

Short Stories from the Lives of the Pious

by Ibn El-Sheikh El-Misri

Introduction:

It was narrated that Sufyan ibn ‘Uyanah said: “With remembrance of the pious, mercy is bestowed.”

And from Imam Abu Hanifa, that he said: “The stories of the scholars and al-Muhsineen (the good doers), is more beloved to me than increasing in the knowledge of fiqh, because it contains the understanding of the manners and etiquettes of this ummah (nation). [*Jama’ bayn al-‘ilm wal fadl* (1/117) and *Farteeb al-Mudrak* (1/56)]

For these and ample reasons not aforementioned, I decided to find, and translate some small stories from the lives of the pious Muslims of the past so that the principles which we claim to live by are clarified, and that our hearts are strengthened.

{And all that We relate to you (O Muhammad SAW) of the news of the Messengers is in order that We may make strong and firm your heart thereby.} (11:120)

1. “If you are killed, then you will have been killed as a martyr”

Imam Ahmad (rahimahullah) said:

I did not, during this affair (i.e. the trials and tribulations which occurred due to the heretical beliefs of the Mutazilites that the Qur’an was created) hear a word stronger than that of al-A’rabi who spoke to me at Rahbat Tooq (the name of a place) and said:

‘If you are killed, then you will have been killed as a martyr (shaheed), and if you live, then you will live with honour’.

And so my heart became strengthened”

(*Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad by Ibn al-Jawzi*)

2. “Leave for you are freed”

The slave of al-Mansour bin Mahran approached him with a hot drink and (unintentionally) spilt it on him. When he felt its heat, he gazed at here. So she said “O teacher of good, remember the words of Allah”.

He replied: “And what are they?”

She said: “{Those who....repress anger}” 3:134

He said: “I have controlled it”

She said: “And remember {Those who...pardon men}” 3:134

He said: I pardon you.

She said:”And remember {verily, Allah loves Al-Muhsinun (the gooddoers).}” 3:134

He said: **“Leave for you are freed”**.

[*al-Imta' wal Mu'nasa (2/129)*]

3. “Nothing aids one’s memory like it”

Ali bin Khashram said: “I used to examine Wakee’ (ibn al-Jarrah) and never did I find him writing anything with his hands. Instead he would memorize everything. So I asked him: ‘What is the potion for memorizing?’

He replied: ‘The abandonment of disobedience! **Nothing aids one’s memory like it.**”

[*Tahtheeb at-Tahtheeb (11/129)*]

4. “Everytime you are increased in blessings, you are increased just as much in distress”

Yahya bin Ma’een said:

Myself and Ahmad bin Hanbal were with ‘Abd ar-Razzaq. I spent my time writing poetry and hadith, while Ahmad would engage only in hadith. One day ‘Abd ar-Razzaq came to us and recited the following lines of poetry:

‘Be, if you want, rich or poor

Compulsory in this life is afflictions

And everytime you are increased in blessings, You are

Increased just as much in distress’

Upon hearing this, Ahmad said to him: ‘How did you say that? How did you say that?’ So ‘Abd ar-Razzaq repeated it to him until he wrote it.”

[*al-Jalees as-Salah al-Kaafi (2/333)*]

5. "And is there good except in (our) youth?"

Ata bin Saa'ib said: “We were sitting with Hudhaifa, and a man came across us, so Hudhaifa asked him:

‘O so-and-so, what has stopped you from partaking in our sitting (of knowledge)?’

The man replied: ‘By Allah, nothing stopped me from joining you except for these youth who surround

you’.

Hudhaifa became angered by what he said, and replied: ‘Have you not heard the words of Allah:

{They said: "We heard a young man talking (against) them who is called Ibrahim (Abraham)."} [Al-Anbiya': 60] and {They were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah), and We increased them in guidance.} [Al-Kahf: 13] **And is there good except in (our) youth?'"**

[*al-Jamima' li Akhlaaq al-Rawi wa Adaab as-Sama' by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (1/310)*]

I hope what has preceded has been accepted by the most pure hearts and the most beautified eman.

May Allah allow you to derive benefit from what you have just read, and will power to ask Him for my forgiveness. Ameen.