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THE PERSONIFICATION OF HOSPITALITY (*DIYĀFAH*) IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL SOLIDARITY (*TAKĀFUL IJTIMĀ'Ī*) THROUGH THE PROPHETIC TRADITION (*SUNNAH*)

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Abstract

*This paper looks at the subject of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) and elucidates its social standing and associated terms by outlining the personification of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) in community development through the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). The research clarifies the essential components of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) with a specific spotlight on the association of human rights and the development of spirituality in the different kinds of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) that were in practice during the early Islamic period. The study features the influence of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) on social solidarity system (*al-takāful al-ijtimā'ī*) as it deals with the essential components related to the act of endowment (*awqāf*), the occasions of sacrificing animals (*aḍāḥī*), and the wedding banquets (*'urūs*). Lastly, the paper emphasizes that meaningful hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) bears a significant impact on community development in society and safeguards human rights, and along with the spiritual progress it promotes education and encourages the growth of knowledge since hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is a gift which raises humanity towards achieving divine guidance from God.*

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1. Introduction: Hospitality (*Ḍiyāfah*) and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*)

One of the greatest pursuits of knowledge and ethics associated with the life of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is the importance of mercy (*raḥmah*) to humanity to achieve perfection in character and develop “beautiful character traits.”⁴ Although good character had been in existence before the Prophet’s advent, the mission of guiding Muslims towards developing “beautiful character traits” was given to the Prophet (ﷺ) which is likened to cleaving a sparkling diamond and polishing it till it acquires its impeccable charm. Among the good character traits, this paper will discuss *ḍiyāfah* or hospitality, which nowadays is an essential element in promoting the friendly and generous reception of guests. It is worthy to note that the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) has raised this to the level where it becomes an essential part of a Muslim’s belief system, that is, if a Muslim believes in Allah (ﷻ) and Judgment Day (*ākhirah*) then he should honour his guests at his best.⁵

This paper seeks to explore the various types of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) that were in practice during the Prophet’s time. There are many narrations in the *Sunnah* about hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) in general and in almost every significant compilation of Ḥadīth. Hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is described and expanded in various related topics and

⁴ Ahmad, Ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Shaybānī, *Al-Musnad*, ed., Shu’aib al-Arnā’uṭ and ‘Ādil Murshid et al. (Beirut: *Mu’assasah al-Risālah*, 2001), vol. 14, 512-513, Hadith No. 8952: Abū Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, “I was sent to perfect good character.”

⁵ Muslim, Ibn al-Hajjāj Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Qushayrī al-Naisābūrī, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed., Abū Qutaybah Naẓr Muḥammad al-Faryābī. (Riyad: *Dār Ṭayyibah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī‘*, 2006), vol. 1, 41, Hadith No. 75: It is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said: “He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either utter good words or better keep silence; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should treat his neighbour with kindness and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should show hospitality to his guest.”

issues such as rights of neighbours and relatives and rules of travelling and wedding ceremonies. However, the types of hospitality (*ḏiyāfah*), which contribute to community development and have an impact on social solidarity (*al-takāful al-ijtimā'ī*) were not precisely discussed as separate topics. Thus, the following passages will investigate the personification of hospitality (*ḏiyāfah*) in the expansion of a society and its influence on social solidarity through the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*).

2. Hospitality (*ḏiyāfah*) and its Personification in Community Development

The word *ḏiyāfah* comes from the root word *ḏāfa*,⁶ which means accommodation, entertaining, being cordial and generous towards guests, providing friendly reception and housing.⁷ In Arabic, there are some synonyms of *ḏiyāfah* presented in dictionaries. For example, *walimah* means a feast after the wedding or reception;⁸ *su'r* means the remainder of food or drink;⁹ *ma'dubah* means banquet, feast or spread, (formal meal, usually for a special event at which speeches are often made);¹⁰ *ḥafal* means ceremonies or opening celebrations¹¹ and *tuhfah* means gift or present.¹²

⁶ Abū Ṭāhir Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb al-Fayrūzābādī, *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, ed., Muḥammad Na'im al-'Arqasūsī (Beirut: *Mu'assasah al-Risālah li al-Ṭibā'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'*, 2005), 8th edition, vol. 1, 830.

⁷ Muḥammad Ruwās and Hāmid Ṣādiq Qanībī, Qal'ajī, *Mu'jam Lughah al-Fuqahā'* (Beirut: *Dār al-Nafā'is li al-Ṭibā'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'*, 1988), 2nd edition, vol. 1, Alphabet D, 286.

⁸ 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jazīrī, Ibn Muḥammad 'Iwaḍ. *Al-Fiḥ al-ā al-Madhāhib al-Arba'ah* (Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah*, 2003), 2nd edition, vol. 2, p.33; Ibn Fāris, Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī al-Rāzī, *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughah*, ed., 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Damascus: *Dār al-Fikr*, 1979), vol. 1, 74.

⁹ Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Azhar al-Dawrī, Al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughah*, ed., Muḥammad 'Iwaḍ Mur'ab (Beirut: *Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī*, 2001), vol. 13, 34.

¹⁰ Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī al-Rāzī, *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughah*, ed., 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Damascus: *Dār al-Fikr*, 1979), vol. 1, 74.

¹¹ Abū Bakar Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Azdī, Ibn Darīd, *Jamharah al-Lughah*, ed., Ramzī Munīr Ba'labakkī. (Beirut: *Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malāyīn*, 1987), vol. 1, 554.

Hospitality (*diyāfah*) was in practice way back in the period of the Prophet Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) as the Holy Qur'ān refers to the story of the guests of Ibrāhīm "when they came to him and said, Peace, he said, we are afraid of you."¹³ In the *Sunnah*, various narrations support the concept of hospitality (*diyāfah*) and its personification. During the first revelation (*waḥy*) Khadījah (رضي الله عنها) pointed out that one of the most exceptional traits of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was to serve his guests generously.¹⁴ On one occasion, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) made the demonstration of hospitality (*diyāfah*) one of the conditions which justifies *īmān* (faith). He said, "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day (*ākhirah*) should honour his guest's provisions for the road are what will serve for a day and night; hospitality extends for three days; what goes after that is a charity (*ṣadaqah*)."¹⁵ Indeed numerous narrations concerning hospitality (*diyāfah*) are found in the *Sunnah*. This paper seeks to examine the nature of hospitality (*diyāfah*) and its role in community development.

With regard to the ruling on hospitality (*diyāfah*), there are three opinions among Muslim jurists (*fuqahā*): *wājib* (compulsory), *farḍ kifāyah* (collective duty) and *mandūb* (recommended). Those who prescribe *wājib* or *farḍ kifāyah* present evidence from the Ḥadīth of Miqdām and 'Uqbah. "Putting up a guest for one night is

¹² Abū Naṣr Ismā'il ibn Ḥammād al-Jawharī, *Al-Farābī, al-Ṣiḥāḥ Tāj al-Lughah wa Ṣiḥāḥ al-'Arabiyyah*, ed., Aḥmad 'Aḥmad 'Abd al-Ghafūr 'Aṭār (Beirut: *Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malāyīn*, 1987), 4th edition, vol. 4, 1333.

¹³ The Quran, *Sūrah al-Ḥajar*: 51-52; *Sūrah al-Dhāriyāt*: 24-27

¹⁴ Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'il al-Ju'fī, *Al-Bukhārī, Al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed., Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Naṣīr. (Beirut: *Dār Ṭūq al-Najāt*, 2001), vol. 8, 11, Ḥadīth no. 6019.

¹⁵ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, retrieved from <https://sunnah.com/abudawud/28> Ḥadīth no. 3748, Grade: Sahih (Al-Albani), In-book reference: Book 28, Ḥadīth 13, English translation: Book 27, Ḥadīth no. 3739, Abū Shuraiḥ al-Ka'bī reported the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) as saying: "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should honour his guest provisions for the road are what will serve for a day and night: hospitality extends for three days; what goes after that is *ṣadaqah* (charity); and it is not allowable that a guest should stay till he makes himself an encumbrance." Abū Dāwūd said: Mālik was asked about the saying of the Prophet: "Provisions for the road what will serve for a day a night." He said: "He should honour him, present him some gift, and protect him for a day and night, and hospitality for three days."

*obligatory upon every Muslim,”*¹⁶ and, “*If you stay with some people, and they entertain you as they should for a guest, accept their hospitality, but if they do not, take the right of the guest from them.*”¹⁷ Both Ḥadīth mean that if a group of people fail to host a guest, the guest has the right to eat their food and stay a night at their property against their consent.

On the other hand, according to Ṭaḥāwī¹⁸ the ruling on hospitality (*diyāfah*) is *mandūb* (recommended) according to several narrations, among them the Ḥadīth of Miqdād (different from the Ḥadīth of Miqdām). When Miqdād came to the Prophet (ﷺ) he reported that no one was ready to host him and provide food and accommodation, so the Prophet (ﷺ) offered him milk to drink.¹⁹ Based on the above narration, the Prophet (ﷺ) would have abandoned the people who did not host Miqdād, if hospitality (*diyāfah*) is compulsory, but he did not. Therefore, hospitality (*diyāfah*) is not compulsory in Islām. Ṭaḥāwī also presents his argument by quoting the Ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Umar, where the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited a person from milking someone else's cow without his permission.²⁰ Feeding the starving is always a recommended act in Islām, but sometimes it may be enforced to ensure complete eradication of starvation.²¹ The fact that it is allowed to praise someone who feeds famished people means that the act of feeding itself is a recommended act, not a compulsory one.²²

¹⁶ Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Azdī al-Miṣrī, Al-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Mushkil al-Āthār*, ed., Shu‘aib al-Arnā‘ūt (Beirut: *Mu‘assasah al-Risālah*, 1994), vol. 7, 245, Ḥadīth no. 2810-2811.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., vol. 8, 248, Ḥadīth no. 2817.

¹⁹ Muslim, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 1625, Ḥadīth no. 2055.

²⁰ “No one should milk someone else's cow without his permission. Would any of you like someone to come to his apartment, break into his larder, and take his food? The udders of cows guard their food for their owners, so no one should milk someone else's cow without his permission.” The origin of the ḥadīth Ḥadīth from al-Bukhari, vol. 3, no. 126, Ḥadīth no. 2435; Muslim, vol. 3, 1352, Ḥadīth no. 1726.

²¹ Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Ḥasan al-Tamīmī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb (Taḥṣīr al-Kabīr)* (Beirut: *Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī*, 1999), 3rd edition, vol. 21, 487-488.

²² Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Qurṭubī, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Al-Tamhīd li mā fī al-Muwāṭṭā min al-Ma‘ānī wa al-Asānīd*, ed., Muṣṭafā bin Aḥmad

The Connection between Hospitality (ḍiyāfah) and Human Rights

Being hospitable to guests is considered a human right in the *Sunnah*. Ibn ‘Amru narrated that when he informed the Prophet (ﷺ) that he was fasting all day and praying all night, the Prophet (ﷺ) called and advised him not to spend all his time fasting and praying. The Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized that the time needed to honour guests is among the many rights that a person should fulfil towards the community.²³ Similarly, when Salmān bin Fāris knew that his brother in *Hijrah* (Anṣārī Brotherhood) Abū Dardā’ had no interest in worldly life and kept on fasting and praying all day and night, Salmān stopped him and made him break his fast and let him sleep at night. Then Salman said, “*Indeed your self, Lord, guest and family have a right upon you, so give the right that is due to each.*” When the incident was reported to the Prophet (ﷺ), he said, “*Salmān has told the truth.*”²⁴ According to ‘Azīm Ābādī,²⁵ hosting a guest is superior to non-obligatory fasting in the *Sharī‘ah*. He said that there was an indication that the one who undertook non-obligatory fasting could break his fast due to the unexpected arrival of a guest in order to make the guest satisfied, as the guest has a right upon the host.²⁶

In the *Sunnah*, hospitality always exists regardless of good or bad times, travelling or residing. Circumstances hold no authority to cancel anybody’s right to receiving hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*). According to a narration from Jābir, the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed him to keep a bed for his guest all the time like the way he kept a bed for his wife and family.²⁷

A perfect example of hospitality in bad times was when the

al-‘Alawī and Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Kabīr al-Bikrī (Morocco: Ministry of Public Endowments and Islamic Affairs, 1967), vol. 21, 43.

²³ Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 30, Ḥadīth no. 1975.

²⁴ Abū ‘Isā Muḥammad ibn ‘Isā, al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, ed., Aḥmad Shākir, Muḥammad Fu‘ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī and Ibrāhīm ‘Iṭwah ‘Iwaḍ (Egypt: *Maktabah wa Maṭba‘ah Muṣṭafā al-Bānī al-Ḥalabī*, 1975), 2nd edition, vol. 4, 608, Ḥadīth no. 2413.

²⁵ Muḥammad Ashraf ibn Amīr ibn ‘Alī ibn Ḥaydar, Al-Aẓīm al-Ābādī, *‘Awn al-Ma‘būd Sharḥ Sunan Abū Dāwūd* (Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah*, 1994), 2nd edition, vol. 4, 170.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 1651, Ḥadīth no. 2084.

Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to host a person who was hard pressed by hunger, so the Prophet (ﷺ) sent him to a couple of his wives; every one of his wives replied that they had nothing to offer except water.

Consequently, an Anṣārī companion wanted to host the person, but his wife too had nothing except food for the children. The Anṣārī instructed his wife to extinguish the light and give the guest the impression that everyone had eaten. The next day the Prophet (ﷺ) came to know of the event and said that Allah (ﷻ) admired what the Anṣārī and his wife did for their guest the other night.²⁸ The story reflects how the Anṣārī was willing to host a guest even though he was utterly inadequate.

On another occasion, a rich Anṣārī hosted the Prophet (ﷺ) along with Abū Bakar and ‘Umar when they left their houses one night due to hunger, and the rich Anṣārī offered them a bunch of dates mixed with green and unripe ones before he slaughtered a whole sheep for them.²⁹

The Connection between Hospitality (ḍiyāfah) and Spiritual Development

Hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is one of the greatest traits that every Muslim should adhere to regardless of worldly or spiritual benefits. There are multiple occasions reported in the *Sunnah*, which proved that hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) was perceived as a way for prayers to be answered by Allah (ﷻ), a way to gain His blessings and a means of increasing the faith (*īmān*). As an example, when a scorpion stung the chief of an Arab tribe, he was cured because of a guest who practised *ruqyah* (incantation) with the help of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*.³⁰

²⁸ Ibid., vol. 3, 1624, Ḥadīth no. 2054.

²⁹ Ibid., vol. 3, 1609, Ḥadīth no. 2038.

³⁰ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 92, Ḥadīth no. 2276: Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī narrates, “Some of the companions of the Prophet went on a journey till they reached some of the ‘Arab tribes (at night). They asked the latter to treat them as their guests but they refused. The chief of that tribe was then bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and they tried their best to cure him but in vain.” Some of them said (to the others), “*Nothing has benefited him, will you go to the people who resided here at night, it may be that some of them might possess something (as treatment).*” They went to the group of the companions (of the Prophet) and said, “*Our chief has been bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and we have tried*

Ibn Busr, one of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) confirmed that hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is the best way to gain what one supplicates for to receive blessings from Allah (ﷻ). When the Prophet (ﷺ) was brought some food, dates and drink, the father of Ibn Busr took hold of the rein of the Prophet's cattle and said, "supplicate for us." So, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "O Allah, bless them with what You have provided for them, and forgive them, and have mercy on them."³¹ Obedience to Allah (ﷻ) and the Prophet (ﷺ) is always the way to increase faith (*īmān*) and blessings (*barakah*). Hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is among the best means to achieve complete *īmān* based on the famous Ḥadīth "īmān has over seventy branches,"³² one of which is honouring the guest.³³

The following passages will discuss the various types of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) that were in practice during the Prophet's time. Several types are more impactful than others in contributing to community development and social solidarity (*al-takāful al-ijtimā'ī*), but these will not be discussed as separate topics.

Hospitality (ḍiyāfah) to Strangers

This type of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is common and widespread in both urban and rural societies. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say, "Accept the

everything but he has not benefited. Have you got anything (useful)?" One of them replied, "Yes, by Allah! I can recite a Ruqyah, but as you have refused to accept us as your guests, I will not recite the Ruqyah for you unless you fix for us some wages for it." They agree to pay them a flock of sheep. One of them then went and recited (*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*): "All the praises are for the Lord of the Worlds" and puffed over the chief who became all right as if he was released from a chain, and got up and started walking, showing no signs of sickness. They paid them what they agreed to pay. Some of them (the companions) then suggested to divide their earnings among themselves, but the one who performed the recitation said, "Do not divide them till we go to the Prophet and narrate the whole story to him, and wait for his order." So, they went to Allah's Messenger and narrated the story. Allah's Messenger asked, "How did you come to know that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* was recited as Ruqyah?" Then he added, "You have done the right thing. Divide (what you have earned) and assign a share for me as well." The Prophet smiled thereupon.

³¹ al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, 568, Ḥadīth no. 3576.

³² Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, 63, Ḥadīth no. 35.

³³ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8, 32, Ḥadīth no. 6138.

feast when you are invited to it."³⁴ Ibn 'Umar, one of the companions, used to come to the wedding feast even in the state of fasting.³⁵ The Prophet (ﷺ) used to attend the invitations as Anas bin Mālik narrated from his grandmother's accounts that she invited the Prophet (ﷺ) for a meal, which she had prepared specially for him.³⁶ Accepting the invitation is an essential part of community bonding and development, regardless of who invites whom, i.e. whether the rich invites the poor, the young invites the old or vice versa.

Similarly, requesting hospitality (*diyāfah*) out of necessity also exists in the practice of the *Sunnah*. The one who requires hospitality does not necessarily have to be poor as circumstances might make him do so. The story of Bilāl who, on one occasion, was ordered by the Prophet (ﷺ) to bring some food when a guest came to visit him is one of the classic examples.³⁷

Likewise, recommending someone to host another person is also mentioned in the *Sunnah*; whenever a needy person would come to the Prophet (ﷺ), he would turn to those who were present and say, "*If you make intercession for him, you will be rewarded.*"³⁸ The earlier mentioned narration referring to the Prophet (ﷺ) sending a person who was hard pressed by hunger to a couple of his wives,³⁹ is also among the examples of recommending someone else to host needy people.

Hospitality (diyāfah) to Visitors

In most cases, hospitality (*diyāfah*) has been understood merely as hosting the poor or a family member, but in the context of community development, hospitality (*diyāfah*) has a wide range of

³⁴ Ibid., vol. 7, 24, Ḥadīth no. 5173.

³⁵ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, retrieved from <https://sunnah.com/muslim/16>, Book 16, Hadith no. 119, USC-MSA web (English) reference: Book 8, Ḥadīth no. 3344, Nāfil reported: I heard 'Abdullāh b. 'Umar (Allah be pleased with them) narrating that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: "Accept the feast when you are invited to it. And 'Abdullāh (b. 'Umar) used to come to the feast, whether it was a wedding feast or other than that, and he would come there even in the state of fasting."

³⁶ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, 86, Ḥadīth no. 380.

³⁷ Aḥmad, *Musnad*, vol. 8, 353, Ḥadīth no. 4728.

³⁸ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 2026, Ḥadīth no. 2627.

³⁹ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2, 148, Ḥadīth no. 4889.

meanings and objectives in the *Sunnah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) promised a dignified position in Heaven (*Jannah*) for those who visit a brother for the sake of Allah.⁴⁰ This kind of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) was also common between two parties who visit each other from time to time. This will help the community to have healthy and fruitful interactions and relationships among its members. Likewise, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to visit the households of the Anṣār to take a meal with them and to also pray in their houses before leaving.⁴¹ There are several similar stories from the *Sunnah* that show that the Prophet (ﷺ) practised various kinds of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) with the view of fostering brotherhood among the community.

Hospitality (ḍiyāfah) as Being Hospitable Nonstop

We name this type of *ḍiyāfah* ‘being hospitable,’ because there is a group of people who never stop hosting by virtue of their occupation in the hospitality industry. The ‘nonstop hospitality’ industry now covers three categories: governmental organisations, private companies, and in-house. In the Prophetic period, the first and last categories existed, and we can learn many cases about them from the books of Ḥadīth.

Ibn Qayyim’s interpretation of the verse relating to the story of the guests of Ibrāhīm⁴² earlier discussed acknowledges a kind of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) as the house of Ibrāhīm was used as the place where hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) was practiced all the time. The word ‘*salāman*’ (peace) in the verse is key to understanding the method of giving permission to enter the house of hospitality.⁴³

Similarly, in the *Sunnah*, there is a reference to Ummu Sharīk, a noblewoman whose generosity and hospitality towards the constant stream of guests at her house, made her develop a remarkable reputation as a most charitable personality at that time. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to send his guests to Ummu Sharīk and used to say, “*She*

⁴⁰ al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 4, 365, Ḥadīth no. 2008.

⁴¹ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8, 22, Ḥadīth no. 6080.

⁴² The Qur’ān, *Sūrah al-Dhāriyāt*: 24-25

⁴³ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Ayyūb, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Al-Tafsīr al-Qayyim Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, ed., Ibrāhīm Ramaḍān (Beirut: *Dār wa Maktabah al-Hilāl*, 1989), vol. 1, 487.

spent generously in the cause of Allah and entertained guests in a very hospitable manner.”⁴⁴

Hospitality (Diyāfah) to Delegations

Hosting international delegations in the world today is a potential and delicate act of bridging good relations between developing countries, regardless of religion, race and ethnicity. It is remarkable that this tradition of hospitality was practised throughout the history of Islām, precisely when the intention by Muslims was to express “the beautiful traits” of character in order to attract other nations into accepting the religion of Islām. It is narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to write three things before the day he died so that no one will go astray after his death. Of the three, he mentioned “*respect and offer gifts to foreign delegations the way you have seen me dealing with them.*”⁴⁵

According to Nawawī, treating foreign delegations according to their status and facilitating their itinerary and travel agenda regardless of religion, race and ethnicity are among the essentials of hospitality. Hosting a non-Muslim delegation will offer mutual benefits and lead to better understanding among peoples and nations, which is important for strategic development.⁴⁶

It is also clearly noted in the *Sunnah* that during the holy war of Khaybar, the Prophet (ﷺ) divided the spoils of war into thirty-six lots, each lot comprising one hundred portions. “*One half of it was*

⁴⁴ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 2261-2262, Ḥadīth no. 2942.

⁴⁵ Ibid., vol. 3, 1257, Ḥadīth no. 1637: Sa‘īd b. Jubair reported that Ibn ‘Abbās said: “...On Thursday the illness of Allah's Messenger was aggravated and he said, “*Fetch me writing materials so that I may have something written to you after which you will never go astray.*” The people differed in their opinions although it was improper to differ in front of a Prophet. They said, “*What is wrong with him? Do you think he is delirious? Ask him (to understand).*” The Prophet said, “*Let me alone, as the state in which I am now, is better than what you are calling me for. I make a will about three things: Expel the pagans from the Arabian Peninsula, respect and give gifts to the foreign delegates as you have seen me dealing with them.*” He (the narrator) said: He (Ibn Abbas) kept silent on the third point, or he (the narrator) said: But I forgot that.”

⁴⁶ Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā ibn Sharaf Muhyu al-Dīn, Al-Nawawī, *Al-Minhāj Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1972), 2nd edition, vol. 11, 94, Ḥadīth no. 1637.

for the Messenger of Allah and the Muslims, and he allocated the remaining half for the deputations which came to him, and also for other matters and the emergent needs of the people.”⁴⁷

Hospitality (Ḍiyāfah) to Armed Forces

The armed forces are commonly understood as the part of a state's military force that is qualified to combat on land in a battle. Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh’s narration relates an incredible story, during the holy war of *Khandaq* (ditch). When Jābir felt that the Prophet (ﷺ) was extremely hungry, he requested his wife to cook for the Prophet (ﷺ). As soon as the little food was prepared and presented to the Prophet (ﷺ), he called everyone and said, “*O people of the ditch, Jābir has arranged a feast for you, so (come along).*” At the end of the story, Jābir stunningly concluded as follows, “*the guests were one thousand, I take an oath by Allah that all of them ate (the food to their fill) until they left it and went away and our earthen pot was brimming over as before, and so was the case with our flour.*”⁴⁸

In a similar vein, Anas bin Mālīk narrated that when Abū Ṭalḥah and Ummu Sulaym wanted to present a little food for the Prophet (ﷺ), nearly seventy or eighty people came and ate enough.⁴⁹

Hospitality (Ḍiyāfah) to the General Public

This type of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) is mostly about hosting all kinds of non-Muslims whether they are monotheistic or polytheistic. According to the Sharī‘ah, there were four different types of non-Muslims in the early Islamic era. Firstly, *mu‘āhidūn*: allies, the one who had a conciliation that they will never fight against Muslims. Secondly, *dhimmiyyūn*: non-Muslims living under the protection of a Muslim state. They are exempted from duties of Islām like military service and paying *zakāt*, but they must instead pay a tax called *jizyah*. Thirdly, *musta‘minūn*: non-Muslims who ask for security and safety during their visit for business or pleasure in Muslim lands, and stay under Muslim protection. The above types of non-Muslims and their properties are safe and secure in a Muslim

⁴⁷ Ahmad, *Musnad*, vol. 26, 344, Ḥadīth no. 16417.

⁴⁸ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, 108, Ḥadīth no. 4102.

⁴⁹ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol.3, 1612, Ḥadīth no. 2040.

state. Indeed, the Prophet (ﷺ) warned that “*the one who killed the above would never smell the fragrance of paradise that can be detected forty years long in the distance.*”⁵⁰

Furthermore, there are a couple of narrations in the *Sunnah* that demonstrate the level of constancy in hosting non-Muslims as equal to Muslims. The portrayal of Asmā’ and her non-Muslim mother is a classic example. When Asmā’ wanted to clarify to the Prophet (ﷺ) concerning her polytheistic (*mushrikah*) mother, the Prophet (ﷺ) prescribed that she maintained good relations with her mother.⁵¹ Once the Prophet (ﷺ) himself hosted an infidel (*kāfir*), he ordered a sheep to be milked and the man drank its milk. Then a second sheep was milked, and the man drank that too. This went on until he had drunk the milk of seven sheep. The next morning the man embraced Islām.⁵²

Fourthly, *ḥarbiyyūn*: the non-Muslims who are against Muslims and are an enemy of Islām and who are not under the protection of the Muslim state. There are two ways of hospitality (*diyāfah*) for this category: one which refers to Muslims hosting *ḥarbiyyūn*, and the other one refers to *ḥarbiyyūn* hosting Muslims. The narration of ‘Adī bin Hātim refers to the former, as he was not a Muslim and was not holding any protection and assurance from Muslims; he was handed over to the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) took ‘Adī’s hand and brought him to his house until ‘Adī claimed that he was a guest of Muslims and later embraced Islām.⁵³ The Ḥadīth of al-Khudrī is an example of *ḥarbiyyūn* hosting Muslims when the chief of an Arab tribe was stung by a scorpion and the Arab tribe requested a companion to practice *ruqyah* (incantation with the help of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*) and in return the Arab tribe offered him hospitality (*diyāfah*).⁵⁴

⁵⁰ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 99, Ḥadīth no. 3166; al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Nasā’ī* (Riyad: Maktabah al-Ma‘ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī‘, 1998), vol. 3, 285, Ḥadīth no. 4764.

⁵¹ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb, Al-Ṭabrānī, *Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, ed., Ḥamdī ibn ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī (Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Taymiyyah. n.d), vol. 24, 2nd edition, 78, Ḥadīth no. 204.

⁵² Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 1632, Ḥadīth no. 2063.

⁵³ al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, 202, Ḥadīth no. 2953.

⁵⁴ Refer to the above related matter.

There are two more types of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) to be found in the *Sunnah*, namely hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) in ceremonies and hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) in educational sectors, which will be discussed in the latter parts of the paper.

3. Hospitality (*Ḍiyāfah*) and its Influence on Social Solidarity (*Takāful Ijtīmāʿī*)

Solidarity (*takāful*) here means to be jointly liable and responsible or to be united in solidarity or combining in guaranteeing for each other.⁵⁵ In the context of society, solidarity is based on common interests, objectives, standards and sympathies.⁵⁶ In sociology it refers to the ties in a society that bind people together as one.⁵⁷ In the political ideology of democracy, solidarity is a core concept.⁵⁸ In the context of the *Sunnah*, *takāful* means every individual in a society is united in safeguarding the personal and public interest of the society and eliminating the physical and spiritual problems of that society, with the understanding that every individual holds rights over each other and has to fulfil the privileges at the right time and place in society.⁵⁹

Islām stands alone in holding a comprehensive solidarity system for all kinds of people whether leader or subject; father or son; rich or poor; older or younger; man or woman; traveller or resident; strong or weak and near or far. This is because the system of solidarity is revealed by the One who is abundantly Merciful and Most Beneficent to His creatures, and followed by the One who is under obligation to guide His followers towards what He knows is

⁵⁵ Almaany, *Translation and Meaning*, retrieved from <https://www.almaany.com/en/dict/ar-en/>

⁵⁶ Merriam Webster, *Merriam Webster Dictionary and Thesaurus*, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/solidarity>

⁵⁷ Stanislaw Adamiak, Ewa Chojnacka, and Damian Walczak, "Social Security in Poland – cultural, historical and economical issues," *Copernican Journal of Finance & Accounting*, Volume 2, Issue No. 2(2013): 11–26. doi:10.12775/cjfa.2013.013.

⁵⁸ Tony Fitzpatrick, Kwon Huck-Ju, Nick Manning, James Midgley and Gillian Pascall, *International Encyclopedia of Social Policy* (Routledge, 2013), 1866. ISBN 978-1-136-61003-5.

⁵⁹ *Takāful*, Retrieved from <http://www.islamtoday.net/toislam/art-114-1.htm.05\01\2017>

good for them and to also warn His followers about what He knows is evil for them.⁶⁰

Collaborating and associating in good things is not restricted to Muslims only, but extends to non-Muslims as well, in fact to all living things too. The Holy Qur'ān recommends helping one another in upholding righteousness and piety, and not in acts of sin and aggression.⁶¹ Consequently, the *Sunnah* demonstrates many examples of the association of human beings with achieving good things, mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy. As a metaphorical example, many Ḥadīth can be interpreted in this manner, i.e. *as a brick of a building, each strengthens each other*;⁶² or *as a mirror of his brother, he protects him against loss and defends him behind his back*;⁶³ or *as one body, when one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever*⁶⁴ and so on.

Being philanthropic has many advantages in terms of social solidarity based on *Sunnah* studies. Societies which are grounded in devotion and mutual reliance of its people will be able to eradicate many invisible illnesses such as racism, detesting each other and being hostile to one another. This is the reason why the *Sunnah*

⁶⁰ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 1472, Ḥadīth no. 1844.

⁶¹ The Qur'ān, *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*: 2.

⁶² Al-Bukhārī and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Retrieved from <https://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/1/222> Arabic/English book reference: Book 1, Ḥadīth 222: Abū Mūsā (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "The relationship of the believer with another believer is like (the bricks of) a building, each strengthens the other. He (peace be upon him) illustrated this by interlacing the fingers of both his hands." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

⁶³ Al-Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, Retrieved from <https://sunnah.com/adab/12/2>, No. 239 Grade: Hasan (Al-Albānī) In-book reference: Book 12, Ḥadīth 2, English translation: Book 12, Ḥadīth no. 239: Abū Hurayrah reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "A believer is the mirror of his brother. A believer is the brother of another believer. He protects him against loss and defends him behind his back."

⁶⁴ Al-Bukhārī and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, retrieved from <https://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/1/224>, Arabic/English book reference: Book 1, Ḥadīth 224: Nu'mān bin Bashīr reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

promotes harmony, empathy and support for one another in a community by teaching simple and powerful ways for individuals to respect and build rapport with one another when they meet. Firstly, by *smiling*: this is a good start when meeting someone as it eliminates all negative thoughts and brings positive vibes all around. The Prophet (ﷺ) assured Muslims that *there is nothing insignificant and even a cheerful face is an act of goodness*.⁶⁵ Secondly, via *greetings*: loving one another is a prerequisite for having *īmān*, without *īmān*, no one will enter *Jannah* (paradise). Greeting each other is an excellent way to achieve *īmān* especially in the greeting of Islām (Peace Be Upon You) to another person.⁶⁶ The greeting is not only a salutation or welcoming gesture, but it is also a supplication to Allah (ﷻ), that the opponent should have peace. Finally, *gifts and freebies* are one of the best ways to make a person happy. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to accept gifts and would give something in return.⁶⁷ The exercise of exchanging gifts will strengthen relationships among individuals, communities and nations as long as the exercise is not intended to bribe someone based on some personal interest that is against someone's favour.⁶⁸

While promoting the ethical and moral part of a society, the *Sunnah* did not neglect to warn people about negative aspects, which is about aggression upon oneself or others, or the property of others or ill will towards the achievement of others, as such an evil attitude will create conflict and disharmony in this world and the hereafter. The *Sunnah* counsels that an act of evil committed in society will turn an extremely wealthy man into an utterly poor person in the hereafter. For example, if an awful person reviled others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully devoured the wealth of others, shed the blood of others and physically harmed others, then his good deeds would be credited to the account of those (who suffered at his hand). If his good deeds fall short of clearing their account, their sins

⁶⁵ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 2026, Ḥadīth no. 2626.

⁶⁶ Ibid., vol. 1, 74, Ḥadīth no. 54.

⁶⁷ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 157, Ḥadīth no. 2585.

⁶⁸ Abū 'Umar Yūsuf ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Qurṭubī, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Al-Istidhkār*, ed., Sālīm Muḥammad 'Aṭā and Muḥammad 'Alī Mi'waḍ (Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah*, 2000), vol. 1, 531.

would be entered into his account, and he would be thrown in (hell) fire.⁶⁹

Hospitality (Diyāfah) and Endowments (Awqāf)

Awqāf is the plural of *waqf* and *aḥbās* is the plural of *ḥubs* meaning endowment of a property that is given to a trust in order to provide it with an income to be used permanently for the needy. The practice of *awqāf* did not exist in the period (*jāhiliyyah*) before the Prophet's arrival. The Prophet (ﷺ) introduced it for the purpose that was generally missing in charitable works, which are sustainable provisions for needy people all the time. Poverty today has become the most challenging issue that requires various means to alleviate it. Among them, the most iconic is *awqāf*, an ideal act of Muslims that persistently contributes to mitigating a part of the poverty now and then, benefits the usufructs of the endowment gradually to the poor, needy people, wayfarers and guests, and remains like a tree as the basis for benefiting everyone in the future.⁷⁰

The interrogation of 'Umar is a perfect example which can be described here to discuss the *awqāf* land and its benefits for the sake of hospitality. When 'Umar consulted the Prophet (ﷺ) about some of his best lands in *Khaybar*, the Prophet (ﷺ) suggested he donated the land as endowment (*awqāf*) and offer its fruits in charity to the poor people, to his kith and kin, to use to free slaves, for Allah's cause, and to travellers and guests.⁷¹ Based on the above, Nawawī adds that the *awqāf* properties cannot be sold, cannot be gifted and cannot be inherited by anyone except in the way that the one who has donated (*wāqif*) desires to do with his endowments (*awqāf*).⁷²

The seven types of people that are mentioned by 'Umar who can benefit from the endowments (*awqāf*) are as follows: poor, needy people, relatives, to free slaves, for Allah's cause, travellers and guests. Almost all the famous authentic Ḥadīth books narrated the Ḥadīth, but Imām Bukhārī who alone brought the Ḥadīth into the

⁶⁹ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 1997, Ḥadīth no. 2581.

⁷⁰ Shāh Waliyullāh Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Rahīm ibn al-Shahīd Wajīh al-Dīn, Al-Dihlawī, *Hujjah Allāh al-Bālighah*, ed., al-Sayyid al-Sābiq. (Beirut: *Dār al-Jabal*, 2005), vol. 2, 180.

⁷¹ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 198, Ḥadīth no. 2737.

⁷² al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 11, 86.

chapter on wills, with a subtitle of ‘*the usufruct of an endowment to rich, poor and guest*’ which is very much related to our discussion here. Firstly, the one who donated (*wāqif*) can place a condition on his endowment (*awqāf*) as ‘Umar made the usufruct of the property to seven types of people. Secondly, based on the subtitle (*tarjumah*) of Imām Bukhārī, a guest need not necessarily be poor, a relative or traveller in order to obtain the usufruct from such endowment (*awqāf*). Thirdly, hospitality (*diyāfah*) is perceptibly one of the principles of community development that supports the basic rights in various layers of the social order to achieve communal solidarity, among Muslims as well as the general public.

Hospitality (Diyāfah) and Sacrificed Animals (Aḍāḥī)

Aḍāḥī is the plural of *uḍḥiyah* which means offering or sacrificing something valuable to Allah (ﷻ). It refers to the sacrifice of a specific animal, offered by a specific person, on specific days to seek Allah's pleasure and reward. As we discussed earlier, hospitality (*diyāfah*) has a prominent role in social solidarity, and consequently, a sacrificed animal (*aḍāḥī*) has much to contribute to this sacred practice. The long narration of Anas bin Mālik has a basic explanation to support the above. The Prophet (ﷺ) once prohibited Muslims from eating the meat of a sacrificed animal (*aḍāḥī*) beyond three days, but later he allowed the meat to be stored beyond three days so that it could be shared with guests or kept for those who travelled.⁷³

On another occasion, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered Barrā' ibn ‘Āzib to repeat the sacrifice when he came to know that the sacrifice was made before the prayer of *Eīd al-aḍḥā* to entertain a guest.⁷⁴ No doubt pleasing a guest is part of the practice of social solidarity. However, the Prophet's order to repeat the sacrifice is justified on the occasion of *Eīd al-aḍḥā*, because the purpose of sacrifice is to obtain the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ) rather than pleasing the guest.

Hospitality (Diyāfah) and Ceremonies or Celebrations ('Urūs)

‘*Urūs* refers to wedding ceremonies or celebrations that are generally

⁷³ Aḥmad, *Musnad*, vol. 21, 141, Ḥadīth no. 13487.

⁷⁴ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8, 137, Ḥadīth no. 6673.

one of the most popular types of hospitality (*diyāfah*) among different communities referred to by the name of *walimah* or *walimat al-urūs* (banquet). This type of hospitality should have rightly been discussed earlier in enumerating the different types of hospitality (*diyāfah*) as the significance of wedding ceremonies (*urūs*) lies mostly in promoting social solidarity and its expansion.

Walimah is one of the rights and privileges of human beings, which should not be compromised under any circumstances. Whether the one who marries is poor or travelling out from his hometown, he cannot be deprived of *walimah* and it cannot be waived from his rights. For instance, during the wedding of 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf the *Sunnah* recommended that *walimah* should not be missed, even if only with a sheep.⁷⁵ Indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) requested Ali to arrange *walimah* for the wedding of his daughter Fāṭimah.⁷⁶ 'Alī himself related when he got an old she-camel as his share from the war booty, the Prophet (ﷺ) had given him another from *al-khumus* (one-fifth from war booties). When 'Ali intended to marry Fāṭimah, he arranged that a goldsmith would accompany him to bring *idhkhir* (grass with a pleasant smell) and then sell it to the goldsmith and use its price to pay for the expenses of his marriage banquet.⁷⁷

Walimah can be arranged in the middle of the journey while travelling, and the banquet feast can be as simple as bread, butter and dates. According to Anas bin Mālik's narration, the Prophet (ﷺ) stayed for three days at a place between Khaybar and Medina, and there he consummated his marriage with Ṣafīyyah binti Ḥuwayh, with a banquet that included neither meat nor bread. There were leather dining sheets to be spread, and then dates, dried yoghurt and butter were provided over it.⁷⁸ The Prophet (ﷺ) did not want to abandon or postpone the *walimah*, because the purpose is to fortify social solidarity that can create occasions of cheerfulness among the society members.

⁷⁵ Ibid., vol. 3, 52, Ḥadīth no. 2048.

⁷⁶ Aḥmad, *Musnad*, vol. 38, 142-143, Ḥadīth no. 23035.

⁷⁷ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 1568, Ḥadīth no. 1979.

⁷⁸ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 7, 21, Ḥadīth no. 5159.

Hospitality (Ḍiyāfah) in 'Ilm wa Hidāyah (Seeking Knowledge and Divine Guidance)

Here, the critical point of the topic is not only to discuss the positive impact of hospitality (*Ḍiyāfah*) in the forefront of knowledge but also to deliberate about how the performance of meaningful hospitality (*Ḍiyāfah*) can become a reason for divine guidance (*hidāyah*).

The means of seeking knowledge can differ in many ways depending on the nature of people and place. Knowledge can be promoted through books, articles and libraries to reach the hearts of the people compared to ideological persuasion; or through mosques (*masājid*) or prayer halls over holy habitation; or through educational institutes which deliver methods and applications of cultural values via teaching and education.⁷⁹ Keeping everything in mind, the *Sunnah* deliberately promotes hospitality (*Ḍiyāfah*) in seeking knowledge and then extending it to others by instituting centres for strangers and wayfarers to fulfill their basic needs such as shelter, food and dress etc. *Markaz al-ṣuffah* (centre or kiosk for the homeless) is a perfect example in this context. The impact of people of *ṣuffah* (*aṣḥāb al-ṣuffah*) in spreading knowledge will be a critical discussion in this section.

After the Prophet's arrival, Medina had become the central authority for Muslims. As a leader of the authority, the Prophet (ﷺ) initiated the administrative system, i.e. *majlis shūrā'* (consulting council), judiciary board, military force, educational, economic and political system. When the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to build his first mosque, he also built a centre for strangers and guests, which was later called *ṣuffah* which means the shelter or kiosk, where the homeless can stay and receive the help that they deserve. Later they were known as *aṣḥāb al-ṣuffah*. The *ṣuffah* has a vital role in promoting divine knowledge, and among the most iconic is Abū Hurayrah, a companion of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) whose memory of Ḥadīth narrations and constancy in collecting knowledge, has made him the most narrated *rāwī* (one who narrates Ḥadīth) ever. Besides, Abū Hurayrah himself testified that he used to press his stomach

⁷⁹ 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan al-Dimishqī, *Al-Maydānī, Al-Ḥaḍārah al-Islāmiyyah asasuhā wa wasā'iluhā wa ṣuwar min taḥbīqāt al-Muslimīn lahā wa lamhāt min ta'thīrihā fī sā'ir al-'Umam* (Damascus: *Dār al-Qalam*, 1998), 357-360.

against the earth owing to his hunger, and he would tie a stone over it. When the Prophet (ﷺ) noticed his condition one day, he asked Abū Hurayrah to join the people of *ṣuffah* who were guests of Islām and had no family, no property and no relations.⁸⁰

To put it more clearly, merely hosting the people of *ṣuffah* was part of everyday life and it was never stopped in good and bad times. 'Abd al-Rahmān bin Abū Bakr narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to request that someone who had food for two persons should bring in the third one from the people of *ṣuffah*. If someone had food for four

⁸⁰ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8, 96, Ḥadīth no. 6452: "By Allah other than Whom there is none worthy of worship, I used to press my stomach against the earth owing to my hunger; I would tie a stone over it. One day, I was sitting on the way they usually take when the Prophet passed by me. When he saw me, he smiled at me and knew my condition and my feelings. He called me and I replied, *At your service, O Messenger of Allah*. He said, *Follow me*. So, I followed him. Having arrived at home, he sought permission and entered. He allowed me in and I, too, entered. He found milk in a bowl and asked *where is this from*? He was told that it was a gift for him from so- and-so. He called me and I responded: *At your service, O Messenger of Allah*. He said, "*Go to the people of As-Ṣuffah and usher them in.*" He Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) explained: The people of As-Ṣuffah were guests of Islam; they had no family, no property and no relations. When Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to receive something in charity, he would send it to them without taking anything from it. When he received a present, he would send for them and share it with them. On this occasion, I disliked to give them anything. I said to myself: *This meagre quantity of milk will not be enough for all the people of As-Ṣuffah! I am more deserving of it than anyone else. By drinking it I may attain some strength. When they come, he will order me to give it to them. I do not expect that anything will be left for me from this milk.* As there was no alternative but to obey Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). I went and called them. They came and sought permission which was granted. They took their seats. The Prophet (peace be upon him) called me and I responded, *At your service, O Messenger of Allah*. He then said, *Take the milk and give it to them*. I took the bowl and gave it to one man who drank his fill and returned it to me, and I gave it to the next and he did the same. I went on doing this till the bowl reached Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). By that time all had taken their fill. He (peace be upon him) took the bowl, put it on his hand, looked at me, smiled and said, *Abū Hurr*. I said, *At your service, O Messenger of Allah*. He said "*now you and I are left.*" I said, "*That is true, O Messenger of Allah!*" He said, "*Sit down and drink.*" I drank, but he went on saying, "*Drink some more!*" I said, "*By Him Who has sent you with the Truth, I have no room for it.*" He said, "*Then give it to me.*" So, I gave him the bowl. He praised Allah, uttered the Name of Allah and drank the remainder."

persons, then he should bring one or two from *ṣuffah*, and the narration continues that once Abū Bakr brought three men to his house and the Prophet (ﷺ) brought ten more of them.⁸¹

Among the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), Ibn ‘Abbās had some advantage of kinship, which he used to gain knowledge from the Prophet (ﷺ). At the instruction of his father, Ibn ‘Abbās usually stayed most of the time with the Prophet (ﷺ), and he spent his nights near the Prophet (ﷺ).⁸² Indeed, he used to be a guest of his aunt

⁸¹ al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, 124, Ḥadīth no. 602: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Abū Bakr said, “The *Ṣuffah* Companions were poor people and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Whoever has food for two persons should take a third one from them (*Ṣuffah* companions). And whosoever has food for four persons he should take one or two from them.” Abu Bakr took three men and the Prophet (peace be upon him) took ten of them.” ‘Abd al-Raḥmān added, “my father my mother and I were there (in the house). (The sub-narrator is in doubt whether ‘Abd al-Raḥmān also said, ‘My wife and our servant who was common for both my house and Abu Bakr’s house). Abu Bakr took his supper with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and remained there till the ‘Ishā’ prayer was offered. Abu Bakr went back and stayed with the Prophet (peace be upon him) till the Prophet (peace be upon him) took his meal and then Abu Bakr returned to his house after a long portion of the night had passed. Abu Bakr’s wife said, “What detained you from your guests (or guest)?” He said, “Have you not served them yet?” She said, “They refused to eat until you come. The food was served for them but they refused. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān added, “I went away and hid myself (being afraid of Abu Bakr) and in the meantime he (Abu Bakr) called me, “O *Ghunthar* (a harsh word)!” and also called me bad names and abused me and then said (to his family), “Eat. No welcome for you.” Then (the supper was served). Abu Bakr took an oath that he would not eat that food.” The narrator added: “By Allah, whenever any one of us (myself and the guests of *Ṣuffah* companions) took anything from the food, it increased from underneath. We all ate to our fill and the food was more than it was before its serving. Abu Bakr looked at it (the food) and found it as it was before serving or even more than that. He addressed his wife (saying) “O the sister of Banī Firās! What is this?” She said, “O the pleasure of my eyes! The food is now three times more than it was before.” Abu Bakr ate from it, and said, “That (oath) was from Satan” meaning his oath (not to eat). Then he again took a morsel (mouthful) from it and then took the rest of it to the Prophet. So that meal was with the Prophet. There was a treaty between us and some people, and when the period of that treaty had elapsed the Prophet (peace be upon him) divided us into twelve (groups) (the Prophet’s companions) each being headed by a man. Allah knows how many men were under the command of each (leader). So, all of them (12 groups of men) ate of that meal.”

⁸² Abu Ya‘lā, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Muthannā al-Tamīmī al-Mūṣilī, *Al-Musnad*,

Maimūnah, who was one of the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ), to learn about the night prayers of the Prophet (ﷺ).⁸³

The purpose of the Prophet's mission, is to perfect the good character traits which are way beyond charismatic charms and have the potential to turn a dark-hearted being into a noble forever. The *Sunnah* has shown many examples of changing people's attitudes from lowly characters, i.e. *jahl* (ignorance), *zulm* (injustice), *shahwah* (lust) and *ghaḍb* (anger) to inspiring men with *ṣabr* (patience), *iffah* (chastity), *shujā'ah* (courage) and *ʿadl* (justice).⁸⁴ To cite an example, when a young man asked the Prophet (ﷺ) permission to commit unlawful sex (*zinā*), people turned to rebuke him, but the Prophet (ﷺ) called him closer and asked him, *Would you like it (unlawful sex) for your mother, daughter, sister and aunts* he said *No by Allah...* then the Prophet (ﷺ) put his hand on him and prayed. After that, the young man never paid attention to anything of that nature.⁸⁵

In the same context, meaningful hospitality (*diyāfah*) which takes the form of treating another person well, with gentle persuasion and patience, can often lead to divine guidance (*hidāyah*). The story of ʿAdī bin Abū Ḥātim has many potential lessons about how to treat a non-Muslim guest, while ʿAdī did not receive any protection and assurance from Muslims. When the Prophet (ﷺ) held ʿAdī's hand and gave him a cordial welcome, ʿAdī himself proudly declared that he was a guest of Muslims, which proved that hospitality (*diyāfah*) was the reason for ʿAdī's conversion to Islām.⁸⁶ In another story that we mentioned earlier (in reference to hospitality to the general public) when the Prophet (ﷺ) himself hosted an infidel (*kāfir*), he ordered a sheep to be milked and the man drank its milk... The next morning the man embraced Islām.

ed., Ḥusayn Salīm Asad (Damascus: *Dār al-Ma'mūn li al-Turāth*, 1984), vol. 4, 419, Ḥadīth no. 2545.

⁸³ Aḥmad, *Musnad*, Ḥadīth no. 2572.

⁸⁴ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Ayyūb, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Madārij al-Sālikīn bayn Manāzil Iyyāka Na'budu wa Iyyāka Nasta'in*, ed., Muḥammad al-Mu'tašim bi Allāh al-Baghdādī (Beirut: *Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī*, 1996), vol. 2, 294-295.

⁸⁵ Aḥmad, *Musnad*, vol. 36, 545, Ḥadīth no. 22211.

⁸⁶ al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, 202, Ḥadīth no. 2953.

4. Findings

From the discussion above, the paper has identified some findings that can be summarised as follow:

- Many authentic Ḥadīth talk about the guest and hospitality (*diyāfah*), but not all of them were compiled in an exclusive chapter as mentioned at the beginning of the paper.
- The types of hospitality (*diyāfah*) vary according to its cause and purpose. Among the types mentioned in the *Sunnah* are hospitality to (i) strangers, (ii) visitors, (iii) delegations, (iv) armed forces and (v) general public, and these are the types of hospitality (*diyāfah*) that contribute the most to community development and that have the greatest impact on social solidarity (*al-takāful al-ijtimā'ī*). These different types have not been previously discussed as separate topics.
- The scholars differ in their rulings on hospitality (*diyāfah*) as to whether it is *wājib* (compulsory), *fard kifāyah* (collective duty) or *mandūb* (recommended). The paper has concluded that this dispute revolves around one type of hospitality, which is being hospitable to one who comes for a particular need. Hence, disagreement among scholars did not affect the kinds of hospitality mentioned in the *Sunnah*.
- Hospitality (*diyāfah*) is not a kind of charity that must be paid to the poor or needy alone. Since the Prophet (ﷺ) has accepted hospitality several times, the personification of *diyāfah* cannot be restricted to an act of giving aid or helping a traveller but can be protracted to the wealthy and residents as well.
- The rights of friends and community: The paper reveals that a guest has substantial rights that may be equal to those of a spouse.
- According to the *Sunnah*, the rights of the guest must not be compromised under any circumstances. The Prophet (ﷺ) never allowed the abuse of a guest's rights, but he always acted as a generous patron who provides his guest with their needs.
- Breaking voluntary fasting in the presence of guest is a

legitimate act of being hospitable to the guest according to the *Sunnah*.

- To Allah (ﷻ) the hospitality shown by the poor is not inferior to the hospitality shown by the rich, but meaningful hospitality (*diyāfah*) may lead the poor to achieve higher spiritual progress bestowed by Allah (ﷻ), that the rich cannot achieve.
- The *Sunnah* has indicated that hospitality (*diyāfah*) may be a reason for the inflow of prosperous goodness experienced by the community and prayers are answered instantly because of the integrity of the guest or the dignity of the host.
- The paper shows that excellent hospitality (*diyāfah*), whether it is obtained by the host or by the guest, can be a cause of spiritual development, such as increasing *īmān* and the bestowment of Allah's mercy and blessings.
- The *Sunnah* has testified that there is a comprehensive system of social solidarity, which guarantees all segments of a nation will benefit from each other, and among the benefits are education of individuals, cooperation and interdependence of society. It is also interesting to note that Muslims are the first group of people on the surface of the earth to know what is meaningful solidarity and how it benefits the society in various ways.
- The paper has discussed essential ways of spreading cooperation among the members of a nation or a community and strengthening the fundamentals of social solidarity, i.e. planting trees of love and trust among the members of society. There is no community development if it does not commence with the following three gestures: smiling, greeting each other and exchanging gifts with one another.
- Aggression upon oneself and intention to undermine the achievement of others are acts of evil, which will bring conflicts in the world and in the hereafter. The *Sunnah* warns that an act of evil in society that is executed by a

wealthy man will transform the man into a wretched poor in the hereafter.

- The *Sunnah* has conveyed the rights of guests related to the act of endowment (*awqāf*), the occasions of sacrificing animals (*aḍāḥī*), and the wedding banquets (*‘urūs*), which are based on social solidarity, the interdependence of people and personification of community development.
- The findings in this paper indicate that hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) has a substantial impact on learning as a mean of spreading knowledge by teaching it to others, whether by establishing centres for students to learn and satisfy their basic needs such as housing, food, and cloth, or through the hospitality of individuals towards other individuals.
- In the *Sunnah*, it is clear that the proper treatment of a guest through gentle persuasion and patience is a useful means of uplifting the work of *da‘wah* (calling to Allah (ﷻ)).

Recommendation

The researchers have several recommendations for future studies. Firstly, to collect and identify all the Ḥadīth of hospitality (*ḍiyāfah*) and apply them in different areas of research, that is, discipline of *fiqh* (law), *uṣūl al-dīn* (belief system), Islamization of human knowledge, external affairs, and the ministry of hotels and tourism. Secondly, to take up issues not addressed in this research, especially the hospitality of tourism and its relation to opening the door to job opportunities in the market. Hospitality in tourism has become an important economic activity that plays a key role in the economy of many countries today. It is an essential element leading to the growth of the economy and the reconstruction of the country in this era, such as in the establishment of hotels and tourist destinations with ethical components which are free of corruption and aggression, as stated in the social solidarity system referred to in this paper.