

Erase Sins & Raise Ranks

PodSeries - Vol 17



Achieve Noble Character

Erase Sins & Raise Ranks

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Table of Contents

[Table of Contents](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Compiler's Notes](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Erase Sins & Raise Ranks](#)

[Erasing Sins](#)

[The Congregational Prayers](#)

[Inhabiting the Mosques](#)

[Ablution in Times of Difficulty](#)

[Raising Ranks](#)

[Feeding the Needy](#)

[Kind Speech](#)

[The Voluntary Night Prayer](#)

[Over 400 Free eBooks on Good Character](#)

[Other ShaykhPod Media](#)

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We pray that Allah, the Exalted, completes His favour on us and accepts each letter of this book in His august court and allows it to testify on our behalf on the Last Day.

All praise to Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds and endless blessings and peace by upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on his blessed Household and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Compiler's Notes

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com.

Introduction

People are prone to committing sins but Allah, the Exalted, has given people many ways to erase these sins and even raise their ranks. This short book will discuss a single Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3235, which advises muslims how they can erase their sins and raise their ranks so that they can Achieve Noble Character.

According to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that the heaviest thing in the Scales of Judgment Day will be Noble Character. It is one of the qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which Allah, the Exalted, complimented in Chapter 68 Al Qalam, Verse 4 of the Holy Quran:

“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”

Therefore, it is a duty on all Muslims to gain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to Achieve Noble Character.

Erase Sins & Raise Ranks

Erasing Sins

In a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3235, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised three actions which erase sins namely, walking towards the Mosques for the congregational prayers, remaining in the Mosque after the congregational prayer has finished and performing ablution in difficulty situations.

First of all, it is widely accepted that acts like these only erase minor sins and not major ones. Major sins require sincere repentance. This has been confirmed in the Holy Quran and Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 31:

“If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into Paradise].”

In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 552, that minor sins are erased by actions such as the five obligatory prayers while the major sins are not.

Sincere repentance includes one feeling remorseful, asking forgiveness from Allah, the Exalted, and from the people they have wronged, making a firm promise not to repeat the same or similar sin again and finally, making up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

The Congregational Prayers

The first act mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion which erases minor sins namely, taking many steps towards the Mosques to offer the congregational prayers has been discussed in many Hadiths. For example, a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2119, advises that the one who performs ablution at home and sets out for the Mosque to perform the congregational prayer will have a sin forgiven or their rank raised by one degree for every step they take. The Angels will keep praying for their forgiveness as long as they remain inside the Mosque without breaking their ablution and refrain from causing trouble for others. Finally, they will be recorded as one who is offering prayer as long as they are waiting for the congregational prayer to begin. This same Hadith advises that the congregational prayer is 25 times greater in reward than performing it at home or at work.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2891, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that every step one takes towards offering the prayer in congregation at a Mosque is recorded as charity.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings of a complete light on the Day of Resurrection for those who walk to the Mosques for the congregational prayers in the dark. This refers to the morning and late evening obligatory prayers. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 780.

Praying in congregation is so important that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, regarded the one who did not attend it regularly without a good reason a hypocrite. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 850.

Inhabiting the Mosques

The second action which erases minor sins mentioned in the main Hadith is staying in the Mosque after the congregational prayer has concluded. All are aware of the reward of a person who strives in Holy War. The one who remains in the Mosque after the congregational prayer waiting for the next one is counted as the one who strives in Holy War. This is advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 51. The one who remains in the Mosque must observe its etiquettes. They must busy themselves in good actions such as, reciting the Holy Quran and avoid causing any disruption to others. The one who remains in the Mosque reciting and studying the Holy Quran with others will be blessed with tranquillity, mercy, the company of the Angels and best of all they will be mentioned by Allah, the Exalted, to the Angels in the Heavens. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853.

As mentioned in the last chapter the one who waits for the congregational prayer is recorded as one who is in prayer. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2119. The one whose heart is attached to the Mosques like this has been promised shade from the unbearable heat of Judgment Day. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6806.

Staying in Mosques can be difficult especially, in this day and age, when there are so many different distractions readily available. This act contradicts one's desires to join and participate in these activities hence why the reward of this deed is so great. Chapter 24 An Nur, verses 36-37:

“[Such niches are] in houses [i.e., mosques] which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His name be mentioned [i.e., praised] therein; exalting Him within them in the morning and the evenings. [Are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of zakah...”

Ablution in Times of Difficulty

The last action mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion which erases sins is ablution in difficult situations. Ablution erasing sins is advised in many Hadiths for example, a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 577, advises that the minor sins one commits are erased with the water used for ablution.

Performing ablution in difficult situations includes those occasions which are displeasing to do so. For example, if one is afflicted with a calamity. To remain patient and perform ablution and the prayer correctly can be difficult. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 153:

“O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer...”

Difficult situations can include performing ablution in cold temperatures and when one is sick. Anything difficult performed for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, will always be rewarded greatly. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 120:

“...That is because they are not afflicted by thirst or fatigue or hunger in the cause of Allah...but that it is registered for them as a righteous deed...”

This is an important point to remember as it will inspire one to always perform righteous deeds no matter how difficult they may be.

Raising Ranks

The main Hadith under discussion also advises three actions which raise a muslim's rank namely, giving food to others, especially to the poor, saying kind words to others and offering the voluntary night prayer.

Those who perform these deeds for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be blessed with a special beautiful chamber in Paradise. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2527.

These are one of the first actions advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when he arrived in the city of Medina. He gave the glad tidings of Paradise to the one who does them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2485. The fact that these were the first actions advised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, when he entered the city of Medina highlights how important they are.

Feeding the Needy

The first deed mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion which raises a muslim's rank is feeding others. Offering food to others is a very special deed and when done sincerely for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, reaps an unimaginable reward. In fact, the Holy Quran has declared that those who do this will be protected from the torment of Judgement Day and blessed with Paradise. Chapter 76 Al Insan, verses 8-12:

“And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive. [Saying], “We feed you only for the face [i.e., approval] of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude. Indeed, We fear from our Lord a Day austere and distressful.” So Allah will protect them from the evil of that Day and give them radiance and happiness. And will reward them for what they patiently endured [with] a garden [in Paradise] and silk [garments].”

Allah, the Exalted, gives people according to what they do. For example, the Holy Quran mentions that if one remembers Allah, the Exalted, He in turn will remember them. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

“So remember Me; I will remember you...”

Feeding others for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, is just the same. The one who performs this righteous deed will be fed food from Paradise and whoever gives drink to others will be given drink from Paradise on Judgement Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2449.

When asked about the best type of Islam the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6236, that feeding others and greeting others with kind speech are the best traits in Islam.

Muslims should make it a top priority to act on this righteous deed and strive to feed others especially, the poor on a regular basis. This is an amazing deed which does not require much wealth. Each person should feed others according to their capacity even if it is only half a date fruit as the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1417, that this will protect them from the fire of Hell on Judgement Day. This leaves people with no excuse from abstaining from this righteous deed.

Kind Speech

The next action advised in the main Hadith which raises a muslim's rank is kind speech. Allah, the Exalted, has mentioned the importance of this in more than one place in the Holy Quran. For example, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 83:

“...And speak to people good [words]...”

In fact, Allah, the Exalted, has even commanded muslims to debate non-muslims using kind words. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 125:

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best...”

It is such an important characteristic to possess that Allah, the Exalted, even commanded His Holy Prophets, peace be upon on them, to speak kindly to Pharaoh even though he went beyond all limits in His disobedience. Chapter 20 Taha, verse 44:

“And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].”

This clearly shows that one should always speak kindly with others as no person they speak to will be as bad as Pharaoh. If Allah, the Exalted, commanded that Pharaoh be spoken to kindly can one imagine how kindly people should speak to muslims? This also proves one must speak kindly to all irrespective of their faith.

One should adopt the simple yet profound advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 176. He advised muslims to either speak good or remain silent.

A part of good speech is spreading the Islamic greeting of peace to others. This greeting should be extended to all muslims even if one does not know them. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6236. In fact, this Hadith mentions this action to be one of the best Islamic traits one can adopt. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has made it clear in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 68, that the believers will only enter Paradise when they love each other and this occurs when they spread the greeting of peace amongst themselves.

It is important to note, that the real meaning of spreading the Islamic greeting of peace is that one shows peace to others through their actions not just through their words.

Providing food for others and speaking kind words have been put together in the main Hadith under discussion as one should treat others kindly through their actions, such as providing them with food, and through their words. One without the other is defective and may well cancel the reward one could obtain. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 264:

“O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury...”

Allah, the Exalted, has promised forgiveness, His love and Paradise to those who treat others kindly through their actions and words. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verses 133-134.

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden [i.e., Paradise] as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous. Who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good.”

Withholding one's anger and pardoning others mentioned in this verse requires kind speech.

Gentle speech will always be more effective on the hearts of others especially, when commanding good and forbidding evil than harsh speech. This is indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4807.

It was this kind speech and attitude which caused the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to constantly gravitate towards the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. It is a characteristic of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, Allah, the Exalted, specifically highlighted in the Holy Quran. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 159:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you...”

Therefore, it is vital for muslims to adopt this characteristic and treat others how they wish to be treated through their actions and words.

The Voluntary Night Prayer

The last action mentioned in the main Hadith which raises the rank of a muslim is offering the voluntary night prayer.

Night time worship proves one's sincerity towards Allah, the Exalted, as no other eyes are watching them. Offering it is a means to having an intimate conversation with Allah, the Exalted. And it is a sign of one's servanthood to Him. It has countless virtues for example, a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1614, declares that it is the best voluntary prayer.

No one will have a rank higher on Judgment Day or in Paradise than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and this rank has been directly connected to the voluntary night prayer. This shows that those who establish the night voluntary prayer will be blessed with the highest ranks in both worlds. Chapter 17 Al Isra, verse 79:

“And from [part of] the night, pray with it [i.e., recitation of the Quran] as additional [worship] for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station.”

A Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3579, advises that a muslim is closest to Allah, the Exalted, in the last part of the night. Therefore,

one can derive countless blessings if they remember Allah, the Exalted, at this time.

All muslims desire their supplications to be answered and their needs to be fulfilled. Therefore, they should strive to offer the voluntary night prayer as a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 1770, advises that there is a special hour in every night when good supplications are always answered.

Establishing the voluntary night prayer is an excellent way to prevent one from committing sins, it helps a person to stay away from pointless social gatherings and it protects a person from many physical illnesses. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3549.

One should prepare for the voluntary night prayer by not over eating or drinking especially, before bed as it induces laziness. One should not unnecessarily tire themselves out during the day. A short nap during the day can help with this. Finally, one should avoid sins and strive to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience as the obedient find it easier to offer the voluntary night prayer.

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