

Work and Endeavour

Islam recommends work and prohibits idleness.

Allah the Most High said: ***“And certainly We have established you in the earth and made in it a means of livelihood for you; little it is that you give thanks.”***

He also said: ***“And out of His mercy He has made for you the night and the day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks.”***

He also said: ***“But when the prayer is ended, then disperse abroad in the land and seek of Allah’s grace, and remember Allah much that you may be successful.”***

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) said: *“Cursed be he who puts his burden on people.”*

He (S) also said: *“There is no Muslim who plants anything of which men, animals or birds eat, but it will be counted as a charity for him till the Day of Judgement.”*

He (S) also said: *“Good actions are of ten kinds the best of which is business if it is taken duly and given duly.”*

He (S) also said: *“The supplication of the following people in the Islamic community will not be granted:*

- *A man who curses his parents.*
- *A man who curse his debtor while he has not asked him for a document.*
- *A man who curses his wife while he can divorce and free her.*

A man, who remains at home and without going out for sustenance, prays for it. In this case Allah says to him: ‘My servant, did I not give you a sound body and organs for you to obtain your necessities and that you may not have an excuse disobeying My command that you seek your livelihood and that you may not be sustained by your family? In that case I might have given you or deprived you, while you were excused.’

*A man to whom Allah has bestowed much wealth, and he has wasted it and now he prays to the Lord for sustenance. In this case Allah says to him: **'Did I not give you a bountiful sustenance? Why did you not spend it economically as I commanded you? Why were you lavish when I had prohibited you from being so?'***

Imam Ali (a.s.) the Commander of the Faithful said: *"Anyone who in spite of having water and soil remains poor, stands far from Allah's mercy."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Engage yourselves in business; for by it you will be free from the desire of what people possess. Surely Allah loves people who have some employment with honesty."*

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.) said: *"Allah hates abundance of sleep and abundance of leisure."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Do not fail to acquire your livelihood. The former Imams used to work hard for it."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Do not fail to acquire your livelihood, lest you should be a burden on people."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Keep on being pious and seeking what is with Allah. I swear by Allah that I do not recommend you anything other than what we (Imams) do. So work hard and, when you have performed your morning prayer, go out for sustenance and look for what is lawful; then Allah will give you and provide you with your needs."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Do not quit seeking for lawful sustenance. Do your best and have reliance (on God)."*

Answering one of his companions who had objected to his going out on a hot day for sustenance, he (a.s.) said: *"I go out for sustenance, so that I should be independent of people."*

On a similar occasion, he (a.s.) said: *"I like suffering from the heat of the sun for sustenance."*

On a similar occasion, he (a.s.) said: *"Leave me. I like Allah to see me working with my hands and seeking for a lawful sustenance with suffering."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"If it comes about that you knew the ultimate relief would come the next day, you should never give up going out for sustenance."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"The reward of him who toils on behalf of his household is like the reward of him who does jihad for the sake of Allah."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Farmers are the treasures of Allah in His land, and among actions, nothing is more beloved by Allah than farming."*

He (a.s.) also said: *"Farmers are treasures for men. They plant good things which Allah provides people with. They will have the best and highest position on the Day of Judgement and will be called 'The*

Blessed Ones’.”

He (a.s.) also said: *“Sow and plant; I swear by Allah that people have not engaged themselves in any occupation better and more beloved than it.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Farming is the greatest alchemy.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Do not give up business, so that you might be abased. Do business and Allah will bless you.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Do not give up business. Ask of the bounty of Allah.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“The prayers of him who quits seeking for sustenance will not be granted. Having misunderstood the purport of the revelation which says: ‘**And whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet and give him sustenance from whence he thinks not,**’¹ a group of the Prophet’s companions left their jobs and devoted themselves to worship, saying ‘Our needs will be met.’ When their news reached the Prophet (S) he sent for them to interrogate them about their action. They told him that Allah had guaranteed their sustenance. The Prophet (S) said: The supplication of those who do like this will not be granted. Keep on having endeavour.”*

Imam Musa al-Kazim (a.s.) said: *“Keep away from idleness and sloth; because they forbid you your portion in this world and the world to come.”*

Answering the objection of a friend to his working hard in the field, he (a.s.) said: *“Those who were better than me and my father worked with their own hands. The Messenger of Allah, Imam ‘Ali and my forefathers worked with their hands and it is the manner of the prophets and their successors and of the righteous.”*

¹. The Qur’an 65:2–3.

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