

MORAL ASPECTS OF THE NARRATIVES IN IMAM BUKHARI'S SAHIH*Дониёр Муратов**International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan
Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor*

Annotatsion: This article analyzes the role of the stories from Imam al-Bukhari's Sahih in shaping the moral and spiritual values of youth. Special attention is given to how virtues such as justice, patience, honesty, and generosity are cultivated through these narratives. The importance of Islamic teachings and Imam al-Bukhari's hadiths in the upbringing of modern youth is highlighted. The article also explores ways to foster humanity, responsibility, and piety through these stories. The findings demonstrate the significant role of Islamic heritage in ensuring the spiritual maturity of young generations.

Keywords: Sahih, Imam Bukhari, story, storyteller, panegyrist, hadith, narration, youth, ethics, spirituality.

One of the ways information about past nations has been conveyed is through the style of storytelling (qissa). Numerous hadiths in Imam al-Bukhari's Sahih also mention narratives (qissas). These narrations highlight matters concerning the faith and belief of various past peoples. Through these reports, the intention was for people to receive reminders and take lessons.

The word qissa in Arabic refers to history, story, tale, novella, oral accounts, narrated reports, and news [4:62]. Likewise, in several instances in the Noble Qur'an, Allah speaks about past nations and calls them qissas. For example, "Thus do We relate to you (O Muhammad) some stories of those who have passed away" (Taha, 99), "That is from the news of the towns which We relate to you (O Muhammad)" (Hud, 100), "Then (Moses) came to him and related to him the story" (Al-Qasas, 25), and "We relate to you the best of stories by Our revealing to you this Qur'an" (Yusuf, 3) [3:386].

In terminological terms, qissa refers to a story or narration passed orally from person to person concerning an event or individual and their related occurrences. In literature, it is also used for works that recount real-life events [5:113]. Those who narrate qissas are called qissakhwan, qissaguy, qissachi, or maddah.

Among Arabs, qissa can also mean following something or someone. For example, when the mother of Moses (peace be upon him) placed him in a chest and cast him into the river, she told her daughter (i.e., Moses' sister), "Follow him!" (Al-Qasas, 11). Or, in another place: "Then they both retraced their footsteps" (Al-Kahf, 64), where the word qasas is used in this meaning. Likewise, in the context of "qisas" (retaliation), it implies following the action of the person who committed the original deed.

There are general and specific differences between the terms qissa and khabar (report/news). A qissa is a kind of news, but not every news is a qissa. For instance, reports about Allah creating the heavens and the earth, angels, and jinn, as well as the names of

prophets and their forefathers, are considered news but not qissas. However, stories involving prophets and their communities, struggles between the righteous and the wicked, etc., are classified as qissas [1:12].

In literature, qissa refers to an epic work, a story, or a narrative passed from mouth to mouth concerning events and incidents. It differs from a novel by being shorter and from a short story by being longer; it is simpler than a novel and more complex than a short story. From this, it can be concluded that in literature, qissa is one of the three main genres alongside the short story and the novel. It can even be said that the qissa is one of the oldest forms of literary art found among many peoples.

While scholars, during their research, have outlined specific characteristics that distinguish qissas from other types of literature, it can be observed that these features also apply to qissas found in Islamic sources. However, only those aspects relevant to the topic will be cited in this article:

The general characteristic of the narrative style (riwaya) is that it is so sequential and interconnected that the reader always senses a certain intended purpose behind it and remains attentive and interested until the end.

The qissa is logically and coherently ordered, concisely presented, and insignificant details are omitted. This can especially be observed in the qissas found in hadiths. For instance, in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari, it is stated: "A woman entered Hell because she tied up a cat, neither feeding it nor letting it feed itself from the insects of the earth" [2:815].

The expressions in the qissa must be simple and clear so that the reader can easily become emotionally attached to the events. For example, one can cite the hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari about "the leper, the bald man, and the blind man."

There are several characters associated around the main protagonist. For instance, in the hadith about "Jurayj the worshipper" narrated by Imam al-Bukhari, the participation of three individuals can be observed [2:852].

It is not necessary to depict all events that occurred in the protagonist's life; therefore, only a certain period of the person's life should be highlighted. In doing so, one or several episodes are selected. For example, although the Qur'an and hadiths provide abundant information about Musa (peace be upon him), in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih, it is mentioned that the Prophet's (peace be upon him) daughter came to ask him for a servant. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then visited their home at night and advised Fatimah and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) to recite tasbih (33 times), tahmid (33 times), and takbir (34 times) before sleeping [2:913].

The social content addressed in the qissa is broad and profound [7].

The qissa, using popular expressions, serves as a means to psychologically influence the listener or reader.

In other words, a qissa is an independent genre that narrates certain periods, specific circumstances, and particular emotional states of a person's life in a subjective manner, while still sharing some characteristics typical of the novel, novella, and short story [6:19].

However, the qissas in the Qur'an and hadith differ significantly from the modern literary qissa by being much more concise in their expression. For example, in a qissa-hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari from Abu Hurayra (may Allah be pleased with him), it is reported:

"The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Two women were with their sons when a wolf came and snatched away one of the boys. The mother of the snatched boy said to her companion: 'The wolf has taken your child!' The other replied: 'No, it has taken your child!' They brought the dispute before Dawud (peace be upon him), who ruled in favor of the elder woman. Then, they approached Sulayman ibn Dawud (peace be upon them), and he said: 'Bring me a knife so that I may divide the child between you.' At that point, the younger woman cried out: 'May Allah bless you! Do not do that! He is her child!' Thus, Sulayman ruled in favor of the younger woman" [2:848].

It can be said that qissas are among the oldest genres with a strong spiritual impact directed at the moral education of youth. They serve purposes such as teaching, encouraging good deeds, discouraging evil, delivering admonitions and exhortations, calling to repentance, and more. Additionally, storytelling (qissachilik) constantly reminds people of the miraculous and eternal consequences of human actions [7].

Furthermore, qissas are considered a special literary genre to which people become deeply attached, loving them strongly, following them eagerly, and awakening their hearts. In a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari, it is mentioned:

"One day, a man was traveling along a path and felt extreme thirst. He found a well, climbed down into it, and quenched his thirst. Upon coming out, he saw a dog panting and licking the moist earth out of severe thirst. The man thought to himself: 'This dog is suffering from thirst just as I was!' So he went back into the well, filled his shoe with water, held it in his mouth, and climbed up to give the dog water. Allah appreciated his action and forgave his sins."

The companions asked, "O Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), is there a reward for us in helping animals?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: "There is a reward for serving every living being" [2:569].

The qissas mentioned in hadiths can be conditionally divided into two categories:

Those that serve as explanations of stories already mentioned in the Qur'an. For example, the event between Khidr and Musa (peace be upon them), which Imam al-Bukhari also narrated in his Sahih.

Those that are not found in the Qur'an but are narrated independently. For instance, the story narrated by Imam al-Bukhari about three men who were trapped in a cave during a journey, or the hadith about the leper, the bald man, and the blind man among the Children of Israel [2:528].

Additionally, if the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) narrated stories about others, then events from his own life can also be considered qissas. For instance, the events of the splitting of the Prophet's chest, the Isra (night journey) and Mi'raj (ascension) are treated as separate stories for study. An example is the hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari about the time when Abu Hurayra (may Allah be pleased with him) was extremely hungry and the Prophet (peace be upon him) provided milk to feed him and the people of Suffa [2:1607].

It is particularly important to emphasize that the qissas in the Qur'an and hadiths recount events familiar to specific individuals or tribes. The purpose is for people to reflect on the conditions of previous nations, compare themselves with those before them, and thereby take lessons: avoiding the paths of the wrongdoers and taking guidance, admonition, and good examples from the righteous. As stated in the Qur'an:

"Relate to them the stories so that they may reflect" (Al-A'raf, 176) and
"Indeed, in their stories there is a lesson for those of understanding" (Yusuf, 111).

Indeed, the prophets and preachers took lessons from the stories of previous peoples. The Qur'anic and Prophetic qissas are a treasury that strengthens the hearts of the believers and constantly irrigates souls with goodness. As indicated in the Qur'an:

"And each story We relate to you from the news of the messengers is that by which We make firm your heart" (Hud, 120).

Human life on earth is filled with examples of steadfastness and deviation. Therefore, the stories of the Qur'an and hadith recount various events that impact a person's self-perception and his relationship with those around him. It is as though these texts, while narrating the story of one individual, speak directly to the very problems that trouble a person, or by recounting someone else's story, highlight examples of the righteous living among us, the corrupt who spread mischief on earth, or sometimes even the conditions of ordinary people. The individuals spoken about may be righteous, trustworthy and honest merchants, or compassionate people.

In modern education as well, the method of storytelling is widely used, particularly helping individuals – especially children – to firmly acquire knowledge, skills, and habits. Indeed, narrating qissas and stories quickly captures the attention of the individual or the learner, arouses the desire to listen, and awakens the wish to observe events. Therefore, in all civilizations, the use of qissas in education and upbringing has been widespread since ancient times.

In the Qur'an, educational aims – specifically the training of the soul and providing moral lessons – often utilize stories more than direct advice and wisdom. The profound impact of qissas and stories on human education and upbringing is expressed in the Holy Scripture as follows:

"Indeed, in their stories there is a lesson for those of understanding" (Yusuf, 111).

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) also made effective use of qissas among his companions to promote educational ideas. Indeed, stories had a powerful influence on

drawing their attention and helping them understand the essence of the wisdom and lessons conveyed. Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) effectively employed stories in his activities to teach the companions the essence of Islam.

Through storytelling, the Prophet (peace be upon him) called the companions to have faith in Allah, themselves, the holy books, the prophets, and the Hereafter, to show mercy to people, to maintain good relationships with others, to strive for piety for the sake of Allah's pleasure, to perform obligatory deeds, and to embody the morals and attributes that should manifest in a believer.

In conclusion, qissas hold a special place in Islamic history and represent a distinct literary genre, particularly common among Eastern peoples. A qissa is a brief story that highlights the life of a famous individual, a group of people, or an entire nation during a particular period, aiming to draw lessons and moral teachings from them. However, there is a difference between the qissas found in Islamic history and those that have spread among the general populace.

In Imam al-Bukhari's Sahih, there are a total of 86 hadith-stories: 26 related to previous nations, 34 concerning the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions, and 26 dealing with matters of the unseen [2].

The hadith-stories narrated by Imam al-Bukhari occupy a unique place in Islamic history and play an important role in nurturing young people with a sound worldview. Through these qissas, significant positive traits such as honesty, truthfulness, straightforwardness, humanity, nobility, loyalty, patriotism, diligence, patience, generosity, determination, trustworthiness, friendship, contentment, and other virtuous qualities are cultivated among the youth.

The qissas found in the hadiths have been specially studied by Muslim scholars and compiled into dedicated books. Nowadays, qissas are widely used as an effective means of inviting people to Islam.

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