

## CHAPTER FORTY-NINE

### THE SUNNAH OF SNEEZING AND YAWNING

*O Allah (The Exalted) bless our liege-lord and master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in the Heavenly Assembly until the Day of Judgement.*

There are etiquettes of sneezing and yawning. Unfortunately, we are far from the Sunnah and many do not know about these Sunnahs. If someone sneezes they will purposely say 'Achoo' loudly or say 'Haa' loudly when yawning. This is against the Sunnah. When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would sneeze, he would say 'Alhamdulillah' (All praise be to Allah). The person who heard this would say 'Yarhamuk-Allah' <sup>i</sup> (may Allah have mercy on you), to this the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would answer 'Yahdee Kumullah Wayuslih Baa lakum' (may Allah, The Exalted, guide you). Remember that to say 'Alhamdulillah' (All praise be to Allah) is Sunnah and the person who hears it, it is Wajib (necessary) to reply. <sup>ii</sup> If someone sneezes and does not know the Sunnah then you should tell them what the Sunnah is.

'Abd-Allah Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that "When one sneezes say 'Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Aalameen (All praise be to Allah, Lord of all the worlds)'." <sup>iii</sup>

#### Angels reply

'Abd-Allah Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that when one sneezes and says 'Alhamdulillah' (All praise be to Allah) then the angels say 'Rabbil 'Aalameen' (Lord of the worlds) and if he says, 'Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Aalameen', then the angels reply 'Yarhamuk-Allah' (may Allah have mercy on you). <sup>iv</sup>

#### If there is no-one to answer

If one sneezes and says 'Alhamdulillah' and their no-one to reply then say 'Yaghfirullahu Lee Walakum' (may Allah (The Exalted) forgive both you and me), as the angels reply to the person's sneeze. <sup>v</sup>

#### Hearing but not seeing

If you have heard someone sneeze from but you don't see for instance someone behind a wall or in another room etc. then say, "Yarhmuk-Allahu In Hamit-Tallah" (If you have praised Allah (The Exalted) then may Allah (The Exalted) have mercy upon you). <sup>vi</sup> This was the practise of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him).

#### Sneeze whilst talking & you have spoken the truth

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that, "The truth is at that time (when one is talking) when one sneezes." <sup>vii</sup>

We find that when one is talking and sneezes then that is evidence of the truth. *Subhanallah!*

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, "When one is saying something (talking) and sneezes then that is the truth." <sup>viii</sup>

#### Duties towards a Muslim

The duties of a Muslim towards another Muslim are five;

1. To return his greeting (salaam),
2. To visit the sick,
3. To accompany a (funeral procession) to his burial,
4. To accept his invitation,
5. To respond to someone who has sneezed. <sup>ix</sup>

#### What is the reply

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that, "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has said that when someone from you sneezes then say 'Alhamdulillah' (All praise be to Allah) then the person who heard it will reply by saying 'Yarhamuk-Allah' (may Allah have

mercy on you), then he will say 'Yahdeekumullah Wayus-leehu Baalakum. (may Allah have mercy on you)."<sup>x</sup>

### **To reply is necessary**

When one sneezes, saying 'Alhamulillah' (All praise be to Allah) is a Sunnah and to reply is Wajib meaning necessary, otherwise one will be sinful.

### **Reply not necessary after the third time**

If the sneezing person has flu/cold or any other difficulty and sneezes repeatedly, then it is not necessary to reply after the third time.<sup>xi</sup>

Abu Musa (may Allah be pleased with him) heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) say that, "Whosoever sneezes and says 'Alhamdulillah' (All praise be to Allah) then say 'Yar Hamuk-Allah' (may Allah have mercy on you) and if the person dose not say this then do not say 'Yar Hamuk-Allah'.<sup>xii</sup>

### **Paradise for two dinars**

Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him) was on his way to a riverside, nearby a boat was passing carrying passengers. Suddenly a person sneezed from the boat and said, 'Alhamdulillah'. The ship was travelling at speed and Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him) started to look here and there. Nearby there was an empty boat; he asked the person whom the boat belongs to? 'I want to follow that boat how much will it cost?' He said 'Two dinars'; Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him) agreed and got into the boat to follow the one carrying the passengers. When the boat got near to the other boat, Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him) in order to reply to the answer to 'Alhamdulillah' (All praise be to Allah) he replied in a loud voice 'YarhamukAllah' (may Allah have mercy on you) from the ship a voice came saying 'Yahdikumullah Wayusleehu Baalakum'(may Allah have mercy on you).

Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him) said to the owner of the boat, 'Now my job is done take me back'. The person was surprised and said, 'You spent two dinars just to reply to the sneeze?' He replied, "Yes."

As Soon as Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him) reached the riverside a voice from the unseen was heard "O Abu Dawud (may Allah be pleased with him)! With two dinars you have bought Jannah!"<sup>xiii</sup> Subhanallah!

You have read the benefits of following a small Sunnah, let us try to follow each and every Sunnah and we will benefit in this world and the hereafter, Insha-Allah. Without doubt, following the Sunnah earns you paradise. This was the zeal of following the Sunnah of our pious, yet we do not pay any attention in following the Sunnah and at times feel ashamed. We feel ashamed of gaining reward and pleased in committing sin.

### **Covering the face**

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, "When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would sneeze he would cover his blessed face with his blessed hand or with a cloth and lower his voice."<sup>xiv</sup>

### **Allah (The Exalted) likes sneezing**

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Allah (The Exalted) likes sneezing and dislikes yawning, so if someone sneezes and then praises Allah (The Exalted) then it is obligatory on every Muslim who heard him, to say May Allah (The Exalted) be merciful to you (Yar-Hamuk-allah). But with regards to yawning, it is from Shaytan, so one must try one's best to stop it, if one says 'Haa' when yawning, Shaytan will laugh at him."<sup>xv</sup>

### **Yawning**

The Muslim who is sensitive and well-mannered does not yawn in a gathering if he can help it. If the urge to yawn overtakes him, then he tries to resist it as much as possible.

Yawning is a sign of tiredness. Shaytan makes you feel tired when you do something good. When you yarn say 'La Hawla Wala Quwwata Illa Billa Hil 'Aliyyil 'Adheem' (There is no might or power except with the help of Allah (The Exalted) who is High and Exalted) to rid the influence of Shaytan.<sup>xvi</sup>

'Ubada bin Samat and Sahddad bin Aws and Wathala (may Allah be pleased with them) narrate that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"When someone wants to burp or sneeze do not raise your voice as the Shaytan likes the voice be raised."* <sup>xvii</sup>

It is seen that people make others laugh by burping loudly, the Shaytan likes the voice be raised. We should change our bad habits and follow the blessed Sunnah. It is bad manners to burp aloud anyway.

#### **Do not make a noise**

Wathila (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), *"When one sneezes or yawns do not make a noise as the Devil likes this and that the voice is raised."* <sup>xviii</sup>

*"When one of you says 'HAA' the Devil laughs at him."* (Making noise whilst yawning). <sup>xix</sup>

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"Yawning is from Shaytan and if anyone of you yawns, he should check his yawning as much as possible, for if anyone of you (during the act of yawning) should say: 'Haa', Shaytan will laugh at him."* <sup>xx</sup>

#### **Cover the mouth**

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that, *"One should hold his hand over his mouth if he cannot help yawning."* <sup>xxi</sup>

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that, Allah's Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *"Yawning in prayer is an act of the Devil, so when one of you yawns he should restrain it as much as possible."* In another version the words are; *"He should place his hand upon his mouth."* <sup>xxii</sup>

When in the standing position in Salaah use the right hand and in the rest of the positions use the left hand to cover your mouth. <sup>xxiii</sup>

#### **This is from devil**

The Grandfather of Adi Ibn Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that, Allah's Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *"Sneezing, drowsing, yawning in prayer, also bleeding after childbirth, vomiting and nose-bleeding are from (the acts of) Shaytan."* <sup>xxiv</sup>

Abu Sa'eed Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that, *"When someone yawns, place the hand over the mouth as the Shaytan enters the mouth."* <sup>xxv</sup> *Allahu Akbar!*

#### **Manners of sneezing and yawning**

1. When sneezing, lower the head, cover your nose and mouth either with a cloth or with your hands, and keep the noise minimal. <sup>xxvi</sup>
2. If in a gathering and one sneezes a few times then to reply once is Wajib, after that if the person sneezing says *Alhamdulillah* it is desirable to reply. <sup>xxvii</sup>
3. If an elderly woman sneezes then the man should give the reply so that she can hear and reply to a young woman's sneeze in your heart. <sup>xxviii</sup>
4. If in Salaah you sneeze then do not say '*Alhamdulillah*'. <sup>xxix</sup>
5. If one is in Salaah and someone sneezes and you reply then your Salaah has become Faasid, meaning your Salaah will become void and will have to be repeated. <sup>xxx</sup>
6. Say '*Alhamdulillah*' when you sneeze and the person hearing this will reply by saying '*Yarhamuk-Allah*' and the person who sneezed will say '*Yahdeekumullahu Wayuslih Balakum*' (may Allah, The Exalted,

guide you) or say ‘*Yaghfirullahu Lana Walakum*’ (may Allah, The Exalted, forgive you and me) besides these do not say anything else. <sup>xxxi</sup>

7. If one says ‘*Alhamdulillah Rabbil ‘Aalameen ‘Ala Kulli Haal*’ after sneezing and wipes the teeth with one’s tongue, one will be saved from pain of the teeth and ears. <sup>xxxii</sup>
8. It is Sunnah to say ‘*Alhamdulillah*’ when one sneezes and Wajib to reply in such a manner that one can hear and reply straightaway, or else if replied is delayed one will have to repent as a wajib has been missed. <sup>xxxiii</sup>
9. Say ‘*Alhamdulillah*’ loudly so when others hear it, Allah (The Exalted) willing they will reply and you will gain the reward of all this. <sup>xxxiv</sup>
10. Do not answer to a person who sneezes whilst any sermon (Khutba) is taking place, whether it be Jumu’ah, Eid or wedding. <sup>xxxv</sup>
11. If the person who is giving the reply says ‘*Alhamdulillah*’ before the person who is sneezing, then in one Hadith it states that the person will be free from pain of the teeth and ears and in another Hadith it states one will be free from back pain. <sup>xxxvi</sup>
12. In a gathering if one person says ‘*Alhamdulillah*’ after sneezing then one person’s will suffice, however, it is better everyone replies. <sup>xxxvii</sup>
13. To cover the mouth with the back of the left hand when yawning. <sup>xxxviii</sup>
14. Not to make a noise when sneezing or yawning. <sup>xxxix</sup>
15. If you can not stop yawning then grip the tongue gently with the teeth. <sup>xl</sup>
16. If you want to stop yawning, remember the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) as he never yawned. <sup>xli</sup>
17. If one yawns, one should try and stop themselves from this. The way to do this is to hold the tongue, turn the lips inside the mouth, or remember the Prophets (upon them be peace) as they never yawned as they are protected from any influence from the Shaytan. <sup>xlii</sup>

*May Allah (The Exalted) give us the ability to follow these beautiful Sunnahs in our lives and pass them on to others too, Ameen.*

---

<sup>i</sup> Bukhari in Adab

<sup>ii</sup> Durr-e-Mukhtar & Khazinah-Rahmah, p. 59

<sup>iii</sup> Tabarani

<sup>iv</sup> Tabarani

<sup>v</sup> Mirat-ul-Manabih in Adab.

<sup>vi</sup> ibid

<sup>vii</sup> Tabarani

<sup>viii</sup> Akeem

<sup>ix</sup> Nasa’i

<sup>x</sup> Bukhari

<sup>xi</sup> Mishkat & Mirat-ul-Manabih in Adab.

<sup>xii</sup> Muslim

<sup>xiii</sup> Faizane Sunnat, p. 711

<sup>xiv</sup> Tirmidhi & Abu Dawud

<sup>xv</sup> Bukhari in Adab

<sup>xvi</sup> ibid

<sup>xvii</sup> Bayhaqi in Shu’bul Imaan.

<sup>xviii</sup> ibid

<sup>xix</sup> Mishkat

<sup>xx</sup> Bukhari

<sup>xxi</sup> Muslim

- 
- xxii Tirmidhi & Ibn Maja  
xxiii Faizan-e- Sunnah, p. 718  
xxiv Tirmidhi  
xxv Muslim  
xxvi Raddul Mohtar  
xxvii Bazaziya and Alamgiri  
xxviii Alamgiri  
xxix Faizan-e Sunnat, p. 716  
xxx ibid  
xxxi Alamgiri  
xxxii Hisnul Haseen. Faizan-e-Sunnat, p 715 & Khazinah Rahmah, p. 59  
xxxiii Durre Mukhtar and Raddul Mohtar  
xxxiv Raddul Mohtar  
xxxv Khaniya  
xxxvi Raddul Mohtar  
xxxvii ibid  
xxxviii Faizan-e Sunnat, p. 718  
xxxix ibid  
xl ibid  
xli ibid  
xlii ibid