

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



# *Birr al-Wālidayn*

BEING DUTIFUL TO PARENTS



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BEING DUTIFUL TO PARENTS

IMAM MUḤAMMAD  
IBN ISMĀ'ĪL AL-BUKHĀRĪ  
(D. 256/870)

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﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا﴾

‘And We have enjoined upon man  
to do good to his parents.’ (46:15)



Shaykh as-Sa’dī رحمته said,

‘Being good to parents means treating  
them kindly in all ways; in word and in deed.’

(*Taysīr*, p.57)



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## *Publisher's Foreword*

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, without partners, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is His servant and messenger. I invoke the blessings of Allah and peace upon His final Messenger, Muḥammad, his family, Companions and all those who follow them in goodness till the Day of Rising.

The special standing of parents and the respect and obedience due to them are enshrined in Islam as fundamental values that reflect our sincerity and gratitude towards Allah and form the foundations of a right-guided Ummah. Imam Bukhārī's treatise, *Birr al-Wāliḍayn*, serves as a pointed reminder of this, by presenting hadiths on the many facets of being dutiful to parents, the virtuousness of doing so, its reward and the consequences for someone who fails to do so, as well as the obligation to maintain broader family ties.

The reader will find lessons of insight and value for a changing world, such as the onus upon Muslims to be dutiful even towards non-Muslim parents, the importance of obtaining parental permission and blessing for actions we undertake for the sake of Allah and the excellence of showing kindness towards those loved by our parents. These are values that should inform all our dealings, but sincerity dictates that they apply to our parents first and foremost. Above all, we should keep in mind that caring for our parents is a blessing and an opportunity, as a number of the hadiths in *Birr al-Wāliḍayn* inform us. We, therefore, ask Allah, as He teaches us in the Qur'an, 'My Lord, have mercy on them, as they raised me when I was small.' Qur'an (17:24).

We should also be mindful that parents have a responsibility to raise their children correctly in order for them to be dutiful in return, and this must start from a young age. This includes monitoring how children spend their time and the company they keep, to ensure that they stay on the right path. Small things make a difference and can have a profound effect on the next generation, so a child who is accustomed to witnessing benevolence by their parents is more likely to behave in the same manner towards them. In this regard, we ask Allah, ‘*Our Lord, grant us spouses and progeny that are comfort to our eyes.*’ Qur’an (25:74).

All praise is for Allah. Thereafter, I would like to thank both Shaykh Mohammed Siddiq and Shaykh Muhammad Ammar Salim for bringing this indispensable work to our attention and for their contributions to its translation. May Allah reward them both. In addition, Shaykh Muhammad Ammar Salim compiled the chains of transmission for each hadith, together with biographical information on the narrators, which the reader will find as an appendix to the main text. We are grateful to Mawlānā Amir Isap and all who contributed to editing the translation. Special thanks is due to Mufti Yusuf Shabbir for his expert supervision of the translation and editing and for providing insightful commentary on each chapter. Thanks also to Mariam Madge Conlan for bringing the work to its final format. I pray that Allah accepts the efforts of all involved and makes it a means for our forgiveness and an inspiration for all those who read it. May He raise us on the Day of Judgement with those whom he has forgiven totally and enter us into the Garden with our beloved Prophet ﷺ, along with our family, teachers and friends. Ameen.

YAHYA BATHA  
London 2019

## *Introduction*

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Ever Kind.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the universe and Master of our fortunes, and may peace and blessings descend upon His beloved Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, his Companions and all those who follow in their footsteps.

Imam Bukhārī (d. 256/870) is one of the most distinguished scholars of hadith in Islamic history. His *Ṣaḥīḥ* is regarded as the most authentic book after the Qur'an and has an unprecedented level of acceptance. His credentials have been attested to by his teachers, contemporaries, students and scholars of later generations. Such is his status that our teacher, Muḥaddith al-‘Aṣr (Hadith Master of the era) Shaykh Muḥammad Yūnus Jownpūrī (d. 1438/2017), suggests that Imam Bukhārī is a unique miracle of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ that manifested two centuries after the Prophetic era. In addition to his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imam Bukhārī authored more than twenty books, many of which are published.

One of the books authored by Imam Bukhārī is *Birr al-Wālidayn*, a short treatise on being dutiful to parents. The treatise was published a few years ago by Dār al-Ḥādīth al-Kattāniyyah, based on a manuscript found in the personal collection of the erudite Moroccan scholar Ḥāfiẓ ‘Abd al-Ḥayy al-Kattānī (d. 1382/1962). Prior to its publication, it was assumed that the book no longer exists. When our respected teacher, Muḥaddith al-‘Aṣr Shaykh Muḥammad Yūnus Jownpūrī, received a copy of the book, he began to kiss it out of happiness and joy, reflecting his life-long attachment and devotion to Imam Bukhārī and his works. This scene was witnessed by my respected father Mufti Shabbīr Aḥmad (b. 1376/1957), who suggested to me that the treatise should be translated into English for the benefit of the wider public.

My dear and beloved student Mawlānā Moḥammed Siddīq agreed to undertake this task and the result is this publication before you.

This treatise of Imam Bukhārī is a small collection of 75 hadiths transmitted under various chapter headings. The collection focuses on two broad themes which we have categorised into two sections: firstly, the hadiths pertaining to being dutiful to parents, and secondly, the hadiths pertaining to maintaining broader family ties. The final hadith transmitted by Imam Bukhārī relates to the first theme, perhaps reminding the reader of the primary purpose of this book.

It is worth noting that Imam Bukhārī has dedicated several chapters within the Book of Manners in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* to both these themes. Likewise, he has a standalone publication, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, which has many more chapters and hadiths pertaining to both these themes. Thus, most of the hadiths transmitted in this short collection have also been transmitted by Imam Bukhārī in one or both of these books, as readers will gauge from the referencing (*takhrīj*) of the hadiths in the footnotes. In addition, there are several narrations on the subject matter which have been transmitted in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and/or *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* but have not been transmitted in this collection. The translations of these narrations have therefore been added as appendices to this book for the benefit of readers.

In relation to the format of this translation, readers should note the following. Firstly, the chains of transmission have been omitted, as the original Arabic publication can be referred to for this. Secondly, repeated narrations within the same chapter have been omitted. However, some repeated narrations have been retained if they appear within different chapters, particularly if Imam Bukhārī has used the narration to make a different deduction, or if the *matn* (text) of the narration is different. Thirdly, brief notes have been added to the narrations and chapter headings. Imam Bukhārī's rationale for transmitting certain narrations which do not appear to have any link with the subject matter of the book has also been addressed. Fourthly, the referencing of *Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Kattāniyyah* has been used, albeit with a few minor numeric tweaks.

What makes this collection unique is that Imam Bukhārī appears to be the first person to pen a discreet treatise on being dutiful to parents. Several scholars after him followed suit. They include: Imam Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī (d. 285/898–9), Imam Qāsim ibn al-Aṣḥab al-Qurṭubī (d. 340/951), Imam Abū ash-Shaykh al-Aṣḥabānī (d. 369/979) and others.

We pray to Almighty Allah to forgive our shortcomings and make this collection a means of guidance and salvation in both worlds. May Allah bless the lives of our parents and make us and our progenies the coolness of their eyes, and unite us all in Paradise.

YUSUF SHABBIR, BLACKBURN  
1 Rajab 1439/17 March 2018



SECTION 1

*Being Dutiful to Parents*



بَاب: قَوْلُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى:

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا﴾

*Chapter: The speech of Allah the Exalted: 'And We instructed Man to be good to his parents.' Qur'an (31:14)*

HADITH 1

عن أَبِي عَمْرٍو الشَّيْبَانِي يَقُولُ: أَخْبَرَنَا صَاحِبُ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ، وَأَوْمَأَ بِيَدِهِ إِلَى دَارِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ يَعْنِي ابْنَ مَسْعُودٍ رضي الله عنه قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَيُّ الْعَمَلِ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى؟ قَالَ: الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا، قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ: ثُمَّ بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ، قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ: الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي بِهِنَّ، فَلَوْ اسْتَزِدُّهُ لَزَادَنِي.

Abū 'Amr ash-Shaybānī said, 'The owner of this house informed us,' and he pointed with his hand to the house of 'Abdullāh, referring to Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, "I asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, 'Which action is most beloved to Allah the Exalted?' He replied, 'Prayer performed on time.' I asked, 'Then what?' He said, 'Then being dutiful to parents.' I asked, 'Then what?' He said, 'Jihad in the path of Allah.'" He [Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه] said, "He related these things to me, and if I had asked him further, he would have told me more."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (527, 2782, 5970), Al-Adab al-Mufrad (1), Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (85).

HADITH 2

عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رضي الله عنه قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ أَوْ الْعَمَلِ الصَّلَاةُ لَوْفَتِهَا وَبِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ.

Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه narrates, ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The most virtuous of deeds (or: the most virtuous deed) is the prayer performed on time and being dutiful to parents.”<sup>1</sup>

HADITH 3

عَنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رضي الله عنه قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: أَفْضَلُ الْعَمَلِ الصَّلَاةُ لَوْفَتِهَا وَالْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

‘Abdullāh [Ibn Mas‘ūd] رضي الله عنه narrates, ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The most virtuous deed is the prayer performed on time and jihad in the path of Allah.”’ *Shu‘ab al-Īmān* (3910).

HADITH 4

عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رضي الله عنه قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ: أَيُّ الْأَعْمَالِ أَفْضَلُ؟ قَالَ: الصَّلَاةُ وَبِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، وَلَوْ اسْتَزِدْتُهُ لَزَادَنِي.

Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه narrates, ‘I asked the Prophet ﷺ, “Which actions are most virtuous?” He said, “The prayer [performed on time], being dutiful to parents and jihad in the path of Allah.” And if I had asked further, he would have told me more.’ *Musnad Aḥmad* (3973), *Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr* (9817, 9818).

*Commentary:* Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab (d. 795/1393) has provided an elaborate explanation of these narrations in *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (4:211), concluding that

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.