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Sense of Humor

That which can be derived from the etiquette and teachings of Islamic society and the way (*sunnah*) of the Noble Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) is that joking is desirable when it does not lead to sinful acts such as disparaging, ridiculing or slander and only has the intention of making a brother in faith happy. The Most Noble Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him and his family), in addition to encouraging his companions to make jokes, would himself joke with them.

The Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him) has said, *"The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family), in order to make one of his companions happy who had been upset, would joke with him and he would say, 'Verily, God hates one who snarls in his brother's (in faith) face."*[1]

There are numerous instances of the Prophet's tendency to joke recorded in books of his traditions and lifestyle. Reference will be made to some of these:

1. A servant of the Messenger of God named Anjashah would say "*huda*" (something they say to make a camel go faster) to the camel of the Prophet's wife. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said, "O Anjashah, be careful (when dealing) with glass"[2] (an allusion to the fact that women are fragile and it is possible that at a high speed they may get scared, fall and hurt themselves).

2. A women came to the Most Noble Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) and mentioned her husband's name. He asked, "Is your husband the one who has white in his eyes? She replied, "No, he doesn't have white in his eyes." When that woman went home and told her husband what had happened, he said, "Don't you see that the white part of my eyes is more than the black part?"[3]

3. The Prophet's lifestyle was such that he permitted his supporters to say humorous things in his blessed presence. Following the example of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family), they would stay away from inappropriate jokes. But they did not hold back when it came to acceptable forms of jesting.

"Nu'ayman was the type of person who liked to joke. One day he saw a Bedouin with a sack of honey.

He bought it and took it to the Prophet's house. The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) thought he had brought this as a gift. Nu'ayman left and the Bedouin came standing in front of the Prophet's house. After waiting for a long time, he yelled, 'Whoever lives here, if you don't have money, give the honey back.' The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) discovered what had happened and paid that man for the honey.

When the Prophet met Nu'ayman, he asked, 'Why did you do that?'

Nu'ayman said, 'I figured, the Messenger of God likes honey and that Bedouin man had a lot of honey.' The Messenger of God laughed at what Nu'ayman had done and did not show any signs of being upset. "[4]

1. Sunan an-Nabi, p. 60.
2. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 16, p. 294.
3. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 16, p. 294.
4. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 16, p. 296.

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