

# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’

Translated from Imām Abū Bakr Al-Ājūrī’s *Kitāb Al-Sharī‘ah*<sup>1</sup> by Mahdi Lock

Released by [www.marifah.net](http://www.marifah.net) 1431 H

Muḥammad ibn Husayn Al-Ājūrī said: Abu Bakr Jafar ibn Muḥammad ibn Al-Firyabi related to us in the month of Rajab in the year two hundred and ninety seven, Ibrahim ibn Hisham ibn Yahya Al-Ghasani related to us, my father related to us, on the authority of his grandfather, on the authority of Abu Idris Al-Khawlāni, on the authority of Abu Dharr, who said:

‘I entered the masjid and The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting by himself, so I sat with him and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, indeed you have commanded me to pray, so what is Prayer (*ṣalat*)?’<sup>2</sup> He said: **‘Prayer is the greatest matter, so do more or less.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which action is the most virtuous?’ He said: **‘Faith in Allah, and struggling for His sake.’** I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which of the believers is most virtuous?’ He said: **‘The best of them in manners.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which of the Muslims is most submissive (*aslam*)?’ He said: **‘The one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe.’**<sup>3</sup>

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is the best emigration?’ He said: **‘Whoever leaves off abuse.’**<sup>4</sup>

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is the best prayer?’ He said: **‘Lengthening the du‘ā’ of qanūt.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is the best fast?’ He said: **‘The obligatory that is rewarded, and with Allah it is multiplied many times over.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is the best struggle?’ He said: **‘The one who pours his sweat and sheds his blood’.**

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<sup>1</sup> p.448-451, Dar Al-Kutub Al-‘Imiyyah, Beirut

<sup>2</sup> In another narration, ‘What is Prayer?’ is omitted (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*). This hadith is mentioned by Imam Ibn Kathīr in his commentary of Sūrat Al-Nisā’ 4:163-165.

<sup>3</sup> In another narration it says ‘from whose tongue and hand the believers are safe’ (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

<sup>4</sup> In another narration it says ‘The one who emigrates from evil deeds.’ (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which is the best slave?’ He said: **‘The most expensive in price and the most precious to its people.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is the best charity?’ He said: **‘Effort from a destitute person, and something for a poor person.’**<sup>5</sup>

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which āya is the most awesome of that which has been sent down to you?’ He said: **‘Āyat Al-Kursī.’** Then he said: **‘O Abū Dharr, the sevens heavens in comparison to the Kursī are like a ring thrown into an open field. The virtue of the ‘Arsh over the Kursī is like the virtue of the open field over the ring.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, how many Prophets are there?’ He said: **‘One hundred and twenty-four thousand.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, how many of them are Messengers?’ He said: **‘Three hundred and thirteen, a large group, all of them pure.’**

I said: ‘Who was the first of them?’ He said: **‘Ādam.’**

I said: ‘Is he a prophet that was sent?’ He said:

**‘Yes, Allah created him with His hand, breathed into him from His spirit, and formed him.’**<sup>6</sup> Then he said: **‘O Abū Dharr, four are Syriac; Ādam, Seth [*Shīth*], Eunuch, who is Idrīs and the first person to write with a pen, and Noah (*Nūh*). Four are from the Arabs: Hūd, Shu‘ayb, Šāliḥ and your Prophet. ‘O Abū Dharr, the first of the Prophets of the Children of Israel is Moses (*Mūsā*) and the last of them is Jesus (*‘Isā*). The first of the Messengers<sup>7</sup> is Ādam and the last of them is Muḥammad.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, how many books has Allah sent down?’ He said: **‘One hundred and four books. Allah sent down fifty scriptures to Seth, thirty to Eunuch, ten to Abraham (*Ibrāhīm*), and He sent down to Moses, before the Torah, ten scriptures, and then the Injil, the Zabūr and the Furqān [the Qur’ān].’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what were the scriptures of Abraham?’ He said: **‘In their entirety they were: “O king, who is dominating<sup>8</sup> and deluded. Indeed I have not sent you to gather the life of this world (*Al-dunyā*), one part after another. Rather, I sent you so that the oppressed would supplicate to Me, because I do not refuse the supplication of the oppressed, even if the person is a disbeliever.” It also contains some proverbs: “The intelligent person must have four times; a time in which he in intimate conversation with his Lord ﷻ, a time in which he takes himself to account, a time in which he ponders over Allah’s making, and a time in which he fulfils his needs for food and drink.**

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<sup>5</sup> In another narration it says ‘pleasing to a poor person.’ (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

<sup>6</sup> In two other versions of Ibn Kathīr’s Tafsīr we find the word *qabilan* in one and *qablan* in another, meaning that he was created before the rest of creation. The exception is Muḥammad, The Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Please see <http://www.marifah.net/belief--aqidah/articles/aqidah/the-primordial-rank-of-the-prophet.html>

<sup>7</sup> Another narration says ‘Prophets’. (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

<sup>8</sup> In another narration the word tested is mentioned (*mubtalā*). (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

**“The intelligent person must not move away except for three things: supplying himself for the Hereafter, or repairing one’s current life, or pleasure that is not forbidden. The intelligent person must have insight into the age he lives in, get on with his business and hold back his tongue. Whoever reckons his speech in comparison to his action speaks little, unless it is something that concerns him.”**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what were the scriptures of Moses?’ He said:

**‘They were all lessons: “I am amazed at how someone can rejoice when they are certain of death. I am amazed at the person who is certain of destiny. How much does he prepare? I am amazed at the person who sees the life of this world and accepts it with its inhabitants. How can he have confidence in it? I am amazed at the person who knows that the reckoning is tomorrow and then doesn’t act!’**

Then I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, does mankind have anything that was in the hands of Abraham and Moses, peace be upon them, which Allah, Mighty and Majestic, also sent down to you?’ He said:

**‘Yes, read, O Abū Dharr: “To happiness [in the life to come] will indeed attain he who attains to purity [in this world], and remembers his Sustainer’s name, and prays [unto Him].” [Al-Ālā 87:14-15] to the rest of the sūra, i.e. including the āya: “Verily, [all] this has indeed been [said] in the earlier scriptures –the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.” [87:18-19]**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, advise me.’ He said:

**‘I advise you to be conscious of Allah, for indeed it is the peak of your affair.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘You must recite the Qur’ān and remember Allah, for indeed it is a mention of you in the heavens and a light for you on earth.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘Beware of laughing too much, for indeed it kills the heart and takes the light away from one’s face.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘Struggling (*jihad*) is obligatory for you, for it is the monasticism of my *Umma*.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘You must remain silent unless it is something good, for indeed doing so drives Satan away and helps you with your *Dīn*.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘Look at those below you and don’t look at those above you, for indeed it is more appropriate that you do not think little of Allah’s blessings upon you.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘Love the poor, and keep their company.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘Maintain your ties of kinship, even if they cut you off.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘Say the truth, even if it’s bitter.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘When it comes to Allah, don’t fear the blame of those who blame.’**

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, increase me.’ He said:

**‘What you know about yourself should keep you away from looking at people, and you don’t have a grudge against them regarding it.’<sup>9</sup> It is enough of a blemish that you know things about people that you don’t know about yourself, or you envy them because of what you love.’<sup>10</sup>**

Then he struck my chest with his hand and said: **‘O Abū Dharr, there is no intelligence like planning, no piety like abstention, and no nobility like good manners.’<sup>11</sup>**



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<sup>9</sup> In the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Kathīr the wording is: ‘...and you don’t have a grudge against them regarding what you love.’

<sup>10</sup> In the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Kathīr the wording is: ‘...and you don’t have a grudge against them regarding what you love.’

<sup>11</sup> It is narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān (3/129-130) in *Al-Majrūhīn* and (94) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Abū Nu‘aym (1/166-167) in *Al-Ḥilya*, Al-Ṭabarānī (1651) in *Al-Kabīr*. Its chain of transmission (*sanad*) includes Ibrāhīm ibn Hishām, and he has been declared weak by Abū Ṭāhir Al-Maqdisī and accused of lying by Abū Ḥātim, Abū Zar‘a, and Ibn Al-Jawzī. Al-Dhahabi said that he is abandoned (*matrūk*). See *Al-Mizān* (1/72-73), *Al-Lisān* (1/122). Narrated by Ibn Mājah (4218) in an extremely abridged version via Al-Māqī ibn Muḥammad on the authority of ‘Alī ibn Sulaymān, on the authority of Al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad on the authority of Abū Idrīs Al-Khawlānī. Al-Būṣayrī said: ‘This *isnād* is weak, due to the weakness of Al-Māqī ibn Al-Ghāfilī.’ Narrated by Al-Kharā‘iṭī (p.80) in *Makārim Al-Akhlāq* via Ismā‘īl ibn Abū Zayd on the authority of Sulaymān Al-Filasṭīnī, on the authority of Al-Qasim. Its *sanad* includes Ismā‘īl ibn Abū Zayd, and he is abandoned (*matrūk*) and has been accused of lying. See *Al-Mizān* (1/230). Narrated by Al-Ṭabarānī (1648) in *Al-Kabīr* via Yaḥya ibn Abū Zakariyya Al-Ghasānī, on the authority of Ismā‘īl ibn Abū Khālid, on the authority of Badīl ibn Maysara, on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn As-Ṣāmit, on the authority of Abū Dharr, in an abridged version. Its *sanad* includes Ibn Abū Zakariyya, and he is amongst those considered weak, as in *Al-Taqrīb* (2/348). Narrated by Al-Ṭabarānī (1649) in *Al-Kabīr* via Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Namīr, on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Bishr, on the authority of Ibn Abū Khālid, on the authority of ‘Āmir Al-Sha‘bī, on the authority of Abū Dharr. Its *sanad* is cut (*munqatī*) between Al-Sha‘bī and Abū Dharr. Mentioned by As-Suyūṭī (6/341) in *Al-Durr Al-Manthūr*, and he attributed it to ‘Abd ibn Ḥamīd, Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn ‘Asākir, and all of them from Abū Dharr.