



Imaam Abu Dawood (rahimahullah) was a great Muhaddith and luminary of this Ummah. He was born in 202 A.H. and passed away in 275 A.H. His name was Sulaimaan bin Ash'ath (rahimahullah), though he was more well known by his kunyah (filial title) of 'Abu Dawood'. (*Siy aru Aa'laamin Nubalaa vol. 13, pgs. 204 & 221*)

Allah Ta'ala blessed the hadeeth compilation of Imaam Abu Dawood (rahimahullah) with such acceptance that his kitaab, commonly referred to as 'Sunan Abi Dawood', is counted among the six authentic compilations of hadeeth that are taught in madrasahs around the world.

From the many outstanding qualities that he possessed, one quality that stands out in particular is his love for the sunnah and commitment to practising on the sunnah.

On one occasion, Imaam Abu Dawood (rahimahullah) was aboard a ship when he heard a person on the shore sneeze and recite the sunnah du'aa saying, "Alhamdulillah".

On hearing the person sneeze, Imaam Abu Dawood (rahimahullah) immediately hired a small boat, for the fee of one dirham (silver coin), and requested to be taken from the ship to the shore. When he arrived at the shore, he went to the person who had sneezed and replied to his sneeze in the sunnah manner by saying, "Yarhamukallah", and thereafter returned to the ship.

When Imaam Abu Dawood (rahimahullah) was asked as to why he had underwent the difficulty of leaving the ship and traveling to the shore to reply to the person who had sneezed, he replied, "It is possible that the person who sneezed is one whose du'aas are readily accepted."

In other words, apart from replying to the sneeze being a blessed sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), it has the added benefit of acquiring the du'aa of the one who sneezed, as he will reply saying, "Yahdeekumullah" (may Allah Ta'ala guide you). If this person's du'aa is accepted, then one will be blessed with divine guidance from Allah Ta'ala.

That night, when the people aboard the ship went to sleep, they were told in a dream, "O people aboard the ship! Abu Dawood (rahimahullah) has purchased Jannah from Allah Ta'ala in exchange of one dirham!"

(Fat-hul Baari vol. 10, pg. 745)

Lessons:

1. In the Quraan Majeed, we are informed that the key to acquiring the love and mercy of Allah Ta'ala is to uphold the blessed sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) in our lives to the best of our ability. The sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is so beloved to Allah Ta'ala that it is like a magnet that attracts His mercy and love. Thus, the more steadfast we are on the sunnah, and the more we try to bring the sunnah into our lives (be it in our business, domestic, social or any other department of our lives), the more Allah Ta'ala will love us, shower His mercy upon us and bless us with acceptance.

2. We do not know which person's du'aa will be readily accepted by Allah Ta'ala. Thus, if we can, we should try to acquire the du'aa of all people, and likewise, we should refrain from incurring the curse of any person.

3. We should value every good action or sunnah and show its importance, and should never regard any good action or sunnah as being insignificant, as we do not know which good action or sunnah may become the means of our salvation and entry into Jannah.

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our entry into Jannah.**



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