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The Charitable And Sending Of Good Deeds To The Dead

There is a very beneficial idea. Just as we all love to receive gifts and we all love when people remember us in our life time, similarly we love to be remembered in our death when we shall be counted as dead people and our graves will lie amongst other graves.

We should therefore not forget others who have departed from us especially our parents and relatives by praying for them, by giving charity on their behalf and by visiting their graves. Some people think wrongly that our rights towards our parents are limited only in their life and end at their death.

Muhammad ibn Muslim narrates a tradition from Abu Ja'far (a.s.): "A person may be good to his parents during their life and forget them after their death, thus Allah considers him to have angered his parents. If on the other hand he was irresponsible in his duties towards them during their life and started to do good deeds on their behalf after their death Allah considers him to be an obedient servant". [1](#)

The Holy Prophet says that the leader of the good doers on the day of Judgment is the one who did good to his parents after their death. [2](#)

A famous scholar relates that he was told by Sheikh Ali Tehrani that the Sheikh's father related that he was in Karbala' and his mother was in Tehran. Then one night he dreamt that his mother had come to him and said that she had died and that she had been brought to Karbala'.

The Sheikh's father woke up and as he wondered about his dream, he received a letter saying that his mother had indeed died and they had sent her body to Karbala' to be blessed and buried at the Haram (shrine) of Imam Husayn (a.s.).

The sheikh's father brought the body to the Haram of Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) and prayed to this saint. "Ya Abbas! my mother was not a regular in saying her prayers or fasting. I beg you to intercede on her behalf and I promise to pay somebody who will pray and fast for fifty years on her behalf", he begged.

After many months, the Sheikh's father heard that there was noise and commotion in his dream at the door of his house. He came out to find out about the origin of that noise when at the door he saw that his mother had been tied to a tree and was being whipped. The sheikh's father asked the reason for this and he was told that they had been ordered by Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) to whip her until the Sheikh's father fulfilled his promise of paying the debt of her prayers and fasting.

Thus he went into his house and brought back the money and then took his mother in to the house to tend to her wounds. When he got up from his dream he realized the mistake he had committed and in reality found people to pray Salaat Istijaara and fast for her.[3](#)

He used not to pray and fast!

Marhum Khalil Tahraani says that there was a man who worked at the public bath house in Tehran. This man was called Ali Talib and he never prayed or fasted. He even had a public bath built well known by his name.

Once when Marhum Khalil was in Najaf, he saw Ali Talib in his dream at Wadius Salaam. According to the traditions from our Imams, the soul of the believers is bought to Wadius Salaam which is a place situated in Najaf. Marhum Khalil asked him how he happened to be in this nice place when he never prayed or fasted.

Ali Talib then related how the famous scholar called Sheikh Muhammad Kermanshahi had paid several people to pray and fast on his behalf. Then Ali Talib also mentioned the people who were praying, fasting and performing pilgrimage for him.

Marhum Khalil says that when he got up from his dream, he met after some time travellers from Tehran who indeed verified that Ali Talib had died and that Sheikh Muhammad Kermanshahi had indeed paid several people to pray his lifetime prayers and fasts, and they too mentioned the same people who were mentioned in the dream.

This event proves that what we perform for the dead reaches them. It also proves that the soul of every believer does go to Wadius Salaam in Najaf. It teaches us how people in the past cared about people who were not related to them except in faith not only in the lifetime but also in the death. [4](#)

The best charity!

Once a companion of the Prophet (S) called Saad had gone to the battle field outside Medina. On the way, Saad heard that his mother who had been sick had died. Saad who loved his mother very much came to the Prophet (S) and said that he had wanted to give charity on his mother's behalf but it had not been possible for him.

He then enquired if he could give charity on her behalf now that she was dead. The Prophet (S) replied

in the affirmative. Saad then went on to inquire what was the best charity he could offer? The Prophet (S) said that on the route to the battle field he had seen that the soldiers were thirsty and there was a dire need of water.

The Prophet suggested that the best charity was to dig a well on the road so that caravans would benefit from the supply of water and it would also be a continuous form of charity for years to come. That was what Saad did. [5](#)

The fast reaching charity!

Sayyid Husayn Muddarrisi relates that one of his female relatives had seen his dead father in a dream. His father's face was illuminating with light and beside him was a woman who was folding beautiful and smart clothes the likes of which she had never seen in this world before. When asked where the clothes had come from, the woman replied that they were for his father and that they had been sent by his sons for him.

This woman who had seen the dream asked all his dead father's relatives whether they had done any special good deeds for their father. One of the Sayyid's brothers was taken back and admitted that he had prepared for some clothes to be given to orphans but he had not actually distributed them.

The Sayyid was so surprised to know that a deed had been rewarded when only a decision was made on his part and the charitable act had not taken place yet. So this proves that any charitable act done for the dead reaches them immediately, as soon as you make the intention. [6](#)

Respect the charity!

One great scholar Allama Muhammad Husayn Al Husayni At-Tehrani says that when we do an act of charity or a good deed for the dead, it should be with respect.

He relates a real life event as told to him by another great scholar of Islam Agha Buzurgh ATahraani who said that when he was small he lived with his family in Tehran. It was a few days after the death of his grandmother and he was with his mother in the kitchen while his mother was cooking some food.

A beggar knocked on the door and Agha Buzurg decided to give the beggar some food as an act of charity on behalf of his grandmother so that she would get a reward. Well, because he didn't find a suitable vessel in which he could put the food he quickly grabbed a cup which they used in the bathroom and put the food in it and gave it to the beggar.

That night his father dreamt a strange dream and woke up in the middle of the night and related to his mother that he had seen his mother and she was annoyed, because she had received some charity in a bath cup and her friends had all made jokes of this. She stressed that when you stand up to do an act of charity it should be done with respect.

Agha Buzurg says that his mother was taken back by this incident and on straining her memory she remembered that Agha Buzurg had given the beggar some food in a cup used in the bathroom. [7](#)

The world of Barzakh!

Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Al Mudarrisi says that he saw his father a few days after his death and asked him how he felt when his soul was being removed. His father, Marhoom Ayatullah Al Kazim Al Mudarrisi replied that he was quite at ease when it happened.

Sayyid Taqi Mudarrissi says that the Marhoom father often appears in his children's dreams and relates to them about many events connected to them.

Once his father's soul appeared in the dream of their neighbour who teaches his children and asked the neighbour to inform his children that the good charitable acts that they do reach him continuously.

One of his sons called Sayyid Husayn Al Mudarrissi has been specially appointed by his family to rise up to the task of doing charitable acts for the deceased members of the family. Sayyid Taqi's brother Sayyid Muhammad Bakir Al Mudarrissi relates that one year they commemorated the death of their father with a majlis and then they distributed tea, cakes and biting to the people who had participated.

On that particular night the soul of their father appeared in the dream of their sister who knew nothing about this event and who resides in Tehran. Their father told her that his sons had sent him some cake that day. In another yearly commemoration for their father, as they prepared food in the kitchen, one of his brothers called Abbas saw his father in his dream and his father asked him to check whether every thing was all right in the kitchen.

The reward of food distributed as charity reaches the dead people very quickly, as related in many teachings of Islam. [8](#)

Beware of the debts of the deceased!

It is very important to pay the debts of the people who are dead, since this can relieve them of punishment in the grave.

After the death of the great scholar Almir Sayyid Hassan Bin Air, Sayyid Ali Al Husayni revealed in a dream to his son the amount of money which he owed to a person, and that he was in trouble due to this. When the amount of money was paid, he thanked his son for relieving all the pain and torture he was undergoing.

Another scholar Allamah al Noori relates that he was told by Amir Sayyid Ali, that the latter in his dream saw his father and expressed his thanks and the relief he felt since he had been through a lot of trouble. When the scholar asked his father why he had been through turmoil, his father revealed that it was

because of a certain amount of money that he owed somebody, and mentioned the name of that person.

On going through the accounts of his father he became even more surprised on not finding the name of this person in his father's account books. The only way was to ask the person whose name had been mentioned by his father. The man when approached said that, at the death of the scholar's father he had inquired whether there was a mention of his name in the list of people his father owed, but he had been told by the man who was handling the accounts that there was no mention of his name. The man went on to say that he had been upset and regretted that he had not made a written contract as a proof of the money owed to him by his father. However after sometime he chose to forgive this matter and overlook it.⁹

Gift the dead!

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) said: "Gift the dead". When the companions asked what they should gift the dead with, the Prophet said: "With Charity and Prayers," and continued to say that: "the souls of dead people descended every Friday on earth and begged their close ones with a forlorn voice: 'O Mother, O Father, O Children, O Close ones to me, be kind to me even with a dirham, or a piece of bread or clothes, and Allah shall reward you.'"

Then the Prophet S.A.W. cried bitterly and all the companions cried bitterly too such that the Prophet (S) could not utter anything. Finally the Prophet said, "These were your brothers in faith and they now have turned to dust after enjoyment in this life and they regret bitterly and reproach themselves and wish that they had done good deeds so that they wouldn't need you, and that is why you should help them in their desperate condition."

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says that: "All the prayers, fasts, pilgrimage, charity, good acts and prayers reach the dead and help and reward them".

The Holy Prophet (S) says that: "The dead man is like a person drowning who helplessly holds on to any help given to him by his father or brother or friend and he clings on to these and loves these acts more than the world itself, and the gifts for the dead are charity and praying for their forgiveness."¹⁰

Hajj on behalf of dead is also charity!

One scholar relates that in the season of Hajj after completing the acts of worship he did Tawaf, going round the Kaaba seven times and prayed two units of prayers at Maqaame Ibrahim (a.s.) for another scholar.

When he went home, the same night he saw the scholar whom he had gifted the acts of worship, come in his dream and thank him for his kindness, a proof that these acts reach the dead. ¹¹

Only six days!

Al Haj Sayyid Muhammad Hassan Naaji Shirazi informed his own son after his death in a dream that the person his son had hired to pray the Salaat and Fasts that he had missed in his life time, had not acted upon his will and in fact had only repaid the equivalent of six days prayers.

Sayyid Muhammad Hassan Naaji's son relates that his father had instructed him to hire a man to pray an equivalent of four years prayers, and four months fasts. His son had done as instructed, but after some time his son saw his father in a sorry state and he was informed that his will had not been acted upon.

His son immediately went to ask the man whom he had hired and on checking the books in which the hired man used to write how much of the worship he had accomplished, they realized that the dream was true. The hired man apologized and said that he had been under the impression that he had accomplished much, but from then he promised to complete the contract. [12](#)

60 Tumans saved me!

A scholar relates that he saw a friend of his in the dream, and when he asked his friend's condition after death, he was told that his condition had been bad were it not for some money given by his trustee on his behalf in the year of severe drought in Yazd.

On waking up, this scholar went to the deceased's trustee and asked him what he had done for the deceased during the drought in Yazd. The Trustee thought for a little while and on recalling said that he had been asked to help the people of Yazd who had been suffering from famine. In addition to his own money or charity he also took out some sixty tumans from the deceased's account and gave charity on the dead man's behalf.

Well he was surprised to understand that these sixty tumans were the ones which changed the destiny of the deceased's man after his death. [13](#)

Charity to own relatives first!

A woman lost her husband through death. She decided to give charity on his behalf. One Friday night she prepared some food and sent her son to give it to a poor man who lived near her house. While sending the food the dead man's son felt very hungry but he controlled himself and after having given the charity, he returned home hungry and went to bed.

The next Friday the same sequence of events took place. On the third Friday, the orphan while sending the food to the poor, could not control himself and ate the food on the way. That night the widow of the dead man dreamt her husband who told her that: "That night was the first night whence he received the

reward of the charity she had given, while the charities she had given before had not reached him”.

The widow got up and doubting that her son had committed a blunder went to investigate the matter. Her little orphan said that contrary to her suspicion he had sent the charity the two Friday's to the poor man, and it was on the third Friday that he had eaten the food.

It was then that the widow understood that her son deserved the food more than the poor neighbour.

Thus we need to give charity to our near kith and kin before we look further¹⁴

“But he would not attempt the uphill road, and what will make you comprehend the uphill road? it is the setting free of a slave or giving of food on a day of hunger to an orphan having relations or to the poor man lying in dust.” ¹⁵

Give Charity even if it is little

Marhoom Nahawandi says that it was related to him by a scholar who saw in his dream a group of dead people walking together in a happy mood. He saw an old man walking behind them who was unhappy and despairing.

When the scholar asked the old man why he was unhappy, the old man replied that while the relatives of other dead people sent charity to them his own son didn't send anything to him.

This scholar woke up and immediately went to the deceased's son. The son was a launderer and the scholar found him washing some clothes near a river. On inquiry, the dead man's son said that his economic condition was too bad for him to help his father and when the scholar tried to convince him he got angry and took a cup and poured some water on the river bank three times, and retorted angrily, “Here take some charity for my father!”.

That night the scholar dreamt the same old man in a happy mood. On inquiry the old man said that the charity of the water had reached him. The scholar questioned how three cups poured down on the river bank could have helped him. The old man answered that there had been a little fish on the river bank which was dying due to lack of water. The three cups of water poured by his son had pushed the little fish back into the river, thus saving its life.

This had made the dead man happy and prayed for the economic condition of his son to improve. After some time the son became rich due to his fathers blessings. This shows us to give charity even if it is little. ¹⁶

Your Salaams has reached me!

A great scholar's wife relates that after the death of her husband she visited his grave and greeted him. That night the woman saw her husband who told her that he had received her greetings.

This small incident shows that if a mere greeting reaches a dead man so what about an act of charity. [17](#)

Small acts of charity saved me!

After the death of Ayatullah Sayyid Mirza Mahdi Shirazi, a believer saw him in the dream and asked him: “What was the act he really benefited from in the Akhira”.

The great scholar replied that it was small acts of charity he had given to beggars who knocked his door and were satisfied with whatever was given to them. [18](#)

Rewards and Punishments!

Sayyid Shaheed Abdul Husayn Dastaghaib relates that a scholar told him that he had seen his father in the dream. When the scholar asked him to give him details about the rewards and the punishments that are found in the life here after, the dead man replied that worldly people could not understand about the circumstances of the hereafter but he would try to give some examples.

The punishments meted out were as if you had a very high and steep mountain which you cannot ascend and you are being followed by a wolf, and there is no way out.

As for the rewards they can be likened to being in a sauna with all the steam and water vapor, and if somebody opens the door slightly how soothing is the breeze that creeps into the sauna? Well a reward feels this way. This is the way it feels when you send us gifts from the world.

My mother is unhappy with me!

It has been related in some books that a believer spent a night in a graveyard. In the middle of the night he saw a group of people emerging out of their graves with a shining light and a plate full of various blessings. Only one dead man didn't come out of his grave and remained in its darkness full of remorse.

The believer went to him and asked him why he was not blessed as the others. The dead man replied that all the others had relatives who sent them gifts. He had an old mother but she had been unhappy with him and didn't give him a thought.

The dead man asked the believer to greet his mother for him and told him where she lived. In the morning the believer went to the old woman and related what he had seen. The old woman wept bitterly and gave the believer a bag of gold to be distributed to the poor as charity on her son's behalf.

The next night the believer saw the young man happy and thankful, and asked that his mother should be thanked for saving him. [19](#)

Salaatul Wahsha

Mullah Fateh Ali Sultaan Abadi relates that whenever he used to hear about the death of anybody, he would pray Salaatul Wahsha; the prayer recommended to be prayed for the deceased, and ask Allah to protect him especially in the first night in the grave from loneliness.

Well a certain man died and the Mullah prayed for him as was his custom. The Mullah met a friend of his who told him that he had seen the dead man in his dream, and was told that his condition had been miserable but when the Mullah prayed for him the torture was removed.

The dead man prayed for the Mullah for showing such consideration and kindness to him. [20](#)

Send proper Sadaqah!

It has been related in the book 'Al Irshadaat fi ilm il Ibaadaat', that a man prayed for a dead woman and this woman came in his dream to thank him and assure him that his prayers had reached her in the form of blessings.

It has been related in the book stated above that a woman used to work in somebody's house. The owner of the house had invited some guests and shortly after the guests had left, the maid servant collected all the remaining food and gave it as *Sadaqah* in her mother's name.

The next day the maid was visited by her sister who informed her that she had dreamt their deceased mother who informed her that the food her sister had sent had reached her, but she had asked that the next time she should send proper *Sadaqah* and not remains of some meals.

Sheikh Sudooq relates from Imam Ja'far Sadiq who heard this tradition from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) that once Prophet Isa (a.s.) was passing a grave whose occupant was being tortured. After some time, Nabi Isa (a.s.) passed that grave again and saw that the torture had stopped.

He asked Allah who revealed to him that the deceased's son had given charity and so the torture had stopped. [21](#)

[1.](#) Al Bihar vol 4 page 59

[2.](#) Al Bihar vol 74

[3.](#) Dar us-Salaam vol 2 page 242

[4.](#) Dar Us Salaam vol 2 page 245

[5.](#) Al Ma'aad Bainal Rooh Wal Jasad, Muhammad Taqi Falsafi vol 2 page 219

[6.](#) Al Qasas Wal Khawatir Page 121

[7.](#) Maad Shenasi Page 188

[8.](#) Al Qasa Wal Khawatir Page 726 -727

[9.](#) Dar Al Salaam

[10.](#) Bihar UI Anwar

[11.](#) Al Amwaat Yatakallamoona Ma'ana, Sayyid Muhammad Rizwi page 27

- [12.](#) Al Qasas Al Ajiibah
- [13.](#) Dar Al Salaam
- [14.](#) Al Amwaat Yatakallamoona Ma'ana, page 74
- [15.](#) Al Balad Verse 11–16
- [16.](#) Rang O Rang (Farsi) vol 2 page 476
- [17.](#) Qasas Wal Khawatir.
- [18.](#) Yak Sad Daastan Khwandamni Page 37
- [19.](#) Unwaanul Kalam Akhund Mullah Muhammad Baqer Al Fasharqi
- [20.](#) Unwaanul Kalam Akhund Mullah Muhammad Baqer Al Fasharqi
- [21.](#) Al Amwaat Yatakallamoona Ma'ana

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