

مسند
المسيح
ابن مريم
صلى الله عليه وسلم

Musnad of the Messiah
Jesus Son of Mary

Sayings Reported from Jesus Son of Mary
in Early Muslim Books

Collected by
Muhammad ibn Shams al-Din

Translated by
Taim Otah Bashi



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Peace and blessings be upon him

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Introduction

In the name of Allah. "Praise belongs to Allah, and peace be upon His servants whom He has chosen. Is Allah better, or what they associate with Him?" [al-Naml 27:59]

I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, that Muhammad is the servant and Messenger of Allah, and that Jesus is the servant and Messenger of Allah. To proceed:

In this book I gathered sayings reported from Jesus son of Mary in our early books, each with a chain of narrators. These chains do not go all the way back to Jesus. They end with early Muslims who passed these sayings on.

These reports are not used to decide what is halal or haram. They are words of wisdom, advice, and reminders.

I left out a few reports because their wording seemed wrong to me. I also left out reports that quoted words as being spoken by Allah. I included the reports that the early Muslims accepted and passed on.

I called this book Musnad of the Messiah Jesus Son of Mary, peace and blessings be upon him. This book is not a musnad in the usual meaning of the word. A musnad normally arranges hadiths under the names of their narrators. I chose this short title because it gives the idea of the book better than a much longer name.

I found that Ibn Abi Shaybah devoted a section of his Musannaf to reports from the Messiah, peace and blessings be upon him. Ahmad ibn Hanbal did the same in al-Zuhd, and Ibn Asakir did so in his History. I did not find a separate collection devoted to them.

After I had nearly finished this book, I found a modern collection called Written in the Torah, Followed by a Section on Reports of the Master Messiah, by Yusuf ibn Muhammad al-Dakkil. I reviewed it and added eleven reports from it.

I ask Allah Most High to accept this work from me and to make me among those who will be saved with the Messiah, peace and blessings be upon him, if we live to see his descent.

Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Muhammad ibn Shams al-Din
1443 AH

Chapter One: Hadiths from the Prophet

1

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"I am the closest of all people to Jesus son of Mary in this world and the Hereafter. The prophets are like brothers with the same father and different mothers. Their laws are different, but their religion is one." [E1][R1]

2

Ibn Abbas reported that he heard Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, say from the pulpit that he heard the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, say:

"Do not praise me beyond the proper limit, as the Christians praised the son of Mary beyond the proper limit. I am only His servant, so say: the servant of Allah and His Messenger." [E2][R2]

3

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Among the three who spoke while in the cradle were Jesus son of Mary and the infant in the story of Jurayj ..." [E3][T1][R3]

Explanations

[E1] All the prophets called people to worship Allah alone. Their basic beliefs were the same, although some details of their laws were different.

[E2] Do not raise a prophet above being Allah's servant and messenger. Do not call upon him or direct worship to him.

[E3] Jurayj was a worshipper whose story appears in the longer hadith.

Translator's Notes

[T1] Only the part of the longer narration about Jesus son of Mary is quoted here.

References

[R1] Al-Bukhari (3443). Muslim (2365, report 145).

[R2] Al-Bukhari (3445).

[R3] Muslim (2550, report 8). Al-Bukhari (3436).

4

Abd Allah ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both, reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"I saw myself last night at the Kaaba. I saw a brown-complexioned man as handsome as any brown-complexioned man you could see, with the finest hair reaching between his ears and shoulders. His hair was combed and water was dripping from it. He was leaning on two men, or upon their shoulders, while circling the House." [E4][R4]

5

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"On the night I was taken on the Night Journey, I passed by Moses son of Imran, peace be upon him. He was a tall, brown, curly-haired man, as though he were one of the men of Shanu'ah, a tribe from Yemen. I saw Jesus son of Mary, of medium height and build, reddish-white in complexion, with straight hair." [R5]

6

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Jesus son of Mary saw a man stealing. He asked, 'Did you steal?' The man replied, 'No, by Allah, besides whom there is no god.' Jesus said, 'I accept your oath by Allah and reject what my own eyes appeared to see.'" [E5][R6]

7

Al-Harith al-Ashari reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Allah, Mighty and Majestic, revealed five commands to John son of Zechariah, commanding him to act upon them and to command the Children of Israel to act upon them. John was slow in carrying them out, so Allah revealed to Jesus: 'Either you

Explanations

[E4] The man described here is Jesus son of Mary.

[E5] Jesus accepted his oath by Allah and did not accuse him of lying because of what he saw.

References

[R4] Al-Bukhari (5902).

[R5] Muslim (165, report 267).

[R6] Al-Bukhari (3444). Muslim (2368, report 149).

convey them, or he must convey them.' Jesus came to John and said, 'Allah commanded you with five commands, that you act upon them and command the Children of Israel to act upon them. Either you tell them, or I will tell them.' John said, 'Spirit of Allah, do not do so. I fear that if you precede me in conveying them, I may be swallowed by the earth or punished.'

"John gathered the Children of Israel in Jerusalem until the mosque was full and people sat upon the raised places. He addressed them and said, 'Allah, Mighty and Majestic, revealed five commands to me and commanded me to order the Children of Israel to act upon them.

'The first is that you worship Allah and associate nothing with Him. The likeness of one who associates something with Allah is that of a man who bought a slave with his own pure gold or silver, placed him in a house, and said: Work and give the earnings to me. The slave then worked and gave the earnings to someone other than his master. Which of you would be pleased for his slave to behave in this way? Allah created you and provides for you, so associate nothing with Him.

'When you stand for prayer, do not turn away. Allah, Mighty and Majestic, turns His Face^[E6] toward the face of His servant so long as the servant does not turn away.

'He commands you to fast. Its likeness is that of a man in a group who carries a pouch of musk, and everyone loves to smell its fragrance. The breath of the fasting person is more fragrant to Allah than the scent of musk.

'He commands you to give charity. Its likeness is that of a man captured by an enemy. They bound his hands to his neck and brought him forward to be executed. He said, "Will you allow me to buy my freedom from you?" He began giving a little and much until he bought his freedom.

'He commands you to remember Allah often. Its likeness is that of a man whose enemy pursued him swiftly until he reached a strong fortress and protected himself within it. In the same way, the servant is not saved from Satan except through remembering Allah.' ^[R7]

Explanations

[E6] Allah's names and attributes in these texts are accepted as they came. They are real, are not like the attributes of creation, and we do not ask how they are.

References

[R7] Ibn Khuzaymah (930). Ibn Hibban (6233).

8

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said that Jesus son of Mary stood among the Children of Israel and said:

"Children of Israel, do not teach wisdom to people who will treat it badly, or you will wrong wisdom. Do not keep it from people who deserve it, or you will wrong them. Do not wrong one another. Do not answer wrongdoing with wrongdoing, or you will lose the good in what you do."

"Matters are of three kinds. If the right guidance of a matter is clear, follow it. If its error is clear, avoid it. If people disagree about it, refer it to Allah, Mighty and Majestic." [R8]

9

Umar ibn Shahr said:

"I heard two sayings: one from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and another from the Negus. I heard the Messenger of Allah say, 'Look to Quraysh: take their words and leave their actions.'

"I was once sitting with the Negus when his son returned from the school carrying a book. He read a verse from the Gospel, and I recognised it - or understood it - and laughed. The Negus said, 'Why do you laugh? Is it at the Book of Allah Most High? By Allah, among what Allah revealed to Jesus son of Mary was: The curse will be upon the land when its rulers are children.'" [T2][R9]

Translator's Notes

[T2] Negus was the royal title of the ruler of Abyssinia.

References

[R8] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (123). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (1707).

[R9] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad (15536), with a sound chain. Abu Ya'la (6864).

His Descent

10

Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"By the One in whose hand is my soul, the son of Mary will soon descend among you as a just judge. He will break the cross, kill the pigs, abolish the jizyah, and wealth will overflow until no one will accept it." [E7][T3][R10]

11

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Jesus son of Mary will certainly descend, confirming me and following my religion. He will remain on earth for forty years, then he will die." [R11]

12

Thawban, the freedman of the Messenger of Allah, reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Two groups from my nation will be protected by Allah from the Fire: a group that will fight in India, and a group that will be with Jesus son of Mary, peace be upon them both." [R12]

13

Al-Nawwas ibn Saman reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned the Dajjal and then said:

Explanations

[E7] At that time, jizyah will no longer be accepted. People will be required to accept Islam, and Jesus will kill those who refuse.

Translator's Notes

[T3] Jizyah was a payment made by non-Muslim subjects living under Muslim rule in return for protection and exemption from military service.

References

[R10] Al-Bukhari (2222). Muslim (155, report 242).

[R11] Abu Ya'la, al-Musnad (6584). Husayn Salim Asad graded its chain sound.

[R12] Al-Nasa'i (3175). Authenticated by al-Albani.

"While he is in that state, Allah will send the Messiah Jesus son of Mary. He will descend by the white minaret on the eastern side of Damascus, wearing two garments lightly dyed with saffron, placing his hands upon the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head, drops will fall, and when he raises it, droplets like pearls will scatter from him. No unbeliever will detect the fragrance of his breath without dying, and his breath will reach as far as his sight.

"He will pursue the Dajjal until he catches him at the gate of Ludd and kills him. Jesus son of Mary will then come to a people whom Allah has protected from the Dajjal. He will wipe their faces and tell them of their ranks in Paradise." [T4][T5][R13]

Other Reports

14

Abd Allah ibn Amr reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Convey from me, even if only one verse. Narrate from the Children of Israel, and there is no harm. Whoever deliberately lies about me, let him take his seat in the Fire." [E8][R14]

Explanations

[E8] Reports from the Children of Israel are of three kinds: those confirmed by revelation, those rejected by revelation, and those about which revelation is silent. The last kind may be mentioned as reminders, but it is not used to establish belief or law.

Translator's Notes

[T4] The Dajjal is the great false messiah who will appear near the end of time.

[T5] Ludd is the historical town now commonly called Lod, southeast of Jaffa.

References

[R13] Muslim (2937, report 110).

[R14] Al-Bukhari (3461).

Chapter Two: Sayings Reported from Jesus in Early Books

These chains end with early Muslims who reported the sayings. They do not go all the way back to Jesus. The sayings are included as wisdom and reminders.

Section One: Guarding the Tongue

15

Yahya ibn Said al-Ansari reported that Jesus son of Mary met a pig on the road and said to it:

| "Pass in peace."

He was asked, "Do you say this to a pig?" He replied:

| "I do not want to train my tongue to speak badly." [E9][R15]

16

Ibn al-Mubarak said that he was informed that Jesus son of Mary passed by a group who insulted him. He answered them with good words. He passed by another group who insulted him even more, and he increased his good words toward them. One of the disciples said, "The more they increase in evil toward you, the more you increase in goodness toward them, as though you are encouraging them against yourself." Jesus replied:

| "Everyone gives what is inside him." [T6][R16]

Explanations

[E9] Bad words become a habit. Guard your tongue even in private speech so that evil speech does not become easy for you.

Translator's Notes

[T6] "The disciples" translates al-hawariyyun, the close followers of Jesus.

References

[R15] Malik, al-Muwatta' (Yahya recension) (3609).

[R16] al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (1494). Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh Dimashq.

17

Salim ibn Abi al-Jad reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Blessed is the one who controls his tongue, stays in his home, and cries over his sins."
[R17]

18

Malik ibn Dinar reported that Jesus son of Mary and the disciples passed by the dead body of a dog. The disciples said, "How foul its smell is." Jesus said:

"How white its teeth are."

He said this to teach them and warn them against backbiting. [E10][R18]

19

Said ibn Abd al-Aziz reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"One of the greatest sins before Allah is for a servant to tell a lie and say, 'Allah knows that this is true.'" [E11][R19]

20

Musa ibn Abi Imran, who was a student of knowledge, reported that Jesus son of Mary said to John son of Zechariah, peace and blessings be upon them both:

"When something true about you is said to you, give thanks to Allah. When something that is not true about you is said to you, give even greater thanks to Allah, for a good deed has been credited to you although you did no work for it." [R20]

Explanations

[E10] Train yourself to mention what is good instead of looking for what is ugly. Jesus taught them this even when speaking about the dead body of a dog.

[E11] This person lies and then claims that Allah knows his lie to be true. He has falsely spoken about Allah's knowledge.

References

[R17] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (124). Waki', al-Zuhd (255).

[R18] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Dhamm al-Ghibah wa-l-Namimah (159).

[R19] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Samt (722).

[R20] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Mudarat al-Nas (52).

Section Two: Correcting Your Actions

21

Hilal ibn Yasaf reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"When one of you fasts for a day, let him oil his head and beard and wipe his lips so that people do not see that he is fasting. When he gives with his right hand, let him conceal it from his left. When he prays, let him draw a curtain over his door, for Allah Most High distributes praise just as He distributes provision." [E12][R21]

22

Artah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Even if you fast until you become bent like bows, pray until you stand like stakes, and tears flow from your eyes like rivers, you will not receive what is with Allah unless you truly stay away from sins and doubtful matters." [E13][T7][R22]

23

Khalid al-Hadhdha reported that when Jesus son of Mary sent out his messengers to bring the dead to life, he would say to them:

"Say such and such. Say such and such. When you feel a shiver and tears come, make du'a at that moment." [E14][R23]

Explanations

[E12] Voluntary worship is normally hidden so that it is done only for Allah. It may be shown when the purpose is to teach or encourage someone, not to gain praise.

[E13] Fasting, long prayers, and many tears do not benefit a person who refuses to follow the truth. Outward worship must come with sincerity, obedience, and following the Sunnah.

[E14] "Bringing the dead to life" here may mean calling people to Allah, since literally raising the dead was a miracle particular to Jesus, peace be upon him.

Translator's Notes

[T7] A variant reads, "Even if you prayed..." instead of "Even if you fasted...". The context supports "fasted."

References

[R21] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (150). 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Musannaf (7913).

[R22] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Wara'. Qawam al-Sunnah, al-Targhib wa-l-Tarhib (2499).

[R23] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (306).

24

Al-Muhajir ibn Habib reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"The person who prays and fasts but does not leave sins is written with Allah as a liar."
[E15][R24]

25

Khaythamah reported that a woman passed by Jesus and said, "Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breast that nursed you." Jesus replied:

"Rather, blessed is the one who recites the Book and follows what is in it." [E16][R25]

26

In another narration, Thabit reported that Jesus set out to visit a brother of his. A person met him and said, "Your brother has died." Jesus turned back. The daughters of the deceased heard that he had turned away from them, so they came to him and said, "Messenger of Allah, your turning away from us is harder upon us than the death of our father." He said, "Come with me and show me his grave." They went with him until they showed it to him. He called to the man, and the man emerged with white hair. Jesus said, "Are you not so-and-so?" He said, "Yes." Jesus asked, "Why do I see you like this?" He replied, "I heard your voice and thought it was the Blast."

The man's wife saw what had happened and heard it. She said, "Blessed is the womb in which you remained and the breasts from which you nursed." Jesus said:

"Blessed is the one whom Allah, Mighty and Majestic, taught His Book, and who then did not die as an arrogant tyrant." [E17][R26]

Explanations

[E15] Prayer and fasting do not make a person truthful while he continues in sin and has bad character. Worship must change the way a person obeys Allah and treats people.

[E16] Being related to a righteous person does not save anyone. The one who reads Allah's Book and follows it is blessed.

[E17] "Brother" means a brother in faith, not a blood brother. Jesus brought the man to life only by Allah's permission.

References

[R24] al-Firyabi, *Sifat al-Nifaq wa-Dhamm al-Munafiqin* (63).

[R25] al-Waqf wa-l-Ibtida' fi Kitab Allah (7). Ibn Abi Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (34231).

[R26] al-Waqf wa-l-Ibtida' fi Kitab Allah (7). Ibn Abi Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (34231).

27

Abu Imran al-Ansari reported that the Messiah said:

"Disciples, if you want to be among those specially chosen by Allah and to be a light among the children of Adam, make peace between people, and love those who hate you." [R27]

28

Yazid ibn Maysarah reported that the Messiah said:

"If you wish to be among those specially chosen by Allah, Mighty and Majestic, and a light among the children of Adam, forgive those who wrong you, visit those who do not visit you, do good to those who do not do good to you, and lend to those who will not repay you." [E18][R28]

29

Shahr ibn Hawshab reported that Jesus son of Mary went out to pray for rain, and the people went out with him. He said:

"Anyone among you who has committed a sin should return."

The people returned until only a one-eyed man remained. Jesus said to him, "Supplicate, and I will say amen." The man supplicated, Jesus said amen, and Allah sent them rain. [E19][R29]

30

Malik ibn Mighwal and others reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"A look plants desire in the heart. It is enough of a temptation to accompany a person." [E20][R30]

Explanations

[E18] Do good without waiting for praise, repayment, or a favour in return. Seek your reward from Allah.

[E19] Leaving sin is one of the causes of having du'a answered.

[E20] A forbidden look plants desire in the heart.

References

[R27] Abu Hatim, al-Zuhd (6).

[R28] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (75). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (482).

[R29] 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Musannaf (4916). al-Tabarani, al-Du'a' (3).

[R30] 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Musannaf (7453). Ibn al-Jawzi, Dhamm al-Hawa.

31

Amr ibn Murrah reported from Salim that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Moses forbade you from adultery. I forbid you from it and also forbid you from thinking about committing the sin. This is like a fire lit in a house. Even if it does not burn the house, its smoke blackens it and makes it smell foul." [E21][R31]

32

Bashir ibn Salih reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Blessed is an eye that sleeps without thinking about sin and wakes without having committed one." [R32]

33

Abu Thumamah reported that the disciples asked, "Jesus, what does it mean to be sincere to Allah?" He replied:

"It means doing a deed without wanting anyone to praise you for it. A sincere person puts Allah's rights before people's rights. If one matter concerns this world and another concerns the Hereafter, he begins with the matter of the Hereafter." [R33]

34

Said ibn Abi Said al-Maqburi reported that a man came to Jesus son of Mary and said, "Teacher of goodness, teach me something you know and I do not, something that will benefit me and not harm me." Jesus asked, "What is it?" The man said, "How does a servant truly fear Allah?" Jesus replied:

"The matter is simple. Love Allah sincerely with all your heart. Obey Him with all the strength you have. Show mercy to the people of your kind as you show mercy to yourself."

Explanations

[E21] Repeatedly thinking about a sin makes it easier to commit. Even when the thought does not lead to the act, it darkens the heart like smoke blackens a house.

References

[R31] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34240). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Tawbah (124).

[R32] Collection of works by Abu al-Abbas al-Asamm and Isma'il al-Saffar (283).

[R33] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34234). Ibn Abi Hatim, Tafsir (10207).

The man asked, "Teacher of goodness, who are the people of my kind?" Jesus replied, "All mankind."

"Whatever you hate people doing to you, do not do to them." [R34]

35

Al-Fudayl ibn Iyad and Ibn Uyaynah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I have cast the world face down and sat upon its back. No one will contend with you over it except kings and women. As for kings, do not compete with them for the world, for they will not obstruct you so long as you leave their world to them. As for women, guard yourselves from them through fasting and prayer." [R35]

36

Jafar ibn Jirfas reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"The root of sin is love of the world. Women are the snare of Satan, and wine is the key to every evil." [R36]

37

Ibn Hubays reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Satan stays close to this world. His tricks appear through wealth, he makes desires look beautiful, and he gains full control when lust takes over." [R37]

38

Muhammad ibn Suqah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Leave people alone so they can have peace from you. Keep yourself busy with what concerns you. Do not search for their private matters or their faults. Focus on what you yourself are responsible for." [R38]

References

[R34] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (73).

[R35] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (34). al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (984).

[R36] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (474).

[R37] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (489). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Maka'id al-Shaytan (58).

[R38] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (469). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Samt (738).

39

Al-Shabi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Goodness is not merely doing good to someone who has done good to you. That is repayment. True goodness is doing good to someone who has wronged you." [R39]

40

Muan ibn Rifaah reported from Abu Abd Allah that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Servants of the world, before giving charity, show mercy to those you have wronged." [R40]

41

Abd al-Aziz ibn Husayn reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Whoever lies often loses his beauty. Whoever argues with people loses their respect. Whoever worries all the time becomes physically ill, and whoever has bad character makes life hard for himself." [R41]

Section Three: Reminders for the Heart

42

Wahb reported that the disciples asked, "Jesus, who are the allies of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, upon whom there is no fear and who will not grieve?" Jesus son of Mary replied:

"They look past the outside beauty of this world, while other people look only at what they can see. They think about how this world will end, while other people think only about what they can enjoy now. They remove from their hearts what may destroy them, and they leave what they know will soon leave them. "Even when they receive much from this world, they see it as little. When they remember it, they count it as a loss. What people enjoy from it brings them sorrow. When its pleasures are offered to them, they turn them away. When status is offered to them, they lower it and put the truth back in its proper place. "This world has grown old in their eyes, so they do not

References

[R39] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (76). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (317).

[R40] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (468).

[R41] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Samt (133). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Mudarat al-Nas (96).

renew it. It has fallen into ruin, so they do not rebuild it. It has died in their hearts, so they do not bring it back to life. They tear it down and use it to build their Hereafter. They sell it and buy what will remain. They look at its people and see them suffering hardship. "They keep death in mind and stop thinking about living for this world. They love Allah and love remembering Him. They seek light from His light and give light through it. They receive great news, and that news remains with them. The Book stands through them, and they stand through the Book. The Book speaks through them, and they speak through the Book. The Book is known through them, and they know through the Book. "They know that nothing is better than what Allah has given them. They seek the greatest safety and guard themselves from the greatest danger."

[R42]

43

Malik ibn Anas reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"Children of Israel, drink pure water, eat coarse barley bread and wild greens, and beware of fine wheat bread, for you will never be able to thank Allah enough for it."

[R43]

44

Abu al-Dil reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I thought about creation and found that the one who was never created is better off, in my view, than the one who was created." [R44]

45

Hisham, the companion of al-Dastawa'i, said that he saw in a book a saying reported from Jesus son of Mary:

"You work for this world even though you are provided for in it without your work, but you do not work for the Hereafter even though you will receive there only through your deeds."

References

[R42] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (339). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Awliya' (18).

[R43] Malik, al-Muwatta' (Abu Mus'ab recension) (1956). Malik, al-Muwatta' (Yahya recension) (3439).

[R44] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Ishraf fi Manazil al-Ashraf (390). al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (486).

"Woe to you, evil scholars! You take the pay but waste the work. The Master of the work may soon ask for His work, and you may soon leave the wide space of this world for the darkness and tightness of the grave.

"How can someone be one of the people of knowledge when he blames Allah for what He has decreed and is not pleased with what happens to him? How can someone be one of the people of knowledge when he prefers this world to the Hereafter and wants this world more? How can someone be one of the people of knowledge when he seeks words so he can tell them to others, but does not seek them so he can act on them?"

[E22][R45]

46

Wahb ibn Munabbih reported that Jesus son of Mary said to the disciples:

"The more a person loves this world, the more he panics when hardship strikes." [R46]

47

Wahb ibn Munabbih reported that Jesus son of Mary was standing beside a grave with the disciples while the dead person was being lowered into it. They mentioned the darkness, loneliness, and narrowness of the grave. Jesus said:

"You were once in something narrower than this: your mothers' wombs. When Allah wants to make a place wide, He makes it wide." [R47]

48

Al-Maqburi reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"When you do a good deed, stop thinking about it. It is with the One who will never lose it."

He then recited: "Indeed, We do not allow the reward of those who do good to be lost."

"When you do a bad deed, keep it before your eyes." [R48]

Explanations

[E22] Allah has guaranteed what He will provide for you in this world, but what you receive in the Hereafter depends upon faith and deeds. Knowledge is meant to be acted upon, not collected for money, status, or the praise of being called a scholar.

References

[R45] Abu Dawud, al-Zuhd (1). al-Ajurri, Akhlaq al-'Ulama'.

[R46] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (338). Abu Nu'aym, Hilyat al-Awliya'.

[R47] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (301). Abu Nu'aym, Hilyat al-Awliya'.

[R48] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (301). Ibn Abi Hatim, Tafsir (12795).

49

Malik ibn Mighwal reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Disciples, seek Allah's love by hating disobedience. Draw near to Him by staying away from it. Seek His pleasure even if the people who disobey Him are displeased with you."

They asked, "Spirit of Allah, with whom should we sit?" He replied:

"Sit with someone whose appearance reminds you of Allah, whose words teach you, and whose actions make you want the Hereafter." [R49]

50

Ibn al-Mubarak reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Hardship may soon carry the patient person into ease, while ease may carry the sinful person into hardship." [R50]

51

Jesus, peace be upon him, said:

"The world existed when I was not in it, and it will continue when I am no longer in it. I have only these days. If I fail during these days, then I have truly failed." [R51]

52

Wuhayb reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Four things rarely come together in one person: silence, which is the beginning of worship; humility before Allah; turning away from this world; and owning little." [T8]
[R52]

Translator's Notes

[T8] A variant wording reads: "Four qualities are extraordinary, and only an extraordinary person preserves them."

References

[R49] Ibn al-Mubarak, *al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq* (355). Abu Ubayd, *al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz* (84).

[R50] Ibn al-Mubarak, *al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq* (627). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, *al-Sabr wa-l-Thawab 'Alayh* (74).

[R51] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, *al-Zuhd* (266).

[R52] Ibn al-Mubarak, *al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq* (629). Ibn Wahb, *al-Jami'* (451).

53

Wahb ibn Munabbih reported that the Messiah said:

"Remember Allah often, praise Him and declare Him perfect, and obey Him. When Allah is pleased with a person, it is enough for him to say in du'a: O Allah, forgive my sin, put my life and daily needs right, and protect me from what I dislike, my God."

[R53]

54

Malik ibn Mighwal reported that Jesus son of Mary passed by a ruined settlement and said, "Ruined home, where are the people who lived here?" Allah revealed to it that it should answer His servant. Something within it replied:

"Spirit of Allah, they are gone. Work hard while you are alive, for Allah's command is serious." [R54]

55

Sad ibn Masud reported that John son of Zechariah met Jesus son of Mary, peace and blessings be upon them both, and said, "Tell me what brings a person near to Allah's pleasure and what keeps him far from Allah's anger." Jesus replied:

"Do not become angry."

John asked, "What begins anger and brings it back?" Jesus replied:

"Thinking you are above others, hurt pride, arrogance, and wanting greatness."

John said, "Ask me about something else." Jesus replied, "Ask whatever occurs to you." John asked, "What begins adultery and brings it back?" Jesus replied:

"The gaze. It places something in the heart that increases the steps toward sinful entertainment. Wealth increases carelessness and sin. Do not keep looking at what is not yours. What you have not seen cannot grieve you, and what you have not heard cannot delight you." [R55]

References

[R53] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (302).

[R54] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (641). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Qasr al-Amal.

[R55] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq, supplement. Ibn Wahb, al-Jami' (475).

56

Wuhayb reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"Love of Paradise and fear of Hell make hardship easier to bear and keep a person from chasing comfort in this world." [R56]

57

Sulayman al-Taymi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I tell you the truth: you have no permanent home in this world. You are only travellers passing through it. Treat the mosques of Allah as your homes, and treat your houses as places where a guest stays." [R57]

58

Said ibn Abi Hilal reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"Whoever thinks his greed increases his provision should try to increase his height, broaden his body, add to the number of his fingers, or change his colour. Allah, Blessed and Most High, created creation, and creation goes as He created it. He then divided provision, and provision comes as He divided it. "The world cannot give anyone something that is not his, nor can it withhold from anyone something that is his. So worship your Lord, for that is what you were created to do." [R58]

59

Al-Muhajir ibn Habib reported that the Messiah Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"Disciples, do not seek the world at the cost of destroying yourselves. Seek the preservation of your souls by abandoning what is in it. You came into it naked and barefoot, and you will leave it naked and barefoot.

"Do not seek tomorrow's provision today. Today's provision is enough for today, and tomorrow will come with its own concern. Ask Allah to make your provision day by day." [R59]

References

[R56] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq, supplement. Abu Nu'aym, Hilyat al-Awliya' (42).

[R57] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (79). Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34242).

[R58] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (80).

[R59] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (490).

60

Abu al-Dil reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I tell you the truth: you do not seek this world, and you do not seek the Hereafter."

They said, "Messenger of Allah, explain this to us. We thought that we must be seeking one of the two." He replied:

"Had you sought the world, you would have obeyed the Lord of the world, in whose hand are the keys to its treasures, and He would have given it to you. Had you sought the Hereafter, you would have obeyed the Lord of the Hereafter, who owns it, and He would have given it to you. But you seek neither this nor that, and you obey neither."

[R60]

61

Bakr ibn Abd Allah al-Muzani reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say in the morning:

"My God, I have reached morning owning none of what I hope for and unable to keep away what I fear. I have reached morning while the matter is in the hand of another - and in Your hand, my God. No poor person is poorer than I." [R61]

62

Ismail ibn Abi Khalid reported from a man of the people of the mosques who lived before the non-Arabs that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"O Allah, this morning I cannot bring myself what I hope for or keep away what I fear. My good is in the hand of another, and my deeds hold me responsible. No poor person is poorer than me.

"Do not let my enemy rejoice over me. Do not test me through my religion. Do not make this world my greatest concern. Do not give power over me to someone who will show me no mercy." [R62]

References

[R60] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (82). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (310).

[R61] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (85).

[R62] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (29386). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (491).

63

Said ibn Abd al-Aziz reported that the Messiah Jesus son of Mary said:

"It is not as I want, but as You want. It is not as I will, but as You will." [R63]

64

Ubayd Allah ibn Said al-Iddi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"My outer garment is fear. The clothing against my body is hunger. My mount is my two legs, and my lamp at night is the moon. The rising sun warms me in winter. My companions are people who are always ill and people who are poor. I own nothing by evening or morning, yet who is richer than I?" [T9][R64]

65

Said ibn Abd al-Aziz reported that Jesus son of Mary looked at Satan and said:

"This is the chief of this world. He came out for it and asked for it. I will not share any part of it with him. I will not even take a stone to put under my head, and I will not laugh much in this world until I leave it." [R65]

66

Urwah ibn Ruwaym reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Satan has a place upon the heart of the son of Adam. He places his head upon the fruit of the heart. When the servant remembers his Lord, Satan withdraws. When he does not remember Him, Satan places his head upon the fruit of the heart and gives him desires and whispers evil to him."

He then recited: "From the evil of the retreating whisperer, who whispers into the breasts of mankind." [R66]

Translator's Notes

[T9] The word used here means "the garment worn directly against the body."

References

[R63] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (486).

[R64] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (35708).

[R65] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (87). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Maka'id al-Shaytan (57).

[R66] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34233).

67

Khaythamah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Blessed is the child of the believer. Blessed is he. He is protected through the righteousness of his father."

Khaythamah then recited: "Their father was a righteous man."

In another wording:

"Blessed is the believer, and blessed is he again. How Allah, Mighty and Majestic, protects his child after him." [R67]

68

Malik ibn Dinar reported that whenever Jesus son of Mary passed by a town whose people had died and its homes stood empty, he would stop and call out:

"Woe to your former masters and to their brothers who have inherited you after them. Why did they not take warning from the fate of those who passed before?" [R68]

69

Shuayb ibn Salih reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"The world never settles in the heart of a servant without his heart becoming entangled in three things: work that never ends, a feeling of poverty that is never satisfied, and hopes that never stop."

"The world is both a seeker and something sought. The seeker of the Hereafter is pursued by the world until he receives his full provision from it. The seeker of the world is pursued by the Hereafter until death comes and takes him by the neck." [R69]

References

[R67] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34233). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (304).

[R68] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Qasr al-Amal (321).

[R69] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (35).

70

Sufyan reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Just as fire and water cannot remain together in one vessel, love of the Hereafter and love of the world cannot remain together in the heart of the believer." [R70]

71

Makhul reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Disciples, which of you can build a house on the waves of the sea?"

They said, "Spirit of Allah, who could do that?" He replied:

"Be careful of this world. Do not treat it as a permanent home." [E23][R71]

72

Wahb ibn Munabbih reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I tell you the truth: a sick person may look at good food but not enjoy it because of his illness. In the same way, a person whose heart is attached to this world does not taste the sweetness of worship while love of the world remains in him.

"I tell you the truth: an animal that is never ridden or trained becomes hard to control. In the same way, hearts become hard when they are not softened by remembering death and regular worship.

"I tell you the truth: a sound leather container can hold honey. In the same way, hearts can carry wisdom as long as desires have not torn them, greed has not made them dirty, and luxury has not made them hard." [E24][R72]

Explanations

[E23] This world is unstable like the waves of the sea. No one builds a lasting house on moving water, so do not build all your hopes upon this life.

[E24] Love of this world makes worship tasteless, like illness makes good food tasteless. A heart becomes hard when it is not softened by remembering death and regular worship. Desires, greed, and luxury stop the heart from carrying wisdom.

References

[R70] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (166). al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (1150).

[R71] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (325).

[R72] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (178).

73

Ubayd Allah ibn Muslim reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Woe to the companion of the world. How can he die and leave it behind? It deceives him, yet he feels safe from it. It humiliates him, yet he trusts it.

"Woe to those who are deceived. How what they dislike has put them to trial, how what they love has left them, and how what they were promised has come to them.

"Woe to the one whose concern is the world and whose work is sin. How he will be exposed tomorrow by his sin." [R73]

74

Al-Fudayl ibn Iyad reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"You will not attain what you desire except by abandoning what you desire, and you will not reach what you hope for except by patiently enduring what you dislike.

"Woe to the companion of the world. How can he die and leave it? It gives him security and yet betrays him, he trusts it and yet it abandons him.

"Woe to those deceived by the world. How what they dislike has put them to trial, how what they desire has left them, and how what they were promised has come to them.

"Woe to the one whose concern is the world and whose work is sin. How he will be exposed tomorrow." [R74]

75

Duwayd ibn Nafi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"You work for the small world and abandon the great Hereafter, although death may pass over you at any moment." [R75]

References

[R73] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (180).

[R74] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (264).

[R75] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (275).

76

Abu Hurayrah reported:

“The Messiah was once in a group of disciples between a flowing river and a foul-smelling dead snake. A beautiful bird of changing colours approached, looking like gold. It landed nearby, shook itself, and shed its skin. Beneath it was a very ugly creature: bald and red. It went to a pool, rolled in its mud, and came out black and ugly. It then went to the water and washed itself. It returned to its skin, put it on, and became beautiful again until it was as it had been at first. “The one who commits sin is like that when he leaves his religion and lives among sins. Repentance is like washing away the dirt in the river, after which he returns to his religion until he puts his skin on again. These are examples.” [T10][R76]

77

Dawud ibn Rashid reported from Abu Abd Allah that Jesus son of Mary said:

“The seeker of the world is like one who drinks seawater: the more he drinks, the thirstier he becomes, until it kills him.” [R77]

78

Ibrahim ibn al-Walid al-Abdi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

“Time revolves through three days. Yesterday has passed, and you have received a warning from it. Today is the day in which you gather your provision. Tomorrow is a day about which you do not know what will happen to you.

“Matters are of three kinds. If the right guidance of a matter is clear, follow it. If its error is clear, avoid it. If it remains unclear, leave it to Allah.” [R78]

Translator's Notes

[T10] “Skin” here means the hide or outer covering.

References

[R76] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa’iq. Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Tawbah (138).

[R77] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (322).

[R78] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (328).

79

Yazid ibn Maysarah ibn Hubays reported that the disciples said, "Messiah of Allah, look at the House of Allah. How beautiful it is." Jesus replied:

"Yes, yes. I tell you the truth: Allah will not leave a single stone of this mosque standing upon another except that He will destroy it because of the sins of its people. Allah has no need of gold, silver, or stone.

"The things most beloved to Allah are righteous hearts. Through them Allah causes the earth to flourish, and when they are otherwise, He causes it to fall into ruin." [R79]

80

Abu al-Dil reported that Jesus son of Mary passed by a group of elderly men and said:

"Elders, do you not know that when a crop becomes white, dry, and firm, its harvest has drawn near?"

They said, "Yes." He said:

"Then prepare yourselves, for your harvest has drawn near."

He then passed by a group of young men and said:

"Young men, do you not know that a crop is harvested when it is ready?"

They said, "Yes." He replied:

"Then prepare yourselves, for you do not know when you will be harvested." [R80]

Section Four: Good Character

81

Malik and Abu al-Dil reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"Do not speak excessively without remembering Allah, for a hard heart is far from Allah, although you may not realise it.

References

[R79] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (488).

[R80] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-'Umr wa-l-Shayb (21).

"Do not look at people's sins as though you were lords. Look at your own sins as servants. People are either afflicted or spared. Show mercy to those who are afflicted, and praise Allah for well-being." [R81]

82

Qatadah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Ask me, for my heart is gentle and I consider myself small." [R82]

83

Yazid ibn Maysarah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Why do I not see the best act of worship among you?"

They asked, "What is the best act of worship, Spirit of Allah?" He replied:

"Humility before Allah, Mighty and Majestic." [R83]

References

[R81] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (329).

[R82] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (329).

[R83] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (312).

84

Hisham ibn Yahya al-Ghassani reported from some people of knowledge that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I tell you the truth, disciples: none of you will enter the kingdom of heaven until he becomes like a statue that does not rejoice when praised and does not grieve when criticised." [E25][R84]

85

Said ibn Abi Said al-Maqburi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"When there is a problem between you and your brother, meet him, greet him with peace, and ask Allah to forgive you and him. If he accepts, he is your brother. If he refuses, bring two, three, or four witnesses before him. If he still refuses, let him be to you like an unjust tax collector and like one who has disbelieved in Allah." [E26][R85]

86

Muhammad ibn Qays reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"A person's faith is not complete until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." [R86]

Explanations

[E25] What matters is whether Allah is pleased with you. Praise and criticism do not change your true standing before Him.

[E26] When a problem arises between you and another Muslim, meet him, greet him, and ask Allah to forgive both of you. Make a real effort to repair the relationship. If he still refuses after you have done your part, the blame is upon him.

References

[R84] al-Ghassani, Akhbar wa-Hikayat (6).

[R85] Ibn Wahb, al-Jami'(270).

[R86] Ibn Wahb, al-Jami'(241).

87

Said ibn Abd al-Aziz said:

"It has reached me that no phrase said to Jesus son of Mary was more beloved to him than for someone to say, 'What a poor and humble man this was.'" [R87]

88

Al-Hasan reported that John and Jesus, peace be upon them both, met. Jesus said to John, "Ask forgiveness for me. You are better than I." John said, "Ask forgiveness for me. You are better than I." Jesus replied:

"You are better than I. I pronounced peace upon myself, while Allah pronounced peace upon you."

Al-Hasan said, "By Allah, he recognised John's virtue." [R88]

89

Said ibn Abd al-Aziz reported from his teachers that Jesus was travelling through the pass of Afiq with one of his disciples. A man blocked their way and said, "I will not let you pass until I strike each of you once." They tried to reason with him, but he refused. Jesus said, "Here is my cheek. Strike it." The man struck him and allowed him to pass.

He then said to the disciple, "I will not let you pass until I strike you." The disciple refused. When Jesus saw this, he offered his other cheek. The man struck him and then let them both pass. Jesus said:

"O Allah, if this pleases You, then let it bring me to Your pleasure. If it was done from Your anger, then You have more right to defend me." [R89]

References

[R87] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (487).

[R88] Yahya ibn Sallam, Tafsir. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (394).

[R89] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (483).

Section Five: Students of Knowledge

90

Abu Farwah reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"Do not hide knowledge from people who deserve it, or you will sin. Do not give it to people who cannot carry or understand it, or you will act foolishly. Be like a kind doctor who puts the medicine where it will help." [E27][R90]

91

Abd al-Aziz ibn Zabyan reported that the Messiah Jesus son of Mary said:

"The one who learns, teaches, and acts upon his knowledge is called great in heaven." [R91]

92

Ziyad Abu Umar reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"It does not benefit you to learn what you do not know while you do not act on what you already know. Much knowledge only makes you prouder if you do not act on it." [R92]

93

Wahb reported that the Messiah said:

"Do not throw pearls before swine, for they will do nothing with them. Do not give wisdom to one who does not want it. Wisdom is more precious than pearls, and one who does not want it is worse than swine." [E28][R93]

Explanations

[E27] Teach people what they can understand and what will benefit them. Do not give every difficult matter to every listener. A good teacher is like a doctor who chooses the right medicine for each person.

[E28] Give people the knowledge they need and can understand. Wisdom should be given to those who recognise its value.

References

[R90] al-Darimi, al-Musnad (391). Ibn Abi Khaythamah, al-Tarikh al-Kabir (4594).

[R91] Zuhayr ibn Harb, al-'Ilm (7). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (330).

[R92] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (327).

[R93] al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (311).

Malik ibn Dinar reported that Allah, Mighty and Majestic, revealed to Jesus son of Mary:

"Advise yourself first. If you obey the advice, then advise people. Otherwise, be ashamed before Me." [E29][R94]

Explanations

[E29] Correct yourself, but do not use your own sins as an excuse to stop telling people what is right. Leave the sin yourself and warn others from it.

References

[R94] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (300). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Amr bi-l-Ma'ruf wa-l-Nahy 'an al-Munkar (97).

95

Imran al-Kufi reported that Jesus son of Mary said to the disciples:

"Do not take payment from the people you teach, just as you gave me no payment. Salt of the earth, do not become corrupt. Everything can be treated with salt when it becomes corrupt, but if salt itself becomes corrupt, there is no treatment for it.

"Know that you have two signs of ignorance: laughing when there is nothing to laugh at, and sleeping late in the morning without having stayed awake in worship during the night." [E30][R95]

96

Abd al-Jabbar ibn Ubayd Allah ibn Sulayman reported that Jesus son of Mary approached his companions one night and said:

"Do not make money from the Book of Allah. If you stay away from doing so, Allah will seat you on raised seats, a single stone of which is better than this world and everything in it." [E31]

Abd al-Jabbar said that these are the seats mentioned in the Qur'an: "In a seat of truth with an all-powerful King." [R96]

97

Abd Allah ibn Dinar al-Bahrani and others reported that the Messiah said to his companions:

"I tell you the truth: the worst of you is a scholar who chooses the world and wishes that all people would imitate his actions. How dearly the servants of the world would love to find an excuse through him - and how far they are from any excuse, if only they knew." [R97]

Explanations

[E30] Jesus taught them without charging them. Do not turn religious knowledge into a way of chasing money. Teach for Allah and seek the reward from Him.

[E31] Do not turn the Book of Allah into a way of making money.

References

[R95] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (283). Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (83).

[R96] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (1447). The second collection of Yahya ibn Ma'in's reports (51).

[R97] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (340).

98

Shuayb ibn Harb reported from one of his teachers that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Allah, Mighty and Majestic, loves the servant who learns a trade through which he becomes independent of people, and He dislikes the servant who learns knowledge and turns it into a trade." [R98]

99

Dawud ibn Hilal al-Nusaybi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Woe to you, evil scholars. You hope for a low desire and expect a lofty Paradise, while forgetting the terror of the Day of Resurrection." [R99]

100

Malik ibn Dinar reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Blessed is the one whose ears hear what his own tongue says." [R100]

101

Said ibn Utarid al-Fazari, who often wept, reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"How long will you describe the road to travellers while remaining lost yourself? A little speech and much action are enough." [E32][R101]

102

Khalaf ibn Hawshab reported that Jesus son of Mary said to the disciples:

"Just as the kings have left wisdom to you, leave the world to them." [R102]

Explanations

[E32] This is like someone who tells a traveller the right road but never walks that road himself. Do not teach people the truth while refusing to act upon it. Speak less and act more.

References

[R98] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, *Islah al-Mal* (316). al-Dulabi, *al-Kuna wa-l-Asma'* (2089).

[R99] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, *al-Zuhd* (466).

[R100] al-Dinawari, *al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm* (1224).

[R101] Akhbar al-Shuyukh wa-Akhlaquhum (194).

[R102] Ibn al-Mubarak, *al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq* (284). al-Shafi'i, *al-Sunan al-Ma'thurah* (423).

103

Khaythamah reported that Jesus son of Mary used to prepare food for his companions. He would then stand over them and say:

"This is how you should serve students of knowledge." [R103]

104

Sulayman ibn al-Mughirah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Blessed is the one whom Allah, Mighty and Majestic, taught His Book and who then did not die as an arrogant tyrant." [E33][R104]

Section Six: Not Clinging to This World

Zuhd means not clinging to this world or making its pleasures your main concern. It means using what you need while caring more about the Hereafter.

105

Abu Hurayrah and Shimr ibn Atiyyah reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Eat what grows from the earth, drink plain water, and leave this world safely." [R105]

106

Abd Allah ibn Dinar al-Bahrani reported that Jesus son of Mary said to the disciples:

"Eat barley bread and leave this world safely. I tell you the truth: the sweetness of this world is the bitterness of the Hereafter, and the bitterness of this world is the sweetness of the Hereafter. The servants of Allah do not live for comfort and luxury.

"I tell you the truth: the worst among you is a scholar who loves this world and puts it before his knowledge. If he could, he would make everyone follow his way." [R106]

Explanations

[E33] Knowledge should make a person humble. If learning only makes him proud, harsh, and harmful to people, he has not benefited from what he learned.

References

[R103] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34243). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Qira al-Dayf (67).

[R104] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Tawadu' wa-l-Khumul (208). al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (1196).

[R105] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34227). Reports of Khaythamah ibn Sulayman.

[R106] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (484). Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (205).

107

Abd Allah ibn Dinar reported that Jesus, peace and blessings be upon him, said to the disciples:

"Eat barley bread with coarse salt. Eat it only when you are truly hungry. Wear rough woollen clothes and leave this world safely.

"I tell you the truth: the sweetness of this world is the bitterness of the Hereafter, and the bitterness of this world is the sweetness of the Hereafter. The servants of Allah do not live for comfort and luxury.

"I tell you the truth: the worst among you is a scholar who loves this world and puts it before his knowledge. If he could, he would make everyone act like him. How dearly the servants of this world would love to find an excuse through him - and how far they are from having any excuse, if only they knew." [R107]

108

Ibn Umar reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"I tell you the truth: eating wheat bread, drinking fresh water, and sleeping on rubbish heaps with dogs are more than enough for the one who seeks to inherit Paradise." [R108]

109

Thabit al-Bunani reported that a man said to Jesus son of Mary, "If only you took a donkey to ride for your needs." Jesus replied:

"I am too honoured before Allah for Him to give me something that would distract me from Him." [E34][R109]

Explanations

[E34] Owning things can bring work, care, and distraction. Jesus did not want something that would distract him from worship.

References

[R107] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Ju' (191).

[R108] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (326).

[R109] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (34235). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (309).

110

Salim ibn Abi al-Jad reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Work for Allah, and do not work only for your stomachs. Look at this bird: it goes out in the morning and returns in the evening. It neither sows nor harvests, yet Allah provides for it.

"If you say that your stomachs are larger than the bird's, then look at the wild cattle and donkeys. They go out in the morning and return in the evening. They neither sow nor harvest, yet Allah provides for them.

"Keep away from extra worldly possessions. Extra worldly possessions are filthy before Allah." [R110]

111

In another narration, Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad al-Muharibi reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Do not store today's food for tomorrow. The One who brought it to you today can bring it to you tomorrow.

"Look at the birds: they neither plough nor sow. They go out for what Allah provides and return.

"If you ask what will be enough for you, look at the wild donkeys and cattle. They go out for what Allah provides and return satisfied." [R111]

112

Abd Allah ibn Abi al-Hudhayl reported:

"When John saw Jesus, he said, 'Give me counsel.' Jesus said, 'Do not become angry.' John said, 'I cannot.' Jesus said, 'Then do not acquire wealth.' John replied, 'Perhaps I can do that.'" [R112]

References

[R110] Ibn al-Mubarak, *al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq* (848). Ibn Abi Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (34232).

[R111] Ibn Abi Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (35583).

[R112] Ibn Abi Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (34245). Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *al-Zuhd* (322).

113

Sufyan reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

| "Love of this world is the root of every sin. Wealth has many diseases."

They asked, "What are its diseases?" He replied:

| "Its owner is rarely safe from pride and boasting."

They asked, "What if he is safe from them?" He replied:

| "Caring for it still distracts him from remembering Allah." [R113]

114

Wahb ibn Munabbih reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

| "I tell you the truth: the sides of heaven are empty of the rich. A camel entering through the eye of a needle is easier than a rich man entering Paradise." [R114]

115

Al-Shabi reported that rain failed during the time of Jesus son of Mary. A cloud passed by, and Jesus saw an angel driving it. He called to the angel and asked, "Where are you going?" The angel replied, "To the land of so-and-so."

Jesus went there and found a man repairing the small water channels with a digging tool. Jesus asked him, "Would you like more rain than this?" The man said, "No." Jesus asked, "Less than this?" He said, "No." Jesus asked, "What are you doing with your crop this year?" The man replied, "What crop? The worms and insects will eat it."

Jesus asked, "What did you do with the previous year's harvest?" He said:

| "I divided it into three parts. One part was for the land, the cattle and the family. One part was for the poor, the needy and the traveller. The final part was for my own needs."

Jesus said:

| "I do not know which of these three parts carries the greatest reward." [R115]

References

[R113] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (475).

[R114] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (476).

[R115] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq, supplement, p. 32.

116

Yahya ibn Said reported:

"Jesus son of Mary never built a house and never placed one stone upon another." [R116]

117

Mujahid and al-Shabi reported:

"Jesus son of Mary used to eat wild plants, wear wool, and sleep wherever evening overtook him. He had no child who could die and no house that could fall into ruin." [R117]

118

Ubayd ibn Umayr added:

"He did not ask about what he had lost. He had no child who could die and no house over which he could grieve. He slept wherever night overtook him." [R118]

119

Hilal ibn Yasaf added:

"He stored no lunch for dinner and no dinner for the next day." He used to say, "Every day comes with its provision." [R119]

120

In another narration, al-Hasan reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"I have cast the world down upon its face and sat upon its back. I have no child who can die and no house that can be ruined."

They said, "Why do you not take a house?" He replied:

"Build me a house upon the path of a flood."

References

- [R116] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (88).
 [R117] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (89). Abu Hatim, al-Zuhd (559).
 [R118] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (88). Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (31877).
 [R119] Hannad ibn al-Sari, al-Zuhd.

They said, "It would not remain standing." They asked, "Why do you not take a wife?" He replied:

| "What would I do with a wife who will die?" [R120]

121

In another narration, Zarah ibn Ibrahim al-Dimashqi reported from Ibrahim that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

| "I tell you the truth: just as none of you can build a house upon the waves of the sea, do not take the world as a permanent dwelling." [R121]

122

Sari reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

| "The world is the farm of Satan, and you are its cultivators." [R122]

123

Al-Ala ibn al-Musayyib reported from a man that the disciples asked Jesus son of Mary, "What do you eat?" He replied, "Barley bread." They asked, "What do you wear?" He replied, "Wool." They asked, "What do you spread beneath yourself?" He replied, "The earth."

They said, "All of this is difficult." He replied:

| "You will not attain the kingdom of the heavens until you accept this willingly."

Another wording has: "until you desire it." [R123]

124

Ibn Shihab said:

| "Jesus son of Mary wore nothing but wool until Allah took him." [R124]

References

[R120] Hannad ibn al-Sari, al-Zuhd.

[R121] Hannad ibn al-Sari, al-Zuhd.

[R122] al-Bayhaqi, al-Zuhd al-Kabir (267).

[R123] al-Bayhaqi, al-Zuhd al-Kabir (267).

[R124] Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (90).

125

Abu al-Aliyah said:

"When Jesus son of Mary was raised, he left nothing behind except a coarse woollen cloak, light footwear, and a sling with which he cast at birds." [T11][R125]

126

Ibrahim ibn Abi Hurrah and Abd Allah ibn Shawdhab reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Fine clothing can produce pride in the heart." [R126]

127

Abd al-Wahid al-Qantari reported that the Children of Israel mocked Jesus son of Mary for his poverty. He said:

"Poor people, you have become free of wealth. Show me a single person who disobeyed Allah while seeking poverty." [R127]

128

Layth reported that Jesus son of Mary saw the world in the form of an old woman adorned with every ornament. He asked her, "How many times have you married?" She replied, "I cannot count them." He asked, "Did they all die and leave you, or did they all divorce you?" She replied, "I killed them all."

Jesus said:

"Woe to your remaining husbands. How do they fail to take warning from your former husbands? You destroy them one after another, yet they do not remain on guard against you." [R128]

Translator's Notes

[T11] The cloak described is made from thick wool of the kind worn by servants and poor people.

References

[R125] 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Musannaf (21697). Abu Nu'aym, Hilyat al-Awliya'.

[R126] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Tawadu' wa-l-Khumul (145). Abu Nu'aym, Hilyat al-Awliya'.

[R127] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Wara' (al-Marwazi's recension) (243). al-Dinawari, al-Mujalasah wa-Jawahir al-'Ilm (1580).

[R128] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (27).

129

Shahr ibn Hawshab reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Do not take the world as a lord, lest it take you as slaves. Store your treasure with One who will never lose it. The owner of worldly treasure fears that disaster will strike it, but the owner of treasure stored with Allah, Mighty and Majestic, does not fear disaster upon it." [R129]

130

Ibrahim al-Taymi reported that Jesus said:

"Place your treasures in heaven, for a person's heart is with his treasure." [R130]

131

Yahya ibn Abi Bakr al-Abdi reported from one of the scholars that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Disciples, I have cast the world down on its face for you. Do not raise it after me.

"One bad thing about this world is that Allah, Mighty and Majestic, is disobeyed in it. Another is that you cannot reach the Hereafter while holding tightly to it. Pass through this world, and do not build your life as though you will remain here." [R131]

132

Dawud ibn Rashid reported from Abu Abd Allah that Jesus son of Mary said:

"Disciples, do not cling to this world, and you will pass through it without worry." [R132]

References

[R129] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (31).

[R130] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (313).

[R131] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (32).

[R132] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (324).

133

Abd Allah ibn Uqayl reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

“A sign of people who turn away from this world is that they leave every companion who does not desire what they desire.” [T12][R133]

134

Al-Husayn ibn Abd al-Rahman reported from Zakariyya ibn Adi that Jesus son of Mary said:

“Disciples, accept a small share of this world while keeping your religion safe, just as the people of this world accept a small share of religion so that their worldly life remains safe.” [R134]

Other Reports

135

Al-Najib ibn al-Sari reported that Jesus son of Mary passed through the region of Hebron and made three prayers for its people:

“O Allah, whoever comes to it in fear, grant him safety within it. Do not give wild beasts power over its people. When the surrounding land suffers drought, do not let Hebron suffer drought.” [R135]

136

Salim ibn Abi al-Jad reported that Jesus son of Mary said:

“A beggar has a right, even if he arrives riding a horse decorated with silver.” [R136]

Translator's Notes

[T12] “Companion” here means someone a person mixes with closely.

References

[R133] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (354).

[R134] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, al-Zuhd (522). Nu‘aym ibn Hammad, al-Fitan (705).

[R135] Nu‘aym ibn Hammad, al-Fitan (705, 1/247).

[R136] Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Musannaf (9824).

137

Sufyan ibn Uyaynah reported that Jesus son of Mary met Satan. Satan said to him, "Are you the one whose lordship is so great that you spoke as an infant in the cradle, when no one before you had spoken there?"

Jesus replied:

"No. Lordship and greatness belong to the God who made me speak, who will cause me to die, and who will then bring me to life."

Satan said, "Are you the one whose lordship is so great that you bring the dead to life?"

Jesus replied:

"No. Lordship belongs to Allah, who will cause me to die, who caused the one I brought to life to die, and who will then bring me to life."

Satan said, "By Allah, you are a god in heaven and a god upon earth."

Gabriel, peace be upon him, struck Satan with his wing, and he did not stop until he reached the edge of the sun. Gabriel struck him again, and he did not stop until he reached the hot spring. He struck him a third time and drove him into the seventh sea, sinking him until he tasted its black mud. Satan emerged saying:

"No one has ever met from another what I have met from you, son of Mary." [R137]

138

Bakr ibn Abd Allah reported that the disciples could not find their prophet, peace be upon him, so they went out looking for him and found him walking on the water. One of them said, "Prophet of Allah, may I walk out to you?" He said, "Yes."

The man placed one foot on the water, then tried to place the other and began to sink.

Jesus said:

"Give me your hand, person of little faith. If the son of Adam had firm certainty equal to the weight of a grain - or an atom - he would walk on water." [R138]

References

[R137] Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Maka'id al-Shaytan (54).

[R138] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (315).

139

Al-Hadrami ibn Lahiq al-Taymi reported that Jesus was asked, "How do you walk upon water?" He replied, "Through certainty." They said, "We too have certainty." Jesus asked:

"Are stone, clay, and gold equal in your sight?"

They said, "No." He replied:

"They are equal in my sight." [E35][R139]

140

Abu al-Hudhayl reported that he heard a monk say that Satan said to Jesus, peace be upon him, when he placed him on the Temple in Jerusalem:

"You claim that you bring the dead to life. If that is so, ask Allah to turn this mountain into bread."

Jesus replied, "Do all people live on bread?" Satan then said, "If you are as you claim, throw yourself from this place. The angels will catch you." Jesus replied:

"My Lord, Mighty and Majestic, commanded me not to test Him with myself. I do not know whether He would keep me safe or not." [E36][R140]

141

In another narration, al-Zuhri said:

"The servant does not test his Lord. Allah tests His servant."

Jesus defeated Satan in the argument. [R141]

Explanations

[E35] His trust in Allah was so complete that stone, clay, and gold were the same in his heart. He did not depend upon gold for what Allah would provide; he depended upon Allah.

[E36] Do not put yourself into danger to test whether Allah will save you. Allah tests His servants; His servants do not test Him. Stay away from trials when Allah has kept you safe from them.

References

[R139] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (331).

[R140] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (314). 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Musannaf (21137).

[R141] 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Musannaf (21137).

142

Sufyan reported that Jesus son of Mary used to say:

"I tell you these things so that you may learn, not just so that you may be amazed."
[R142]

143

Al-Shabi reported:

"Whenever the Hour was mentioned in the presence of Jesus son of Mary, he cried out and said, 'It is not fitting for the son of Mary to hear the Hour mentioned and remain silent.'" [R143]

144

Ibn Judan transmitted that Jesus passed while reciting the talbiyah:

"At Your service: Your servant, the son of Your female servant and the daughter of Your servant."

Before that, seventy prophets had passed through. The ropes used to lead their camels were made from palm fibre, and they prayed in the Mosque of al-Khayf. [T13][T14][R144]

Translator's Notes

[T13] The talbiyah is the pilgrimage declaration beginning, "At Your service, O Allah."

[T14] The Mosque of al-Khayf is at Mina, near Makkah.

References

[R142] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (485).

[R143] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (229). Abu Ubayd, al-Khutab wa-l-Mawa'iz (86).

[R144] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Zuhd (p. 51).

145

Al-Shabi reported that Gabriel met Jesus son of Mary and said, "Peace be upon you, Spirit of Allah." Jesus replied, "And peace be upon you, Spirit of Allah." Jesus asked, "Gabriel, when is the Hour?"

Gabriel trembled and shook his wings and said:

"The one asked about it knows no more than the one asking. 'It weighs heavily upon the heavens and the earth. It will not come upon you except suddenly.'"

Or he recited: "None will disclose its time except Him." [R145]

Final Advice

146

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"I hope that if my life is prolonged, I will meet Jesus son of Mary. If death comes to me first, then whoever among you meets him should convey my greeting of peace to him." [R146]

147

Abu Hurayrah said:

"I hope that if my life is prolonged, I will live to see Jesus son of Mary. If death comes to me first, then whoever meets him should convey my greeting of peace to him."

Muhammad ibn Shams al-Din said:

"I hope that if my life is prolonged, I will live to see Jesus son of Mary. If death comes to me first, then whoever meets him should convey my greeting of peace to him." [R147]

References

[R145] Ibn al-Mubarak, al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqa'iq (228, p. 77).

[R146] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad (7970).

[R147] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad (7971).