The Concept of Rewards and Punishments in Religion:
A Special Reference to Kitab Al-Adab of Sahih Bukhari

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Abstract: This study examines the Prophetic tradition in Akidah or Islamic belief through the book of Sahih Bukhari which the Prophet Muhammad PBUH gave direction to educate the people by mentioning and promising the rewards (al-thawab) and punishments (al-iqab) that aiming at making the people active in persuading and what sort of rewards and punishments were mentioned that motivate the Muslims to do good deeds and stay away from negative behaviors. In fact, peace, tranquility, nobility and real greatness at home and street, in this world and the hereafter can be achieved by following his noble life and teachings. A textual and critical analysis of hadith referred to Chapter of Behavior (Kitab al-Adab) will be utilized to demonstrate the application of hadith pertaining to human behavior. The ideas presented could be further developed and appreciated by the society in related discipline in order to address contemporary challenges in understanding for future human living prospects.

Key words: Punishment • Reward • Thawab • Iqab • Sahih Bukhari • Kitab al-adab • Akidah

INTRODUCTION

The Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, which was and still is and will remain one of the main sources of Islamic law, second only to the Quran, covered all the activities of the Prophet PBUH [1]. In the Prophetic tradition, the Prophet not only gave direction to educate the people but also mentioned great rewards (al-thawab), for instance, teachers and students. He stated that learning and pursuit of knowledge is an obligatory on every Muslim [2]. One who conceals knowledge is liable to go to hell [3].

Here we can say that the concept of positive and negative reinforcement and reward or punishment as is known to a western psychologist was already introduced in Islam. For example, in Islamic teaching there is the concept of the creation of incentive to teachers and students. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH says;

If any one pursues a path in search of knowledge Allah will thereby make easy for him path to paradise and the angels spread their wings from good pleasure with one who seek knowledge and all the inhabitants of the heaven and the earth, even fish in the depth of water, ask forgiveness for him [2, 4, 5].

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