

AL-AMANA

(TRUSTWORTHINESS)

Definition:

To be trustworthy implies three concepts:

To discharge our responsibilities towards Allah and obey His orders

A noble character that prevents us from taking that which is not ours to take and that which does not belong to us.

To safeguard what we are entrusted with and to feel responsible until we deliver that trust to its rightful owner.

We Will Discuss The Following Concepts:

- Our *Amana* (trust) to obey Allah and to discharge our responsibilities and obligations toward Him.
- Our *Amana* in safeguarding what we have been entrusted with.
- The noble character of avoiding things that we have no right to engage in.
- Allah's messengers and angels are all trustworthy.
- The benefits and rewards of *Amana*.
- The opposite of *Amana* is *Khiana*, betraying our trust.

AMANA IS A DUTY

Allah endowed man with the ability to learn, understand, think and reason. He also endowed him with the ability to know right from wrong as well as to know his Creator.

Allah cares for His servants, provides for them and guides them. We are given a choice to honor our covenant with Allah: to worship Him, to live our life as He has commanded, or to reject faith and follow our vain

desires. Those who honor their commitments and fulfill their trusts understand the meaning of *Amana* (being trustworthy). They are rewarded according to the best of their deeds by Allah.

Amana in this sense is a responsibility that must be shouldered. The Qur'an explains this heavy responsibility and covenant.

﴿ إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ تَحْمِلَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴾ [الأحزاب: ٧٢]

"We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but man undertook it; - he was indeed unjust and foolish;"
(Al-Ahzab 33 : 72)

Only Man is capable of shouldering this responsibility. If he obeys Allah, living his life in a righteous manner, he can rise to the status of the angels; but if he betrays his trust, he lowers himself to become as the worst of devils.

﴿ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴾ [التين: ٤]

"We have indeed created man in the best of moulds," (At-Tin 95: 4)

﴿ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ﴾ [التين: ٥]

"Then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low," (At-Tin 95:5)

﴿ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴾ [التين: ٦]

"Except such as believe and do righteous deeds: for they shall have a reward unfailing" (At-Tin 95 : 6)

If man becomes irresponsible and betrays his trust, he is a wrongdoer ignorant of his duty and mission in serving his Creator.

Amana in this concept then implies:

- All our rituals of worship

- All our covenants and promises to others
- Our proper and righteous behavior
- Our noble character of honesty and sincerity

Among the characteristics of Allah's servants who truly believe in Him and understand their accountability to Him is not only their devotion and acts of worship, but also their character of safeguarding their trusts and being true to their promises.

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ١]

"Ineed the believers will succeed" (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 1)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٢]

"Those who humble themselves in their prayers" (Al-Mumenoun 23:2)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٣]

"Who avoid vain talk;" (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 3)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٤]

"Who are active in deeds of charity;" (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 4)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأُزْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٥]

"Who abstain from sex;" (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 5)

﴿ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٦]

"Except with those joined to them in the marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess, for (in their case) they are free from blame," (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 6).

﴿ فَمَنْ آتَبَعِي وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٧]

"But those whose desires exceed those limits are transgressors,"
(Al-Mumenoun 23 : 7)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٨]

"Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants;"
(Al-Mumenoun 23 : 8)

When Aba Zhurr Al-Ghafary asked for a certain position, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explained this concept when he (PBUH) said, "Aba Dhurr you are weak and this is a trust. It can be a cause of shame and remorse on the Day of Judgment, except for those who know that they are capable and take their responsibilities seriously and discharge their obligations properly."

Narrated by Muslim

At the same time, if we know that we are capable and able to do a good job, then we should not shy away from responsibility. The Qur'an tells us about Prophet Yusuf who did not hesitate to take charge.

﴿ وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ أَتُتُونِي بِهِ أَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِي ۗ فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أُمِينٌ ﴾ [يوسف: ٥٤]

"So the king said: "Bring him unto me; I will take him specially to serve about my own person." Therefore when he had spoken to him, he said: "Be assured this day, thou art, before our own Presence, with rank firmly established. And fidelity fully proved!"
(Yusuf 12 : 54)

﴿ قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْمُ ۗ ﴾ [يوسف: ٥٥]

"(Joseph) said: "Set me over the store-houses of the land: I will indeed guard them, as one that knows (their importance)"
(Yusuf 12 : 55)

Amana is to do work to the best of our ability. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Allah loves for you to do your work to the best of your ability."

narrated by Baihaqi

SAFEGUARD WHAT WAS ENTRUSTED

We should protect and safeguard that which is entrusted to us as if it is our own, perhaps even more so. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was known as **Al-Ameen** (the one to be trusted). People would leave their valuables with him knowing that he would take care of it; even those who refused to accept him as God's prophet left their valuables with him! They had no doubt about his honesty and integrity. When he emigrated to Madinah, he instructed his cousin Ali to return those valuable that were in his safekeeping to their rightful owners.

Allah orders Muslims to be trustworthy and to return that which was entrusted to them to their owners,

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴾ [النساء: ٥٨]

"Allah does command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: verily how excellent is the teaching which He gives you! For Allah is He Who heareth and sees all things"

(An-Nesa'a 4 : 58)

The Qur'an warns us not to betray our trusts or to be wicked as those people who must be forced, otherwise they are unwilling to return their trusts except under duress.

﴿ وَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بدينارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ فَآيَمَا ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [آل عمران: ٧٥]

"Among the People of the Book are some who, if entrusted with a hoard of gold, will (readily) pay it back; others, who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless thou constantly stookest demanding, because, they say, "There is no call on us (to keep faith) with these illiterate." But they tell a lie against Allah, and (well) they know it" (Al-Imran 3 : 75)

DO NOT TAKE WHAT IS NOT YOURS

In Arabic, this noble character is called *Effat an-nafs*. The Qur'an alludes to this noble character on the tongue of the daughter of Prophet Shu'aib, when she asked her father to hire Musa (Moses) for he was capable, honest and trustworthy.

﴿ قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ ﴾
[القصص: ٢٦]

"Said one of the (damsels): "O my (dear) father! engage him on wages: truly the best of men for thee to employ is the (man) who is strong and trusty" (Al-Qasas 28 : 26)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) praised the keeper of goods who safeguards his trust and does his work, not looking or abusing what was entrusted to him.

Abou Musa related that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said,

"The keeper of goods who is trustworthy and delivers what he is ordered to do with a good heart is one of those who give charity."

Narrated by Bokhari and Muslim

We learn from this Hadith:

- Though the keeper of goods did not give charity himself, yet his behavior of safeguarding what was entrusted to him gives him the reward and distinction of those who gave charity.
- We should not abuse that which is entrusted to us.
- We should do our job to the best of our ability.
- We should not look at material things that does not belong to us and we should feel content with that which Allah has provided for us.

ALLAH'S MESSENGERS WERE TRUSTWORTHY

The Qur'an, Allah's words were entrusted to the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) to deliver to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Angel of Revelation was described in the Qur'an as being trust-worthy.

﴿ وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ [الشعراء: ١٩٢]

"Verily this is a Revelation from the Lord of the worlds:"

(Ash-Shura'a 26 : 192)

﴿ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴾ [الشعراء: ١٩٣]

"With it came down the Spirit of Faith and Truth,"

(Ash-Shura'a 26 : 193)

﴿ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴾ [الشعراء: ١٩٤]

"To thy heart and mind, that thou mayest admonish"

(Ash-Shura'a 26 : 194)

﴿ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ ﴾ [الشعراء: ١٩٥]

"In the perspicuous Arabic tongue" (Ash-Shura'a 26 : 195)

Allah entrusted Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to deliver His message, explain it, and apply it and to become an example for others to follow. Allah praised the character of His Messenger (PBUH)

﴿ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴾ [القلم: ٤]

"And you are on an exalted standard of character"

(Al-Qalam 68 : 4)

All of Allah's messengers were trustworthy. On the tongue of Prophet Musa,

﴿ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يُنْفِرَ عَوْنُ إِيَّيْ رَسُولٍ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ [الأعراف: ١٠٤]

"Moses said: O Pharaoh! I am a Messenger from the Lord of the Worlds" (Al-Ara'f 7 : 104)

﴿ حَقِيقٌ عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا أَقُولَ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَأَرْسِلْ

مَعِيَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴾ [الأعراف: ١٠٥]

"One for whom it is right to say nothing but truth about Allah. Now have I come unto you (people), from your Lord, with a Clear (Sign): so let the Children of Israel depart along with me"

(Al-Ara'f 7 : 105)

BENEFITS AND REWARDS OF AMANA

Amana is a noble character that differentiates between a righteous truthful person and one who lies and cheats. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explained the three characteristics of hypocrisy:

Abou Horaira related that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said,

"The signs of a hypocrite are three; he lies when he talks; he does not deliver on his promises; and he is not faithful to his trusts."

Narrated by Bokhari and Muslim.

One who is trustworthy is trusted by others. They are not afraid that he will harm them. Quite the contrary, they know him to be honest and fair and one to keep his word not betraying his trust. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said,

Abou Horaira related that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said,

"A Muslim is he who other Muslims fear no harm from his tongue or his hand; and the believer is he who other people entrust with their persons and their money."

Narrated by Termedhi, Nesa'ee and Ibn Hibban

Those who are trustworthy are rewarded with Allah's Paradise. The Qur'an describes their characteristics as being:

- Devoted in their prayers
- Avoid vain talk
- Give in charity
- Guard their modesty
- Faithful to their trust

﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ﴾ [المؤمنون: ١٠]

"These will be the heirs," (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 10)

﴿ الَّذِينَ يَرْتُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ١١]

"Who will inherit Paradise: they will dwell therein (forever)"

(Al-Mumenoun 23 : 11)

Fulfilling our trust means that we understand our responsibility and duty towards Allah by obeying His orders and living our life as He has commanded.

We are following in the footsteps of Allah's prophets and messengers and emulating their character and behavior.