

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MERCIFUL THE BENEFICIENT

MANNERS IN ISLAM

PREFACE

The best of praise and glory be to Allah the lord of the universe, and the best of prayers and peace be on his Messenger Muhammad, his kin, his companions, and his pious followers who follow his guidance and etiquette. O Allah guide us to follow them in words and actions until we die.

This is a brief book on “The etiquette of Islam” in which I collected selected texts on the manners of Islam. The Hadiths cited in this book are either authentic (Sahih) or good (Hasan).

I wrote this book because I have seen many of my beloved brothers and sisters disregard these etiquettes and misinterpret them. In compiling this, I hope to remind them of these manners. I do not claim to be better or less in need of practicing these manners; but, it is the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil and observing the order of Allah “And remind because a reminder is beneficial to the believers.” ¹ May Allah enable all of us to benefit from good reminders and make this of benefit to myself and my readers. May Allah protect and guide us in this life and in the hereafter.

Riyadh, 1 Muharam, 1412
Abdul Fattah Aboghodda

¹ Al-Zariat 51:55

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Introduction

The religion of Islam has rules of etiquette and a moral code involving every aspect of life. These are applicable for the whole society; the elderly, the young, men and women. We must not forget that the Prophet ((PBUH)) said, "Women are the counterpart of men." Hence, what is required of men, in adhering to Islamic manners, is required of women; for together they form the Muslim society and through them Islam is introduced and identified.

These manners cover even the slightest acts, such as entering, or exiting a washroom, the posture of sitting, and cleaning one's self. At the time of the Prophet, one of the polytheists mockingly said to his companion Salman Al-Farisi: "Your prophet has taught you everything, even the manners of going to the toilet." Salman answered, "Yes, the Prophet forbade us from facing the Qibla when urinating or getting rid of body waste." Salman continued, "the Prophet asked us not to use the right hand when cleaning ourselves and to use at least three stones for cleaning³."

1. Appearance

1.1 **Distinct Muslim Personality** Islam advocates this etiquette and stresses it so as to perfect the Muslim personality and to bring about harmony among people. There is no doubt that embodying such manners and virtues enhances personal style and qualities, refines personality and brings us closer to the hearts and minds of others. The forthcoming manners and etiquette are central to Islam, its purposes and its aims. Calling it "etiquette" by no means implies that it is marginal to life and social behaviour.

² Reported, and with wording by Abu Dawood in the book of Tahara 1:162, Tirmizi 1:127 and Imam Ahmad in (Al-Musnad) 6:256. He stated that Ayesha (RA) reported that the Prophet said, "Yes, for women indeed are the counterpart of men." Imam Al-Khattabi said that this means that women are analogous and similar to men in creation, in attributes and in being subject to Islamic rules, unless otherwise specified..

³ Reported by Imam Muslim in the book of Tahara (cleanness) 3:152, and Abu Dawood, Tirmizi, Nasa'i and Ibn Maja in the book of Tahara (cleanness). The wording, however, is that of Muslim.

It does not mean Muslims have the option of ignoring this code of behaviour, or that it is merely preferable to adhere to it.

In pointing out that manners rank higher than deeds, Imam Al-Qarāfi in his book *Al-Furwūq*⁴ said, "Learn that a little etiquette is better than a lot of good actions." Riwāim, the righteous scholar, told his son, "Oh my son, make your deeds salt, and your manners flour." Many good manners with few good deeds are better than many good deeds with few good manners.

Even if some of these rules appear to be simple common courtesy, it is important to highlight their significance. Many Muslims commit errors which blemish the Islamic personality, whose purpose is meant to be unique in its beauty, perfection and traits. Our master⁵, the Messenger of Allah ((PBUH)) directed the blessed companions by saying: "You are on your way to meet your brothers, put on a nice dress and fix your riding⁶ so you appear distinct among people as a fleck [on a beautiful face] Allah does not like roughness nor rough manners.⁸" When the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "No one will enter Paradise if they have at heart a grain of arrogance." A man asked: "A man may like his dress to be nice and his shoes nice" The Prophet answered "Allah is beautiful and likes beauty. Arrogance is to deny rights and look down at people." Shaikh

⁴ 3:69 and 4:272.

⁵ The prominent scholar Imam Abdullah Al-Abdoucy Al-Fassi, Imam and Mufti of the city of Fez, Morocco, who died in 849 in Hijra, was asked about adding the expression "Sayedina," (our master), when the name of our Prophet (PBUH) is mentioned in prayers that are quoted verbatim, but did not reach us verbatim. Al-Fassi replied, "Nothing must be added or reduced to the Prophet's original wording." However, if the addition is "our master," then it is permissible, because the Prophet (PBUH) used this expression when his companions asked: "Allah has ordered us to pray for you, how should we pray for you?" On the other hand, if the expressions were not his original wordings, we can add "our master Muhammad."

The great scholar Imam and Judge Kassem Al-Akabani Al-Talmassani who died in 854 H, was also asked this question, and he replied: "The best of Zikr (remembrances) are those stated in their exact forms by the original propagator of this religion (the Prophet PBUH), but mentioning the name of the Prophet along with mastery and other glorifying titles is allowed. It is considered an additional worship, especially, after the Prophet ascertained that: "I am the master of the children of Adam" (reported by Bukhari and Muslim and others). Mentioning the Prophet's name in its mastery title after receiving this Hadith is considered a belief in it, and an acceptance of everything the Prophet delivered is considered part of worship and faith. (Al-Ma'iar Al Mu'arab, by Imam Ahmad Ibn Yahia Al-Wanshrishy 11:81)

⁶ This refers to whatever is placed on the back of an animal for the purpose of riding it, decorating it, or for the comfort of the traveler.

⁷ Shama are black flecks on the face or on the body. Muslims should look distinct and explicit in their loveliness, their cleanness, their nice smell and their good looks, just as a black fleck enhances the beauty of an already nice face.

⁸ As reported by Sahel Ibn Al-Hanzaliah, cited by Abu Dawood 4:349, in the book of clothing, and Imam Ahmad in (AL-Musnad) 4:180, and Al-Hakem in (Al-Mustadrak Ala Al Sahihain) 4:183 in the book of clothing. The wording here is his.

Ibn Taimia⁹ said that the beauty that Allah likes include nice clothes. Hence it could be said that Allah likes all nice things. Therefore, a Muslim ought to be recognized by neat dress, cleanliness and graceful appearance.

1.2 CLEANLINESS AND WASHING

The Sunna is to keep perfume and to use it regularly on oneself. Al-Bukhari narrated that Salman Al-Farsi said: the Prophet, peace be upon him, said "Allah will forgive the sins of the past week for he who on Friday will take a bath, cleanse himself, put on his [regular] perfume or any perfume available in house. Then, he goes out [to Jumu'ah prayer] and does not try to separate two friends. Then he prays wherever he could and listens to the Imam."

If the body became odorous a day or two before Friday, one should not wait till Friday to cleanse the body. We should wash our bodies as soon as it require washing to keep ourselves clean and fresh.

To take a bath on Friday is specifically required since a large number of people will be gathering at mosques. However, if our body became dirty or we sweat on a particular day, then, we should take a bath at the end of day or the next morning. This is indicated by a Hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim that Abu Huraira said, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "It is the duty of every Muslim to have a bath once every week to wash his head and body."**Another Hadith**

1.3 ARRIVING FROM A JOURNEY If you are traveling to visit someone or if you are about to receive guests, whether those in question are your parents, relatives, peers, or friends of a different age, make sure that your hands, feet, and socks are clean, and your appearance and clothing is neat. Never neglect or underestimate the importance of your look, for that would certainly mar the pleasure of the meeting, while dulling the enjoyment of those you meet. In this regard, the Prophet directed his companions upon returning from a journey: "You are returning to your brethren, dress nicely, and sort out your rides so that you may become a beauty mark among people, for Allah does not like sloppiness or acting in a sloppy way."

⁹ The collection of Fatawi, 22:134

Try to bring some gifts to those receiving you, and likewise present your guests with a present. Always be prepared to reciprocate with a suitable gift. The subtle joy of seeing your beloved ones will be vividly remembered for many years. A gift, however symbolic, will greatly enhance the pleasure of such a meeting. The Prophet (PBUH), as reported by Bukhary, said: "Exchange gifts; exchange love." Our Muslim predecessors used to leave their host with a present which could be as symbolic as an *Arâkstick*.

1.4 **DRESS PROPERLY WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS** Dress properly, even among friends and relatives. Dress properly when visiting your parents, a pious person, an elder, or even a relative or a friend. Your attire should be clean and elegant, not ugly or unsightly. We are attracted or repulsed by what we see. If you look good in clean clothes, smelling nice, you will be pleasant to look at and people will be attracted to you and enjoy your presence. If you were the opposite, people will look down on you even if you were a relative or friend. To look good while visiting or being visited is an instinctive trait in addition to being an Islamic manner. Do not ignore this aspect because you consider yourself to be close to your hosts or guests.

Imam Bukhari in his book, "Al-Adab Al-Mufrad" reported that the great follower Abi Al-'Alia Al-Riahi Al-Basri said, "Muslims were at their best when visiting each other." Al-Hafez Al-Haithami in "Majma Al-Zawaed" (1:169) reported that Thabet Al-Banani, the student of Imam Anas bin Malik said, "When I used to visit Anas, he would call for a perfume and run it along his cheeks."

Accordingly, if you were visited at home while dressed very casually, as it sometimes happens, you should change for your visitor. This will enhance his respect for you and will complement your hospitality. It is, after all, the manners of the early Muslims.

¹⁰ A tender branch of the tooth-brush tree *Salvadora persica*.