




ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Elucidating the Behaviors of the Hypocrites in Medina During the Prophet's Era as an Undesirable Lifestyle

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT	
Article History: Received: 10 June 2024 Revised: 20 August 2024 Accepted: 05 September 2024		SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: This study examines the behaviors of hypocrites in Medina during the Prophet Muhammad's era, positioning them as paradigms of an undesirable lifestyle. It integrates historical accounts, Quranic references, and prophetic traditions to identify detrimental behaviors and propose corrective measures for a balanced Islamic lifestyle.	
Key Words: Hypocrisy Lifestyle Undesirable Lifestyle Islamic Morality Medina Society		METHOD & FINDING: Using a descriptive-analytical methodology grounded in library and electronic resources, the research identifies ten traits, namely deception, rumor-mongering, duplicity, fostering doubts, alliances with non-Muslims, mockery, reproach, breaking covenants, false oaths, and defiance of the Prophet's orders as reflections of hypocrisy. The findings underscore the significance of avoiding these behaviors to foster a lifestyle rooted in faith, morality, and social harmony.	
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/imjpl.2024.10187		CONCLUSION: The study concludes by presenting practical strategies for achieving an ideal way of life based on adherence to divine commandments, thereby contributing to individual and societal well-being. This research extends existing literature on the Islamic lifestyle and highlights the enduring relevance of these lessons.	
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Introduction

One of the aspects of Islam's advancement is the emphasis on lifestyle and how to live within a society. A person striving for prosperity always pursues two main goals: spiritual and material. The spiritual goal pertains to achieving eternal happiness and salvation, while the material goal focuses on leading a better worldly life. To achieve spiritual goals, as the term implies, one must adopt a proper religious lifestyle. Similarly, attaining material goals requires moral and psychological security, which necessitates a correct way of living.

The concept of lifestyle is broad, making it challenging to define a precise framework. Experts in various fields of humanities view lifestyle as a set of behaviors and activities that an individual consistently engages in throughout their life. These behaviors often follow a specific pattern influenced by the individual's thoughts, beliefs, values, living environment, and upbringing.

This study seeks to identify some components of a correct lifestyle by analyzing the behaviors of the hypocrites in Medina. Based on the Quranic verses that were revealed in condemnation of their behavior and ethical recommendations from narrations, it proposes pathways to achieve a better worldly and spiritual life. Meanwhile, the research addresses the following

questions to provide a focused exploration:

1. What are the specific traits of hypocrisy acted by individuals in Medina during the Prophet's time as documented in Quranic and historical sources?
2. How did these behaviors impact the spiritual, moral, and social fabric of Medina?
3. What practical strategies can be derived from Islamic teachings to counter such behaviors and establish an ideal lifestyle?

To address the questions mentioned, the study establishes the following objectives:

1. Identify and analyze the key behaviors associated with hypocrisy during the Prophet's era.
2. Evaluate the negative effects of these traits on the community and their contradiction to Islamic values.
3. Propose corrective measures and strategies rooted in Islamic teachings to foster faith, morality, and societal harmony.

By systematically addressing these inquiries and objectives, this research aims to contribute to the literature on the Islamic lifestyle, demonstrating the enduring relevance of these historical lessons. Such an approach underscores the significance of avoiding the detrimental behaviors of hypocrites and embracing virtues that promote spiritual and social well-being.

Theoretical Foundations

the most important terms used in the title and contents of this article will be briefly explained as follows:

1. Lifestyle

Lifestyle refers to the method that every individual chooses for their lifespan in this world. It encompasses the system of values, perceptions, attitudes, habits, subcultures, actions, and reactions of each person. This concept originates from the realm of insight and gradually manifests in actions, eventually evolving into a permanent disposition (Sharaf al-Dīn, 2017, p.74; Kāfi, 2018, p.22; Fa'ālī, 2018, p. 90).

The premise of this discussion is that a healthy and correct lifestyle depends on adhering to divine commandments and following religious teachings. Accordingly, the prohibitions mentioned in Quranic verses and traditions including the prohibition of the behaviors of the hypocrites, are considered pathways to achieving a healthy lifestyle. Thus, *Ḥayāt al-Tayyibah* (goodly pure life) is a kind of individual or social life, that is characterized by calmness, smoothness, purity, and peace of mind, and it is free from every kind of pollution, oppression, betrayal, enmity and hatred, captivity and humiliation, and all kinds of worries and anything that makes life unpleasant (Muhammad-Bello et al., 2021, p. 48).

2. Nifāq (Hypocrisy)

The Arabic term *Nifāq* is a rare verbal noun derived from the *Mufā'ala* form, following the pattern of *Fi'āl* and stemming from the root *Nafaqa*. This root conveys the meanings of 'loss' or 'to lose' and this general sense is present in all its derivatives, such as *Nafaqatun* (expense) and *Infāq* (spending). The idea is that in any kind of expenditure, an individual's wealth decreases and a portion of it is lost. Sometimes, *Nafaqa* is also used concerning the price of goods, implying that a commodity has become scarce or unavailable, leading to an increase in its price.

It is pertinent to mention that all the derivatives mentioned under the entry *Nafaqa* in *Kitab al-'Ayn* pertain to these meanings (Farāhīdī, 1989, Vol.5, p.178). Additionally, the term *al-Nafaqun* refers to moving stealthily, whether underground or above ground (Ibn Durayd, 1988, vol. 2, p. 967). This term entails a sense of escape (Azharī, 2000, Vol. 9, p. 155; Ibn 'Abbād, 1993, Vol. 5, p. 445). Some linguists believe that this root and its derivatives stem from two principal meanings. Certain derivatives refer to the first meaning, i.e., loss, while others relate to the second meaning, i.e., concealment. These two meanings ultimately converge, as the derivatives of this root imbue both concepts (Ibn Fāris, 1984, Vol. 5, pp. 454-455).

In technical usage, the term *Nifāq* refers to a psychological state where an individual outwardly professes Islam while inwardly remaining a disbeliever (cf. 'Askarī, 1980, p. 223). This state is precisely the opposite of *Taqīyya* [dissimulation], in which a believer conceals their faith while outwardly displaying something else (cf. Muḥaffarī, 2022, p. 43).

Additionally, *Nifāq* is defined as entering Islam through one door and leaving it through another (cf. Ibn Manẓūr, 1993, Vol. 10, p. 359). Thus, a person exhibiting the psychological state of hypocrisy is referred to as a *Munāfiq* (hypocrite), which is the active participle of the *Mufa'ala* form derived from this root.

3. Islamic Morality

Morality refers to the degree of conformity to the moral principles acquired by a society. (Leaman, 2008, p. 414). Islamic morality is therefore rooted in the Quran and the Prophet's sayings and actions. Many good character traits/moral qualities such as kindness (to people and animals), charity, forgiveness, honesty, patience, justice, respecting parents and elders, keeping promises, and controlling one's anger, are commanded or encouraged in verses in the Quran and Hadīth (Ibid, p. 416).

This moral framework was crucial in shaping the community in Medina, where the Prophet encouraged believers

to adopt a lifestyle of compassion and righteousness.

4. Medina Society

The society of Medina during the Prophet's era was diverse, consisting of Muslims, Jews, and other groups, each with distinct beliefs and interests (Mubarakpuri, 2004, p. 60). The establishment of Islam as the dominant faith and the formation of a unified Muslim community brought about social and political transformations. However, some individuals, particularly those with personal or tribal interests, displayed outward allegiance to Islam while secretly opposing its principles. This dual-faced approach led to internal discord and challenges in governance, prompting Quranic revelations that exposed their deceitful behaviors and warned the Muslim community of their harmful influence.

Literature Review

Although numerous literary works have been written on healthy lifestyles and the Islamic lifestyle, as well as various studies addressing the characteristics of the hypocrites during the Prophet's era, no work has been identified that specifically analyzes the behaviors of the hypocrites in Medina during the Prophet's era as an undesirable lifestyle.

However, there are writings by various scholars that closely align with the subject of this article. Hence, it can be claimed that the literature

review on this topic should be sought in works that mention and analyze the traits of hypocrites. For example, Abu Bakr Ja'far ibn Mohammad al-Firyabi (d. 913), in his book *Ṣifat al-Nifāq wa Dhamm al-Munāfiqīn* (The Characteristics of Hypocrisy and the Condemnation of Hypocrites), which is among the earliest surviving Islamic writings on the topic of hypocrisy, compiled narrations from the Prophet, his companions, and their successors in the following two sections: 'The Three Characteristics of Hypocrites' and 'Those Who Feared Falling into Hypocrisy.'

After him, Hafiz Abu Na'im al-Iṣfahānī (d. 1038), in his book *Ṣifat al-Nifāq wa Na't al-Munāfiqīn min al-Sunan al-Ma'thūrah 'an Rasūl Allāh* (The Characteristics of Hypocrisy and Description of the Hypocrites based on Prophetic Traditions) collected 181 narrations from the Holy Prophet, His companions, and their successors, deriving the titles of each chapter from the first Ḥadīth in that chapter. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzī (d. 1350), authored *Ṣifāt al-Munāfiqīn* (The Characteristics of Hypocrites), in which he categorized hypocrisy into the following two types: *Nifāq Akbar* (major hypocrisy) and *Nifāq Aṣghar* (minor hypocrisy). He then provided Quranic verses related to each type and described the moral traits of hypocrites, condemning their behaviors. It can be asserted that many

later books discussing and condemning the traits of hypocrites were indebted to Ibn Qayyim's meticulous examination of Quranic verses on the subject of hypocrisy.

Among contemporary scholars, 'Abd al-Raḥman Ḥasan Habannakah al-Maydani, a Syrian writer, in his book *Zāhirat al-Nifāq wa Khabā'ith al-Munāfiqīn fī al-Tārīkh* (The Phenomenon of Hypocrisy and the Vices of Hypocrites in History), sought to explore the nature of hypocrisy. Similarly, 'Ali Reza Mohseni Tabrizī, Maḥmoud Rajabi, and 'Ali Salimi in their article *Tabyīn-e Ijtimā'i-ye Nifāq: Olgu'i Talfiqi bar Asās-e Āmūze-hā-ye Qur'ānī* (A Sociological Explanation of Hypocrisy: An Integrative Model Based on Quranic Teachings), published in Fall/Winter 2012 of the biannual journal *Nazariye-ha-e Ijtimā'i-ye Mutaḥakkiran-e Musalman* [Social Theories of Muslim Thinkers], have aimed to demonstrate the social dimensions of hypocrisy and analyze cultural variables at the micro, intermediate, and macro levels using Quranic verses.

Research Methodology

The research employs a descriptive-analytical methodology to explore the behaviors of hypocrites in Medina during the Prophet Muhammad's era as examples of an undesirable lifestyle. The descriptive approach gathers and organizes data from Quranic verses, Prophetic traditions, and historical

accounts to detail the hypocrites' traits, such as deceit, rumor-mongering, and covenant-breaking. The analytical aspect critically examines these behaviors, highlighting their ethical and social ramifications in the context of Islamic principles. Through this analysis, the study not only underscores the contradiction of such actions with Islamic teachings but also provides practical guidance for avoiding them and fostering a lifestyle aligned with faith and moral values. This methodology ensures the research is both comprehensive in its documentation and relevant in its applicability to contemporary life.

The Behaviors of the Hypocrites

By examining some of the characteristics and behaviors of hypocrites, we can derive recommendations for adopting a proper lifestyle.

1. Deception Against God and the Believers

One of the fundamental and strategic principles underlying the behaviors of hypocrites is deception and trickery. This trait is evident in all their actions, making deceit and the use of cunning schemes one of their prominent characteristics. The Quran points out that hypocrites even attempt to deceive Almighty God, as stated, "*The hypocrites indeed seek to deceive Allah, but it is He who outwits them*" (The Quran, 4: 142).

The term *Khid'ah* in the Arabic lexicon means deceit, trickery, and misleading others (Bustānī, 1996, p. 358). The Prophet Muhammad said, "*A true Muslim neither deceives nor schemes, for I heard Gabriel say: Indeed, deceit and scheming belong in the Fire*" (Ṣadūq, 1984, Vol. 2, p. 50). Thus, the life of a true Muslim is devoid of deceit and trickery. Anyone who uses such means to achieve their goals adopts a hypocritical disposition.

In another verse, God identifies reliance on deceit and manipulation as a trait of hypocrites. In this respect, Allah said, "*They seek to deceive Allah and those who have faith, yet they deceive no one but themselves, but they are not aware*" (The Quran, 2: 9). This verse emphasizes that while hypocrites may seek to deceive God and believers, their schemes ultimately backfire, affecting none but themselves.

2. Rumors Mongering

One of the most significant and impactful activities of the hypocrites during the Prophet's era in Medina was their orchestration of psychological warfare against the Prophet and the Muslims. They sought to harm Islam and its nascent government by fabricating and spreading rumors, disseminating false information, and fostering fear, insecurity, and anxiety among the Muslim community (Khātāmī, 2000, p. 121).

A notable example of such rumors was the false accusation concerning one of the Prophet's wives (Aisha or Maria), known as the Incident of Calumny (Ḥalabī Shāfi'ī, n.d, vol. 2, p. 294). Almighty God countered this rumor by the revelation of verses in the Quran and said, *"Indeed those who initiated the calumny are a group from among yourselves. Do not suppose it is a bad thing for you. No, it is for your good. Each man among them bears [the onus for] his share in the sin, and as for him who assumed its major burden from among them, there is a great punishment for him"* (The Quran, 24: 11).

The Holy Quran addressed the incident of the calumny, describing the behaviors of the hypocrites and simple-minded people who participated in this character assassination of the Prophet, offering guidance and warnings in response and said, *"When you [first] heard about it, why did not the faithful, men and women, think well of their folks, and say, 'This is an obvious calumny'?"* (The Quran, 24: 12). The next verse emphasized the need for evidence in such accusations, *"Why did they not bring four witnesses to it? So, when they could not bring the witnesses, they are liars in Allah's sight"* (The Quran, 24: 13).

In continuation of the verse, Almighty God said, *"Indeed those who want indecency to spread among the faithful—there is a painful punishment*

for them in the world and the Hereafter, and Allah knows and you do not know" (The Quran, 24: 19).

The following principles as guidelines for a proper Islamic lifestyle could be derived from these verses:

1. Spreading rumors is prohibited since Islam strongly condemns and punishes those who engage in rumor-mongering.
2. Not only rumor-mongering is forbidden, but also admiring or supporting the propagation of immorality is equally forbidden.
3. Rumor-mongering not only incurs worldly punishment but also incurs eternal punishment.
4. Regarding a calumny, the listeners must demand witnesses from the reporter, and the witnesses must be at least four; otherwise, the reporter is to be regarded as a liar and a fabricator.

3. Duality in Appearance and Inwardness

The most important trait of the hypocrites is their duplicity. They profess the faith outwardly but harbor disbelief inwardly. The hypocrites apparently claim to believe, but inwardly they do not believe in what they say or do. In this regard, Allah said, *"They say with their mouths what is not in their hearts, and Allah knows well whatever they conceal"* (The Quran, 3: 167).

With this account, a lifestyle where one's actions and words do not align with one's true beliefs is described as

hypocritical and is strongly condemned in Islam.

4. Creating Doubts

One of the destructive strategies employed by the hypocrites during the Prophet's era was their dissemination of doubt and confusion, especially during critical and challenging moments. This behavior aimed to weaken the faith of the Muslim community. For instance, before the Battle of Badr, the hypocrites spread doubt among Muslims to stop them from participating in the war, claiming that God's promises of victory were illusory and deceptive (Yūsufi Gharawī, 1996, Vol. 2, p. 133).

The hypocrites created a similar doubt during the *Battle of the Trench*, when the Muslims encountered a massive rock while digging the trench, the hypocrites mocked the Prophet's promises of future conquests. They cynically remarked, "Do you not marvel at Muhammad's promises of the palaces of Hira and Ctesiphon while you cannot even manage to dig this trench?" (Ṭabarī, 1992, Vol. 2, pp. 179, 368).

The Quran highlighted these tactics of creating doubt by the hypocrites and said, "*When the hypocrites, as well as those in whose hearts is a sickness, were saying, 'Allah and His Apostle did not promise us [anything] except delusion' "*" (The Quran, 33: 12).

Another doubt raised by the hypocrites emerged during moments of Muslim defeat in battle. They told the

Muslims that because our religion was not right, we were defeated in the *Battle of Uhud* and if we were right, we would not have been killed here (Yūsufi Gharawī, 1996, Vol. 2, p. 133). The Quran also mentions this doubt and says, "*They say, 'Had we any role in the matter, we would not have been slain here' "*" (The Quran, 3: 154).

It is essential to distinguish legitimate questioning from insidious doubt-mongering. Asking questions is a natural process of an active and thoughtful mind. Questions—whether expressed in speech or writing—should be posed respectfully and answered appropriately. Similarly, doubt is not inherently negative. Constructive doubt, when pursued logically and systematically, leads to certainty and stronger faith. However, it is crucial to engage with doubt responsibly and through proper means to avoid becoming entrenched in excessive skepticism.

5. Alliance with non-Muslims

Careful study of the Quranic verses reveals that Allah, the Almighty, disapproves of Muslims associating with disbelievers, polytheists, and certain factions of Jews, Christians, and followers of other religions who aim to sow discord and harm Islam and Muslims. However, examining the behaviors of the hypocrites in Medina during the Prophet's era shows repeated instances of their

continuous association with, and even obedience to, non-Muslims.

Allah describes the hypocrites' motives for forming ties with non-Muslims in the Quran, "*Those who take the faithless for allies instead of the faithful. Do they seek honor with them? [If so,] indeed all honor belongs to Allah*" (The Quran, 4: 139).

The hypocrites' primary motivation for associating with non-Muslims was to gain prestige and protective support during critical times (Darwazah, 1964, Vol. 2, p.180). Additionally, due to their lack of faith and weak reliance on Allah, they viewed material power as the sole determinant of success. As a result, they sought friendships and collaborations with powerful non-Muslims to ensure their safety and wealth in case these non-Muslims gained control of the society's political conditions (Khātāmī, 2000, pp. 47-50).

Applying these lessons today can shape a proper lifestyle. The Quran, as a timeless guide for humanity, emphasizes that honor and power are entirely contingent on faith and allegiance to believers. This principle remains a foundational guideline for Muslims, helping to define the correct boundaries and conduct in their interactions with others.

6. Mockery and Ridicule of the Believers

Mocking and ridiculing the believers was one of the most frequent actions

of the hypocrites throughout their presence in Medina, while the Prophet was present there. The Quran addressed this characteristic and stated, "*The hypocrites are apprehensive lest a surah should be sent down against them, informing them about what is in their hearts. Say, 'Go on deriding. Allah will indeed bring out what you are apprehensive of'*" (The Quran, 9: 64).

This verse shows that the hypocrites feared the revelation of a surah that would expose their inner secrets. Allah commands the Prophet to tell them to mock, as Allah would reveal what they feared. Other verses refer to their mockery of the Prophet as being naive and simple-minded, and the believers as foolish (The Quran, 9: 61; 2: 13).

There are several historical instances of mockery and ridicule of the believers by the hypocrites during the Prophet's mission. For instance, in the ninth year of Hijrah, when the Muslims were preparing for the battle against the Romans in the region of *Tabūk*, due to the harsh conditions and distance of the battlefield, they were forced to gather a large number of supplies, the Muslims on the other hand would do whatever they could to help the Islamic armies. A poor Muslim named Abu Aqil was only able to provide a small number of dates, which he had earned as payment for watering the garden of one of the *Anṣār*. He presented these dates to the

Prophet and the Muslim army as provisions. When he did, the hypocrites began mocking him, saying that Allah did not need such a meager offering (al-Ṣāliḥī al-Shāmī, 1993, Vol. 5, p. 435).

However, Allah exposed their ill intentions with the revelation of a verse and promised them punishment, saying, *“Those who blame the voluntary donors from among the faithful concerning the charities—and as for those who do not find [anything] except [what] their means [permit], they ridicule them—Allah shall put them to ridicule, and there is a painful punishment for them”* (The Quran, 9: 79).

Mocking others is considered one of the moral vices and one of the most heinous sins (Narāqī, 1999, p. 556). According to Mulla Ahmad Narāqī, the mocker is devoid of faith, humanity, and reason and will be subjected to various punishments on the Day of Judgment (Ibid, p. 555). Numerous Quranic verses and Ḥadīths condemn mockery (Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', 2001, Vol. 6, p. 33). This vice is attributed to criminals (The Quran, 83: 29), hypocrites (The Quran, 2: 14-15), the most unjust individuals (The Quran, 18: 56-57), and the foolish (The Quran, 5: 58). Therefore, a healthy, human-centered lifestyle is free from mockery and ridicule.

7. Reproaching the Believers

The hypocrites during the Prophet Muhammad's era exhibited hostility

towards the Muslims, displaying resentment during their moments of joy and mocking them in times of hardship. Their behavior reflected their inability to tolerate the success or happiness of the believers. The Quran vividly describes and portrays this behavior of the hypocrites in several verses. For instance, Allah said, *“If some good should befall you, it upsets them, but if some ill befalls you, they rejoice at it. Yet if you are patient and Godwary, their guile will not harm you in any way. Indeed, Allah encompasses what they do”* (The Quran, 3:120). Also, *“And should an affliction visit you, he says, ‘It was certainly Allah’s blessing that I did not accompany them!’”* (The Quran, 4:72).

One of the historical manifestations of the hypocrites mocking the believers occurred after the *Battle of Uhud*, when the Muslims had lost many martyrs and, on the surface, the battle appeared to be a defeat against the Muslims. As the Muslims returned to Medina, they mourned the loss of their dead. The hypocrites rejoiced in this situation and mocked the Muslims, saying, “Muhammad is seeking kingship and royalty, which no other prophet has achieved. Those who died in this battle should have survived, but they chose to be with Muhammad. The hypocrites aimed to create doubt among the Prophet's companions and gradually isolate them from the

Prophet through these remarks” (‘Āmilī, 1994, Vol. 6, p. 122).

The hypocrites in Medina exhibited destructive behavior by reproaching and mocking the believers during hardships and resenting their successes, intending to weaken their morale. The Quran highlights their actions, contrasting them with the Islamic principles of constructive reproach aimed at improving individuals' behavior without attacking their character. Constructive reproach involves critiquing undesirable traits privately to avoid embarrassment, as advocated by Imam Ali, “Reproaching someone in front of others is an attack on their character” (Āmadī, 1990, Vol.1, p. 720).

However, public criticism may be necessary in cases where harmful practices might influence others (Sharīf al-Razī, 1993, p. 98). Constructive reproach, rooted in sincere intentions, is vital for fostering correction and maintaining trust. In contrast, destructive reproach, stemming from arrogance, seeks to harm reputations and violates the principle of ‘enjoining good and forbidding evil’. Imam Baqir narrates from the Prophet, “It is enough of a fault for a man that he looks at the flaws of others but fails to see his own, or that he reproaches others for actions that he commits” (Kulaynī, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 459).

8. Breaking of Covenants

Breaking covenants is another characteristic of the hypocrites, which is mentioned in the Quran and Ḥadīth. The hypocrites, like other members of society, outwardly professed Islam, thus signing a pact of cooperation and solidarity with the Muslims and the Islamic government under any circumstances. They were obligated to defend Islam and the Prophet against their enemies. However, in several battles, they broke this practical covenant with the people. Sometimes, they refrained from joining the Muslim army before the battle even started, and at other times, they would retreat or flee after the battle had begun and the dire situation of the war became apparent.

This issue was addressed earlier in the discussion of the *Battle of Uhud*. Similarly, in the *Battle of the Trench*, after the enemies of Islam, with their overwhelming armies, created a critical situation at the gates of Medina, the hypocrites abandoned the battlefield. The Quran stated, “*Though they had already pledged to Allah before that they would not turn their backs [to flee], and pledges given to Allah are accountable*” (The Quran, 33: 15). That is, they had previously made a covenant with Allah not to turn their backs on the enemy, and the covenant made with

Allah will definitely be questioned, for they are accountable for it.

As previously mentioned, in the *Battle of Tabūk*, a group of hypocrites, led by Abdullah ibn Ubayy, did not accompany the Prophet and the Muslims and they returned to Medina. Similarly, in the *Battle of Banu Nadir* where they had made a pact of cooperation with the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir they also acted treacherously and broke their promise. The Quran refers to this behavior of the hypocrites as follows, *“Surely, if they were expelled, they will not go out with them, and if they were fought against, they will not help them, and [even if] they were to help them they will turn their backs [to flee] and eventually they will not be helped”* (The Quran, 59: 12).

Fulfilling promises and covenants is a fundamental duty and one of the etiquettes of interaction and good conduct with others. The Quran considers the fulfillment of covenants a sign of faith (The Quran, 23: 8), and an attribute of the righteous (The Quran, 2: 177). Therefore, keeping promises should always be a cornerstone of the lifestyle of the faithful and the righteous.

9. False Oaths

There were times when the intentions and actions of the hypocrites became apparent to some Muslims. In such cases, one of the actions that the hypocrites

consistently resorted to was the use of false oaths. In the Quran, 58:16, which refers to the alliance between the hypocrites and the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir around Medina, Allah describes their false oaths as a shield to deflect accusations and suspicions from themselves. The verse states, *“They make a shield of their oaths and bar [people] from the way of Allah; so, there is a humiliating punishment for them”* (The Quran, 58: 16).

One of the manifestations of the hypocrites' false oaths occurred when the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims were returning from the *Battle of Tabūk*. The hypocrites, to apologize for not accompanying the Prophet and the Muslims in the battle, sought to gain their favor by swearing false oaths. However, before they reached Medina, Allah informed the Prophet of this plot and revealed, *“They will offer you excuses when you return to them. Say, ‘Do not make excuses; we will never believe you. Allah has informed us of your state of affairs. Allah and His Apostle will observe your conduct, then you will be returned to the Knower of the sensible and the Unseen, and He will inform you concerning what you used to do.’ They will swear to you by Allah when you return to them, that you may leave them alone. So, leave them alone. They are indeed filth, and their refuge shall be hell, a requital for what they used to*

earn. They swear to you that you may be reconciled to them. But even if you are reconciled to them, Allah shall not be reconciled to the transgressing lot” (The Quran, 9: 94-96).

An oath refers to a statement that emphasizes the truth and correctness of a matter, asserting that there is no mistake or error in it (Ṭabarasī, 1987, Vol. 9, p. 87). A lie, on the other hand, means a statement that is false and contrary to reality and is considered one of the major sins (Hāshimī Rafsanjānī, 2000, Vol. 13, p. 373).

Some scholars believe that a false oath involves two sins. One is the sin of lying, which is a major sin, and the other is swearing falsely by something sacred, such as Allah. Therefore, the sin of a false oath is considered to be double, equivalent to two major sins (Motahhari, 1997, Vol. 8, p. 263). In the advice of the Prophet Muhammad to Imam Ali, it is stated that Allah does not show mercy to those who swear falsely in His name (Ibn Shu‘bah, 1984, p. 14). According to Ḥadīths, false oaths lead to poverty, infertility, severed family ties, and the depopulation of cities (Ṣadūq, 1990, pp. 226-228).

The Quran also mentions the following punishments for false oaths:

1. The painful punishment of Allah (The Quran, 3: 77).
2. Being deprived of the abundant benefits of the Hereafter (Ibid).

3. Allah does not speak to those who swear false oaths (Ibid).

4. The humiliation and disgrace of the individual on the Day of Judgment (The Quran, 9: 62-63; 58: 14-15)

5. The destruction of the individual (The Quran, 9: 42).

10. Disobeying the Prophet's Orders

One of the characteristics of the hypocrites in Medina during the Prophet’s era was their defiance of his commands and their avoidance of responsibility during critical times. Historical reports indicate that during the Battle of the Trench, the Prophet assigned the digging of the trench to groups of ten men. Among the Muslims were some hypocrites who were supposed to carry out the task of digging, just like the others. However, when they felt that no one was watching them, they would stop working, and whenever the Muslims paid attention to them, they would resume the task. They would abandon their work without permission from the Prophet and even go to their homes (Ibn Hishām, 1936, Vol. 2, p. 701).

The Quran addressed this issue and said, *“Do not consider the Apostle’s summons amongst you to be like your summoning one another. Allah certainly knows those of you who slip away shielding one another. Those who disobey his orders should beware lest an affliction should visit them or a*

painful punishment should befall them” (The Quran, 24: 63).

Since the *Wilāyah* (guardianship) in Islamic and Quranic analysis is a fundamental aspect of faith, and the two are inward matters, the way to assess a person’s acceptance of guardianship and faith is through their obedience. In other words, to measure a person’s faith and loyalty to the chosen servant of God, one must look at their willingness to obey.

The more obedient and responsive a person is, the greater it is understood that such an individual has love and affection for the chosen servant of God and feels a closer connection to them. This is because *Wilāyah* in the Quranic culture is deeply connected with love and affection. Hence, it is said in the interpretation of true faith that faith and disbelief are nothing but love and hatred respectively. Believers have love and affection for Allah and the Islamic leaders, who are referred to as the chosen servants of God, and this love and affection is what transforms them into obedient and responsive individuals. If they are asked to do something, they do it without hesitation or excuse. In this sense, guardianship and its acceptance are core elements of the believers’ lifestyle.

Conclusion

This research examines the undesirable lifestyle traits exhibited by the hypocrites in Medina during the

Prophet Muhammad’s era, as derived from Quranic verses and Prophetic narrations. The study systematically analyzed ten significant behaviors, such as deception, rumor-mongering, alliance with non-believers, and false oaths, that undermined societal and spiritual cohesion. These actions, driven by duplicity and selfish motives, not only threatened the emerging Islamic community but also contravened the core principles of morality and faith as emphasized in Islam.

From this examination, a set of constructive guidelines for adopting a righteous lifestyle emerges. These include truthfulness, maintaining loyalty to covenants, fostering sincerity in belief and actions, resisting deceit, upholding communal trust, and aligning one’s life with divine teachings and the example set by the Prophet. By avoiding the traits of hypocrites and adhering to these principles, Muslims are empowered to cultivate a lifestyle centered on ethical conduct, societal harmony, and spiritual well-being. Ultimately, this study affirms the enduring relevance of Quranic injunctions in guiding human behavior and promoting a virtuous society. It underscores the importance of self-awareness and moral discipline in building a life that leads to both worldly and eternal success.

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Conflict of Interest

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