

Right n. 6: The Right of the Legs

حق الرجلين

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ رِجْلَيْكَ فَأَنْ لَا تَمْشِي بِهِمَا إِلَى مَا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ وَلَا تَجْعَلُهُمَا مَطِيئَتَكَ فِي الطَّرِيقِ الْمُسْتَحْفَةِ بِأَهْلِهَا فَإِنَّهَا حَامِلَتُكَ وَسَالِكَةٌ بِكَ مَسَلَكَ الدِّينِ وَالسَّبْقُ لَكَ، وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

And the right of your legs is that you walk not with them toward that which is unlawful for you. And you should not direct them in the way that will lead the person they carry to being debased. Your legs will carry you in the direction of the religion and they will help you go ahead. And there is no power but in God. 1

Almighty God says:

أَلَمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا قُلْ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُوا فَلَا تُنظِرُونَ

“Have they feet to walk with? Or hands to lay hold with? Or eyes to see with? Or ears to hear with? Say: “Call your ‘god-partners’, scheme (your worst) against me, and give me no respite!” [The Holy Qur’an, al-A’raf 7: 195]

We also read:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

“O ye people! Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good; and do not follow the footsteps of the evil one, for he is to you an avowed enemy.” [The Holy Qur’an, al-Baqarah 2: 168]

How Do God's Special Servants Walk

The Almighty God expresses twelve special characteristics of His special servants in Chapter Furqan of the Holy Qur'an. The first of these characteristics is regarding the way they walk as we read in the following verse:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

“And the servants of (God) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!” [The Holy Qur'an, al-Furqan 25:63]

This means that they walk so calmly that they reject haughtiness.² Thus, the first characteristic of God's special servants is that they reject haughtiness, pride and selfishness that can even become manifest in the way one walks. This is because man's moral characteristics are usually displayed through his behavior.

God's Important Decree on This Issue

The following verse revealed an important decree to the Prophet :

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا

“Nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou canst not rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height.” [The Holy Qur'an, Bani Isra'il 17:37]

This verse points out that haughty people stomp their feet on the ground so that others are informed when they walk. They raise their necks up to the sky so that they can show their superiority to others. The reason why some people get this way is that they forget themselves and become haughty.

In an interesting tradition from the Noble Prophet we read: “One day when the Prophet was walking in an alley he saw that people had gathered in one place. He asked for the reason. He was told that there was a mad man there and the people were attracted to his insane and funny acts. The Prophet called the people and said: Do you want me to introduce to you the very insane? Everyone was quiet and listened whole-heartedly. Then the Prophet said:

الْمُتَّبَعْتُ فِي مَشْيِهِ، النَّاطِرُ فِي عِطْفِيهِ، الْمَحْرُكُ جَنْبِيهِ بِمِنْكَبِيهِ الَّذِي لَا يُرْجَى خَيْرُهُ وَلَا يُؤْمَنُ شَرُّهُ فَذَلِكَ الْمَجْنُونُ، وَهَذَا الْمُبْتَلَى.

The one who walks with pride, constantly looks on either side and throws up his shoulders as he walks, from whom good is not expected and from whose evil people are not secure – that is the insane one. This man (whom you saw) is afflicted (with an illness)”.³

Humbleness does not mean that one should be lethargic when he walks. Rather one must be humble but take firm steps that show his determination and power.

The Way the Prophet Walked

There is a section on the way the Prophet walked in Makarim ul-Akhlaq. In one tradition in this section we read: Imam Ali said:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ إِذَا مَشَى تَكَفُّوًا تَكَفُّوًا كَأَنَّمَا يَتَقَلَّعُ مِنْ صَبَبٍ، لَمْ أَرِ قَبْلَهُ وَلَا بَعْدَهُ مِثْلَهُ.

“When the Prophet walked he inclined forwards as if he was going downhill (even though he was not in a hurry). I never saw anyone else walk this way before or after him.”⁴

One of the companions of the Prophet said:

مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَسْرَعَ فِي مَشْيَيْتِهِ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ كَأَنَّمَا الْأَرْضُ تُطْوَى لَهُ وَإِنَّا لَنَجْهَدُ أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنَّهُ لَغَيْرُ مُكْتَرَثٍ.

“I have never seen anyone walk faster than the Prophet did. It was as if the Earth was contracted for him. We would strive (to catch up with him) but he did not pay attention to it.”⁵

Ibn Abbas said:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ إِذَا مَشَى مَشْيًا يُعْرَفُ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِمَشْيِي عَاجِزٍ وَلَا بِكَسْلَانٍ.

“When the Prophet of God walked, he neither walked like one lacking in strength nor like the lethargic ones.”⁶

Luqman’s Will on How to Walk

We read the following in the Holy Qur’an regarding Luqman’s will to his son:

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

"And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for God loveth not any arrogant boaster." [The Holy Qur'an, Luqman 31: 18]

In the next verse we read:

وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ

"And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass." [The Holy Qur'an, Luqman 31: 19]

We read in a tradition from the Prophet of God :

مَنْ مَشَى عَلَى الْأَرْضِ اخْتِيَالًا لَعَنَتْهُ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ تَحْتَهَا وَمَنْ فَوْقَهَا.

*"The Earth, everyone on it and everyone in it curse whoever walks with pride on the Earth."*⁷

In another tradition recorded in Amali we read that the Prophet admonished against walking with pride and haughtiness and said:

مَنْ لَبَسَ ثَوْبًا فَاعْتَالَ فِيهِ خَسَفَ اللَّهُ بِهِ مِنْ شَفِيرِ جَهَنَّمَ وَكَانَ قَرِينًا قَارُونََ لِأَنَّهُ أَوَّلُ مَنْ اخْتَالَ فَخَسَفَ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ.

*"Whoever wears a garment and gets too proud and makes a show of it, then God will make him sink into edge of Hell. He will be the companion of Qarun (Korah), since Qarun was the first man who established haughtiness. God made him and his house sink into the earth."*⁸

We also read that Imam Sadiq said:

بَابُ أَنَّ الْإِيمَانَ مَبْتُوثٌ لِحَوَارِحِ الْبَدَنِ كُلِّهَا: وَرِجْلَاهُ اللَّتَانِ يَمْشِي بِهِمَا

*"God has made faith incumbent upon all our body parts and has divided it amongst them. He has made it incumbent upon our legs not to walk towards committing sins, rather to walk in ways to please God."*⁹

Witnesses on the Resurrection Day

God the Almighty said in the Holy Qur'an:

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَى أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“That Day shall We set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to us, and their feet bear witness, to all that they did.” [The Holy Qur’an, Ya-Sin 36:65]

He also said:

يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions.” [The Holy Qur’an, al-Nur 24:24]

There have been various views on how the body parts will witness:

1 Some believe that on that Day God will make them understand and empower them to talk, and they will talk. It is not surprising for the Creator who initially created this power in us to create it in our body parts.

2 Some believe that on that Day God will only empower them to talk but they will not understand. They will just express the facts to God.

3 Others believe that our body parts will certainly carry the effects of what was done by them during our lifetime. The appearance of these effects is like them witnessing. This view can also be seen a lot in the day-to-day sayings like “your eyes witness to your not having slept.” A Persian poet said: “The color of the face witnesses about the secret within.”¹⁰

Let’s Take Steps to Help Fulfill the Believers’ Needs

Regarding the rights of the legs Imam Sajjad said: “And the right of your legs is that you walk not with them toward that which is unlawful to you. And you should not direct them in the way that will lead the person they carry to being debased.” Therefore, we must make an effort to help fulfill the believers’ needs if we want to improve ourselves. Ali ibn Ibrahim quoted on the authority of his father, on the authority of Himad, on the authority of Ibrahim ibn Omar Yamani, on the authority of Imam Sadiq :

مَا مِنْ مُؤْمِنٍ يَمْشِي لِأَخِيهِ الْمُؤْمِنِ فِي حَاجَةٍ إِلَّا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَهُ بِكُلِّ خُطْوَةٍ حَسَنَةً وَحَطَّ عَنْهُ بِهَا سَيِّئَةٌ وَرَفَعَ لَهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةً.

“A believer does not move to help fulfill another believer’s needs but that God will record a good deed for him for every step he takes, and wipe out one of his wrong-doings and raise him in rank.”¹¹

We also read in Makarim ul-Akhlaq that Imam Sajjad said:

“You have no escape from standing upon the narrow bridge (Al-Sirat [over Hell]), so you should see to it

that your legs do not slip and cause you to fall into the Fire.”¹²

The People Entering Hell

God informs us about this event in the following verse of the Holy Qur’an:

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا

“Not one of you but will pass over it: this is, with thy Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished. But We shall save those who guarded against evil, and We shall leave the wrongdoers therein, (humbled) to their knees.” [The Holy Qur’an, Maryam 19:71-72]

There is extensive discussion among the interpreters of the Qur’an regarding what is meant by the phrase “you shall all enter Hell” in this verse. Some believe that it means all the people will approach it whether they are good or bad. They believe that the good people will then be released, but the wicked ones will be placed there. They use the similarity in the wording in Arabic that is used in this verse, and that used in the following verse of the Holy Qur’an about Moses and what happened to him to support this view:

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ

“And when he arrived at the watering (place) in Madyan, he found...” [The Holy Qur’an, al-Qasas 28:23]

Others believe that this does not imply just an approach to Hell. Rather it means that all the people will enter Hell. However, believers are saved from the Fire and the unbelievers will remain there. The last sentence of the verse and the related traditions all support this view. Jabir ibn Abdullah was asked about this verse. He pointed to both his ears and said: I heard with both my ears that the Prophet said the following. May I get deaf from both ears if I lie:

الْوُرُودُ (يعني) الدُّخُولُ. لَا يَبْقَى بَرٌّ وَلَا فَاجِرٌ إِلَّا يَدْخُلُهَا فَتَكُونُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا كَمَا كَانَتْ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، حَتَّى أَنْ لِلنَّارِ (أَوْ قَالَ: لِحَبْنَمَ) ضَجِيجًا مِنْ بَرْدِهَا. ثُمَّ يُنَجِّي اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَيَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا

“Entry in this verse means really going in. There are no good-doers or bad-doers that will not enter Hell. However, the Fire will cool off for the believers and it will be safe for them just as it was for Abraham, until the Fire [or he said: Hell] will cry out from (the excessive) cold. Then God will rescue the pious people and abandon the oppressors in it, in a state of humiliation.”¹³

In another tradition from the Prophet we read:

تَقُولُ النَّارُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: جُزْ يَا مُؤْمِنُ، فَقَدْ أَطْفَأَ نُورَكَ لِهَبِّي

“On the Resurrection Day the Fire will tell the believer: “Pass through, O believer, for your light has extinguished my flames.”¹⁴

The other traditions regarding the Bridge over Hell that is finer than hair and sharper than a sword also support this view. In a tradition from the Prophet he said:

يَرِدُ النَّاسُ النَّارَ ثُمَّ يَصْدُرُونَ بِأَعْمَالِهِمْ، فَأَوْلَهُمْ كَلْمَعِ الْبَرْقِ ثُمَّ كَمَرِ الرِّيحِ ثُمَّ كَحَضْرِ الْفَرَسِ ثُمَّ كَالرَّكِبِ ثُمَّ كَشَدِّ الْأَرْجْلِ ثُمَّ كَمَشْيِهِ..

“All the people will enter Hell but leave it according to their deeds. Some come out like a flash of lightning, some come out with the speed of a strong wind, others will come running out like a fast-running horse. Some come out like a horse that is walking. Some will come out like a person that is walking fast and some leave it like a person walking at a normal speed.”¹⁵

The Ankle

The ankle is a complex mechanism. What we normally think of as the ankle is actually made up of two joints: the **subtalar joint**, and the **true ankle joint**. The true ankle joint is composed of 3 bones, seen above from a front, or anterior, view: the **tibia** which forms the inside, or medial, portion of the ankle; the **fibula** which forms the lateral, or outside portion of the ankle; and the **talus** underneath. The true ankle joint is responsible for up and down motion of the foot.

Beneath the true ankle joint is the second part of the ankle, the subtalar joint, which consists of the **talus** on top and **calcaneus** on the bottom. The subtalar joint allows side-to-side motion of the foot. The ends of the bones in these joints are covered by **articular cartilage**. The major ligaments of the ankle are: the **anterior tibiofibular** ligament, which connects the tibia to the fibula.

The **lateral collateral** ligaments, which attach the fibula to the calcaneus and gives the ankle lateral stability; and, on the medial side of the ankle, the **deltoid** ligaments, which connect the tibia to the talus and calcaneus and provide medial stability. These components of your ankle, along with the muscles and tendons of your lower leg, work together to handle the stress your ankle receives as you walk, run and jump.

The Hip

The hip is a ball-and-socket joint where the head of the femur articulates with the cuplike acetabulum of the pelvic bone.

The Knee

The bones of the knee, the **femur** and the **tibia**, meet to form a hinge joint. The joint is protected in front by the **patella**.¹⁶ The knee joint is cushioned by **articular cartilage** that covers the ends of the tibia and femur, as well as the underside of the patella. The lateral **meniscus** and medial meniscus are pads of cartilage that further cushion the joint, acting as shock absorbers between the bones. Ligaments help to stabilize the knee. The **collateral ligaments** run along the sides of the knee and limit sideways motion.

The **anterior cruciate ligament**, or **ACL**, connects the tibia to the femur at the center of the knee. Its function is to limit rotation and forward motion of the tibia. The posterior cruciate ligament, or PCL located just behind the ACL limits backward motion of the tibia. These components of your knee, along with the muscles of your leg, work together to manage the stress your knee receives as you walk, run and jump.

The Jurisprudents' Views on the Worth of the Legs

Now we will discuss the jurisprudents' view on the value of the legs. Imam Sajjad gave us many useful moral suggestions regarding the rights of the legs. But the question here is the jurisprudents' view on their worth. We read the following in Mabani Takmilat al-Minhaj: "There is full compensation for cutting off both legs. The compensation for each leg is half that amount. It does not make any difference whether the leg is cut off from the joints, the knees or the thighs."¹⁷

There is full compensation for cutting off all the toes. We read the following in Mukhtasar ul-Manafi': "There is full compensation for both legs. There is half compensation for each leg. The place where the legs meet the knees is the limit. The compensation for the toes is the same as that for the fingers of the hands."¹⁸

¹. In the other version it is followed by: "You have no escape from standing upon the narrow bridge (al-sirat [over Hell]), so you should see to it that your legs do not slip and cause you to fall in the Fire."

². Tafsir-i-Namunah, v. 15, footnote on p. 147.

³. Tafsir-i-Namunah, v. 15, p. 149.

⁴. Makarim al-Akhlaq, p.22.

⁵. Tafsir-i-Namuneh, v. 15, p. 153.

⁶. Makarim al-Akhlaq, p.22.

⁷. Nur al-Thaqalayn, v.4, p.207.

⁸. Ibid.

⁹. Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p.34.

¹⁰. Tafsir-i-Namuneh, v. 18, p.431.

¹¹. Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p. 197.

¹². The Complete Edition of the Treatise on Rights, Imam Sajjad; research and translation by Dr. Ali Peiravi and Ms. Lisa Zaynab Morgan.

¹³. Nur al-Thaqalayn, v.3, p.353.

¹⁴. Nur al-Thaqalayn, v.3, p.354.

[15.](#) Ibid. p.353.

[16.](#) The kneecap.

[17.](#) Mabani' Takmilat al-Minhaj, v.2, p.314.

[18.](#) Mukhtasar al-Manafi', p.301.

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