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Performing Personal Chores

Even though he possessed lofty spiritual stations, had found a special place in the hearts of the Muslim faithful and was granted a particular form of respect from members of his family, the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) never liked for others to perform his personal chores. Rather, he sought to be completely independent in taking care of his personal affairs. By so doing, he succeeded in showing respect towards others and not thinking of himself as better than others as well as teaching others to be self-reliant.

Daylami, in his book entitled *Irshad al-Qulub*, narrated the following: *"The Prophet would patch his clothes, mend his shoes, milk his sheep, eat with slaves, sit on the floor and was not too shy to procure whatever he needed from the market and take it to his family."*[1]

Similarly, it has been narrated that: During a particular journey, the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) was with a group and they had traveled for hours. Both the riders and the animals they were riding were showing signs of weariness. The caravan stopped at a place with a well full of water. The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) made his camel lie down and got off. Certain individuals were determined to get to the water as soon as possible and prepare themselves for prayer.

The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) proceeded towards the well as soon as he got off his camel but shortly after, he returned without saying anything. His companions and friends were astonished and said to themselves, "What, is this not an acceptable place to stop? Is he going to tell us to start moving again?" They looked and listened carefully, waiting to hear his command. Their astonishment became even greater as he (peace and blessings be upon him and his family), immediately upon arriving at his camel's side, took knee braces and placed them on his camel's knees and then once again, headed towards the well.

The companions, perplexed, asked, "O Messenger of God, why did you not ask us to do it for you instead of burdening yourself by returning to your camel? It would have been our honor to perform this service."

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) replied, "Never seek the help of others in performing personal chores and do not rely on others even if it be for a piece of wood with which to brush your teeth."[2]

1. Irshad al-Qulub, chapter 32, p. 155.
2. Kuhl al-Basar, p. 69.

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