, and the agitation of the late Sēyyēd Bahrul Ulum... All these stories refer to people, who have become selfish in a moment in their lives; and when someone becomes selfish and arrogant, he/she loses his/her natural caution and precaution, and will be destroyed in a flash...!

All these stories are full of various moral lessons to be learned by you, dear ones. They are advices, which will serve you, as living examples, of these lessons to be remembered by you, during your blessed lives. Now what do you think of all that...?

ترجمہ و تفسیر
عبدالحق علی

Take care, and good luck!

1-A prayer is fulfilled

The lord of the believers, Hazrat-ē Ali [*as*] had declared, “For he, who knocks at the Door of Divine Mercy, that Door shall be opened for him.”
Ghorar Al-Hēkam, Number 8292]

Once, the great Prophet of God, Hazrat-ē Ibrāhim [*as*] was passing through a desert. Suddenly, he saw a pious man, praying God busily. He told him,

“Let us pray together, and ask God that He save the human beings from that frightening Day [i.e. Resurrection Day]...”

The pious man replied,

“It is now three years that I am praying God to fulfill one of my dearest wishes, however it has not been fulfilled yet. Therefore, I am now ashamed to ask God for another thing...”

Hazrat-ē Ibrāhim [*as*] told him,

“To pray to God has nothing to be ashamed of! Sometimes, it happens that God loves dearly one of His creatures. He then does not fulfill his wish, so that this creature keeps on praying to Him...! And sometimes, He is angry at one of His creatures, and He fulfills it in a flash, or leads him to despair, so that he may not feel any wish to pray God, anymore and to stop his conversations with Him. Now tell me, what is the prayer that you had made and which has not been fulfilled yet...?”

The pious man replied, “My story is long to narrate. Suffice it to say that one day, I was passing through a desert, when suddenly my gaze fell on a young man, who had brought a cow in the pasture...” I asked him, “Who are you?” He said, “I am the son of Ibrāhim [*as*], known as “Khalīl” [or the Friend of God]. From that day on, I began to pray and supplicate God Almighty to be able to meet His “Friend”, whose name is Ibrāhim...”

Hazrat-ē Ibrāhim [*as*] told him,

“Now your wish has been fulfilled, for I am the same Ibrāhim, you so wanted to meet, person to

person! And that young man is my son, called
Ismāʿīl...”

Now, even though the pious man had reached his
limit, in patience, for his long prayer, however we
see that at the end, God Almighty had fulfilled his
wish...



2- If you do something for the sake of God

The venerable Prophet [*savavs*] had been reported to say, “Whosoever gives one dirham, as a charity, and in Allah’s way, God Almighty shall write seven hundred Rewards for him.” [“A’mālī”, by Sheikh-ē Tussi, 306/183]

It was now half a century that Abdullāh Ibn-ē Mobārak had the privilege of going to the Pilgrimage of the House of God, once every two years. On that year, he was preparing himself once again for this spiritual journey. He departed, with the Caravan of the Pilgrims of the House of God. One night, they made a camp in an unknown place and Abdullāh decided to take a stroll, around the campfire. He saw a woman, who was washing a dead duck, to prepare it for dinner. He approached her, and after greeting her, asked her,

“Dear sister, why are you washing that dead duck?”

The woman replied,

“Why ask me this question, when this affair has nothing to do with you?”

Abdullāh insisted and the woman said at last,

“Now that you are insisting in such way, I shall tell you...”

I am a Sēyyēdeh [i.e. a descendant of the venerable Prophet *savavs*] and I have four daughters. Sometime ago, their father departed from this world and left us alone. This is the fourth day that we, as five grown-up persons, have had nothing to eat... Therefore, to eat this dead duck becomes now, licit for us...”

Abdullāh recounts, “I thought to myself, “You are going to Mecca, while this poor woman is going to eat a dead duck, with her daughters, because of hunger?! Woe betide you!”

Then I told her, “Give me the tail of your veil...” when she stretched out her hand, while gripping the tail of her veil, I gave her all the money that I had brought with me, for my journey to Mecca...

She then went her own way, while I went back to my hometown. After a while, the Hādjis [i.e.

Pilgrims] returned home. However, whosoever saw me, spoke as if I had been with them, all along! They would narrate memories of our traveling together and being in different places, all at once... They would tell me, “Do you remember? We went in that place?” Anyway, we all congratulated each other for our accepted Pilgrimage. That night, with such strange events, happening to me, I went to bed and saw the venerable Prophet [*savavs*] in my dream. He announced me,

“O, Abdullāh, you helped and assisted my progeny, and I too asked God Almighty to create an Angel with your features, so that it may perform the rituals of Hadj, in your place, until Resurrection Day, and to bestow on you, all the spiritual Rewards that this Angel will gather in your name!”

3-Immense love for the lord of the believers [*as*]

The venerable Prophet [*savavs*] had announced, “To love Ali [*as*] will eat away all your sins, just as fire, eats away wood!” [Kanz Ul-A’amāl, Number 33021]

Sēyyēd Hēm'yari was one of the greatest Shiite poets of his time! He wrote poems, only in honor and eulogy of the noble Prophet [*savavs*] and his holy Family [*as*]. He never once wrote another kind of poetry. Once, he was returning home, from the house of a dignitary, living in Kufah. That man had offered him a fine horse, and a variety of fine garments and clothes. Midway through his journey back home, he met with a group of Kufians. He told them loudly,

“O people! Whosoever narrates me one of the many excellences of the lord of the believers, Hazrat-ē Ali [*as*] that I have not yet made a poem out of it, I shall offer him this fine horse and all these beautiful clothes!”

A man said,

“I have a story to tell that I think you have never made a poem out of it...”
Everybody looked at him, expectantly.

Sēyyēd encouraged him and said,

“All right, recount us...”

The man said,

“One day, our lord and master wanted to mount his horse. He was fully dressed; he put on one of his outdoor shoe, and wanted to put on the other pair, when suddenly an eagle came and took the second pair of Hazrat-ē Ali’s shoe! He took it to the sky and then threw it to the ground, from a very great height. Everyone saw that suddenly, a big, ugly snake, black in color, came out of the shoe and ran away quickly to a hole, in a wall. Our lord and master put on then, the other pair and went outside...”

Sēyyēd Hēm’yari, who had never written any poem about this event began to cry with gratitude. He offered the man all the things he had promised to give away. He then bid them farewell and returned home, by foot. Afterward, he wrote a new poem, about this event...

4-The right of the poor neighbor

The illustrious Imām Mohammad Bāghēr [*as*] had declared, “The noble Prophet of God [*savavs*] had been reported to say, “He, who has slept soundly during the whole night, with a full stomach, while his neighbor is hungry, has not believed in me...” [The illustrious Ussul-ē Kāfi, 14/667/2]

Āghā Sēyyēd Djavād Āmoli was one of the greatest Shiite erudite and Islamic scholars. He narrated this himself. “One night, I was eating my dinner, when I heard somebody knocking at my door. The knocks were violent and insistent. I got up and went to my door. It was the manservant of the great erudite, Sēyyēd Bahrol Olum.

He told me, “We have prepared our master’s dinner, but he did not eat anything and is now waiting for you to join him...” I went in the presence of the great scholar. The moment he set eyes on me, I saw how upset he was. He told me with great anger,

“Do you not fear God?! Do you not feel ashamed?”

I asked him, "Can you please tell me what is upsetting you, sir?"

He said,

"One of our Shiites is your neighbor. Every night, he buys some dates for his family, from the grocer, whose shop is at the beginning of this alley. His financial situation is not good at all, and it is now seven whole days that he has not been able to buy anything for his family. Today, he went to the grocery, but the grocer refused to give him some dates, pretending that he was overdue in his debt to him. The poor man was so ashamed that he went back home, empty-handed, and along with his family, they slept with an empty stomach..."

I told him, "I am deeply sorry, I had no idea about his economic situation..."

The master replied, "If you **had known**, and **had not** helped him out, you would have been a heretic and a disbeliever! I am upset at you for not having made some research about who is hungry and who is not! And the fact that you had remained uninformed of such tragedy...! Now, take all these foods and let my manservant help you take them

with you. Go and tell the poor man that you wish to share your food with him, and then place this purse, under the mat, at the entrance of his house!”

The manservant took the great dish, and together, we went to his house. I knocked and greeted them and said that I wished to share my food with them, on that night. He invited me in, and the good smell of all those delicious foods filled the empty space of his humble abode. However, the man turned to me and said,

“This food is not your food! It is a non-Arab food. As long as you do not tell me whose food it is, I shall not touch it...”

He then implored me to tell him the real story, for he was sure that until now, nobody had known anything about his poverty. I recounted Sēyyēd’s story. He regained his calm and that night, along with his family members, they ate a full dinner; I then gave him the purse, so that he may pay his debts and spend the remaining money for his household.

5-Imām's Knowledge

Hazrat-ē Imām Mohammad-ē Bāghēr [as] had announced, "The earth will never remain as such, without the presence of an Imām, whether he is manifest or hidden." [Bēhul Anvār, 26/23]

Abu Ayyub narrates, "One night, Mansur-ē Davānighi [the tyrannical Abbassid Caliph] summoned me to his side. I went to him and saw that he was seating in his bed, while a lit candle was beside him. He was holding a letter in his hand, and reading it with great attention. I greeted him and he threw the letter to me.

He said with tears in his eyes, "This letter was sent to me from Medinah; and they have announced me that Djafar Ibn-ē Mohammad [i.e. Imām Sādiq as] has just died." He then repeated three times, "*Surely we belong to Allah and to Him we shall surely return...*" [Al-Baqarah-156].

He then said, "How can one find someone like Djafar, anymore?"

He then turned to me and said,

“Now, write at once, a letter to the governor of Medinah and tell him that if Imām Sādiq [as] has already appointed someone as his successor, to arrest and behead that person, without losing any time!”

By doing this, he wanted to destroy the lineage of the Infallible Imāms [as] and to put his mind at rest, finally. However, it was not to be. After five days, another letter reached us from Medinah. The governor had written us that the late Imām [as] had appointed five persons, as his successor: 1- the Caliph [Mansur himself !], 2- the governor of Medinah, 3- his son, Abdullāh, 4- his other son, Mussā [i.e. the real successor: Hazrat-ē Mussā Ibn-ē Djafar as], 5- lady Hamidah [i.e. Imām Mussā Kāzēm’s mother]. When the Caliph had read the letter, he was astonished. He said,

“One cannot kill them all, as Imām’s successor!”

Indeed, Imām Sādiq [as] knew fully well that Mansur, with the hatred that he felt towards the Ahlil Bēyt [as] will soon kill his successor. Therefore, he had appointed five different persons,

as his successors, the first of them Mansur himself! He wanted no one to understand that the real successor was none but the young Imām Mussā Kāzēm [as]; by doing so, he wanted his family members and the new Imām [as] to remain unharmed, by Mansur and his men...

6-When Man becomes proud...

The Sixth illustrious Imām, Hazrat-ē Sādiq [as] had declared, “He, whose heart has been penetrated by pride and selfishness, will be forever destroyed...”
[The illustrious Ussul-ē Kāfi, 2/313/2]

The battle had not yet begun. The two armies were preparing their troops. The commanders-in-chief of the two armies were on one side, Amir Ahmad-ē Sāmāni, and on the other side was none other but Amr Lēys Saffāri. In Amir Ahmad’s army, there were twelve thousand warriors, while Amr Lēys’ men were more than seventy thousand! Amr was so proud of his army, and so besotted, by its glory...! When the responsible of the royal kitchen approached him, and told him respectfully that

lunch was ready and that he may as well eat his meal and then continue the battle, Amr responded him haughtily, “First, we shall destroy and annihilate this little army of twelve thousand men and then we shall begin our lunch!”

“Attack!”

Amr moved forward and entered the battlefield. However, his horse became suddenly wild, for no reason at all, so that it led its master towards the enemy camp! The enemy soldiers took him alive, tied his hands and feet, and then defeated his leaderless army, very easily and powerfully! Everybody had run away!

Amir ordered that Amr should be taken to a stable, held as their prisoner. They did not give him anything to eat for three days, and on the fourth day, he saw one of his own slaves and begged him to give him something to eat. The slave took a bucket from the groom, prepared some food, and then put the food inside the bucket, to bring Amr another plate. However, a dog was passing and it smelled the food. It pushed down its head inside the bucket and began eating the food. The slave

came back and the moment he saw the dog, he cried loudly to frighten the poor animal. The dog was frightened, and while it wanted to take its head out of the bucket, the bucket lid fell in its neck and it ran away, panicked, with the bucket tied to its body! The slave saw that Amr was laughing heartily. He asked him curiously,

“Why are you laughing?”

He said,

“I am laughing at the world’s betrayal! Three days ago, the responsible of my royal kitchen told me that three hundred camels were only “carrying” the utensils of my kitchen, while half of the utensils had not yet been mounted on the remaining camels! And now, I see a dog, taking away, not only my only food but also the only available utensil of this simple kitchen...!”

7-A packsaddle was found in a Prayer

The venerable Prophet [*savavs*] had announced, “God shall not accept the Prayers of he, whose heart is not attuned with his body movements, during the Prayer.” [Al-Mahāssēn, 921/406/1]

There was a man, who was called Abu Abdullāh Djavālighi [i.e. packsaddle maker]. One day, Abu Abdullāh lost the packsaddle of his own donkey. The more he thought, the less he remembered to whom he had lent it or placed it where...

He thought long and hard, but to no avail. The packsaddle was not found. One day, he was performing his Prayer, when Satan came to make mischief. He made him think again about his packsaddle! He began thinking hard during his Prayer, and with Satan’s help, who did everything to disrupt his Prayer; he completely forgot what he was supposed to do. Satan made him become more and more distracted. Suddenly, he remembered that he had given it to an individual. After his Prayer, he went back home and told his son, happily,

“Son, I just found to whom I had given the packsaddle!”

The son asked,

“Dear father, how did you succeed?”

Abu Abdullāh replied proudly,

“I was performing my Prayer, when suddenly I remembered that I had given it to such and such...”

The son said,

“Then you were not performing your Prayer, dear father! You were “searching” for your packsaddle in your mind, and you found it, eventually!”

These words provoked havoc in his heart, and he soon regretted his misdeed. It has been written that he began purifying his heart and soul, so much so that he soon became a learned man, leaving behind him an Interpretation of the Holy Qur’ān.

8-The consequence of oppression and injustice

The lord of the believers, Hazrat-ē Ali [as] had declared, “Whosoever commits an injustice, this very injustice will lead him to his own destruction. “Ghorar Al-Hēkam, Number 7835]

Hadjādj Ibn-ē Youssof was one of the cruelest and most tyrannical governors. No one reached his level of cruelty. One day, Sha’abi, who was old, was giving him some advice; he was frightening him about his oppression and injustice; at the end, Hadjādj gave him a gold piece and said,

“Take this gold piece to the market, and ask for its true weight and how much carat it has...”

Sha’abi went to the market and asked those two questions from a number of goldsmiths and jewelers. Everyone, in order to pay less that the real prize would tell him, “It is not heavy enough...” or, “Its carat is low...”

Sha'abi came back to Hadjadj and told him what had happened. Hadjadj declared, "Now, take this same gold piece to a quarter that I will tell you the name, and find such street, at such house, and ask the owner of that house about the real value of this gold piece."

Sha'abi obeyed once more, and found that individual. He showed him the gold piece. The man took it and studied it most carefully. He then said,

"This piece is a perfect one, both in its weight and in its carat! It does not have any flaw! If you wish to sell it, I can give you a fair price for it..."

Sha'abi asked the man,

"Has Hadjadj been unjust towards you?"

He replied,

"I mind my own business and work as an honest person, and have nothing to do with him or anyone..."

Sha'abi came back to see Hadjādj and recounted the man's answer. Hadjādj replied him, "When people are unjust and oppressive against one another and do not recognize the legitimate rights of God and their fellowmen, God will appoint them an unjust and tyrannical leader. If someone commits no wrong or injustice, no one can do him any wrong! Now, if these people had been true to their God and performed their duties, as the true servants of God, I would never have been appointed as their governor, to dominate them in such way! Therefore, this is the direct consequence of their disgraceful, illegitimate acts..."

And evidently, when people do not have pity, for one another, God Almighty will send down a calamity and a disgrace, such as the wicked person of Hadjādj, who was the personification of evil, and in those instances, everybody, good or bad, is afflicted in the same way...

9-He is God's Vali [i.e. Friend]

The illustrious Eighth Imām, Hazrat-ē Rēzā [*as*] had declared, "Imāmat signifies, to take the reins of

Religion and the mundane affairs of the Muslims. It is also the arrangement, development, and prosperity of this world, along with the honor of the Muslims...” [The illustrious Ussul-ē Kāfi, 1/200/1]

Motēvakkēl-ē Abbāssi was indeed a cruel and despotic Caliph. A wound was formed in his body, so that he had to endure great pain and inconvenience, because of it. Various physicians were brought in, to examine this wound, and to procure a cure for it, but with no result, whatsoever. Motēvakkēl’s mother began to pray and made a vow that if her son was going to get well, once again, and to be saved from that terrible affliction, she would then send the sum of 10.000 dinārs to Hazrat-ē Imām Hādi [*as*].

Now, Fat’h Ibn-ē Khāghhān was Motēvakkēl’s minister. He told the royal physicians, “This man [i.e. Imām Hādi *as*] is very knowledgeable man, and whenever he prays God, his prayers are answered swiftly by the Almighty... Now, send someone to fetch him, and bring him here. Maybe he would know what to do...”

The emissary of the Caliph went to Imām's house and told him what the urgent matter was. Imām [as] told him, "Find some sheep's dung. Mix it well with rose water, and then, place this balm on the wound..." When the physicians heard this, they began to laugh loudly and mockingly. They then announced that nothing would come out of that cure!

However, Motēvakkēl's mother heard this cure and ordered at once that such balm be prepared for her son. The slaves began mixing the ingredients and placed the balm over the open wound. The wound's top opened the same day, and a lot of pus and infection and blood came gushing out of the inflamed wound. The terrible pain left Motēvakkēl's body. After a few days, he was well again, while his wound had been nicely healed. When the good news of the Caliph's regained health reached his mother, she was overjoyed! She then ordered that the sum of 10.000 dinārs that she had previously vowed to offer to Imām [as] be offered to him respectfully.

10-A salary for a good work

The illustrious Imām Sādiq [*as*] had been reported to say, “He is not one of us, he who is deceptive and treacherous.” [The illustrious Ussul-ē Kāfi, 1/160/5]

This man’s daily work was to go to the forest, with his hatchet and a lengthy cord, to cut some wood during the day, and to gather broken branches, fallen on the ground. He would then tie the wood with a cord, and take it to the city, to sell it at a fair price. By doing this, he provided for his family.

On that day, he was in the forest as usual, and very busy, cutting wood. Suddenly a man came to him and sat in front of him. With each blow of his hatchet, that stranger would make some strange noises. The woodcutter told himself that maybe the man was irrevocably mad... When he finished his work, he gathered the wood and tied it securely.

He then placed the burden on his shoulders and went back home. He sold his wood and received his money. However, the moment he wanted to go back home, the same stranger came to him and demanded his due...

The woodcutter told him with great stupor,

“What due? What share?! What did you do, to ask such a thing from me?!”

The man replied,

“I am your partner in the wood that you cut in the forest! All the noises that I made, to show you that the wood was cut, came from my mouth!”

The woodcutter refused to pay him anything. They soon began to quarrel. Eventually, they were brought before the city Judge. They recounted their story and the man said, “Your honor, I made a noise for every blow that he gave, to cut the wood! Why does he not want to pay my due?!”

The judge replied, “You are right!” He then turned to the woodcutter and declared,

“Take the money that you have received for your hard work in one of your hands, and place the coins, one by one, to your other hand!”

He then turned to the deceptive man and said,

“Now, listen **well and good**, to the **sounds** of the coins!”

The man, who was stupefied and bewildered by such verdict, asked the judge, “What kind of a verdict is that?!”

The judge replied,

“The salary for each noise that you “let out” from your mouth is to “listen” to the sound of these pieces!”

Al'hamdulillāh Rabbēl Ālamīn

Tehran, 13 July 2014

15 Ramadān 1435

22 Tir 1393

On the Blessed Birthday of Imām Hassan-ē Mudj'tabā *as*

The End