105343 - The reward of taking care of one who is sick

the question

I hope that you can help me with regard to this matter, as I looked on the Internet for evidence of the virtue of taking care of one who is sick, or the looking after him. I would like some stories or information on the reward that awaits the one who takes care of one who is sick.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

One of the greatest of deeds before Allah, may He be exalted, one of the dearest to the Most Merciful, one of the highest in honour and greatest in chivalry, is showing kindness to the weak and the sick, taking care of them and looking after them.

It was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The Muslim is the brother of his fellow Muslim; he does not wrong him or let him down. The one who meets the needs of his brother, Allah will meet his needs. Whoever relieves a Muslim of distress, Allah will relieve him of distress on the Day of Resurrection.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (2442) and Muslim (2580).

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever removes a worldly hardship from a believer, Allaah will remove one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection from him. Whoever grants respite to (a debtor) who is in difficulty, Allaah will grant him relief in this world and in the Hereafter. Whoever conceals (the fault of) a Muslim in this world, Allaah will conceal him (his faults) in this world and in the Hereafter. Allaah will help a person so long as he is helping his brother.”

Narrated by Muslim (2699).

The one who stays with the one who is sick, and takes care of him and looks after him has done good by serving him and caring for him, and Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “and do good. Truly, Allah loves Al-Muhsinoon (the good-doers)” [al-Baqarah 2:195].

Helping the one who is sick and serving him is an act of charity. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Helping a man onto his mount or lifting up his luggage onto it is a charity.”

Narrated by Muslim (1009).

The same applies to helping the person himself, carrying him or helping him to walk or sleep, or treating him.

It was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that a man came to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: O Messenger of Allah, which of the people is dearest to Allah? And which deeds are dearest to Allah? The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The dearest of people to Allah, may He be exalted, is the one who does most benefit to people, and the dearest of deeds to Allah, may He be exalted, is joy that you bring to a Muslim, or relieving him of distress, or paying off debt for him, or dispelling his hunger. And to walk with a brother to meet his needs is dearer to me than observing i‘tikaaf in this mosque – meaning the mosque of Madinah – for a month.”

Narrated by at-Tabaraani (12/453); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh at-Targheeb (955).

When the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) fell sick, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed her husband, ‘Uthmaan ibn ‘Affaan (may Allah be pleased with him), to stay with her and nurse her, and to stay behind from the battle of Badr. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said to him: “You will have a reward and share (of the booty) of a man who was present at Badr.” Narrated by al-

Bukhaari, 4066

The one who takes care of one who is sick must have the characteristic of patience because of what he will encounter of difficulty in staying up at night, and watching and tending to the one who is sick. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning” [az-Zumar 39:10].

It is also essential that he be compassionate. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Those who show mercy will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Show mercy to those who are on earth and the One Who is in heaven will show mercy to you.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (4941) and at-Tirmidhi (1924); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Ibn Abi’d-Dunya narrated in Qada’ al-Hawaa’ij that al-Hasan al-Basri said: To meet the need of a Muslim is dearer to me than praying a thousand rak‘ahs.

Ibn Rajab said in Lataa’if al-Ma‘aarif (232):

Many of the salaf (early generations of Islam) used to stipulate to their travelling companions that they should serve them, seeking to acquire reward thereby. Among them were ‘Aamir ibn ‘Abd Qays and ‘Amr ibn ‘Utbah ibn Farqad. This was in addition to their striving hard in worship by themselves. Similarly, Ibraaheem ibn Adham used to stipulate to his travelling companions that he should serve them and give the adhaan. One of the righteous would accompany his brothers on journeys for the purpose of jihad and otherwise, and would stipulate to them that he should serve them. If he saw a man who wanted to wash his garment, he would say to him: This is part of what I stipulated, then he would wash it. And if he saw a man who wanted to wash his head, he would say: This is part of what I stipulated, then he would wash it. When he died, they looked at his hand and saw written on it the words, “One of the people of Paradise.” They looked more closely and saw that it was written between the skin and the flesh. End quote.

Congratulations to the one whom Allah enables to extend a helping hand to the weak, sick and needy; congratulations to the one who spends his life and his time doing acts of kindness. We hope that Allah will bestow upon him mercy and pardon, and be pleased with him.

And Allah knows best.