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عَنْ أَبِي الْعَبَّاسِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا
قَالَ : كُنْتُ خَلْفَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمًا فَقَالَ :
يَا غُلَامُ إِنِّي أَعَلَّمْتُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ : أَحْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ ، أَحْفَظِ
اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ مُجَاهَكَ ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ ، وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ
فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ . وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْأُمَّةَ لَوِ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ
يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ ، لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ ؛ وَإِنْ
اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ ، لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ
كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ، رُفِعَتِ الْأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتِ الصُّحُفُ . رَوَاهُ
التِّرْمِذِيُّ . وَقَالَ : حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ .

وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ غَيْرِ التِّرْمِذِيِّ : أَحْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ أَمَامَكَ
تَعْرِفْ إِلَى اللَّهِ فِي الرَّخَاءِ يَعْرِفَكَ فِي الشَّدَةِ ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ
مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبِكَ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ .
وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مَعَ الصَّبْرِ وَأَنَّ الْفَرْجَ مَعَ الْكُرْبِ وَأَنَّ
مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا .

Abu al-'Abbas 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, radiyallahu anhuma, reported: One day I was behind the Prophet, (ﷺ), and he said to me: "O young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice] : Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you (have need to) ask, ask of Allah; and if you seek help, seek help from Allah. Know that even if the Nation (or the whole community) were to gather together to benefit you with something, they would not benefit you with anything except that which Allah has already recorded for you, and that if they gather together to harm you with something, they would not be able to harm you with anything except that which Allah has already recorded against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried." [Al-Tirmidhi relates this and says: It is a good, genuine Hadith]

In a version other than that of al-Tirmidhi it reads: "..Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him before you. Get to know Allah in prosperity and He will know you in adversity. Know that what has passed you by was not going to befall you; and that what has befallen you was not going to pass you by. And know that victory comes with patience, relief with affliction, and ease with hardship."

Background

This hadith implies a very important advice and general ruling in Islam: Allah's protection. Ibnu Rajab quoted one scholar as saying: "What a pity for the one who is ignorant of this hadith and has little understanding of its meaning."

Lessons

The Prophet, (ﷺ), starts the hadith by getting the attention of Ibn 'Abbas by saying "O young man, I shall teach you some words of advice". By saying "O young man", Ibn 'Abbas knows that the Prophet, (ﷺ) is talking specifically to him. And by following it with "I shall teach you..." Ibn 'Abbas knows how important the next words of the Prophet, (ﷺ), are going to be. Hence, these words at the beginning have attracted the undivided attention of Ibn 'Abbas.

This teaches us that when we give a talk or speech, it is important that we start with words that will grab the attention of the audience. This is to ensure that our words of advice (contained in our speech) do not fall on 'deaf ears'.

The phrase "Be mindful of Allah" means:

- ? To observe or fulfil Allah's obligations
- ? To adhere to His commandments
- ? To avoid His prohibitions

Some of the things we have to fulfil - to attain Allah's protection - include:

- ? The daily prayers (salah) – by praying in the best way we can and by performing it on time.
- ? Maintaining cleanliness and purity.
- ? Observing our oath – we have to be careful if we swear by Allah that we will do something, because we have to abide to this commitment we make.
- ? Guarding our senses – we should ensure that what we see or hear or say pleases Allah. We should fear Allah and not use these senses in the wrong manner.
- ? Ensuring that we do not consume, via food or drink, anything that is not halal.
- ? Observing that our dealings and transactions are halal.
- ? Protecting our hearts from being involved in maksiah, e.g. zina' (adultery) – the moment a person is weak and does a maksiah, he should repent because of his fear of Allah.

If we are “mindful of Allah”, i.e. we observe and fulfil His obligations/commandments, “Allah will protect us”. There two kinds of protection from Allah:

1. Allah will protect or look after His servants in this world / in worldly matters. For example, our health and our senses. We will be enjoying Allah’s mercy and bounty for our sight, hearing and speech all of our lives – even as we grow old, Allah will still allow us to see and hear properly, or he will take care of our intellect and mental health.

Another example is Allah will protect our family and our property, belongings and money. Also, if one is mindful of Allah during his youth, Allah will protect him during his adult years.

2. Allah will protect His servants’ deen (religion) and iman (faith). He will protect us from misunderstandings and being misled or influenced by misconceptions and self-desires. He will help us and give us guidance so that we are protected from negative influences.

Allah will also protect our deen when we leave this world. When we leave this world, we will leave with iman for being a mua'min (believer). We will be protected from shaitan’s influence to lead us astray right at the very last moment in our life.

We may not be aware of when Allah is protecting our deen. It may even cause us to be unhappy. There may be a situation where Allah prevents us from doing something (something which we want to do) – this is actually a protection from Allah, preventing us from a disaster or problem or from committing a sin.

If we are mindful of Allah, we will find Him close to us or beside us or in front of us. Allah is close to His servants (the mua'minin) by giving them guidance, support, help, protection, victory, etc.

The other narration of this hadith states that if we become beloved to Allah during times of ease, He will know us during times of hardship. During our times of ease or prosperity, if we use it for the pleasure of Allah, He will be with us to look after us in our times of hardship, weakness, sickness, etc. Even in terms of receiving reward from Allah. If we are sick and are no longer able to do something which we used to do during our times of ease, we will be given the reward for that act.

The statement in which the Prophet, (ﷺ), tells ‘Abdullah bin Abbas to “ask of Allah” and to “seek help from Allah” is the fundamental basics of Tawhid. This is something we say in every salah (“iyya ka na’budu wa iyya ka nasta’in”). This shows us the importance of du’a, the importance of continuously

asking Allah for His support and guidance. We need to show our need for Allah and our total dependency on Him by performing such forms of ibadah.

Allah subhana wa ta'ala has already written in Al-Lauhulmahfudz what is going to take place. There are events or occurrences that happen which we have no control over (e.g. being sick, losing someone we love, falling into hardship, etc.) and to face these events correctly we need to practice contentment (redha) which is the highest level of action required where we are pleased or contented with whatever Allah has chosen for us, whether it is positive or negative. The second highest level is tolerance (sabr), where we need to be patient and not panic or say anything that displeases Allah subhana wa ta'ala.

In the Qur'an there are several verses which emphasises this same meaning that is mentioned at the end of this hadith: Surah Yunus (10), ayat 107; Surah Fatir (35), ayat 2; Surah Al-Hadid (57), ayat 22.

Allah recorded the qadar (fate) of all creations 50,000 years before He created the heavens and the earth (Sahih Muslim). In another Sahih Muslim hadith, a man asked the Prophet, (ﷺ), whether what we do today is something that has already been recorded or whether it is something that just happens. The Prophet, (ﷺ), replied that whatever happens is according to what has already been recorded. The man then asked why he should do anything at all. The Prophet, (ﷺ), made a command [not just to the man but to the whole Muslim ummah] to do good deeds - everyone will be guided towards what he has been created for.

Al-qadar can be broadly broken down into two categories:

1. There are actions that take place which we do not have any control over. We have to surrender to the will of Allah and be patient.
2. There are actions that take place which we had control over. These events happen as a result of our recklessness, laziness, of not being alert, etc. Even though the minute these things happen they already become qadar, those who are responsible for the actions will be held responsible. Thus, whatever we do, we should do it carefully, completely and to the best of our abilities. For example, construction workers building a site, doctors taking care of patients, driving, etc.

Generally speaking, we are responsible for what we do, whether it is in worldly matters or whether it is in our ibadah. We should always strive to improve ourselves and to constantly tell ourselves that we can do better.

Also, we should avoid things that can be avoided, e.g. avoiding disasters, avoiding trouble, etc. Even in health, we should avoid consuming things which are unhealthy for our bodies - e.g. food which can cause heart diseases (i.e. contains high cholesterol), etc. In other words, we should avoid things that are bad for us, and not just let it happen and then blame it on qadar.

It doesn't contradict with qadar if someone is sick that he seeks treatment. If we are faced with a problem, we should try our best to solve it or minimise it and not do things which will worsen the situation.

Many Muslims tend to interpret this hadith (on qadar) negatively. We should understand qadar in a positive sense. We should differentiate between things which we don't have control over and things which we do. Instead of just accepting things that happen as qadar, we should see how we can improve the situation and how we can avoid things which can be avoided. We should accept the fact that we are responsible for whatever we do and the choices we make.

Conclusion

This hadith teaches us how we can live a peaceful and happy life by being mindful of Allah and by totally trusting and worshipping Him. By understanding qadar positively, we will not live a stressful, unhappy life of always worrying about our future or what the consequences of our actions or decisions will be. We do our best to fulfil Allah's obligations and we trust and accept whatever He wills for us.