

40 Hadith on Trials, Pandemics and Plagues

with Prophetic advice on how to deal with them

Compiled and organised by

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may Allāh pardon him

Bismillāh al-Rahmān al-Rahīm

*O Allāh!
Nothing is easy,
Save what You make so,
And should You wish,
You can make all hardships go.*

Rabbanā! You are deserving of all thanks, praise and exaltation. O Allāh we thank you for the good that You bestow upon us. We are grateful to You for the favour of guidance, the blessing of good health, and the miracle of life. Glory and dominion are Yours alone. Power and sovereignty are none but Yours. We bear witness that you are the:

“Forgiver of sins and the Acceptor of repentance, severe in punishment, infinite in bounty. There is no god but Him; to Him is the ultimate return.”¹

I testify that You alone are deserving and worthy of worship, and I send *salāh* and *salām* upon the best teacher of all, Allāh’s mercy to mankind—the Messenger Muḥammad—and upon his family, his household, his noble companions, and anyone who follows their faith until the Final Day.

This is a short compilation containing 40 prophetic reports, as was the norm among Muslim scholars across the ages. I decided to compile it after seeing the effects that the coronavirus is having on the world—we pray to Allāh that He lifts this affliction from the face of the earth. I divided it into nine chapters, each covering a basic theme, though inevitably, as the reader shall notice, there are some which overlap. The chapters are: on plagues and trials, along with an encouragement to be patient and to anticipate Allāh’s reward; on being prepared and taking precautionary measures; on supplications; on solitude and self-isolation; on upholding people’s rights; on communal behaviour and good conduct; a counsel concerning the rights of spouses, children and maintaining a congenial environment at home; on martyrdom and harbouring good thoughts about Allāh, and, finally, a chapter containing a comprehensive hadith.

I ask Allāh to make this work sincerely for Him and in desire of His pleasure. I would also like to thank all those who assisted or encouraged, and specifically I would like to thank the ‘Allama, Shaykh ‘Abdullah al-Judai’, may Allāh extend his life in good health and righteous deeds, and also thank my friend Ibrahim al-Tamimy. May Allāh reward everyone abundantly.

All praise and thanks to Allāh.

¹ *Surat Ghāfir*, 40:3

Chapter one: On plagues and trials, along with an encouragement to be patient and to anticipate Allāh's reward

1. 'Ā'isha, Mother of the Believers, said:

I asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) about epidemics and he said, "They are a punishment which Allāh sends upon whomsoever He wills, but Allāh has made it a mercy to the believers. Anyone who remains in a town which is plagued with an epidemic, remaining patient and anticipating Allāh's reward, while firmly believing that nothing will befall him other than what Allāh has preordained for him, then he will receive a reward of a martyr." ²

2. Suhaib al-Rūmī reported that:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "How wonderful is the situation of a believer! there is good for him in everything and this applies only to a believer. If prosperity befalls him and he expresses gratitude to Allāh, then it will be for his good; and if adversity befalls him and he endures it patiently, it will also be for his good."³

3. Anas b. Mālik reported that:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "The magnitude of the reward is proportionate to the severity of the trial. When Allāh loves a people, He tests them. Whoever accepts that shall be pleased, but whoever is discontent shall be devastated."⁴

4. Abū Huraira reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Never is a believer afflicted with discomfort, illness, anxiety, grief or mental anguish, or even something as trivial as the pricking of a thorn, except that Allāh will expiate his sins on account of his patience."⁵

5. Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ari reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "When a slave of Allāh suffers from illness or goes on a journey, he is credited with an equal reward of whatever good works he used to do when he was healthy or at home."⁶

² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 3474

³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2999

⁴ *Hasan. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 2396

⁵ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 5641; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2572

⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 2996

Chapter two: On being prepared and taking precautionary measures

6. Usāma b. Zaid said:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "If you hear of a plague in a land do not enter it; and if it breaks out in the land where you stay, do not leave."⁷

7. Usāma b. Sharīk narrated:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Servants of Allāh! Make use of medical treatment, for Allāh has not made any disease without creating a cure for it."⁸

8. Abū Huraira narrated:

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "There is no unbidden contagion, no evil omen, no death bird (*hama*), no tape-worm (*safar*), and one should keep away from a leper as one keeps away from a lion."⁹

9. Abū Huraira narrated:

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Do not quarantine a healthy person with an infected one."¹⁰

10. Abū Mālik al-Ash'ari reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Being clean and pure is half of faith."¹¹

11. Mu'ādh b. Jabal said:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Charity wipes away sins."¹²

⁷ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 5728; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2218

⁸ Authentic. *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*: 6061, with similarly-worded reports in the other *sunan* collections

⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 5707

¹⁰ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 5771; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2221

¹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 223

¹² *Ṣaḥīḥ. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 2616, and elsewhere

Chapter three: On supplications

12. Salmān narrated:

That the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Nothing revises the Decree of Allāh except supplication."¹³

13. 'Uqba b. 'Āmir said:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said to me: 'Say.' I said: 'What should I say?' He then recited Sūrat al-Ikhlās, Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās, and then he said: 'People have never sought refuge in Allāh with anything like this,' or 'the people have never sought refuge with Allāh by anything greater than this.'¹⁴

14. Abū Huraira reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Whoever recites every morning and evening this supplication: '*A'ūdhu bi-kalimāt illāhi al-tāmāti min sharri mā khalaq*: I seek refuge in Allāh's perfect speech from any evil that exists', shall not be harmed by anything"¹⁵

15. 'Uthmān b. 'Affān reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Whoever recites three times in the morning and three times in the evening: '*Bismillāhi al-ladhī lā yadurru ma'as-mihi shai'un fī al-ardi wa lā fī al-samā'i, wa huwa al-Samī' al-'Alīm* (In the Name of Allāh with whose name there is protection against every kind of harm on earth or in heaven, and He is the All-Hearing and All-Knowing),' nothing shall harm him."¹⁶

16. Anas b. Mālik narrated:

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say: "*Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bika min al-bars, wa al-junūn, wa al-judhām, wa min sayyi' al-asqām*: O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from leprosy, madness, communicable disease, and evil diseases."¹⁷

¹³ *Hasan. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 2139

¹⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Sunan al-Nasā'i*: 5446

¹⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ. al-Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*: 523; with similarly-worded reports in *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 3966 and other collections

¹⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Sunan Abī Dawūd*: 5088; *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 3388, and other collections

¹⁷ *Hasan. Sunan Abī Dawūd*: 1554, and other collections

17. On the authority of 'Aisha, Mother of the Believers:

"The Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite the following prayer upon those who were unwell: *'Allāhumma rabbi al-nās adhib al-ba's, washfi Anta al-Shafi, lā shifā'a illā shifā'uka, shifā'an lā yughādiru saqama:* O Allāh, Lord of all humans, take away the affliction and grant healing, for You are the Healer, there is no heal but yours—grant us a cure that leaves no trace of sickness.'

When the Prophet (ﷺ) fell sick at the end of his life, I took his hand and wiped it over his body and recited these words. He withdrew his hand from mine and said: 'O Allāh, forgive me and give me the best company,' and those were his last words."¹⁸

¹⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Musannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah: 23917; it is found in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 5743 with more concise wording*

Chapter four: On solitude and self-isolation

18. 'Uqba b. 'Āmir said:

I asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), "How can salvation be achieved?" He replied, "Control your words, keep to your home, and weep over your sins."¹⁹

¹⁹ *Hasan. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 2406; similarly-worded reports are found in *Musnad Aḥmad* and in al-Ṭabarānī's *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*

Chapter five: On upholding people's rights

19. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar reported:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your duties. The ruler is responsible for his subjects, the man is in charge of his family, the woman is responsible for her husband's house and their children. All of you are guardians and are accountable for your responsibilities."²⁰

20. Abū Huraira reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "It is obligatory upon you to listen to and obey the authorities during prosperity and adversity; whether you are willing or unwilling, even when someone is given undue privileges over you."²¹

21. Anas b. Mālik reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

"You have better knowledge and expertise in the material affairs of the world."²²

22. It was narrated from 'Amr b. al-'As:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Whoever practices medical treatment when he is not known or qualified for it, will be held liable."²³

23. Ma'mar b. 'Abd Allāh reported Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying:

"No-one hoards except the crook."²⁴

²⁰ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 893; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 1829

²¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 1836

²² *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2363

²³ *Hasan. Sunan al-Nisā'ī*: 7039; a similarly-worded report is found in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*: 4586

²⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 1605

Chapter six: On communal behaviour and good conduct

24. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"The merciful are shown mercy by al-Rahmān. Be merciful to all inhabitants of the earth, and you will be shown mercy from the One above the heavens."²⁵

25. On the authority of Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Every act of goodness is considered an act of charity."²⁶

26. On the authority of Abū Shuraiḥ al-Khuzā'ī that the Prophet (ﷺ) observed:

"Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day should do good to his neighbour. Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day should show hospitality to his guests, and whoever who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should either convey goodness or remain silent."²⁷

27. Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ari narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Show leniency to others and do not be severe nor harsh. Give people good news and never be repugnant. Work together and do not be divided."²⁸

28. On the authority of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allāh loves that His concessions are used, in the same way He likes His commandments to be upheld."²⁹

29. Anas b. Mālik reports that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"None of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself."³⁰

30. Nu'mān b. Bashīr reported:

²⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Sunan Abī Dawūd*: 4941; a similarly-worded version is found in *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 1924

²⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 6021

²⁷ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 6019; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 48, and this is the latter's version

²⁸ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 3038; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 1733

²⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibban*: 354

³⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 13

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "The believers—in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy—are like one single body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds with restlessness and fever."³¹

31. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Whoever fulfils the needs of his brother, Allāh will fulfil his needs; whoever removes the troubles of his brother, Allāh will remove some of his troubles on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever conceals the shortcomings of a Muslim, Allāh will conceal his shortcomings on the Day of Resurrection."³²

32. On the authority of Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"The best person is the one most useful to others."³³

33. Abū Sa'id narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever doesn't express thanks to people, has not shown gratitude to Allāh."³⁴

³¹ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 6011; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2586, and this is the latter's version

³² Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 2442; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2580, and this is the former's version

³³ *Hasan*. al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*: 5787

³⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 1955

Chapter seven: A counsel concerning the rights of spouses, children and maintaining a congenial environment at home

34. Abū Huraira reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "The believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best conduct, and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives."³⁵

35. Anas b. Mālik said:

I have never seen anyone more kind to one's family and children than Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).³⁶

36. al-Aswad said:

I asked 'Ā'isha, 'What would the Prophet (ﷺ) do at home?' She replied: "He used to keep himself busy helping and serving his family."³⁷

³⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 1126

³⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2316

³⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 676

Chapter eight: On martyrdom and maintaining good thoughts about Allāh

37. Abū Huraira narrated:

That Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Allāh said, 'I am how my slave perceives me'"³⁸

38. Abū Huraira reported:

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Whoever dies of a plague is considered a martyr."³⁹

39. Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ari narrated that:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever loves to meet with Allāh, Allāh loves to meet with him; and whoever hates to meet with Allāh, Allāh hates to meet with him."⁴⁰

³⁸ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 7405; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2675

³⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 1915

⁴⁰ Agreed upon. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 6508; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2685

Chapter nine: A concluding chapter containing a comprehensive hadith

40. On the authority of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās who said:

One day I was behind the Prophet (ﷺ) riding on the same mount and he said, "Young man, I shall give you some words of advice: Be mindful of Allāh and Allāh will protect you. Be mindful of Allāh and you will find Him before you. If you ask, then ask Allāh alone; and if you seek help, then seek help from Allāh alone. Know that if the entire world comes together to benefit you in any way, they would not be able to do so except with what Allāh has already prescribed for you; and if they were to come together to harm you in any way, they would not be able to do so except with what Allāh has already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried."⁴¹

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⁴¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ. Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*: 2516