

The Beloved Prophet ﷺ & Household Chores

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عَنِ الْأَسْوَدِ بْنِ يَزِيدٍ، سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا - مَا كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَصْنَعُ فِي الْبَيْتِ؟ قَالَتْ: كَانَ فِي مِهْنَةٍ أَهْلِيهِ، فَإِذَا سَمِعَ الْأَذَانَ خَرَجَ.

Al-Aswad ibn Yazid said, "I asked Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, 'What would the Prophet ﷺ do at home?' She replied, 'He would be in the service of his family, and when he heard the Adhaan, he would leave.'" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 5363)

عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا: مَا كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ يَعْمَلُ فِي بَيْتِهِ؟ قَالَتْ: يَخْصِفُ نَعْلَهُ، وَيَعْمَلُ مَا يَعْمَلُ الرَّجُلُ فِي بَيْتِهِ.

Hisham ibn 'Urwah narrates from his father that he said, "I asked Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, 'What did the Prophet ﷺ, do in his house?' She replied, 'He mended his sandals and worked as any man would work in his home.'" (Al-Adab al-Mufrad, 539)

عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ: مَا كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ يَصْنَعُ فِي بَيْتِهِ؟ قَالَتْ: مَا يَصْنَعُ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي بَيْتِهِ، يَخْصِفُ النَّعْلَ، وَيَرْقَعُ الثَّوْبَ، وَيَخِيطُ.

Hisham ibn 'Urwah narrates from his father that he said, "I asked Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, 'What did the Prophet ﷺ, do in his home?' She replied, 'He did what one of you would do in his home. He mended sandals, patched clothing and stitched.'" (Al-Adab al-Mufrad, 540)

The above three narrations encourage the members of the home to serve others. This can be done by sharing household responsibilities and distributing chores. Serving others develops humbleness. It refines the heart by purifying it from pride, which is the mother of all spiritual ailments.

The people would ask Sayyidah Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا about the domestic life of the Prophet ﷺ because she was the most knowledgeable of it. It was his noble habit to help around in the home. The impeccable character of the Prophet ﷺ in the privacy of his house and public was the same. Assisting in household chores is a *sunnah* for every member of the family.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also distributed responsibilities between his daughter, Sayyidah Fatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and her husband, Sayyiduna Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Sayyidah Fatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was tasked with domestic household duties, while Sayyiduna Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was assigned the external responsibilities (Palanpuri 31). Once, she approached her father, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to request a servant who could assist her. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not provide her with a

servant. Instead, she was encouraged to engage in the remembrance of Allah when going to bed (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 5361). Imam al-Bukhari رحمه الله عليه has written this hadith under the title: “The Service of a Lady in Her Husband’s Home.”

During the blessed era, it was common for women to tend to domestic duties. Sayyidah Asmaa bint Abi Bakr رضى الله عنهما says: “When Zubair married me, he had no property, servant or anything else except a camel and his horse. I used to feed his horse, draw water, sew the bucket (made of leather, for drawing water from the well), and prepare the dough. I did not know how to bake bread. My female neighbours from the Ansaar would bake bread for me” (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 5224).

In the Muslim family, the husband is the head of the household. The Noble Prophet ﷺ was also the leader of his house. This position comes with responsibilities and accountability. It is not a license for abuse, oppression, or dictatorship. Regarding household chores, the Noble Prophet ﷺ did not consider it below his position to tend to his household needs, whether it be fixing his sandals, stitching his clothes or milking the sheep (*Musnad Ahmad*, 26194).

References:

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