



Sustainable Lifestyle as Practised by Prophet Muhammad S.A.W.

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The term "sustainability" began to be used more frequently in the 1980s to refer to the way humans live on the planet (Rack, 2014). Yet it is a concept that has existed for as long as people have, to exhibit a concern for the future of our natural resources. Our ancestors were very careful in guarding the natural resources such as jungle produce and fish. Even Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. (Peace Be Upon Him) practised a sustainable lifestyle more than 1400 years ago through his actions and deeds as recorded in the hadith.

A balanced diet is one of the cornerstones of good health. When it came to preventing sickness and diseases, Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. advocated eating less as a preventative measure. Miqdam bin Madikarib narrated that the messenger of Allah said, "A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink and one third for air (Sunan Ibn Majah)."

Through the way he performed the ritual ablution, Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. showed the logical approach to sustainable water management. The notion of water conservation is exemplified wisely by the rule that requires us to exercise

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restraint when performing ablutions or *wudu*, even if we have access to a river. According to a hadith as narrated by *Al Thirmidhi*, “do not waste even if performing ablution on the bank of a fast flowing large river”. The Prophet himself used only one mudd of water (equal to two-thirds of a litre) for ablution and one saa' of water for bathing (equivalent to around 3 litres in modern volume measurements).

The Prophet was observed mending his shoes rather than discarding them at the first sign of a rip. Additionally, he would mend his robes and instructed his companions to do likewise. As narrated in a hadith where *Aisyah R.A.*, the wife of the Prophet S.A.W., was asked by *Hashim*, one of his companions, what the Prophet S.A.W. would do in the house. She replied to him, “he did what one of you would do in his house. He mended sandals and patched garments and sewed (*Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*, 540).”

Planting trees is a good act that affects multiple levels of the ecosystem and contributes to environmental preservation and care. The Prophet S.A.W. advocated for tree cultivation. The fruits borne by the tree when eaten by humans and animals are an act of charity or *sadaqah*. As narrated in a hadith, *Anas ibn Malik R.A.* reported that the Prophet S.A.W. said, “There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable gift (*Sahih al Bukhari*).”



Maintaining environmental hygiene or cleanliness is important not only to the ecosystem but also to the occupants' safety. This entails removing or avoiding dumping filthy and hazardous waste around us. This is exemplified in a hadith reported by *Abu Huraira R.A.* where the Prophet S.A.W. said, “While a man was walking on the road, he found a thorny branch on the road and he moved it aside. Allah appreciated his deed and forgave him (*Sahih al-Bukhari*).”

Animals play a critical function in the ecosystem. They cohabit and balance one another out to mitigate negative environmental impacts and unintentionally address pollution, global warming, and disruptions that produce severe changes in ecosystems. With animals fulfilling their duties in helping to care for and conserve the earth, it is only natural for us to care for them in return. In a hadith narrated by *Abu Huraira R.A.*, the Prophet S.A.W. said, “A man felt very thirsty while he was on the way, there he came across a well. He went down the well, quenched his thirst and came out. Meanwhile he saw a dog panting and licking mud because of excessive thirst. He said to himself, “This dog is suffering from thirst as I did.” So, he went down the well again and filled his shoe with water and watered it. Allah thanked him for that deed and forgave him. The people said, “O Allah's Messenger !(^)Is there a reward for us in serving the animals?” He replied: “Yes, there is a reward for serving any animate (living being) (*Sahih al-Bukhari*).”

Sustainability enhances our quality of life while also safeguarding our ecosystem and natural resources for future generations. Humans live in harmony with the natural environment in a sustainable society, conserving resources for future generations and ensuring social fairness and high quality of life for all. There are many manageable ways that we can include sustainability in our daily lifestyle. We can start by not overeating, collecting rainwater for gardening, donating clothes, growing our own kitchen garden, recycling waste products and adopting pets from rescue centres instead of buying them.

References

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