

A To Z

of Ethics from the Words of the Prophet

Abstract: The following are mostly extracts from the last narration mentioned by al-Saduq in his book *Thavab ul-a'mal va Iqab ul a'mal*, 'The rewards of deeds and the punishments of deeds'. This narration from the Prophet Muhammad (as) consists of ethical and moral subjects and the rewards/punishments for performing/disregarding them. Some other narrations from the prophet (as) have also been included from other sources. These have been summed up to create an A to Z of ethics from the words of the Prophet.

Narrations without a reference can be found at: al-Saduq, *Thavab ul-a'mal va Iqab ul a'mal*, P. 280-295

Asking Permission

He who looks in his brothers letter (i.e. reads it) without his permission is as if he has looked into the hell-fire¹.

Back-biting

He who defends his brother (in religion) in a meeting when others are back-biting him, Allah will turn away from him a thousand chapters of evil in this world and the hereafter and if he doesn't defend his brother he will go through the same burden (punishment) that the back-biters will go through.

Betrayal

He who cheats a Muslim in his trades with him is not one of us (has no relation with us) and will be gathered with the Jews on the day of rising.

The blind

He who guides (takes) a blind person to his prayer place or to his house or strides to help him in one of his needs until he satisfies it, God will give him two letters of immunity (*bara'atain*) one from fire (Hell) and the other from hypocrisy and He will fulfill for him seventy thousand wishes in this passing world and he will be under God's grace until he returns (from helping the blind person).

Custodian

He (who accepts to) take over the affairs of a group of people and does not perform his duties in an appropriate way, will be imprisoned on the brink of Hell a thousand years for every day (that he has not performed his duties).

¹ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 9, p. 159

Dowry

He who acts unjustly regarding his wife's dowry is regarded by Allah as someone who commits adultery.

The elderly

The blessings are with your elderly¹.

Exposing indecency

He who hears about an indecency (scandal) and exposes (spreads) it is like someone who has committed it.

False testimony

He who makes a false testimony against a Muslim man or someone who lives under the protection of the Muslim state or any one from the people, will be hanged from his tongue on the day of Rising and will be placed with the hypocrites (*munafiqin*) in the deepest level of fire.

Family/Women

The best amongst you are those who act the best towards their women and I am the best of you in this regard².

Flattery/Lauding

Throw dirt (soil) in the face of those who flatter/laud³.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 72, p. 137

² al-Saduq, *Man la yahzoroho al-faqih*, vol. 3, p. 443

³ al-Saduq, *Man la yahzoroho al-faqih*, vol. 4, p. 381

Flaws/ Defects/ shortcomings

He who strides to expose (to others) the shortcomings (flaws) of his brother, the first step that he takes will be brought down in hell and God will expose his shortcomings (flaws) in front of the people.

Forgiveness

Forgive the sins of the people and for that God will repel from you the torment of the hell-fire. Forgive the errors of those who make mistakes and for that God will protect you from bad fates¹.

Giving Gifts

Give each other gifts because gifts remove hatred from your hearts².

Good-naturdness (Hosn ul-khulq)/

Family/Relatives/Kin

Good-naturedness, bonding with your family and helping the near relatives results in longer lives and makes the lands thrive even if the people are unrighteous³.

Verily, being good-natured makes that person acquire the ranks of those who are fasting and standing (i.e. Performing salat)⁴.

Good-naturdness keeps love (friendships) firm and affability destroys hatred¹.

¹ ibn abi feras, *Majmuat ul-varram*, vol. 2, p. 119

² Sheikh Musa al-Zanjani, *Madinat ul-balaghah*, vol.2, p. 475, a similar narration can be found at al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.5 p. 143

³ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 174

⁴ al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.2 p. 103

Gratitude/thankfulness/appreciation

God will not appreciate those who are not thankful to people².

Helping each other

He who strides to Help his brother and cause him benefit will have the reward of those who fight for the cause of Allah.

Helping the Distressed

He who helps out his distressed brother from the hardships of this world, God will glance at him with His grace and by this he will earn Heaven and God will help him out with his distresses in this world and the hereafter.

Honesty/truth telling

Do not consider the high amount of their prayers (*salat*), fasting, Hajj pilgrimage, good deeds (alms) and their murmurs at night (their sounds while reciting Quran and prayers) but consider their honesty (truthfulness) and them giving back what has been given to them as a safekeeping³.

Humbleness

Be humble and do not be arrogant to each other for God's Grace is bestowed on all of you⁴.

¹ al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.2 p. 103; Affability: "pleasant, friendly and easy to talk to", oxford advanced learners dictionary

² al-Saduq, *Man la yahzoroho al-faqih*, vol. 4, p. 380

³ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 68, p. 9

⁴ ibn abi feras, *Majmuat ul-varram*, vol. 2, p. 119

The Ill/Sick

He who takes care of an ill person a day and a night, God will resurrect him in the company of Ibrahim al-khalil (*as*) and he will pass the (bridge of) *serat* like a flash of lightning and he who makes an effort to satisfy an ill persons need and satisfies it will be purified from his sins like the day he was born from his mother.

Injustice/Tyranny

Be aware that God the most Exalted and the most Majestic is not unjust and He will not let injustice go unanswered and he is lying in ambush (*mirsad*) to punish the bad doers for what they have done and to reward the good doers with good things. He who does good has done it for himself (will benefit from the results himself) and he who does bad then it will be against himself and your Lord is not the least unjust to the servants.

Kin

He who strides toward a relative or someone with close relations with him to see how he is doing, God will award him with that equal to the reward of one hundred martyrs. If he then asks him about what he is doing (and if he has any needs) and then bonds with him using his wealth and his soul he will be rewarded for every step that he takes with forty thousand thousand kindnesses (*hasanah*) (from Allah) and his rank will be increased by forty thousand thousand and he will be like one who has worshipped Allah for one hundred years. And He who strides to make corrupt the (bonds) between them and separate them from each other, God will be angry at him and he will be far from His mercy in this world and the hereafter and he will have the same burden (punishment) as he who breaks bonds with his family members (*qate' rahim*).

Lending

He who's brother (in religion) needs a loan from him and is able to give it to him but doesn't, God will forbid from him the scent of Heaven¹.

Loan

He who loans his Muslim brother, will be rewarded for each *dirham* that he has lent, good deeds the weight of the mountain of *Uhud* and the mountains of *Rizvi* and the mountain of *Sina*. If he tolerates him (e.g. if he returns the loan late) he will cross the (bridge of) *Serat* like a flash of lightning without (his sins) being accounted for and without being punished. He whose Muslim brother complains to him (about his needs) and he does not loan him God will forbid from him the reward of the good-doers.

Loans with interest

God will fill with hellfire the stomach of he who eats from the interest of the loans he has given, equal to the amount he has eaten².

Marriage

He who makes an effort to bring together two believers so that they marry each other, God will marry him to a thousand thousand Heavenly women (*hurun ein*). Each woman will be in a palace made of rubies and great pearls. For every step he has taken and every word he has spoken (to bring these two together) he will be given the reward of a year in which he has not slept in its nights (to worship God) and has fasted its days. He who makes an effort to separate a wife and her husband, will be under the wrath and curse (*la'n*) of God in this world and the Hereafter and God will surely pound him with a thousand boulders made of fire. He who makes

¹ ibn abi feras, *Majmuat ul-varram*, vol. 2, p. 261

² Note: eating here does not necessarily mean eating like eating food. It can also mean spending, consuming or using.

an effort to make mischief between these two (married people) and does not succeed in separating them will be under Gods anger and his curse (*la'n*) in this world and the hereafter and God will forbid him from glancing at His Face (*vajhullah*).

Mercy

Those who have mercy the Merciful (God) will have mercy on them. Have mercy on those who (dwell) on earth so that he who is in the skies has mercy on you¹.

Neighbors

Be aware that Allah will question you about the rights of your neighbors and he who deprives his neighbor from his rights is not one of us (has no relation with us)

Openhandedness/Generosity

The generous are close to God -The Almighty-, are close to the people, close to Heaven and far from Hell. The ungenerous are far from God -The Almighty-, far from the people, far from Heaven and close to Hell².

Orphans

The best of your houses is a house in which there is an orphan who is treated kindly. The worst of your houses is a house in which (the orphan) is treated badly³.

I and he who takes care of an orphan are in heaven like these two. The prophet (*as*) then pointed to his index and middle fingers. (i.e. we are very close in heaven)¹.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 169

² Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 70, p. 308

³ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 2, p. 474

Parading/showing-off/ostentation

He who feeds food to parade himself (or to show-off) or so that people speak about this act, God will feed him from the blood and pus of the festering wounds of (those in) hell.

Parents

God have mercy on he who helps his children to be kind to him².

The poor/needy/impoverished

He, who insults a poor Muslim because of his poverty and humiliates him, has not paid attention to the rights of Allah and Allah will be his enemy and angered at him until he satisfies the poor person.

Quran

He who reads the Quran and does not act according to it will be gathered blind on the day of rising, then he will say: <Lord, why have you summoned me blind but before I could see. (Allah) will answer: likewise our signs came to you and you forgot them and so you have been forgotten today>(The holy Quran 20:125-126). Then he will be ordered toward fire.

He who learns the Quran for anything other than God and to become famous so that he can quarrel with the fools or to show-off to the learned and to attain by it worldly things, God will separate his bones at the day of rising (*qiamah*) and their will not be anyone in the hell-fire with a more severe punishment than him. There will be no kind of punishment except that he will be punished like that because of the extent of God's wrath and anger at him.

¹ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 2, p. 474

² al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.6 p. 50

And he who learns the Quran and is humble towards (this) knowledge and teaches it to Gods servants and he longs for what is with God, there will be no one in Heaven who has a greater reward or higher rank than him and there will be in heaven no position and no high rank and nothing that is the best of its kind except that he will have the best share in it and the greatest position.

Reconciliation/reunion/making peace

He who strides toward making peace between two people God and his angels will bestow their grace upon him until he returns and he will be rewarded the reward of the night of *Qadr* (*Lailatul Qadr*). He who strides to disunite two people will have as much sin as the reward given to he who made peace between two people and he will be far from God's mercy until he enters Hell and then his torture will be multiplied.

Repentance

Verily he who repents a year before his death God will forgive him and a year is too much. He who repents a month before his death God will forgive him, and a month is too much. He who repents a Friday before his death God will forgive him and a Friday is too much, He who repents a day before his death God will forgive him and a day is much, he who repents an hour before his death God will forgive him. He who repents and his soul has reached here (The Prophet then pointed to his throat) god will forgive him.

Safe-keeping/Trust

He who betrays what has been given to him as a trust and does not return it to its owner in this world and then dies, will have died whilst not being part of my nation and he will meet God while God is angry at him¹.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 72, p. 171

Spouse / wife

He who has a wife who disagrees with him and does not have patience regarding the provisions that Allah gives them and forces him to do what is difficult for him and not in his ability; Allah will not accept from her any of her good deeds to shield her from the heat of hell and Allah will be angry at her whilst she has this attitude.

Tolerance and patience towards people

Half of being faithful is tolerating people and being kind (friendly) with them is half of having a good life¹.

I have been ordered to tolerate people and have patience towards them just as I have been ordered to announce Gods messages².

Two-facedness/backstabbing

He who is two-faced and two-tongued (backstabber) in this world will be two-tongued in Hell³.

Tyranny

The prophet (as) was asked: “what is the status of a tyrant aggressive leader who does no good for his citizens and does not perform Gods orders between them?” He answered: “He is the fourth of the four people who have the harshest punishment in hell: Satan (*iblis*), Pharaoh (*fir'on*), he who kills himself and the tyrant ruler.”

¹ al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.2 p. 117

² Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 153

³ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 90

Visiting the sick/ill

He who visits a sick person, for each step that he takes until he returns home, will be given seventy thousand thousand (of Gods) kindnesses (*hasanah*) and seventy thousand thousand sins will be deleted from him and his rank will be increased by seventy thousand thousand degrees and seventy thousand thousand angels will be appointed over him who will visit Him in his grave and will ask God to forgive him until the day of rising (*yom al-ghiamah*).

Wanting the good of others/Desiring good things for others/Generosity towards others

The summit of common sense (*aql*) after having faith is to love people (or be friendly to them) and to do good to the righteous and the unrighteous¹.

Women

He who harms a woman until she commits suicide, Allah will not be satisfied as his punishment anything but hell.

Worker/Laborer

He who acts unjustly regarding the wage of a laborer will have his good deeds annihilated and the scent of heaven will be forbidden from him even though it can be smelt from a distance which takes five hundred years to travel.

Give the laborer/worker his wage before his sweat dries up².

Being unjust to the worker is one of the Great sins³.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 71, p. 400

² al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 14, p. 29

³ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 14, p. 31