

CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

THE SUNNAH WAY OF WALKING

O Allah (The Exalted) bless our liege-lord and master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) at every moment and every instant.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would walk behind his companions and would say let the angels come behind me. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would pray *Bismillah* when lifting his blessed feet, when walking up a high place he would praise Allah (The Exalted) by saying *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is The Greatest) and when walking down a lower place he would say *Subhanallah* (Allah is Pure). Whilst walking he would stay engaged in the remembrance of Allah (The Exalted) and would instruct others to do the same. Those who walk with their chests out and shoulders swinging side to side with arrogance, fear Allah (The Exalted) and learn the Sunnah way of walking.

Walking

Hasan Ibn 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) stated that, *"When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) intended to walk, he would raise his blessed feet with force and would put them down inclining forwards (as if going down a hill.) He walked striding with modesty and his manner of walking gave an impression as if he was coming down from a high place. Instead of looking towards the sky and looking around, he preferred to look down."*

Tufail (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, *"I saw the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)." Someone asked how did you see him? He said, "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was fair in complexion and so beautiful, and when he would walk it seemed as if he was coming down a hill."*ⁱ

Gaze down

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would walk as if he was coming down a hill, looking down with his blessed shoulders slightly forward and would walk in a slightly faster speed than normal.ⁱⁱ The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not look here or there whilst walking but always kept his blessed gaze lowered.

Pace

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) says that, *"I did not see anyone more handsome than the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). It was as if the brightness of the sun shone from his auspicious face. I did not see anyone walk faster than him, as if the earth folded for him. One moment ago he would be here, and then there. We found it difficult to keep pace when we walked with him, and he walked at his normal pace."*ⁱⁱⁱ

Do not walk between two women

Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he forbade men from walking in between two women.^{iv} In another narration it states that if women come in front of you do not walk in between them but walk on the right or left side.

Walking with pride

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that, *"A person who had two sheets (blankets) wrapped around him was walking in an arrogant manner and showing off with pride, he was forced into the ground and will be forced into the earth until the day of resurrection."*^v

O brother/sister! Do not walk with pride, chest out, shoulders swinging side to side. If Allah (The Exalted) can punish this person he can punish us too! What have we got to be proud of? Pride belongs only to Allah (The Exalted). To understand who we really are read on.

Muhalab bin Abi Sufuri who was a member of Hajjaj bin Yusuf's tribe once came out wearing silk and walking with pride towards Mutarif (may Allah be pleased with him). Mutarif (may Allah be pleased with him) said, *'O servant of Allah (The Exalted)! Allah (The Exalted) and the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) dislike the way you are walking.'* He replied, *'Do you not know who I am?'* Mutarif

(may Allah be pleased with him) replied, *'I know you very well, in the beginning you were a impure liquid (in your father) and in the end you will be a dead corpse and everyone knows the impurity that you have inside you.'* Muhalab became shy and did not walk in the same manner again. ^{vi}

This is the reality of all of us. How will we face Allah (The Exalted) on the day of judgement, with modesty or pride?

Wahab (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, *'When Allah (The Exalted) created Paradise he said, "You are unlawful for those who have pride and are arrogant."* ^{vii}

The only destination for pride and arrogance is the hell fire. There are no advantages in being proud and arrogant.

Three types of people will go to hell

In one hadith it states that a neck will come out from the hell fire which will have two ears, two eyes and a tongue. It will say, *'I have been appointed to three types of people, the person who had pride in himself, those who made partners with Allah (The Exalted) and finally those who made pictures (portraits of living beings).'* ^{viii} *Allahu Akbar!* May Allah (The Exalted) save us all from these things, Ameen.

Those with pride will go Head first into Hell

Abu Salma bin 'Abdur-Rahman (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that, 'Abd-Allah bin 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and another companion met at a place, after some time, 'Abd-Allah bin 'Umar left and tears poured out from the companion's eye's.

People asked the reason for crying, he said: 'Abd-Allah bin 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) had heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) say, *"Whoever has pride in their hearts equivalent to a piece of linseed (or rice) then Allah (The Exalted) will put such a person into Hell head first."* ^{ix}

Pride, meaning to think of oneself as being better than another person, this is the thing that destroys people.

Respect and favour the elders

Recognize the status of the elders and give them due respect. When walking with them, walk slightly behind and to their right. Let them enter and exit first, open doors for them and hold it until they enter. If you meet them, greet them properly and respectfully. If you discuss something with them, let them speak first and listen attentively and graciously. If your opinion differs, you should remain polite, calm and kind-hearted, and you should lower your voice. Never forget to remain respectful.

When 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was young and was at a gathering of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his senior Companions, like 'Abu Bakr and his father. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) asked his Companions, "Tell me which tree does not shed its leaves and is like the Muslim." The Companions started suggesting names of desert trees. 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) thought it was the palm tree. Since he was the youngest, and seeing 'Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) silent, he shied away and said nothing. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) told his Companions. *"It is the palm tree."* Later, 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) told his father that he knew the right answer but shied away. 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said to his son, *"For you to have said it right then would have been worth a lot to me."*

Manners of Walking

1. Walk on the side and not in the middle of any street or pathway.
2. Do not walk with pride, as Allah (The Exalted) dislikes those with pride. ^x
3. Walk in a manner that is not too slow or too fast. ^{xi}
4. If someone is stood in the way, do not walk to the person too close but move and walk so that you do not cause the person any problems.
5. Do not walk in-between women but walk on the side. ^{xii}

6. Do not make noise with your shoes when walking as this seeks attention and the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) disliked it. ^{xiii}
7. If you are talking to someone then move to one side and do not stand in the way.
8. Keep the gaze lowered whilst walking. ^{xiv}
9. When you hear the adhaan stop, reply and then walk on.
10. If you hear a donkey brow or a dog bark, recite Ta'awudh (*A'udhubillah...*) because the donkey brows and the dog barks when it sees the devil. ^{xv}
11. If you hear a Cock crow, make supplication of mercy as it does this when it sees the angels. ^{xvi}

Respected brother/sister in Islam! When walking up and coming down the stairs in your own homes or anywhere else bring this Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) into your lives and make your walking a worship too.

May Allah (The Exalted) give us all the ability to walk in the Sunnah manner, Ameen.

ⁱ Abu Dawood

ⁱⁱ Shamail-e-Tirmidhi

ⁱⁱⁱ ibid p. 118

^{iv} Abu Dawood

^v Bukhari

^{vi} Muqashifatul Quloob

^{vii} ibid

^{viii} ibid

^{ix} ibid

^x Faizan-e-Sunnat, Chapter on walking, p. 781

^{xi} ibid

^{xii} ibid p. 782

^{xiii} ibid

^{xiv} ibid

^{xv} Tirmidhi

^{xvi} Bukhari