



Suruhanjaya Sekuriti
Securities Commission
Malaysia

40 HADITHS ON GOVERNANCE

الأربعون في الحوكمة



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Securities Commission Malaysia

3 Persiaran Bukit Kiara
Bukit Kiara
50490 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Tel: +603 6204 8000

Email: cau@seccom.com.my

Websites: www.sc.com.my | www.investsmartsc.my

 @SecComMalaysia

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Editors: Dr. Azrul Azlan Iskandar Mirza and Nurul Huda Yaakob

Reviewer: Sahibus Samahah Professor Dato' Dr. Asmadi Mohamed Naim, Encik Burhanuddin Lukman and Dr. Mohd Khafidz Soroni

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FOREWORD

Governance is not merely a system of rules. It reflects the responsibility to manage authority, institutions, financial resources and decisions in a manner that upholds justice, integrity and accountability. For capital markets, governance is fundamental in safeguarding public confidence. It ensures that markets operate with fairness, transparency and responsibility.

In Islam, governance is rooted in the concept of *amanah* (trust). Leadership is a responsibility to be fulfilled. Authority is inseparable from accountability - not only to society but ultimately to Allah. The Quran and Sunnah (practices and teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) provide a comprehensive ethical framework to guide the exercise of authority, institutional conduct and the upholding of justice.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ exemplified the highest standard of governance. He embodied principles that remain profoundly relevant today: *shura* (consultation), integrity, transparency, fair judgment and accountability. These principles affirm that effective governance must not only be institutional, but should encompass a moral responsibility anchored in justice, knowledge and ethical conduct.

This compilation, titled *40 Hadiths on Governance*, brings together selected Prophetic teachings and practices that highlight key pillars of governance: competency, fit and proper criteria, transparency, oversight and principled decision-making.

These are especially significant for the Islamic capital market. A resilient and credible Shariah governance ecosystem requires not only sound regulatory frameworks, but also a strong ethical foundation rooted in the teachings of Islam. Governance built on integrity strengthens institutions, protects stakeholders and promotes confidence.

It is our hope that this book serves as a reference point for those entrusted as well as their respective sectors and communities. More importantly, it serves as a reminder that governance in Islam is ultimately a duty before Allah, where integrity and sincerity must guide every level of authority.

In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the need for principled governance has never been greater. Returning to the ethical guidance of the Quran and Sunnah provides a timeless foundation for strengthening governance, nurturing responsible leadership and upholding trust within our institutions.

May Allah grant us wisdom in leadership, justice in judgment, and sincerity in all responsibilities entrusted to us.

Dato' Mohammad Faiz Azmi

Chairman, Securities Commission Malaysia



INTRODUCTION

ISLAM AND GOVERNANCE

The concept of governance may appear modern, but its roots are deeply connected to the older idea of government and the act of governing. Historically, the words government and governance come from the same root, although they do not carry the same meaning. The term governance was already used in French as *gouvernance* in the fourteenth century, referring then to royal officers rather than to the broader process of governing society. This shows that governance was originally linked to authority, administration, and the exercise of power within the state.¹

Over time, the meaning of governance expanded. It was no longer sufficient to understand governing as something done only by the state through laws, commands, and public officials. As societies became more complex, the process of governing began to involve many actors, institutions, and relationships. This is why governance became a more useful term than government: it is broad enough to cover not only formal state institutions, but also the wider network of public policies, institutions, corporates, economic relationships, civil society, private organisations, and communities involved in shaping public life.²

In this sense, governance is best understood as the way society is steered. It concerns how decisions are made, how policies are implemented, how resources are managed, and how collective goals are achieved. Traditional governance was often based on a top-down model, where the government directed society through authority and control. Modern governance, however, recognises that public problems are rarely solved by government alone. Instead, they require coordination, cooperation, participation, and accountability among different actors in society.

¹ Polya Katsamunskia, *The Concept of Governance and Public Governance Theories* https://www.unwe.bg/uploads/Alternatives/Polya_1_br2_2016_en.pdf.

² Rhodes, R.A.W. (1996), *The New Governance: Governing without Government* <https://eclass.uoa.gr/modules/document/file.php/PSPA108/rhodes.pdf>.

Therefore, governance can be defined as the system and process through which power is exercised, rules are applied, decisions are made, resources are managed, and those in authority are held accountable. It is not merely about who governs, but how governing is carried out. Good governance goes further by requiring transparency, participation, responsiveness, legal certainty, accountability, efficiency, and a commitment to the common good. In simple terms, governance is the mechanism that ensures power is not exercised carelessly but directed responsibly towards achieving public interest and societal well-being. Modern governance frameworks are generally developed in response to contemporary challenges, stakeholder demands, institutional failures, and the need to strengthen transparency, accountability, and public trust amid changing social, economic, and political circumstances.

However, in this regards, Islam established the principles of governance without depending on any circumstances long before these modern developments emerged.

In Islam, the responsibility to govern ethically does not depend solely on external pressure, stakeholder demand, or regulatory requirements. Rather, accountability is an inherent and permanent obligation rooted in the concepts of *amanah* (trust) and *khalifah* (vicegerency). Human beings are entrusted by Allah to manage authority, resources, and societal affairs responsibly, justly, and with integrity. As such, Islamic governance places responsibility at the highest-level accountability not only before people and institutions, but ultimately before Allah. This creates a governance framework that remains morally and ethically binding regardless of changing circumstances, public pressure, or institutional expectations.

Building upon this foundation, Islamic governance extends beyond procedural compliance and regulatory structures. It is rooted in the responsible exercise of authority in accordance with ethical values and divine guidance.

As the primary source of Islamic law and ethics, the Quran lays down the foundational values that underpin governance, including *'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trust), *shura* (consultation), accountability, and responsibility towards society. These values form the normative framework within which authority is exercised and public affairs are administered.

The Sunnah complements this framework by illustrating its practical application. Through his conduct as a leader and head of state, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ institutionalised these values through consultative governance, transparent administration, effective supervision, and the equitable treatment of all society.

Accordingly, this book organises the relevant hadiths into five key governance pillars that reflect the essential dimensions of responsible governance in Islam:

1. Competency

Governance begins with knowledge and expertise. Decisions made without qualification lead to harm. Islam strongly warns against assigning responsibility to those who are unfit.

2. Fit and Proper Criteria

Integrity is non-negotiable. Bribery, betrayal of trust, dishonesty and abuse of power undermine institutions and destroy public confidence.

3. Transparency

Islam emphasises documentation, truthful testimony, and clear communication. Concealing material information is a moral wrongdoing.

4. Oversight

Supervision is necessary to prevent wrongdoing. Accountability mechanisms are not a sign of distrust they are part of responsible governance. Ultimately, all actions are subject to divine review.

5. Decision-Making

Consultation (*shura*), careful deliberation, sincere intention, and consideration of public interest are central to Islamic decision-making. Governance must avoid haste, extremism, and personal bias.

In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the importance of principled governance continues to grow. Contemporary institutions increasingly recognise that sustainable governance cannot be achieved through regulatory compliance alone, but requires purpose, ethical consciousness, integrity, and internal accountability.

The Quran and Sunnah therefore remain profoundly relevant in providing timeless guidance for strengthening governance, preserving public trust, and ensuring justice in institutional decision-making. When governance is built upon knowledge, integrity, transparency and accountability, institutions become stronger, public trust increases, and decisions become more just. May this compilation contribute towards strengthening Shariah governance practices and nurturing leaders who uphold *amanah* with excellence.

In compiling the hadiths for this book, the methodology prioritises fidelity to classical hadith sources while ensuring clarity and concision. The texts of hadiths are drawn from authoritative compilations such as *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim* and other reputable collections. To streamline the approach without compromising the key content, certain hadiths are abridged, retaining only key phrases or segments essential.

Regarding chains of narration (*sanad*), the methodology simplifies references by citing only the highest-level narrator (*al-Rawi al-A`la*) and omitting subsequent transmitters in the chain. The sources of hadiths are provided in the translation section.





CHAPTER ONE

QURANIC VERSES ON GOVERNANCE

QURANIC VERSES ON GOVERNANCE

The Quran provides a clear foundation for good governance. It sets out principles that guide leadership, decision-making, accountability, justice, and the management of responsibilities. In Islam, governance is not merely about achieving efficiency or organisational success. It is an *amanah* (trust) that must be carried out in accordance with Allah's guidance. The Quran therefore establishes a framework of governance that is built on faith, knowledge, integrity, justice, transparency, and responsibility.

The foundation of good governance begins with the quality of the people entrusted with responsibility. The Quran¹ clarifies that competence in Islam is not limited to technical skills or expertise. It also includes sound values, good character, and the ability to apply knowledge responsibly.² Effective governance therefore begins with individuals who possess both knowledge and strong moral principles.³

Having established the importance of faith and knowledge, the Quran then identifies the qualities required of those entrusted with positions of responsibility. The best person for a task is described as one who is both strong and trustworthy. This verse forms the basis of the fit and proper principle in Islam. A person must have the ability to perform the role effectively, but that ability must be accompanied by integrity and trustworthiness. Both qualities are necessary for responsible leadership and decision-making.⁴ Once responsibility is entrusted to the right people, it must be carried out with honesty and transparency. Therefore, Allah prohibits the concealment of evidence and commands that trusts be fulfilled.⁵ Ibn Kathir⁶ describes the concealment of

¹ Surah *al-Mujadilah* 58:11.

² At-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Aya al-Quran*, Dar Hajr li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Tawzi' wa al I'lan, 2001, volume (vol.) 23, p. 246–247.

³ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Quran al-'Azim*, Dar Thaibah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1999, vol. 8, p. 243.

⁴ Syeikh al-Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir Al-quran Al-azim*, muassasah al-risalah, vol. 20, p. 158.

⁵ Surah *al-Baqarah* 2:283.

⁶ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, Riyadh: Dar Taybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', 1999. p. 343.

evidence as a serious sin and a corruption of the heart because it undermines justice and deprives others of their rights. This verse highlights the importance of truthful disclosure, proper record-keeping, and the protection of rights through accurate information. Transparency is therefore not merely a good administrative practice, but a religious and ethical obligation.

The Quran also recognises that transparency alone is not sufficient if corruption is allowed to influence decision-making. For this reason, the Quran⁷ prohibits the wrongful acquisition of property and the use of bribery to obtain favourable outcomes. The verse makes it clear that a decision does not become right simply because it is obtained through legal procedures. Governance must be protected from corruption, manipulation, and personal gain that can undermine fairness and public trust.⁸ In addition to preventing corruption, the Quran establishes accountability for those who hold authority. The Quran⁹ commands that trusts be returned to those entitled to them and that judgments be made with justice. Al-Tabari¹⁰ interprets this command as applying particularly to those entrusted with public authority and responsibility, including the management of public resources and community rights. This verse reminds leaders and decision-makers that authority is not a privilege but a responsibility. Every position of authority carries an obligation to manage resources, rights, and public interests fairly and responsibly.

⁷ Surah *al-Baqarah* 2:188.

⁸ Al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir al-Munir*, Damascus: *Dar al-Fikr*, 1991. vol. 3, p.106, 111.

⁹ Surah *al-Nisa'* 4:58.

¹⁰ Al-Tabari, *Jami'al-Bayan*, vol. 8, p. 494–495.

The importance of institutional integrity is reinforced in the Quran¹¹, which condemns those who accept bribes and allow personal interests to influence their decisions. Al-Tabari¹² again explains that the verse criticises those who knowingly accept falsehood and consume unlawful gains through bribery. The verse demonstrates how corruption can distort justice and weaken confidence in public institutions. Good governance therefore requires decision-makers to act independently and place the public interest above personal benefit. Beyond integrity, the Quran¹³ also requires fairness in the exercise of authority. Allah commands believers to uphold justice and not allow hatred or personal feelings towards others to affect their judgment. This verse establishes an important principle of impartiality. Decisions must be based on facts, fairness, and objective considerations rather than emotions, prejudice, or external pressure.¹⁴ The central role of justice is further emphasised in the Quran.¹⁵ Allah explains that the messengers were sent with clear guidance, scripture, and the balance (*mizan*) so that people may uphold justice. This verse shows that justice is one of the main objectives of divine guidance. As such, laws, policies, and institutions should all serve the broader goal of establishing fairness and protecting rights within society.¹⁶

To ensure that justice is achieved in practice, the Quran¹⁷ also stresses the importance of preserving trust. Believers are warned not to betray Allah, His Messenger, or the trusts placed upon them. This verse highlights that authority, information, resources, and responsibilities are all forms of *amanah*. Those entrusted with them must carry out their duties honestly and faithfully.¹⁸ The practical application of justice is reflected in the Quran¹⁹ which commands people to establish balance with fairness and not diminish the rights of others. Although the verse refers to weights and measures, its underlying principle extends to all aspects of governance. It calls for honesty, accuracy, fairness, and consistency in every decision and action.²⁰

¹¹ Surah *al-Ma'idah* 5:42.

¹² Al-Tabari, *Jami'al-Bayan*, vol. 3, p. 549-550.

¹³ Surah *al-Ma'idah* 5:8.

¹⁴ Al-Tabari, *Jami'al-Bayan*, vol. 8, p. 428-429.

¹⁵ Surah *al-Hadid* 57:25.

¹⁶ Al-Baghawi, *Tafsir Baghawi Ma'alim al-Tanzil*, Riyadh: Dar al-Taybah, vol. 6, p. 219.

¹⁷ Surah *al-Anfal* 8:27.

¹⁸ Al-Baghawi, *Tafsir Baghawi Ma'alim al-Tanzil*, vol. 2, p. 353-355.

¹⁹ Surah *al-Rahman* 55:9.

²⁰ Al-Tabari, *Jami'al-Bayan*, vol. 21, p. 178-179.

Finally, good governance depends on making decisions based on reliable information. Allah instructs believers to verify information received from questionable sources before acting.²¹ Ibn Kathir²² explains that this command was revealed to prevent decisions being made based on inaccurate information that could lead to injustice and regret. This verse establishes the principle of due diligence and careful verification. Decisions should be based on accurate facts rather than assumptions, rumours, or incomplete information.

Taken together, these verses provide a comprehensive framework for governance in Islam. They begin with the development of knowledgeable and trustworthy individuals, followed by the proper exercise of authority through transparency, integrity, accountability, justice, and careful decision-making. The Quranic model of governance therefore goes beyond administrative efficiency and seeks to ensure that power is exercised as a trust in a manner that serves the public interest and fulfils the objectives of Shariah.

²¹ Surah *al-Hujurat* 49:6.

²² Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, Riyadh: Dar Taybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', vol. 9, p. 179.

The complete Quranic verses are as follows:

1

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَانْشُرُوا يَرْفَعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾

O believers! When you are told to make room in gatherings, then do so. Allah will make room for you in His grace. And if you are told to rise, then do so. Allah will elevate those of you who are faithful, and raise those gifted with knowledge in rank. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do.

(Al Quran: *al-Mujadilah* 58:11)

2

﴿إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ اسْتَجَرْتَ الْقَوِيَ الْأَمِينُ﴾

A strong, trustworthy person is the best to hire.

(Al Quran: *al-Qasas* 28:26)

3

﴿وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا فَرِهَنْ مَقْبُوضَةً فَإِنْ أَتَى بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي اؤْتِمِنَ أَمْنَتَهُ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ ءِثْمٌ قَلْبُهُ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ﴾

If you are on a journey and a scribe cannot be found, then a security can be taken. If you trust one another, then there is no need for a security, but the debtor should honour this trust by repaying the debt and let them fear Allah, their Lord. And do not conceal the testimony, for whoever conceals it, their hearts are indeed sinful. And Allah fully knows what you do.

(Al Quran: *al-Baqarah* 2:283)

4

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly, nor deliberately bribe authorities to devour a portion of others' property, knowing that it is a sin.

(Al Quran: *al-Baqarah* 2:188)

5

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا﴾

Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Indeed, Allah instructs you in an excellent manner. Indeed, Allah is Ever Hearing and Ever Seeing.

(Al Quran: *an-Nisa'* 4:58)

6

﴿سَمْعُونََ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَلُونَ لِلسُّخْتِ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾

They eagerly listen to falsehood and consume forbidden gain. So, if they come to you 'O Prophet', either judge between them or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they cannot harm you whatsoever. But if you judge between them, then do so with justice. Surely Allah loves those who are just.

(Al Quran: *al-Ma'idah* 5:42)

7

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ
النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ﴾

Indeed, We sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and with them. We sent down the Scripture and the balance 'of justice' so that people may administer justice.

(Al Quran: *al-Hadid* 57:25)

8

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

O believers! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trusts knowingly.

(Al Quran: *al-Anfal* 8:27)

9

﴿وَأَقِمْوْا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ﴾

Weigh with justice, and do not give short measure.

(Al Quran: *al-Rahman* 55:9)

10

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصِحُّوا
عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَذِيرٌ﴾

O believers, if an evildoer brings you any news, verify 'it' so you do not harm people unknowingly, becoming regretful for what you have done.

(Al Quran: *al-Hujurat* 49:6)

11

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
 شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ءَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

O believers! Stand firm for Allah and bear true testimony. Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just! That is closer to righteousness. And be mindful of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what you do.

(Al Quran: *al-Ma'idah* 5:8)



A decorative horizontal band featuring a repeating geometric pattern of interlocking stars and polygons in shades of purple and dark blue.

CHAPTER TWO

HADITHS ON GOVERNANCE

HADITH ON COMPETENCY

Competency as a Foundation of Good Governance

Competency occupies a central place in the Prophetic model of governance because authority in Islam carries responsibility for safeguarding religion, upholding justice, and protecting public welfare. Governance is therefore not merely a matter of holding office or exercising power, but of ensuring that responsibilities are discharged by those equipped with the necessary knowledge, judgment, and integrity. The Prophetic tradition consistently links positions of authority with qualification and warns against entrusting responsibilities to those who lack the capability to fulfil them.

The competency principle begins with the importance of knowledge and qualified expertise. In explaining the Prophetic tradition on knowledge, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani¹ notes that true understanding is a sign of divine favour and that scholars play a vital role in preserving religious truth and guiding society. The Prophet ﷺ further warned that knowledge would gradually diminish with the passing of scholars, after which unqualified individuals would assume positions of authority and issue judgments without proper understanding. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani² observes that when leadership shifts from the qualified to the unqualified, both religious and worldly affairs are adversely affected.

While the hadith specifically refers to religious knowledge, its underlying principle extends beyond the religious sphere. It highlights the importance of ensuring that positions of responsibility are entrusted to individuals who possess the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise. In contemporary organisational and corporate settings, this principle underscores the need for decision-makers and those exercising authority to be competent subject-matter experts, as the effectiveness, integrity and sustainability of institutions depend on informed and qualified leadership.

The importance of qualified scholarship is particularly evident in the upholding of justice and the issuance of legal rulings. The Prophet ﷺ stated that a

¹ Al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari bi Syarh al-Bukhari*, al-Maktabah al-Salafiah, Egypt, 1970, vol. 1, p. 164.

² *Ibid*, vol. 1 p. 194-295.

mujtahid who exercises *ijtihad* and reaches the correct ruling receives two rewards, while one who errors after sincere effort receives one reward. Imam al-Nawawi³ explains that this narration validates reasoned judgment undertaken by qualified individuals possessing the necessary scholarly tools. At the same time, the Prophet ﷺ warned that those who issue opinions without knowledge bear responsibility for the resulting error. Therefore, these narrations establish that authority to interpret, decide, and guide must operate within the boundaries of recognised expertise and accountability.⁴

Beyond the ability to derive rulings, competency also requires the capacity to navigate complex evidentiary issues. The discussion on seemingly conflicting hadiths highlights the importance of competency in Shariah decision-making. A Shariah adviser must be able to assess the context and strength of the evidence, evaluate differing views, and apply the appropriate principles of *usul al-fiqh*. Competency, therefore, is not limited to knowledge alone but also includes the ability to exercise sound judgment in reaching accurate conclusions.⁵

The Prophetic tradition recognises that different responsibilities require different forms of expertise. This is clearly illustrated in the incident of date-palm pollination, where the Prophet ﷺ distinguished between matters of revelation and matters that depend upon human experience and specialised knowledge. The narration demonstrates that effective governance requires the proper allocation of responsibility to those who possess the relevant expertise, whether in religious, technical, administrative, or professional fields.⁶

Taken together, these Prophetic traditions present competency as a fundamental requirement for governance. They establish that authority should be exercised only by those who possess the necessary knowledge, expertise, judgment, and integrity, while emphasising that the proper allocation of responsibility is essential for preserving justice, institutional stability, and the public good.

³ Al-Nawawi, *al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim*, Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, 1929, vol. 12 p. 13-14.

⁴ Al-Nawawi, *al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim*, vol. 11 p. 333-334.

⁵ Al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari bi Syarh al-Bukhari*, vol. 4, p. 381-382.

⁶ Al-Harari, Muhammad al-Amin ibn Abdullah. *al-Kawkab al-Wahhaj wa al-Rawd al-Bahhaj fi Sharh Sahih Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj*. Makkah al-Mukarramah: *Dar al-Minhaj & Dar Tawq al-Najah*, vol. 14, p. 301.

Key hadiths relevant to this principle are as follows:

Hadith 1

عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ يَقُولُ: سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ يَقُولُ: مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفْقِهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا قَاسِمٌ، وَاللَّهُ يُعْطِي وَلَنْ تَزَالَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ قَائِمَةً عَلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَالَفَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ .

Narrated by Muawiyah (may Allah be pleased with him): I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying: If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion. I am just a distributor, but the grant is from Allah. (And remember) that this nation (true Muslims) will keep on following Allah's teachings and they will not be harmed by anyone going on a different path till Allah's order (Day of Judgment).

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 71)

Hadith 2

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا، يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ، حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يُبْقِ عَالِمًا، اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُءُوسًا جُهَالًا فَسُئِلُوا، فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ، فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا.

`Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`Asr (may Allah be pleased with them both) reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say:

Indeed, Allah does not take away knowledge by removing it directly from people. Rather, He takes away knowledge by taking the lives of the scholars. When no scholar remains, people will appoint ignorant individuals as their leaders. They will be consulted and will issue rulings without knowledge; thus, they will go astray and lead others astray.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 100)

Hadith 3

عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ:
 إِذَا حَكَمَ الْحَاكِمُ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَصَابَ فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ، وَإِذَا حَكَمَ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أخطأَ
 فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ.

Narrated `Amr bin Al-`As (may Allah be pleased with him): That he heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying, if a judge gives a verdict according to the best of his knowledge and his verdict is correct (i.e. agrees with Allah and His Apostle's verdict) he will receive a double reward, and if he gives a verdict according to the best of his knowledge and his verdict is wrong, (i.e. against that of Allah and His Apostle) even then he will get a reward.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 6919)

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1716)

Hadith 4

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ أُفْتِيَ بِفُتْيَا غَيْرِ تَبَتٍ
 فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى مَنْ أَفْتَاهُ.

It was narrated that Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Whoever is given a Fatwa (verdict) that has no basis, then his sin will be upon the one who issued that Fatwa.

(*Sunan Ibn Majah*, Hadith 53)

Hadith 5

أَنَّ أَبَا صَالِحٍ الزَّيَّاتِ، أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّهُ، سَمِعَ أَبَا سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيَّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ .
يَقُولُ الدِّينَارُ بِالدِّينَارِ، وَالدِّرْهَمُ بِالدِّرْهَمِ. فَقُلْتُ لَهُ فَإِنَّ ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ لَا
يَقُولُهُ. فَقَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ سَأَلْتُهُ فَقُلْتُ سَمِعْتَهُ مِنَ النَّبِيِّ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ، أَوْ وَجَدْتُهُ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ قَالَ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ لَا أَقُولُ، وَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِرَسُولِ
اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنِّي، وَلَكِنِّي أَخْبَرَنِي أُسَامَةُ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَا رِبَا إِلَّا فِي التَّسْيِئَةِ .

Narrated by Abu Salih Az-Zaiyat (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri saying, the selling of a Dinar for a Dinar, and a Dirham for a Dirham (is permissible). I said to him, Ibn `Abbas does not say the same. Abu Sa'id replied, I asked Ibn `Abbas whether he had heard it from the Prophet ﷺ or seen it in the Holy Book. Ibn `Abbas replied, I do not claim that, and you know Allah's Messenger ﷺ better than I, but Usamah informed me that the Prophet had said: There is no *riba* (in money exchange) except when it is not done from hand to hand (i.e. when there is delay in payment).

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 2178, 2069)

Hadith 6

عَنْ أَنَسٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَرَّ بِقَوْمٍ يُلْقِحُونَ، فَقَالَ: لَوْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا
لَصَلَحَ، قَالَ: فَخَرَجَ شَيْصًا، فَمَرَّ بِهِمْ فَقَالَ: مَا لِنَخْلِكُمْ؟ قَالُوا: قُلْتَ كَذَا وَكَذَا،
قَالَ: أَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِأَمْرِ دُنْيَاكُمْ.

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ happened to pass by the people who were pollinating trees. Thereupon he said: If you were not to do it, it might be good for you. (So, they abandoned this practice) and there was a decline in the yield. He (the Holy Prophet) happened to pass by them (and said): What has gone wrong with your trees? They said: You said so and so. Thereupon he said: You have better knowledge (of a technical skill) in the affairs of the world.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 2363)



HADITH ON FIT AND PROPER CRITERIA

Trustworthiness, Integrity and Moral Fitness

In Islam, positions of authority are not regarded as privileges to be enjoyed, but as trusts to be fulfilled. Every position of responsibility carries duties towards others and requires its holder to act with honesty, fairness and accountability. For this reason, Islamic teachings place considerable emphasis on the qualities of those entrusted with authority, recognising that the exercise of power affects not only individual interests but also the welfare of society.

This understanding forms the basis of what is commonly described today as the 'fit and proper' principle. A person is considered fit and proper not merely because he possesses the required qualifications, skills or experience, but because he also demonstrates honesty, integrity, fairness and accountability.

The hadiths discussed in this section collectively establish these requirements. They show that leadership is an *amanah* (trust) that must be exercised with sincerity, justice and responsibility. Those entrusted with authority are expected to safeguard the interests of others, uphold what is right and possess the knowledge and judgement necessary to discharge their duties properly. In other words, governance requires both competence and character.

The importance of trustworthiness is clearly reflected when the Prophet ﷺ issued a stern warning against leaders who betray those under their care. As explained by al-Nawawi, this warning demonstrates that leadership carries both moral and religious consequences. A person who neglects the welfare of those under his responsibility cannot be regarded as fit to hold authority.¹

Once trust has been established as the foundation of leadership, the Prophetic teachings proceed to protect it from corruption. This is evident in the prohibition of bribery, which undermines justice by allowing personal interests to prevail over fairness and truth. A person whose decisions can be influenced by improper benefits lacks the integrity required of those entrusted with public responsibility.²

¹ Al-Nawawi, *al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim*, Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, 1929, vol. 2 p. 166.

² Abu al-'Ala' Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 4, p. 471.

The same principle is reflected in the Prophet's appointment of Abu 'Ubaidah, whom he described as the trustworthy one of this nation. The narration demonstrates that positions of responsibility should be entrusted to individuals who have earned the confidence of others through proven honesty and reliability rather than personal ambition, influence or status.³

Conversely, the hadith on the signs of hypocrisy identifies the characteristics that render a person unworthy of trust. Lying, breaking promises and betraying trusts destroy confidence and erode the moral foundation upon which leadership depends. Such traits are fundamentally inconsistent with the qualities expected of a fit and proper person.⁴

The obligation to honour every trust further reinforces this standard. The Prophet ﷺ taught that believers should not respond to betrayal with betrayal, even when wronged by others. This reflects a level of integrity that remains firm regardless of circumstance and demonstrates the consistency is expected from those who exercise authority.⁵

Integrity also extends to providing advice and professional judgement. Since important decisions often depend on the recommendations of others, honesty in consultation becomes an essential element of good governance. A fit and proper framework therefore requires not only trustworthy leaders but also trustworthy advisers.⁶

Beyond conduct perspective, the hadiths also emphasise the internal qualities that shape ethical leadership. The prohibition against oppression (*zulm*) and destructive greed (*shuhh*) demonstrates that both are among the most significant causes of governance failure. If these negative traits are not controlled or restrained it may lead individuals to prioritise personal interests over justice, public welfare and the rights of others, thereby undermining the very purpose of authority.⁷

³ Al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari bi Syarh al-Bukhari*, al-Maktabah al-Salafiah, Egypt, 1970, vol. 7, p. 69.

⁴ Al-'Asqalani, *ibid*, vol. 1, p.111.

⁵ Al-Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 4, p. 399.

⁶ Al-Mubarakfuri, *ibid*, vol. 8, p. 88.

⁷ Ibn al-Mulaqqin, Siraj al-Din Abu Hafs 'Umar ibn 'Ali ibn Ahmad al-Ansari al-Shafi'i, *Al-Tawdih li Sharh al-Jami' al-Sahih*, vol. 15, p. 588.

Similarly, the prohibition of ihtikar reflects the broader objective of preventing exploitation. By condemning the hoarding of essential goods for personal gain, the Prophet ﷺ affirmed that authority and economic power must be exercised in a manner that serves society rather than individual greed.⁸

While integrity remains fundamental, the Prophetic tradition further requires that authority must be exercised with proper knowledge, responsibility and an awareness of one's limitations. The warning against issuing opinions without knowledge shows that good intentions alone are not enough, especially when a person takes on responsibilities that may lead to harm and adverse consequences for others.⁹ Similarly, authority should be exercised within a framework of lawful leadership and social order. The obligation to obey legitimate authority, provided that it does not involve disobedience to Allah, helps to preserve stability, unity and the collective welfare of the community.¹⁰

Equally important is one's attitude towards leadership itself. The Prophet ﷺ discouraged the pursuit of authority driven by personal ambition reminding them that leadership is a heavy trust which requires Allah's guidance and assistance. This guidance reflects the principle that positions of responsibility should be entrusted based on merit and suitability rather than self-promotion.¹¹

This caution is reinforced by other authentic hadiths which show that, despite the great rewards promised to just rulers, leadership carries a heavy responsibility. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ and the scholars warned against seeking positions of authority without proper qualification and readiness to fulfil their duties. Leadership in Islam is therefore regarded as a trust (*amanah*), not a privilege.¹²

⁸ Al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari bi Syarh al-Bukhari*, al-Maktabah al-Salafiah, vol. 4, p. 407.

⁹ Imam al-Nawawi, *Syarh al-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, vol.12 p. 13-14.

¹⁰ Al-'Iraqi, Zayn al-Din Abu al-Fadl 'Abd al-Rahim ibn al-Husayn. *Tarh al-Tathrib fi Sharh al-Taqrīb*, Cairo: Dar al-Badr and Mu'assasat Shuruq, vol. 8, p.81.

¹¹ Al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol.13, p. 124.

¹² Imam al-Nawawi, *ibid*, vol.12, p. 210-211.

These principles ultimately conclude in the Prophet's response to the case of the Makhzumi woman. By rejecting attempts to secure preferential treatment and affirming that no one is above the law, the Prophet ﷺ demonstrated that justice must be applied fairly and without favouritism. This narration represents the highest expression of the fit and proper principle, where authority is exercised with integrity, competence and an unwavering commitment to justice.¹³

Key hadiths relevant to this principle are as follows:

Hadith 7

عَنِ الْحَسَنِ، قَالَ عَادَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ زِيَادٍ مَعْقِلَ بْنَ يَسَارٍ الْمُرَبِّيَّ فِي مَرَضِهِ الَّذِي مَاتَ فِيهِ . قَالَ مَعْقِلٌ إِنِّي مُحَدِّثُكَ حَدِيثًا سَمِعْتُهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَوْ عَلِمْتُ أَنَّ لِي حَيَاةً مَا حَدَّثْتُكَ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَسْتَرْعِيهِ اللَّهُ رَعِيَّةً يَمُوتُ يَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَهُوَ غَاشٌّ لِرَعِيَّتِهِ إِلَّا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ.

Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad paid a visit to Ma'qil bin Yasar Muzani in his illness of which he (later on) died. (At this juncture) Ma'qil said: I am going to narrate to you a hadith which I have heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and which I would not have transmitted if I knew that I would survive. Verily I have heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: There is none amongst the bondsmen who was entrusted with the affairs of his subjects, and he died in such a state that he was dishonest in his dealings with those over whom he ruled except that Paradise is forbidden for him.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 142)

¹³ Al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 12, p. 89.

Hadith 8

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، قَالَ لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الرَّاشِيَّ وَالْمُرْتَشِيَّ.

`Abdullah ibn `Amr (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed the one who gives a bribe and the one who takes it.

(*Sunan Abu Dawud*, Hadith 3580)

(*Jami` al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 1337)

Hadith 9

عَنْ حُذَيْفَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ جَاءَ أَهْلُ نَجْرَانَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا ابْعَثْ لَنَا رَجُلًا أَمِينًا. فَقَالَ لَأَبْعَثَنَّ إِلَيْكُمْ رَجُلًا أَمِينًا حَقَّ أَمِينٍ. فَاسْتَشْرَفَ لَهُ النَّاسُ، فَبَعَثَ أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ بْنَ الْجَرَّاحِ.

Narrated Huzaifah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The people of Najran came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: Send an honest man to us. The Prophet ﷺ said: I will send to you an honest man who is trustworthy. Every one of the (Muslim) people hoped to be that one. The Prophet ﷺ then sent Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah.

(*Sahih al Bukhari*, Hadith 4120)

Hadith 10

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ خَانَ.

From Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: Rasulullah ﷺ said: The signs of a hypocrite are three: when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he breaks it; and when entrusted, he betrays.

(*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith 33)

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 59)

Hadith 11

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: أَدِّ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَى مَنْ أَيْتَمَّنَكَ وَلَا تَخُنْ مَنْ خَانَكَ.

From Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: Prophet ﷺ said: Return the trust to the one who entrusted you, and do not betray even the one who betrays you.

(*Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 1264)

Hadith 12

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ الْمُسْتَشَارُ مُؤْتَمَنٌ.

Narrated by Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said: Who is consulted is entrusted.

(*Sunan Abu Dawud*, Hadith 5128)

Hadith 13

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: اتَّقُوا الظُّلْمَ فَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ظُلُمَاتٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَاتَّقُوا الشُّحَّ فَإِنَّ الشُّحَّ أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ حَمَلَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْ سَفَكُوا دِمَاءَهُمْ وَاسْتَحَلُّوا مَحَارِمَهُمْ.

Jabir bin Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Be on your guard against committing oppression, for oppression is a darknesses on the Day of Resurrection and be on your guard against stinginess for stinginess destroyed those who were before you, as it incited them to shed blood and make lawful what was unlawful for them.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 2578)

Hadith 14

عَنْ مَعْمَرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ لَا يَحْتَكِرُ إِلَّا خَاطِيٌّ.

Ma'mar bin Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger ﷺ as saying: No one hoards but the sinner.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1605)

Hadith 15

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
الْأَمَانَةُ فَاَنْتَظِرِ السَّاعَةَ . قَالَ كَيْفَ إِضَاعَتُهَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ إِذَا
إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ، فَاَنْتَظِرِ السَّاعَةَ.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: When honesty is lost, then wait for the Hour. It was asked, how will honesty be lost, O Allah's Messenger ﷺ? He said, when authority is given to those who do not deserve it, then wait for the Hour.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 6496)

Hadith 16

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي، وَمَنْ يَعُصِ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ عَصَانِي، وَإِنَّمَا الْإِمَامُ جُنَّةٌ يُقَاتَلُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَيَتَّقَى بِهِ، فَإِنْ أَمَرَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَعَدَلَ، فَإِنَّ لَهُ بِذَلِكَ أَجْرًا، وَإِنْ قَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ، فَإِنَّ عَلَيْهِ مِنْهُ .

Narrated Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him): That heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying, we are the last but will be the foremost to enter Paradise). The Prophet added, He who obeys me, obeys Allah, and he who disobeys me, disobeys Allah. He who obeys the chief, obeys me, and he who disobeys the chief, disobeys me. The Imam is like a shelter for whose safety the Muslims should fight and where they should seek protection. If the Imam orders people with righteousness and rules justly, then he will be rewarded for that, and if he does the opposite, he will be responsible for that.

(Sahih al- Bukhari, Hadith 2797)



Hadith 17

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا تَسْأَلِ
الْإِمَارَةَ، فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ أُعْطِيتَهَا عَنْ غَيْرِ مَسْأَلَةٍ أُعِنْتَ عَلَيْهَا، وَإِنْ أُعْطِيتَهَا عَنْ مَسْأَلَةٍ
وُكِّلْتَ إِلَيْهَا، وَإِذَا حَلَفْتَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ فَرَأَيْتَ غَيْرَهَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا، فَأَتِ الَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ،
وَكَفِّرْ عَنْ يَمِينِكَ .

'Abdur-Rahman bin Samurah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Do not ask for position of authority. If you are granted this position without asking for it, you will be helped (by Allah) in discharging its responsibilities; but if you are given it because of your request, you will be left alone as its captive. If you take an oath to do something and then find a better alternative, you should adopt the latter and expiate for your oath.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 6227)



Hadith 18

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَا تَسْتَعْمِلُنِي قَالَ فَضْرَبَ بِيَدِهِ عَلَى مَنْكِبِي
ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ إِنَّكَ ضَعِيفٌ وَإِنَّهَا أَمَانَةٌ وَإِنَّهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ خِزْيٌ
وَنَدَامَةٌ إِلَّا مَنْ أَخَذَهَا بِحَقِّهَا وَأَدَّى الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا.

Narrated Abu Zar (may Allah be pleased with him): I said to the Prophet ﷺ : Messenger of Allah, will you not appoint me to a public office? He stroked my shoulder with his hand and said: Abu Zar, thou art weak and authority is a trust and on the Day of judgment it is a cause of humiliation and regret except for one who fulfils its obligations and (properly) discharges the duties attendant thereon.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1825)



Hadith 19

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا أَنَّ قُرَيْشًا أَهَمَّتَهُمُ الْمَرْأَةُ الْمَخْزُومِيَّةُ الَّتِي سَرَقَتْ فَقَالُوا: مَنْ يُكَلِّمُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمَنْ يَجْتَرِئُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا أُسَامَةُ حُبُّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَكَلَّمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: أَتَشْفَعُ فِي حَدٍّ مِنْ حُدُودِ اللَّهِ؟ ثُمَّ قَامَ فَخَطَبَ قَال: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا ضَلَّ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا سَرَقَ الشَّرِيفُ تَرَكُوهُ وَإِذَا سَرَقَ الضَّعِيفُ فِيهِمْ أَقَامُوا عَلَيْهِ الْحَدَّ، وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَوْ أَنَّ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتُ مُحَمَّدٍ سَرَقَتْ لَقَطَعَ مُحَمَّدٌ يَدَهَا.

Narrated by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her): The Quraish people became very worried about the Makhzumiya lady who had committed theft. They said that nobody can speak (in favor of the lady) to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and nobody dares do that except Usamah who is the favorite of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. When Usamah spoke to Allah's Messenger ﷺ about that matter, Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, do you intercede (with me) to violate one of the mandatory punishments from Allah? Then he got up and addressed the people, saying, O people! The nations before you went astray because if a noble person committed theft, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed theft, they used to inflict the punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad committed theft, Muhammad will cut off her hand!

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 6406)

HADITH ON TRANSPARENCY

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability are essential in preserving trust. In Islam, those entrusted with authority are expected to carry out their responsibilities diligently, while remaining answerable for the decisions they make. Trust cannot flourish where benefits are hidden, information is withheld or responsibilities are carried out without proper accountability. For this reason, the Prophetic tradition emphasises openness, proper disclosure and the importance of being accountable for one's actions. Transparency is therefore not merely about sharing information, but also about ensuring that information is accurate and that individuals are prepared to answer for their conduct.

The importance of transparency can be seen in the hadith concerning a zakat collector who claimed that some of the wealth he received was a personal gift. The Prophet ﷺ rejected this claim and clarified that benefits received because of one's position cannot simply be treated as private property. The hadith highlights the importance of disclosing benefits received during one's duties and avoiding situations that may give rise to favouritism or conflicts of interest.¹

A similar principle appears in the hadith warning the public against hiding anything entrusted to them, even something as small as a needle. The lesson is clear: accountability is not measured by the value of what is received, but by the willingness to account for it. Those entrusted with responsibility must be transparent in reporting the assets, benefits and resources placed under their care, regardless of how small they may seem.²

Transparency and accountability also extend to the communication of information. The Prophet ﷺ strongly warned against falsely attributing statements to him, highlighting the seriousness of conveying information that is

¹ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 5 p. 220.

² Imam al-Nawawi, *Syarh al-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, vol. 12 p. 535.

inaccurate or untrue. This demonstrates the responsibility to verify information before sharing it and reminds us that accountability applies not only to actions and resources, but also to the information upon which decisions are made.³

Taken together, these hadiths show that transparency and accountability go hand in hand. Openness requires proper disclosure, while accountability requires individuals to answer for what they do, what they receive and what they communicate. By promoting these values, the Prophetic tradition seeks to protect trust, prevent abuse of authority and strengthen good governance.⁴



³ Al-'Ayni, *Umdah al-Qari Syarah Sahih al-Bukhari*, Beirut: Dar Ihya 'Arabi, vol. 2, p.148.

⁴ Muhammad Murtada al-Zabidi, *Ithaf al-Sadah al-Muttaqan bi Sharh Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 10, p. 67.

Key hadiths relevant to this principle are as follows:

Hadith 20

عَنْ أَبِي حُمَيْدٍ السَّاعِدِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ اسْتَعْمَلَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْأَزْدِ يُقَالُ لَهُ ابْنُ اللَّثْبَةِ عَلَى الصَّدَقَةِ، فَلَمَّا قَدِمَ قَالَ هَذَا لَكُمْ، وَهَذَا أُهْدِيَ لِي. قَالَ فَهَلَّا جَلَسَ فِي بَيْتِ أَبِيهِ أَوْ بَيْتِ أُمِّهِ، فَيَنْظُرَ يُهْدَى لَهُ أَمْ لَا وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا يَأْخُذُ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا إِلَّا جَاءَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَحْمِلُهُ عَلَى رَقَبَتِهِ، إِنْ كَانَ بَعِيرًا لَهُ رِعَاءٌ أَوْ بَقَرَةً لَهَا حَوَارٌ أَوْ شَاةٌ تَيْعُرُ. ثُمَّ رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ، حَتَّى رَأَيْنَا غُفْرَةً يُنْطِئُهَا. اللَّهُمَّ هَلْ بَلَغْتُ اللَّهُمَّ هَلْ بَلَغْتُ ثَلَاثًا.

Narrated Abu Humaid Al-Sa'idi (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ appointed a man from the tribe of Al-Azd, called Ibn 'Utbiyya for collecting the zakat. When he returned he said: This (i.e. the zakat) is for you and this has been given to my as a present. The Prophet ﷺ said: Why hadn't he stayed in his father's or mother's house to see whether he would be given presents or not? By Him in whose hands my life is, whoever takes something from the resources of the zakat (unlawfully) will be carrying it on his neck on the Day of Resurrection; if it be a camel, it will be grunting; if a cow, it will be mooing; and if a sheep, it will be bleating. The Prophet then raised his hands till we saw the whiteness of his armpits, and he said thrice, O Allah! Haven't I conveyed Your Message (to them)?

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 2457)

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1832)

Hadith 21

عَنْ عَدِيِّ بْنِ عَمِيرَةَ الْكِنْدِيِّ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ
مَنْ اسْتَعْمَلَنَاهُ مِنْكُمْ عَلَى عَمَلٍ فَكَتَمْنَا مَخِيطًا فَمَا فَوْقَهُ كَانَ غُلُولًا يَأْتِي بِهِ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ.

'Adi ibn 'Amirah al-Kindi (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Whomever we appoint over a task, and he conceals from us even a needle or more insignificant, more trivial, it will be considered misappropriation (*ghulul*), and he will bring it on the Day of Resurrection.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1833)

Hadith 22

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ بَلِّغُوا عَنِّي وَلَوْ آيَةً،
وَحَدِّثُوا عَنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَا حَرَجَ، وَمَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ
النَّارِ .

Narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Amr (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said: Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence, and tell others the stories from Bani Israel (which have been conveyed to you), for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 3274)

Hadith 23

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يَكُونَ صِدِّيقًا، وَإِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ، وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَكْذِبُ، حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَذَّابًا.

Narrated by 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said: Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. And a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to *Al-Fujur* (i.e. wickedness, evil-doing), and *Al-Fujur* (wickedness) leads to the (Hell) Fire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before Allah, a liar.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 5743)



HADITH ON OVERSIGHT

Oversight as a Guiding Principle in Islam

Oversight is an important principle in Islam that ensure actions, decisions, and the exercise of authority remain within the limits prescribed by Shariah. It encompasses not only monitoring of individual behaviour, but also the protection of rights, prevention of harm, administration of justice, and proper discharge of responsibilities. Through effective oversight, social order is preserved, and wrongdoing can be identified and prevented before it results in greater harm. As such, oversight functions as a fundamental mechanism for preserving both individual integrity and the collective welfare of society.

Islam places the responsibility of oversight at various levels within society, encompassing individuals, communities, leaders, and institutions. It further affirms that all actions are subject to continuous observation of Allah SWT and that every person will be held accountable in the Hereafter. The following hadiths illustrate how oversight is established in Islam as a means of promoting good, preventing wrongdoing, and upholding justice in society.

The foundation of oversight in Islam is rooted in the obligation of enjoining good and forbidding evil (*al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*). As articulated by Imam al-Nawawi¹, this duty constitutes a collective obligation (*fard kifayah*), such that its fulfilment by some absolves others, whereas its neglect by all, despite capacity, renders the community collectively sinful and accountable. This demonstrates that such obligation or duty is a shared responsibility that is essential to maintaining social order and collective well-being. It also establishes that effective oversight is not confined to those in positions of authority but is a collective responsibility shared by every member of society according to their capacity.

Beyond encouraging moral responsibility, effective oversight also requires justice in decision-making. For instance, the Prophet ﷺ reminded people that he was a human being who did not know the unseen except what Allah revealed to him. Therefore, judgments were made based on outward evidence

¹ Imam al-Nawawi, *Syarh al-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, v.2 p. 22.

such as witnesses, proofs, and oaths, while the reality of people's intentions remained with Allah. This highlights the importance of fairness, transparency, and evidence-based judgment in any system of oversight.²

While individuals have a role in overseeing one another, the ultimate and highest form of oversight belongs to Allah SWT. Those who are subjected to detailed reckoning on the Day of Judgment will face severe consequences, reflecting the inherent imperfection of human beings. As such, ultimate salvation depends on the mercy and forgiveness of Allah SWT. This serves as a reminder for Muslims to remain mindful of their actions, recognising that they will ultimately be held accountable before Allah SWT.³

Closely connected to the principle of justice is the duty to verify facts before making decisions. Oversight also requires careful verification before taking an action. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani explains that the Prophet ﷺ disassociated himself from the actions of Khalid ibn al-Walid when he acted before fully understanding the intentions of a group of people. This demonstrates the importance of investigating matters properly before making judgments or carrying out decisions. It also serves as a warning against actions based on assumptions or incomplete information.⁴

The practical importance of oversight is further illustrated through the Prophet's powerful analogy of a shared ship. The Prophet ﷺ compared society to a group of people sharing a vessel, where some sought to damage it for their own convenience. If others allowed such actions to continue, all on board would face destruction. However, by preventing them, the safety of everyone is preserved. This analogy underscores that preventing wrongdoing is not merely about correcting individual behaviour, but about safeguarding the collective well-being and stability of society. It demonstrates that neglecting oversight does not only affect the wrongdoer but may also expose the wider community to harm.⁵

² *Ibid*, v.12 p. 4-7.

³ *Ibid*, p. 111.

⁴ *Ibid*, vol. 17 p. 208-209.

⁵ Abu al-'Ala' Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 6, p. 329.

The responsibility of oversight extends beyond ordinary members of society to those entrusted with authority. Islam also emphasises the importance of monitoring those in positions of authority. Speaking the truth to an unjust ruler is regarded as one of the greatest forms of *jihad* because it requires courage and may expose a person to harm. Since the actions of a ruler can affect many people, addressing injustice at this level helps protect the welfare of society as a whole. This demonstrates that oversight is not limited to ordinary individuals but also extends to those who hold power and influence.⁶

At the same time, Islam places clear limits on the exercise of authority itself. Although Muslims are generally required to obey their leaders, such obedience is not absolute. Leaders are meant to be followed only in matters that are aligned and consistent with the teachings of Islam. If they command something sinful, there is no obligation to obey. This principle serves as an important form of oversight by placing clear limits on authority and ensuring that leaders remain accountable to the commands of Allah.⁷

Ultimately, all forms of human oversight are subject to the supreme oversight of Allah SWT. While individuals have a role in overseeing one another, the ultimate and highest form of oversight belongs to Allah SWT. Those who are subjected to detailed reckoning on the Day of Judgment will face severe consequences, reflecting the inherent imperfection of human beings. As such, ultimate salvation depends on the mercy and forgiveness of Allah SWT. This serves as a reminder for Muslims to remain mindful of their actions, recognising that they will ultimately be held accountable before Allah SWT. This awareness reinforces sincerity, integrity, and personal accountability, even in situations where human supervision is absent.⁸

⁶ Abu al-'Ala' Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 6, p. 329.

⁷ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 5 p. 123.

⁸ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 13 p. 131.

In conclusion, these hadiths demonstrate that oversight is an essential part of Islamic teachings. It includes promoting good, preventing harm, ensuring justice, protecting rights, and monitoring the use of authority. Furthermore, Muslims are reminded that all actions are ultimately observed under the oversight of Allah SWT and will be accountable in the Hereafter. Taken together, these principles foster the development of a society that is responsible, just, and firmly guided by the values and ethics of Islam.

Key hadiths relevant to this principle are as follows:

Hadith 24

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيَعْبِرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart and that is the weakest of faith.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 49)

Hadith 25

وَعَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ، وَإِنَّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ إِلَيَّ، وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضَكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَحَنَ بِحُجَّتِهِ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَقْضِي نَحْوَ مَا أَسْمَعُ، فَمَنْ فَضَيْتُ لَهُ بِحَقِّ أَخِيهِ شَيْئًا فَلَا يَأْخُذْهُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَقْطَعُ لَهُ قِطْعَةً مِنَ النَّارِ.

Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported God's Messenger as saying, I am only a human being and you bring your disputes to me, some perhaps being more eloquent in their plea than others, so that I give judgment on their behalf according to what I hear from them. Therefore, whatever I decide for anyone which by right belongs to his brother he must not take, for I am only granting him a portion of hell.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 2680)

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1713)



Hadith 26

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَيْسَ أَحَدٌ يُحَاسَبُ إِلَّا هَلَكَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ يَقُولُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا قَالَ ذَاكَ الْعَرَضُ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ نُوقِشَ الْحِسَابَ هَلَكَ.

'Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported Allah's Apostle ﷺ as saying: Everyone who is reckoned thoroughly is undone. I said: Allah's Messenger, has Allah not called (reckoning) as easy reckoning? Thereupon he said: It implies only presentation of (one's deeds to Him), but if one is thoroughly examined in reckoning, he in fact is undone.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 2876)



Hadith 27

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ، بَعَثَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَالِدَ بْنَ الْوَلِيدِ إِلَى بَنِي جَزِيمَةَ فَلَمْ يُحْسِنُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا. فَقَالُوا صَبَأْنَا صَبَأًا، فَجَعَلَ خَالِدٌ يَقْتُلُ وَيَأْسِرُ، وَدَفَعَ إِلَى كُلِّ رَجُلٍ مِّنَّا أَسِيرَهُ، فَأَمَرَ كُلَّ رَجُلٍ مِّنَّا أَنْ يَقْتُلَ أَسِيرَهُ، فَقُلْتُ وَاللَّهِ لَا أَقْتُلُ أَسِيرِي وَلَا يَقْتُلُ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ أَصْحَابِي أَسِيرَهُ. فَذَكَرْنَا ذَلِكَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَبْرَأُ إِلَيْكَ بِمَا صَنَعَ خَالِدُ بْنُ الْوَلِيدِ، مَرَّتَيْنِ.

Narrated `Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet sent Khalid bin al-Walid to Bani Jazimah and he summoned them to accept Islam. When they did not express their acceptance of Islam properly but began to say, We have changed our religion, we have changed our religion* Khalid began to kill them and take prisoners, and he handed a prisoner to each one of us. But when a day came when Khalid ordered each of us to kill his prisoner, I said, I swear by God that I will not kill my prisoner and that not one of my companions will kill his prisoner till we come to the Prophet. When we mentioned the matter to him, he raised his hands and said twice, O God, I declare myself innocent in Thy sight of what Khalid has done.

*Here the verb *saba'a* is used.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 3976)

Hadith 28

عن النُّعْمَانِ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَثَلُ
الْقَائِمِ عَلَى حُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَالْوَاقِعِ فِيهَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْمٍ اسْتَهْمُوا عَلَى سَفِينَةٍ، فَأَصَابَ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَعْلَاهَا وَبَعْضُهُمْ أَسْفَلَهَا، فَكَانَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَسْفَلِهَا إِذَا اسْتَقَوْا مِنَ الْمَاءِ
مَرُّوا عَلَى مَنْ فَوْقَهُمْ فَقَالُوا لَوْ أَنَّا خَرَقْنَا فِي نَصِيبِنَا خَرْقًا، وَلَمْ نُؤْذِ مَنْ فَوْقَنَا. فَإِنْ
يَتْرَكُوهُمْ وَمَا أَرَادُوا هَلَكُوا جَمِيعًا، وَإِنْ أَخَذُوا عَلَى أَيْدِيهِمْ نَجَوْا وَنَجَوْا جَمِيعًا.

Narrated by An-Nu'man bin Bashir (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said, the example of the person abiding by Allah's order and restrictions in comparison to those who violate them is like the example of those persons who drew lots for their seats in a ship. Some of them got seats in the upper part, and the others in the lower. When the latter needed water, they had to go up to bring water (and that troubled the others), so they said, let us make a hole in our share of the ship (and get water) saving those who are above us from troubling them. So, if the people in the upper part let the others do what they had suggested, all the people of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both parties would be safe.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 2361)

Hadith 29

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَفْضَلُ الْجِهَادِ
كَلِمَةُ عَدْلٍ عِنْدَ سُلْطَانٍ جَائِرٍ.

Narrated Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said: The most excellent *jihad* is when one speaks a true word before a tyrannical leader.

(*Sunan Abu Dawud*, Hadith 4344)



Hadith 30

عَنْ عَوْفِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: خَيْرُ أَيْمَتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُحِبُّوهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَكُمْ، وَيُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَتُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَشَرَّ أَيْمَتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُبْغِضُونَهُمْ وَيُبْغِضُونَكُمْ، وَتَلْعَنُونَهُمْ وَيَلْعَنُونَكُمْ، قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَفَلَا نُنَابِذُهُمْ بِالسَّيْفِ؟ فَقَالَ: لَا، مَا أَقَامُوا فِيكُمْ الصَّلَاةَ، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِكُمْ شَيْئًا تَكْرَهُونَهُ، فَاكْرَهُوا عَمَلَهُ، وَلَا تَنْزِعُوا يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ.

`Auf bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: The best of your leaders is those whom you love and who love you, and those who supplicate Allah in your favour and you supplicate Allah in their favour. The worst of your leaders are those whom you hate and who hate you; and whom you curse and who curse you. It was asked (by those who were present): Should not we oppose them with our weapon, to make armed protest? He said, no, if they establish *Salat*; in your midst.

So, he said: No, if they perform the prayer with you. If you see in your leader something that you hate, then hate his actions, and do not refrain from obeying them.

(*Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 1855)

Hadith 31

عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ
حَقٌّ، مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ، فَإِذَا أُمرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ.

Narrated by Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him): The 'Prophet said ﷺ: It is obligatory for one to listen to and obey (the leaders orders) unless these orders involve one's disobedience (to Allah); but if an act of disobedience (to Allah) is imposed, he should not listen to or obey it.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 2796)





HADITH ON DECISION-MAKING

Prophetic Guidance on Decision-Making

Decision-making is an important part of human life as it reflects one's judgement, responsibility, and exercise of free will. Every choice made can affect individuals, organisations, and society. In Islam, decision-making is not based solely on personal desires or emotions. Instead, it is guided by Islamic teachings and principles as manifested by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The following hadiths present a clear framework for decision-making, ranging from seeking advice to confidence in the final decision.

The first Islamic principle governing decision-making is consultation (*shura*). Although Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was *ma'sum* (infallible), as education for others, he often sought the opinions of his companions before making important decisions. This demonstrates that good decisions are often reached through robust discussion, careful deliberation, and consideration of different views rather than relying on one's personal opinion alone.¹

He still consulted his companions on matters that required human judgment and public interest. In doing so, he established *shura* as a practical model of leadership, showing that consultation is not a sign of uncertainty or weakness, but a means of promoting wisdom, mutual trust, and shared responsibility in decision-making.

After a decision has been reached through such consultation, Islam emphasises the importance of unity and collective agreement. Decisions that are supported by the community and guided by knowledgeable individuals would bring positive outcomes and prevent conflict or division.²

The second Islamic principle is respect for leadership. Once a decision has been agreed upon, it should be carried out through proper leadership and organisation. Obeying leaders in matters that are right and beneficial under

¹ Al-Tirmidhi, Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa ibn Sawrah. *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* (Jami' al-Tirmidhi), vol. 4, p. 186.

² Al-Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 5, p. 304.

the Shariah ensures that decisions are implemented effectively and that order is maintained within the community.³

In implementing decisions, Islam teaches the importance of wisdom, kindness, and making things easier for people. A good decision is not only about choosing the right option but also how it is communicated and carried out. A gentle and considerate approach often leads to better acceptance and cooperation.⁴

Another important Islamic principle is to avoid acting hastily. Rushing into decisions can lead to mistakes and remorse. Careful reflection, evaluation of information, and consideration of potential outcomes enable the making of balanced and well-informed decisions.⁵

Furthermore, every decision should be guided by sincere intentions. In Islam, actions are judged by intentions. Decisions made with sincerity and for the sake of doing what is right would lead to beneficial outcomes than those driven by personal interests or worldly gains.⁶

Good decisions must also be supported by good characters. Values such as honesty, patience, responsibility, and respect for others help individuals to make fair and ethical choices. A person's character influences not only what decision is made but also how it affects others.⁷

These values are closely linked to the principle of justice. Decisions should consider the rights and interests of all parties involved. Islam encourages fairness and discourages any form of oppression or bias that may harm others.⁸

Finally, Islam teaches that decisions should be based on certainty rather than doubt. When a matter is clear and supported by evidence and guidance, a person can move forward with confidence. If there is serious uncertainty or suspicion, further reflection and verification are encouraged before making a final decision.⁹

³ Al-Mubarakfuri, *ibid*, vol. 5, p. 304.

⁴ Imam al-Nawawi, *Syarh al-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, vol. 13, p. 118.

⁵ Al-Mubarakfuri, *ibid*, vol. 6, p. 129.

⁶ Abdullah Saleh al-Muhsin, *al-hadith al-arbain al-nawawi*, Riyadh: Dar al-Watan, p. 78.

⁷ Abdullah Saleh al-Muhsin, *al-hadith al-arbain al-nawawi*, p. 78.

⁸ Al-Mubarakfuri, *ibid*, vol. 4, p. 452.

⁹ Al-Mubarakfuri, *ibid*, vol. 6, p. 129.

In conclusion, these hadiths present a complete and practical decision-making process. It begins with consultation, followed by unity, leadership, wisdom, careful consideration, sincere intention, good character, justice, and finally confidence in the decision made. Taken together, all these Islamic principles provide a balanced approach to making decisions that are beneficial, responsible, and in line with Islamic teachings.

Key hadiths relevant to this principle are as follows:

Hadith 32

عَنْ أَبِي عُبَيْدَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ لَمَّا كَانَ يَوْمُ بَدْرٍ وَجِيَءَ بِالْأَسَارَى قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : مَا تَقُولُونَ فِي هَؤُلَاءِ الْأَسَارَى . وَهَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ وَأَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ لَمْ يَسْمَعْ مِنْ أَبِيهِ . وَيُرْوَى عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَكْثَرَ مَشُورَةً لِأَصْحَابِهِ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Narrated Abu 'Ubaidah (may Allah be pleased with him): That 'Abdullah said: On the Day of Badr when the captives were gathered, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: What do you (people) say about these captives? Then he mentioned the story in the lengthy hadith.

Al-Tirmizi said: This hadith is *hasan*. It has been reported that Abu Hurairah said: None was more apt to seek council of his Companions than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

(*Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 1714)



Hadith 33

عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَجْمَعُ أُمَّتِي أَوْ قَالَ أُمَّةَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ وَيَدُ اللَّهِ مَعَ الْجَمَاعَةِ.

Narrated by Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him): The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Indeed, Allah will not gather my Ummah upon error, and the *Yadullah* (Allah assistance) is with the *Jama'ah* (the main body of the Muslims).¹⁰

(*Jami` al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 2167)

Hadith 34

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ وَمَنْ أَطَاعَ أَمِيرِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي وَمَنْ عَصَى أَمِيرِي فَقَدْ عَصَانِي.

Narrated by Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him): Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah. And whoever obeys the leader (I appoint), obeys me, and whoever disobeys the leader (I appoint), disobeys me.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 6718)

¹⁰ Based on the scholarly commentary (*sharh*) of the hadith, the term *jama'ah* here does not merely refer to most Muslims in terms of numbers alone. Rather, it also encompasses those who adhere to the truth and are guided by qualified scholars.

Hadith 35

عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَعَثَ مُعَاذًا وَأَبَا مُوسَى إِلَى الْيَمَنِ قَالَ: يَبِيسًا وَلَا تُعَسِّرَا، وَبَشِيرًا وَلَا تُنْفِرَا، وَتَطَاوَعَا وَلَا تَخْتَلِفَا.

Narrated Abu Burda (may Allah be pleased with him) That his father said, The Prophet ﷺ sent Mu'adh and Abu Musa to Yemen telling them. Treat the people with ease and don't be hard on them; give them glad tidings and don't fill them with aversion; and love each other, and don't differ.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 3038)

Hadith 36

عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ السَّاعِدِيِّ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الْأَنَاءُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَالْعَجَلَةُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ.

From Sahl bin Sa'd al-Sa'idi (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Deliberateness comes from Allah, while haste comes from Shaitan.

(*Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 2012)

Hadith 37

عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى دُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ.

Narrated 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him): I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying, The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. So whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration was for what he emigrated for.

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 1)



Hadith 38

عَنْ وَابِصَةَ بْنِ مَعْبُدٍ الْأَسَدِيِّ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَوَابِصَةَ: حِينَ تَسْأَلُ عَنِ الْبِرِّ وَالْإِثْمِ؟ قَالَ قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ، قَالَ: فَجَمَعَ أَصَابِعَهُ فَضَرَبَ بِهَا صَدْرَهُ، وَقَالَ: اسْتَفْتِ نَفْسَكَ، اسْتَفْتِ قَلْبَكَ، يَا وَابِصَةُ، ثَلَاثًا، الْبِرُّ مَا اطْمَأَنَّتْ إِلَيْهِ النَّفْسُ وَاطْمَأَنَّ إِلَيْهِ الْقَلْبُ، وَالْإِثْمُ مَا حَاكَ فِي النَّفْسِ وَتَرَدَّدَ فِي الصَّدرِ وَإِنْ أَفْتَاكَ النَّاسُ وَأَفْتَوْكَ.

Wabisah bin Ma'bad al-Asadi (may Allah be pleased with him) reported God's Messenger as saying, have you come to ask about righteousness and sin, *wabisah*? When he replied that he had, he joined his fingers and striking his chest with them and said, ask yourself for a decision, ask your heart for a decision (saying it three times). Righteousness is that with which the soul is tranquil and the heart is tranquil, but sin is that which rouses suspicion in the soul and is perplexing in the chest, even if people give you a decision in your favour.

(*Sunan al-Darimi*, Hadith 2575)



Hadith 39

عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ غَلَا السِّعْرُ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ سَعِّرْ لَنَا . فَقَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمُسَعِّرُ الْقَابِضُ الْبَاسِطُ الرَّزَّاقُ وَإِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ أَلْقَى رَبِّي وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ يَطْلُبُنِي بِمَظْلَمَةٍ فِي دَمٍ وَلَا مَالٍ .

Narrated by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him): Prices became excessive during the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, so they said: O Messenger of Allah! Set prices for us! So, he said: Indeed, Allah is *Al-Musa'ir* (The Price Determiner), *Al-Qabid* (The Withholder), *Al-Basit* (The Extender), *Ar-Razzaq* (The Ever-Providing). And I am hopeful that I meet my Lord and none of you are seeking (recompense from) me for an injustice involving blood or wealth.

(*Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 1314)

Hadith 40

عَنْ أَبِي مُحَمَّدٍ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، قَالَ: حَفِظْتُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: دَعْ مَا يَرِيْبُكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يَرِيْبُكَ فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ طُمَأْنِينَةٌ وَالْكَذِبُ رِيْبَةٌ

Abu Muhammad al-Hasan bin 'Ali bin Abi Talib (May Allah be pleased with them) said: I remember (these words) from Messenger of Allah ﷺ: Give up what is doubtful to you for that which is not doubtful; for truth is peace of mind and falsehood is doubt.

(*Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 2518)

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GLOSSARY

This glossary contains references from credible resources and does not imply endorsement or affiliation.

<i>Al-Amanah</i>	Trust
<i>Al-Amr</i>	Responsibility
<i>Al-Fujur</i>	Wickedness, evil-doing
<i>Al-Rashi</i>	The bribe giver
<i>Ijtihad</i>	Exercise independent reasoning
<i>Murtashi</i>	The bribe taker
<i>Mujtahid</i>	person who formulates independent tradition-based opinions in legal or theological matters
<i>Shuhh</i>	Greed or miserliness
<i>Zulm</i>	Oppression

Securities Commission Malaysia

**3 Persiaran Bukit Kiara
Bukit Kiara
50490 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia**

Tel: +603 6204 8000

Email: cau@seccom.com.my

Websites: www.sc.com.my | www.investsmartsc.my

      @SecComMalaysia