

THE PROPHETS (UPON THEM BE PEACE),
 MUḤAMMAD ﷺ, AND THE COMPANIONS ﷺ

وَالْأَنْبِيَاءَ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ كُلُّهُمْ مُنْزَهُونَ مِنَ الصَّغَائِرِ وَالْكَبَائِرِ وَالْكَفْرِ وَالْقَبَائِحِ، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ مِنْهُمْ زَلَّاتٌ وَخَطَايَا. وَمُحَمَّدٌ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ حَبِيبُهُ وَعَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَنَبِيُّهُ وَصَفِيُّهُ وَنَقِيُّهُ. وَلَمْ يَعْْبُدِ الصَّنَمَ وَلَمْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ تَعَالَى طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ قَطُّ وَلَمْ يَزْتَكِبْ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً قَطُّ. وَأَفْضَلُ النَّاسِ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقُ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ الْفَارُوقُ ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ بْنُ عَفَّانٍ ذُو النُّورَيْنِ ثُمَّ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ الْمُرْتَضَى، رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ، عَابِدِينَ تَائِبِينَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ وَمَعَ الْحَقِّ، نَتَوَلَّاهُمْ جَمِيعًا، وَلَا نَذْكُرُ أَحَدًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ.

The prophets (upon them be blessings and peace) are all free from minor sins, enormities, unbelief, and wicked acts. However, some slips and mistakes have escaped them.

MuḤammad ﷺ is Allāh's beloved, His servant, His Messenger, His Prophet, His chosen one, and His purified one. Never did he worship idols or partner anything with Allāh even for a blink of an eye, nor did he ever commit a minor sin or enormity.

The most noble person after the prophets (upon them be blessings and peace) is Abū Bakr, the Most Truthful, then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the Differentiator, then 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, Possessor of Two Lights, and then 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the Chosen One (may the pleasure of Allāh be with them all). They were [devout] worshippers and steadfast on the truth and with the Truth. We love them all and do not mention any Companion of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ except only by way of praise.



The prophets (upon them be blessings and peace) are all free from minor sins, enormities, unbelief, and wicked acts before and after receiving prophethood (*nubuwwa*).

The Major and Minor Sins

[Qārī] It must be known that leaving obligatory (*farḍ*) or necessary (*wājib*) acts even once without excuse is considered an enormity (*kabīra*). Likewise, committing the unlawful (*ḥarām*) is also considered an enormity. Leaving the *sunna*¹³² act once without excuse due to laziness or taking the matter lightly is considered a minor sin (*ṣaghīra*), as is committing a disliked action (*makrūh*). However, habitually leaving the *sunna* or committing disliked actions also becomes an enormity, though they are considered enormities beneath other [established] enormities. This is because major and minor are relative terms, and thus it is said, “The good deeds of the pious are the sins of the intimate (*muqarrabīn*).” [170]

However, some slips and mistakes have escaped them. An example of a slip (*zalla*) is when Ādam ﷺ ate from the tree, and an example of a mistake (*khata'*) is when Mūsā ﷺ killed a member of Pharaoh's people. He did not intend to kill him, but only to strike him with his hand in order to push him away from the Israelite. Thus, the strike was intentional, but the killing a mistake. The killing was also a slip, because every mistake is a slip, but not every slip is a mistake. Therefore, between the two is the universal-particular relationship. A slip sometimes occurs by mistake, sometimes out of forgetfulness, sometimes out of inattentiveness, and sometimes out of leaving the more worthy or preferred action. Imām 'Umar al-Nasafī states in his *Tafsīr*; “The Imāms of Samarqand do not use the word *zalla* for acts committed by the prophets (upon them be blessings and peace) because a *zalla* [according to them] is a type of sin. Instead, they say, “They [the prophets] performed the good act (*fāḍil*) and left the preferred one (*afḍal*), and they were lightly

132 *Sunna* here is taken in the juridical sense where it refers to an action regularly performed by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and left at times in order for it not be taken as an obligation. This is then subcategorized into the emphasized *sunnas* and the non-emphasized *sunnas*, the latter being more like the *mustahabb* (preferred) acts, i.e., those performed by the Messenger ﷺ sometimes or encouraged in general.

reproved for it, because for prophets to leave the more preferred act is equivalent to others leaving an obligation (*wājib*)."

Another view is that the slip of a Prophet or a Friend of Allāh Most High is a means of closeness to Him. Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī (may Allāh have mercy on him) states, "Dāwūd ﷺ did not perform an act more beneficial for him than a misdeed. He continued to flee from it toward his Lord until he reached Him. Hence, the misdeed was the cause of his fleeing toward Allāh, away from himself and the world."

[Qārī] As for Ādam ﷺ, there are a number of explanations for why he ate from the forbidden tree. One is that he ate from it out of forgetfulness. Another is that he did not eat from the specific tree that Allāh forbade, but from another tree of the same type, assuming that the prohibition of Allāh was only regarding the specific tree, as Allāh said, "but approach not *this* tree."¹³³ He thus chose the less superior or suboptimal (*rukhsa*) path, in accord with the wisdom of Allāh in order [that He] illustrate the weakness of the human ability and condition and to express the strength of divine forgiveness. This is why a ḥadīth states, "If you did not sin, Allāh would bring forth a people who would sin and [then] seek forgiveness and Allāh would forgive them (*Muslim, Tirmidhī*). This is the opinion of the majority of scholars. [172]

"Verily a Cloudiness Comes Over My Heart"

[Qārī] As for the ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that states, "Verily a cloudiness comes over my heart (*la yughānu 'alā qalbī*), and verily I seek forgiveness from Allāh one hundred times daily" (*Muslim, Abū Dāwūd*), Rāzī explains in *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* that this cloudiness is like the light mist in the air that does not block the sun's light but does prevent its complete light from penetrating it. Scholars have interpreted this statement in many ways. First, that Allāh would inform His Messenger ﷺ of the disputations and problems that were to occur among his followers in the future, and whenever he would think about these events, a cloudiness would come over his heart, and he would seek forgiveness from Allāh for his umma. However,

¹³³ Also Ādam's ﷺ offense was in Paradise, which was not considered an abode of accountability (*dār al-taklīf*), in spite of the fact that Allāh forbade him from eating from the tree. In other words, he had no knowledge of the consequences for disobedience. Thus his disobedience was not open defiance as in the case of Satan.