

## ***Eradicating Aggression in Muslim Society: A Special Guidance from Shaikh Sa'adī's Teachings***

**Shahina Imran**

Associate Prof. Govt Graduate College for Women Sahiwal

Email shahinaimran12@gmail.com

**Dr. Allah Ditta**

Assistant Professor/HOD Islamic Studies Department FG Degree College (W)

Multan Cantt Email profabughufan475@gmail.com

**Hafiz Muhammad Hasnain Asadi**

Lecturer Palm Tree International Collegiate Qasba Gujrat Muzaffargarh

Punjab Pakistan

Email: muhammadhasnain5879@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

Shaikh Sa'adī, a renowned Persian poet, is widely recognized for his works on ethics and morality. His teachings have been a source of inspiration for people across the globe, particularly in promoting peace and eradicating aggression in society. Today, his teachings continue to hold relevance, and many people turn to his teachings for guidance in leading a peaceful life. Sa'adī's teachings emphasize the importance of empathy, kindness, and respect for others. He believed that these values are essential in creating a peaceful and harmonious society. One of his famous quotes, "Human beings are members of a whole, in the creation of one essence and soul," highlights the importance of unity and the interconnectedness of all individuals. This teaching emphasizes the need for individuals to work together and support each other, rather than engage in conflicts and aggression. Furthermore, Sa'adī's teachings also focus on the role of forgiveness in promoting peace. He believed that forgiveness is a powerful tool that can be used to resolve conflicts and reconcile relationships. His teachings on forgiveness encourage individuals to let go of grudges and resentments and to approach others with a compassionate and forgiving attitude. Many individuals and organizations have utilized Sa'adī's teachings to promote peace and eradicate aggression in society. For example, schools and universities have integrated his teachings into their curriculum to instill moral values in students. Similarly, social and religious organizations have used his

teachings to promote interfaith harmony and peaceful coexistence. In conclusion, Shaikh Sa'adī's teachings continue to hold relevance in promoting peace and eradicating aggression in society. His emphasis on empathy, kindness, respect, unity, and forgiveness offers valuable guidance in creating a harmonious and peaceful world.

**Keywords:** Sheikh Sa'adī, Aggression, Society, Sufism, Sufi, Islam, Agitation, peace, Harmony.

### **Introduction**

Shaikh Sa'adī, a 13th-century Persian poet, is known for his works on ethics and morality, which continue to inspire people around the world. His teachings emphasize the values of empathy, kindness, and respect for others as essential in creating a peaceful and harmonious society. Sa'adī's works have had a significant impact on various fields, including literature, philosophy, and spirituality. However, his teachings are particularly relevant in the context of promoting peace and eradicating aggression in society. The world today is grappling with various forms of aggression, ranging from physical violence to cyber bullying. The rise of conflicts and unrest in different parts of the world has made it imperative to seek out alternative ways of resolving conflicts and promoting peace. In this regard, the teachings of Sa'adī offer a timeless solution that can guide individuals and societies towards peace. Sa'adī's teachings on empathy, for instance, emphasize the importance of putting oneself in others' shoes and understanding their perspectives. Empathy is a crucial tool in building bridges between people, communities, and nations. By understanding and respecting each other's differences, individuals can overcome conflicts and build stronger relationships. Similarly, Sa'adī's teachings on kindness promote the value of helping others without expecting anything in return. Acts of kindness can create a ripple effect that inspires others to do the same, leading to a more compassionate and caring society. In contrast, aggression and violence only lead to more conflicts and suffering, creating a vicious cycle that is difficult to break. Overall, Sa'adī's teachings offer a powerful framework for promoting peace and eradicating aggression in society. In this article, we will examine how his teachings could be utilized in different fields to address contemporary issues and foster a more peaceful and harmonious world. In this regard, some instances from his literature have been selected to describe the facts which undoubtedly replicate these moral values. At first, we will discuss his biography in short.

### **A Short Biography of Shaikh Sa'adī's**

Sheikh Saadi's name is Sharaf al-Din and his nickname is Musleh. As his father Abdullah Shirazi was an employee of Atabak Saad Zangi and he started writing poetry during his reign, his surname was Saadi. Sheikh Saadi was born in 1210. He was born in the city of Shiraz, Iran. He was educated in the famous Madrasah Nizamiyyah in Baghdad. Sheikh Sadi was very fond of tourism. To acquire knowledge, he started a tourism station and this process continued for about thirty years. During this time, he traveled to Iraq, Palestine, Tripoli and Turkestan etc. and performed Hajj many times. He was an excellent Iranian poet, writer, philosopher and Sufi saint. He was proficient in both Arabic and Persian languages, and wherever he passed, he adapted the places he passed by into poems, thus traveling to distant regions and countries and teaching people humanity in the government of Abu Bakr Saad. Returned to Shiraz, after that he settled in a corner after years of austerity and mujahidah. After that, he presented his life-long experiences and observations to the world in the form of Gulistan and Bostan, these two books of his are famous, especially the flowers of Gulistan's poems are still fresh today. Bostan is the name of his collection of poems, Gulstan's prose texts are embellished with excellent poetry. The stories of Sheikh Saadi are full of advice. He died in 1291 in Shiraz and was buried there.

### **Selected Stories**

A honey seller was so amicable and courteous that some buyers flocked to him like bees. A bad-tempered one also started to sell the honey. He was so hostile and acrimonious that even the buyers did not like to visit his shop. Owing to this, he thought to give up this business. Once, he was telling his wife in despair that his honey is pure and cheap. He doesn't know why it is not sold. His wife replied: "The honey of a bad-tempered man is always bitter."<sup>1</sup> This story tells us the importance of a positive and amicable attitude and good behavior. The honey seller's unfriendly and harsh attitude and behavior ultimately negatively affected his business, while his competitor's business flourished due to his cordial attitude and behavior. The Holy Prophrt also advised the Muslims to be pleasing and peaceful. 'Abdullah bin 'Umar narrated that Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) neither talked in an insulting manner nor did he ever speak evil intentionally. He used to say, "The most beloved to me amongst you is the one who has the best character and manners."<sup>2</sup>

A drunken man grabbed a righteous man by the collar and slapped him two or four times. He did not resist and accepted it silently. Someone said, "You were also a man. Why didn't you smack him too?" He replied, "A wise man tolerates violence and replaces evil habits with virtuous deeds."<sup>3</sup> This narrates those wise

men should not behave as others do. The virtuous man's silence and non-resistance reveal the importance of avoiding aggression and retaliation. The story suggests that non-confrontational tactics can resolve conflicts more successfully. Quran Says:

*Repel evil with what is best: We are well acquainted with the things they say.<sup>4</sup>  
And good and evil are not equal. Repel (evil) with what is best,  
and you will see that the one you had mutual enmity with him will  
turn as if he were a close friend.<sup>5</sup>*

Same is quoted in Hadith. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah (RA) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Sadaqah does not diminish wealth. And Allah increases a man who forgives in honour and no one observes humility for Allah's sake but Allah raises him<sup>6</sup>".

A veteran wrestler was seen in a state of utter destruction and obliteration. Someone asked what happened. Another person told him that someone had abused him. He said that this person could pick up a thousand kg stone, but he cannot tolerate a small thing.<sup>7</sup>

An evildoer repented but could not escape from people's taunts. People kept saying that he was cheating. Finally, he got fed up and went to his mentor and explained the situation. The mentor said, "Thank God that you are better than what people think you are."<sup>8</sup>

A thief broke into a virtuous man's house. He looked everywhere but found nothing. When he was returning disappointed, the virtuous threw the blanket on which he was sleeping so that he did not go empty-handed. It has been heard that the servants of Allah do not hurt even their enemies, but how could you get this position while you keep fighting with your friends?<sup>9</sup>

Sheikh Sa'adī says that I used to pray and recite all night when I was a child. Once, I was busy praying in the mosque with my father, and a group was snoring around us. I told my father that these people are so miserable that they are sleeping and forgetting their lord, Allah. It appears as if they are dead. My father said: O dear son! It would have been better if you had gone to sleep and had not backbited others.<sup>10</sup>

In a gathering, people were exaggeratingly praising an old man. The old man upon hearing his praise replied only I know what I am.<sup>11</sup>

Once a guest came to Ma'rūf Karkhī, who was almost a hundred years old and was afflicted with various diseases. He did not sleep at night, nor did he let anyone sleep. Ma'rūf served him all night wholeheartedly. One night, Maruf caught his eye somewhere, the old man immediately started cursing him and even said that this thug is robbing the world, he doesn't care about anyone, etc. The family asked Ma'rūf to leave him alone in his trouble because the old man is a thankless and mean person. He replied if you are healthy and happy, take

the burden of the weak and the sick as a salutation. Sheikh Sa'adī says that there are too many graves in Karkh but the world has forgotten all of those and only the grave of Ma'rūf is known to all and popular among the masses.<sup>12</sup>

A beggar went to a Dervish and demanded alms. Incidentally, at that time Dervish had nothing to give. He said, "I'm sorry today, please come again." The beggar got angry. He said that the Dervish is a fraudulent and deceiving person. The Dervish said, "My faults are many and what this person has said is very few. He came to me only for a few moments this year. How could he know my faults of seventy years?"<sup>13</sup>

A king of Syria, Al-Malak al-Ṣaliḥ, was walking around the city at night in disguise. When he reached the mosque at dawn, he saw that two Dervishes were shivering from the cold in a corner and cursing the king that we are dying in the cold and our king is sleeping in a bed of squirrels and sables. One of them said if this king went to heaven tomorrow, he will never stay there. The other said, why should we leave there? I will strike so many shoes on his head that he will run away from heaven. When the king came to the palace in the morning, he called them and gave them so much money that they were freed from their worries for the rest of their lives. When they were to leave, the king smiled and said, "I have made reconciliation with you today. I hope you will not close the door of heaven for me tomorrow." <sup>14</sup>

It is known about Hazrat Ḥatim Aṣam that he was deaf. One day a bee got caught in a spider's net and began to cry, so Ḥatim said that the bee, supposed it to be freedom but turned out to be imprisonment. Someone said that you are deaf. He answered, "I am not deaf, but I become deaf so that people can explain my faults to me and I can correct myself."<sup>15</sup>

One of the slaves of a man ran away, his servants went out in search, and by mistake people caught Luqmān. A year later, the building was completed, and when the master realized that Luqmān had been caught by mistake, he apologized and asked for forgiveness. Luqmān said that it is difficult to forget the sorrow of the whole year, but I forgive you that you benefited and I was not harmed.<sup>16</sup>

Junaid Baghdadi was going to the desert when he saw a dog that was dying of hunger. Junaid gave him half of the food and he sat up. He was heard to say, "I don't know who is the better of the two of us. " These people had a higher position than the angels because they did not consider themselves better than a dog.<sup>17</sup>

A student who had little understanding of astrology and more pride went to Koshiar. He was involved in his study circle for some time but could not get knowledge. When he started walking away from there, the teacher said, "You

thought you were very wise, that's why you could not acquire anything." Be aware that nothing else can be added to the bowl that is already full.<sup>18</sup>

A dog bit a desert dweller's leg so badly that he stayed awake all night because of the pain. His daughter said, "Dad, you had teeth in your mouth too. Why didn't you bite him?" He replied that a man can become a little bastard compared to the bastards, but it is impossible to become a dog.<sup>19</sup>

Hazrat Farooq Azam was walking in the dark when his foot fell on the feet of a fakir. Fakir said o blind! First, see then walk. Farooq Azam said, my brother, I have made a mistake unknowingly, so forgive me. Shaykh Sa'adī, after narrating this story, writes that the wise man always acts humbly because the fruitful branch always bends towards the ground.<sup>20</sup>

A crazy man was carrying a musical instrument under his arm when a pious man came from the front. The crazy man hit him on the head with such force that the instrument broke and his head was injured. The pious took out some dirhams from his pocket and presented them to the crazy man and said The wound will be healed free of charge, but the repair of this instrument will cost something, so this is a small amount of money for you.<sup>21</sup> Shaikh Sa'adī says that these persons are loved because they were hurt by the people but they did not tease anyone.

It is said that one year, there was no rain in Egypt for months and the people were in serious trouble. When Zul-Nūn got this news, he immediately ran to Madyan and it rained suddenly. Someone asked the reason for this, and he said that sometimes Sustenance stops because of bad people. I did not see any bad people in this city except myself, so I came out so that people would not suffer because of me. Shaykh Sa'adī says that only those people are respected and cherished in the world who throw away the crown of arrogance.<sup>22</sup>

As much as possible, don't make someone's hurt any ones' heart or tease anyone. Shaykh Saadi, while narrating his story, says: "Once I was riding in a boat with some people. Another small boat was coming behind our boat which capsized and the two brothers in it got caught in the whirlpool. One of the people said to the sailor of our boat that if you catch them both and take them out alive, you will get fifty dinars for each. The sailor jumped and took one alive while the other drowned. Shaykh Saadi says that I said that it died because it had no more life left and perhaps that is why you neglected to catch it. When the sailor heard me, he laughed and said that what you are saying is true, but there is one more thing and that is that I was once going to the forest. I got tired while traveling. He who is alive made me sit on a camel and he who is going to die once beat me with a whip when I was a child. Shaykh Saadi narrates that I heard this sailor and said that Allah has said the truth that whoever does good deeds benefits him and whoever commits sins also suffers harm. Don't tease anyone because there

are many troubles and pains in your life. Work like a poor dervish because you still have a lot of work to do.<sup>23</sup> This story tells us that every deed has consequences: The man's past actions, both kind and cruel, came back to haunt him. So, one should always perform good as treating others with kindness and empathy can lead to positive outcomes. The brother who helped the sailor in the past was saved, while the one who harmed him perished.

Shaykh Saadi says that I complained to an elder that a person had given an evil false testimony against me. The elder said that you should do good to him so that he will be ashamed. Then take a good attitude towards the bad man so that he will not have the power to blame you. The enemy should not be killed with enmity but with the sword of kindness.<sup>24</sup>

A debauched drunkard grabbed a righteous wise man by the collar and slapped him. This good man was beaten silently and did not even cry. Someone said to him that you were not wearing bangles in your hand. Why did you not break the mouth of such a rude person? He replied, "Brother, he was a fool, but I was clever. Why would you expect a clever one to fight a fool?" A wise man lives a life that endures oppression and shows kindness.<sup>25</sup>

A king ordered a prisoner to be killed. The poor man began to abuse the king in despair. The king asked what he said, and his good minister said that the learned man said that the Holy Prophet is one of those who drink away anger and forgive the sins of God's creatures. He spared the prisoner's life. Another ill-tempered minister said that it is not proper for us not to speak the truth in the Sultan's court. The king got angry on hearing this and said that what the first minister said was motivated by the spirit of goodness and what you have said is based on malice and evil. An expedient lie is better than a truth that causes temptation.<sup>26</sup>

A young bride complained to a male elder that my husband does not treat me well. While other people living in this house live like best friends. I am angry at my husband's abuse. The elderly man heard this bride and said, O woman, if your husband is good or if there is any outstanding quality in his person, then it would not be appropriate to tolerate his bad behavior and separate from him. will not be found. That is, if there is any bad habit in a person, then forgive him from this bad habit. Ignore his bad habit and focus on his good habit. Instead of looking for the bad in someone, look for the good in him.<sup>27</sup>

A young man came to an old man and he complained about his wife that my wife is very irritable and bad-tempered because of this condition my life has become miserable. Of course, pain is coming, but in spite of these sufferings, there must be some relief. In such a case, it is necessary for you to live your life with patience and gratitude. And your idea that life should be free from all kinds of difficulties is not correct at all, but life is a combination of comfort and suffering, and it is possible that Allah has hidden your goodness in some evil, so

be patient and thankful in all circumstances. This is a favorite song of devotees in the divine court.<sup>28</sup>

A king's slave ran away. This slave was searched everywhere, but he turned out to be so smart that nobody caught him. It was considered a serious crime for a slave to run away from his master's house like this. Whenever a fugitive slave was caught, he was killed. This slave of the king was on the run for a long time and could not find any abode where he could spend his life comfortably. He was afraid that the king's soldiers would come and take him away, so the slave decided to get rid of this anxiety that I should come to the king's service and apologize for my mistake, maybe in his heart. May Allah have mercy on me and forgive me, I came to the king's service with this thought and humbly apologized for my insolence. As the king hated this slave, he ordered to kill him as soon as he saw him. The executioner caught him and took him to the place of slaughter. After hearing the order to kill, darkness had fallen before the eyes of this slave. He was sure that after a few moments his head would be beheaded. So he controlled his senses and prayed in the divine court like this: O Allah knows that I am being killed innocently and the king. Do not punish him for his sin. I forgive him my blood for I have eaten his salt. It was a strange thing for the executioner and the companions of the king, for they saw that the one who was condemned to death used to curse the king and used a lot of abuse. When the cry of this slave reached the ears of the king, he was pleased with his loyalty and while withdrawing the order to kill him, issued an order to set him free. Honored. That is, this slave prayed for the king instead of abusing like other people on such an occasion and because of his gentleness, the king not only forgave him but also rewarded him with honors. Therefore, whoever cultivates gentleness and sweet speech in himself, he will certainly be entitled to reward and honor in the court of God.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Shaikh Sa'adī's teachings on empathy, kindness, respect, unity, and forgiveness are helpful for making a world that is peaceful and harmonious. The works of Sa'adī have motivated people and groups all over the world to work for peace and to end aggression in society. His teachings emphasize the significance of practicing forgiveness, understanding and respecting the perspectives of others, and encouraging acts of kindness. In today's world, where there are a lot of conflicts and unrest, Sa'adī's teachings are especially relevant. Individuals and societies can work toward making the world a more peaceful and harmonious place by incorporating his teachings into a variety of fields, such as education, religion, and social activism. In the end, Sa'adī's legacy lives on, serving as a timeless source of wisdom and motivation for people who want to

make a difference in the world. His lessons advise us that harmony is conceivable, and it starts with every one of us deciding to rehearse compassion, consideration, regard, and absolution in our regular routines. We can contribute to the improvement of our own future as well as that of future generations by following in Sa‘adī’s footsteps.



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