

CHAPTER ELEVEN

VIRTUES OF BISMILLAH

O Allah (The Exalted) send Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to the Most Praised Station, the envy of those who came first and those who came last.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) always commenced everything in Allah's name (*Bismillah-Hirrahma Nirraheem*) and when making an intention to do something he would say If Allah (The Exalted) desires (*Insha-Allah*).

Victory

The letter, which Prophet Sulaiman (upon whom be peace) wrote to Bilqees (the Queen of Yemen) began with *Bismillah* from the blessing of which Allah (The Exalted) granted Yemen and its queen.ⁱ

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) commenced the writing of the Treaty of *Al-Hudaibiyah* with *Bismillah* as a result of which he was granted victory of Makkah.ⁱⁱ

Commentary

When a person pronounces this formula (i.e. *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem*) he acknowledges his weakness and it increases his trust in Allah's (The Exalted) help and support. Furthermore, when a person becomes accustomed to utter the name of Allah (The Exalted) before every action, this will naturally prevent him from performing any deed which is subject to Allah's (The Exalted) wrath and anger. For he will surely feel ashamed to disobey Allah (The Exalted) while invoking Him for help and support.ⁱⁱⁱ

Imam Qurtubi (may Allah's Mercy be upon him) writes that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: *"If a person has pain in his body he should place his hand on the affected area and recite this verse (Bismillah...) three times."* and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said, *"Bismillah... is a healing for all diseases."*^{iv}

One has to keep in mind that any act should be done with firm belief in Allah (The Exalted).

Incomplete Act

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, *"A permissible act that has been started without mentioning the name of Allah (The Exalted) meaning Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem, that act will stay incomplete."*^v

We wonder at times why our work remains incomplete; we have our answer, and this is to follow the Sunnah. Let us start from today with Allah's (The Exalted) name in every permissible act we do, Allah (The Exalted) willing it will reach completion.

76,000 Rewards

Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that he heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) say that, *"Whosoever prays Bismillah, for every letter he will get 4,000 good deeds written in his book of deeds, 4,000 (Minor) sins will be forgiven and 4,000 grades will be raised for that person."*^{vi}

Subhanallah! The reward and benefits are many. Let us practise this Sunnah and gain the pleasure of Allah (The Exalted) and see blessings in our work.

Saved From Destruction

Imam Fakhrudeen Raazi states, *"He who writes the 'Bismillah' and puts it on the front of his door, then he will be saved from destruction of this world. Even if it is a non-Muslim."* So, what will be the benefit for that Muslim who keeps a habit of writing '*Bismillah*' and keeps a habit of reciting it at all times? ^{vii} *Subhanallah!*

Blessing of Bismillah

There was once a pious person who was preaching the virtues of '*Bismillah*'. In that gathering there was a Christian girl who was listening to the virtues of '*Bismillah*'. Whilst listening to the virtues she found many

benefits from it and embraced Islam. From that moment onwards, she performed the recitation of '*Bismillah*' at all times, when sitting, standing and walking! Infact, she did so in all the work she carried out.

As she was from a Christian family, the girl's parents started to get upset with her as she embraced Islam and left their religion and would recite *Bismillah* at all times. She faced difficulties from her parents due to this, but she did not leave the recitation.

Her father was a close friend of the king and would look after his ring. Once he gave the ring to his daughter to look after, the girl prayed *Bismillah* and put it in her pocket. During the night when the girl was fast asleep, the father crept up to the girl's room and quietly took the ring out of his daughter's pocket then threw the ring into the river so that no one could find it. A fish swallowed the ring so there was no chance of finding this ring even if they wanted to.

In the morning, a fisherman went fishing and by coincidence, caught the fish that had swallowed the ring and brought it in front of the girl's father. The father took the fish and gave it to the girl to cook as guests were coming. As per habit the girl prayed *Bismillah* and took the fish, as she went to cut the stomach by praying *Bismillah* and the same ring that her father had thrown into the river was found. The girl prayed *Bismillah* put the ring into her pocket cooked the fish and put it in front of her father.

After the meal was completed, the father asked the girl for the ring, the girl prayed *Bismillah*, and gave him the ring, the father was surprised to see the same ring that he had thrown in the river right in front of his very eyes.

The father wanted to kill her because she became a Muslim and she was reciting '*Bismillah*'. The girl was saved from the death penalty by the blessings of *Bismillah*. You can see from this that the blessings of reciting *Bismillah* are countless and we should in all permissible acts recite *Bismillah* at all times. ^{viii}

Power of Bismillah

Once some non-Muslims asked the *Sword of Allah*, Khalid bin Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) show us something that the truth of Islam becomes apparent to us. Hence, he sent for some poison, recited *Bismillah* and ate it. With the blessings of *Bismillah* the poison had no effect. Seeing this these people proclaimed, "*Islam is the truth*". ^{ix}

This was the faith of the companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) in Allah (The Exalted) and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). May Allah (The Exalted) give us the ability to strengthen our faith, to follow the Sunnah, and guide us in the straight path, Ameen.

Shaytan Stays With You

Jaabir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) states that, "*When a person enters into his house and when eating he recites Bismillah, then Shaytan says to his off spring, 'We cannot stay in this house nor can we get any food.'* At the time of entering if you do not recite *Bismillah* he says '*Now we have found a place to stay,*' and at the time of eating, if *Bismillah* is not recited he says, '*We have found a place to stay and found food too.*'" ^x

Muslim & Non-Muslim Devil

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, "*Once a Muslim's devil (Shaytan) and a non-Muslim's devil met together. The non-Muslim's devil was very healthy, big and warmly wrapped up wearing nice clothes and had oil in his hair whilst the Muslim's devil was in a very bad state as he was skinny and weak with no clothes.*

The non-Muslim's devil asked 'Brother! Why are you in this state?' He replied: 'I am with such a person who, when he eats he remembers Allah (The Exalted) by reciting 'Bismillah' that is why I have to stay hungry and do not get any share out of his food. When he drinks water, he recites 'Bismillah' so I have to stay thirsty. When applying oil on his hair he recites 'Bismillah', this is why my hair is in this situation, and when wearing his clothes, he recites 'Bismillah' too.

The non-Muslim's devil said: 'I am with such a person that whatever he does he never recites 'Bismillah', this is why I am healthy, and I get to eat with him, drink with him and take part in all his activities.' ^{xi}

Do not let Shaytan take part in anything you do. Do not even be influenced by Shaytan either, recite *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* and gain reward and blessings from Allah (The Exalted).

Parents Are Forgiven

In Shar'atul Islam it states; *"If there is a piece of paper of the floor which has 'Bismillah' written on it and someone out of respect picks it up then Allah (The Exalted) will enter the person as one of His friends, and will free his parents from punishment and will be raised on the Day of Judgement with the martyrs."*^{xii}

Respected brothers/sisters! It is a shame that people are headless of verses of the Qur'an when it comes in Newspapers or on pamphlets. These are thrown away without any care in dustbins and on the roads. Those who work for publishers or now someone who does, please be aware or make them aware and be careful not to print any religious material¹ if there is a chance of it being disrespected. Those who distribute these types of papers and pamphlets also take care, Allah (The Exalted) will reward you!

Alcoholic Becomes a Friend of Allah (The Exalted)!

Bishr Hafi (may Allah's Mercy be upon him) before repentance was an alcoholic. Once he was going somewhere in the state of intoxication when he saw a piece of paper on the floor with *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* written on it. Out of respect he picked it up and placed it on a high place. That very night a pious man heard in his dream saying, *"Go! Say to Bishr you respected my name and placed it on a high place, I will purify you and give you piety in this world as well and the next."* This man though in his heart that Bishr is an alcoholic and a wrong doer, I may have seen a wrong dream, hence he performed ablution, offered two cycles of volentry prayer and went back to sleep. He again saw the same dream, and this happened three times and this time he heard, *"This message is for Bishr go and give him this message!"*

Hence, in the morning the pious man went looking for Bishr and found that he is sat in a gathering of alcoholics. He went there and shouted for Bishr, people said, *"He is drunk and is unconscious!"* *"Tell him somehow that there is an important message for him and the messenger is stood outside,"* said the pious man. The people went and told Bishr, Bishr said to them ask him what message he has brought for me? *"Allah's message,"* said the pious man. When he was told this, he became very excited and came out and to hear the message and made sincere repentance. Since that day he started to walk without shoes due to respect. This is the reason he is famously known as *'Hafi'*, this means to the stay bear footed.^{xiii}

Subhanallah! Look at the status of a person who recites the name of Allah (The Exalted), how much Allah (The Exalted) elevates him, just imagine the blessings and reward of a person who recites it will sincerity in everything they do?

Saved From Punishment

A person before he died made a will that when he passes away *'Bismillah'* be written on his forehead as well as his *Kafan (shroud)*, hence, his will was carried out. Someone saw him in a dream and asked his state and he said, *'When I was placed in the grave, the angles of punishment came and when they saw the Bismillah they said: "You are saved form the punishment."*^{xiv}

Respected brothers/sisters of Islam! We learn from this that if we want the blessings of Allah (The Exalted) then we should remember Allah (The Exalted) and say *'Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem'* in all our actions. Regardless of whether you start an assignment, coursework, writing a letter or even putting a key into the door. Make a habit of this Sunnah and Insha-Allah there will be blessings in everything we do.

It is necessary to recite *'Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem'* with the correct pronunciation and also to recite it so loud that it can be heard at least by yourself. People when reciting quickly miss or add letters to it which is forbidden, as it could change the meaning.

When Not to Recite

Bismillah should not be read at the time of committing unlawful acts, in Fatawa-e-Alamgiri it states: *"At the time of drinking alcohol, adultery or gambling to pray Bismillah is Kufr (disbelief)."*^{xv}

May Allah (The Exalted) save us from sinful acts and give us the ability to follow the Sunnah, Ameen.

¹ i.e. Newspapers, as people tend to read it and throw it away.

Wisdom in Not Reciting

Mufti Ahmad Yaar Khan Naeemi states, "Pay attention to why 'Bismillah' is not written in Surah Tawba^{xvi}, similarly at the time of sacrificing an animal, the complete Bismillah is not said, but 'Bismillahi Allahu Akbar.' is said.

What is the wisdom behind it? The reason is that throughout the Surah Tawba there is mention of war and death and this is a punishment on the non-Muslims, as for sacrificing an animal, a life is taken, and this is a hard time, so do not talk about the mercy (of Allah) at that time. He who recites the complete Bismillah will be saved from Allah's (The Exalted) punishment."^{xvii}

Mercy of Allah

Prophet Isa (upon whom be peace) once, passed by a grave with punishment being carried out in it. After some time, he passed by again and he saw light and was being showered with the mercy of Allah (The Exalted). He was surprised and asked Allah (The Exalted) to show him the reason. It was said, "O Isa! (upon him be peace) He was punished as he was very sinful, however, before he died his wife was expecting a child. A boy was born and today he was sent to learn, the teacher taught him to recite Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem, and I was ashamed to punish him as his son had taken my name."^{xviii}

19 Letters in Bismillah

There are 19 letters in *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* and there are 19 angles of punishment at the hell fire. With the blessings of each letter each angles of punishment will be removed.^{xix}

Manner And Benefits of Bismillah

1. In Shami it states, "At the time of smoking a Hukkah or eating any strong-smelling thing (i.e. onions) it is better not to pray Bismillah."^{xx}
2. It is not permissible to pray *Bismillah* in the toilet (nor say anything else.)^{xxi}
3. There will be no blessings in that work which *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* is not recited.^{xxii}
4. Shaykh Abul Abbas Ahmad bin 'Ali Buni states that, "Whosoever for seven days recites *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* 786 times, Allah (The Exalted) will fulfil any need, be it for something good, removing evil or running of a business."^{xxiii}
5. Whosoever at the time of sleeping recites *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* twenty-One times; will be protected from Shaytan, thieves, a sudden death and all types of misfortune.^{xxiv}
6. Whosoever at the time of sunrise recites *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* three-hundred times and *Salawaa²* three-hundred times, Allah (The Exalted) will give sustenance which cannot be imagined. One will become rich within a year by praying this every day.^{xxv}
7. To improve memory, recite *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* 786 times and blow in some water and drink. Allah (The Exalted) willing your memory will become strong.^{xxvi}
8. Write *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* on paper thirty-five times and hang it in the house, the Shaytan will not enter and there will be many blessings. If hung in a shop, then there will be blessings.^{xxvii}
9. On the first of *Muharram* (1st Islamic month) write *Bismillah Hirrah_hma Nirra_hem* 130 times and whosoever keeps it on them³ will not have any evil in their house or to the person throughout their life.

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² Durood, i.e. sending peace and blessing upon the Prophet. (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

³ Can be kept as an amulet (Taweez) around the neck or around the arm. Any amulet should be wrapped in plastic or leather string and casing and not in a steel, metal, gold or silver or even a chain. (Bahar-e-Shariat)

10. A woman whose child does not survive, write *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* 61 times to keep with her. Allah (The Exalted) willing all the children will survive. ^{xxix}
11. Write *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* 70 times and place in the shroud of the deceased person (near the head) as the questioning will become easy. ^{xxx}
12. Learn it and let a *Qari*⁴ hear it, as incorrect pronunciation could have the opposite effect. ^{xxxi}
13. When writing as an amulet (*Taweez*) then leave those letters open that have holes in them (i.e. *Meem* and *Haa* etc.)
14. When taking clothing of, recite *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* and the Jinn will not be able to see your *Satr*⁵. ^{xxxii}
15. No matter how many times you open or close the doors or windows, when taking or placing any utensils make a habit of reciting *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* as the Jinn will not enter the house and will be saved from theft and using any of the goods/utensils. ^{xxxiii}
16. When closing the doors of the house recite *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* the Jinn and Shaytan will not enter. ^{xxxiv}
17. At night cover any open utensils whilst reciting *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem*. ^{xxxv} In Muslim it states there is a night in the year when difficulties descend and enter into any utensils which are uncovered.
18. Before sleeping recite *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* and wipe the bed three times, one will not be affected by difficulties. ^{xxxvi}
19. Recite *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* when giving or taking there will be blessings in it. ^{xxxvii}

To complete the chapter, it is worth mentioning the translation of *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem*. Mostly it is translated as “*In the name of Allah...*”, and this is correct, however, Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khan has translated *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirraheem* from the Qur’an as “*Allah’s name I begin with...*” *Subhanallah!* Not only does he translate it as it is in the Qur’an but literally he being’s with Allah’s name. The other translations begin with “*In the name*” and then mention “*Allah*”⁶.

⁴ One who can recite the Qur’an with correct pronunciation.

⁵ Those parts that should be covered. In Bahar-e-Shariat an encyclopaedia of Hanafi jurisprudence it states under the section of Salaah that for women except for the five parts i.e. face, both hands upto the wrists and both feet upto the ankles all the body is aurat, meaning should be covered. For men it is from the navel to including the knees.

⁶ The translation of the Qur’an presented by A’la Hadhrat called ‘Kanzul Imaan’ - is proven to be the most unique translation in the Urdu language and is available in English too. In his translation one sees that A’la Hadhrat used only those words in his translation that are worthy for the Attributes and Qualities of Almighty Allah and of His beloved Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). There are many translations that have been translated with its literal meaning. The Qur’an cannot be translated just by knowing the Arabic language, but it needs to be understood with wisdom. We have taken just one example of a Verse from the Qur’an that has been translated by various persons and compared it with the beautiful translation of A’la Hadhrat. We have taken Surah 93, Verse: 7 as an example:

1. “*And he found you lost on the way and he guided thee.*” Translation by Mohammad Asad.
2. “*And found thee groping so he showed the way.*” Translation by Muhammad Ali Lahori Qadiani.
3. “*And He found you uninformed of Islamic laws, so he told you the way of Islamic laws.*” Translation by Ashraf Ali Thanwi.
4. “*Did he not find thee erring and guide thee.*” Translation by Arberry.
5. “*And saw you unaware of the way so showed you the straight way.*” Translation by Fatheh Muhammad Jalledhri.
6. “*And he found thee wandering and He gave thee guidance.*” Translation by Yusuf Ali

Now that we have examined six different translations, let us examine the difference and the uniqueness of the translation of A’la Hadhrat Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khan:

O Allah (The Exalted)! Give us the blessings of Bismillah Hirraḥma Nirraḥeem and with every permissible act, give us the ability to recite Bismillah Hirraḥma Nirraḥeem, Ameen.

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- ⁱ Tafsir Noor-ul-Irfan. Vol: One; On Bismillah.
ⁱⁱ ibid
ⁱⁱⁱ Tafsir Imdad-ul-Karam; Vol: One; Surah Fatiha
^{iv} ibid; with reference to Tafsir Qurtubi.
^v Faizan-e-Sunnat: On Bismillah with reference to Mata Li'ul Massaraat
^{vi} Firdous-ul-Akbaar. Vol: 4. p. 24. Hadith No: 5573
^{vii} Tafseer-e-Kabeer
^{viii} Lama Aani Sufiya
^{ix} Tafsir-e-Kabir
^x Sahih Muslim.
^{xi} Mawahibul Laduniya
^{xii} Tadhkiratul Wa'idheen.
^{xiii} Tadhkirat-ul-Awliya.
^{xiv} Durr-e-Mukhtar.
^{xv} Fatawa-e-Alamgiri, Vol: One, p. 273
^{xvi} **Surah No: 9**
^{xvii} Tafseer-e-Naeemi, Vol: One, p. 43
^{xviii} ibid p. 100
^{xix} Tafseer-e- Kabir, Vol: One, p. 102
^{xx} Faizan-e-Bismillah p. 132
^{xxi} ibid p. 132
^{xxii} ibid p. 133
^{xxiii} Shamshul Ma'arif. P. 73
^{xxiv} Idha. p. 73
^{xxv} Ibid. p. 73
^{xxvi} Ibid. p. 73
^{xxvii} Ibid. p. 73/4
^{xxviii} Ibid. p. 74
^{xxix} Ibid. p. 74
^{xxx} Ibid. p. 74
^{xxxi} Ibid p. 74
^{xxxii} 'Amalul Yawmi wal Layl. by ibn Sunni p. 7
^{xxxiii} Faizan-e-Bismillah. p. 137
^{xxxiv} Bukhari
^{xxxv} Idha.
^{xxxvi} Faizan-e-Bismillah. p. 128
^{xxxvii} ibid

"And he found you drowned in his love therefore gave way unto him"

Look at the uniqueness and cautiousness that is present in this translation of Imam Ahmed Raza Khan! He abstained from using those words that may cause any disrespect to the dignity and personality of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)!