

Al-Jināḥ ilā Sabīl Al-Najāḥ

THE WINGS TO THE PATH OF SUCCESS

Authored by

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(May Allah preserve him and prolong his life)



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Preface

Believing in the obligation of offering sincere advice, as encouraged by the Quran and advocated by the noble Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*), I have compiled in these pages what I can contribute in this regard, according to the needs and dictated by the greater benefit.

This effort came in response to the request of my two esteemed brothers: the virtuous brother Ali Masoud Al-Rabidhi (*may Allah protect him*) and the honorable brother Abdullah Ali Al-Qadhan (*may Allah preserve him*).

These pages include significant discussions on matters that every person should seek to learn and frequently review over time. It is recommended that they be read aloud, shared with peers, and revisited for reflection. Additionally, they contain moral lessons and reminders related to essential matters, as previously discussed. It would be beneficial if teachers assigned a lesson from these pages for students to study.

I ask Allah to make it beneficial and to guide His servants to the path of righteousness and the straight way.

May Allah send His peace and blessings upon Muhammad and his family abundantly.



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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, who taught by the pen, who taught mankind what they did not know.

May peace, blessings, and mercy be upon His Messenger, the one sent as a mercy to the worlds, and upon his purified household.

Some of my brothers suggested including a section outlining what every seeker of knowledge should observe. I found this to be a valuable suggestion, so I have begun explaining the intended subject, seeking Allah's forgiveness and grace.

Intention (An-Niyyah)

Anyone who seeks knowledge must begin with a sincere and righteous intention. A righteous intention means that one must firmly resolve in his heart and decisively commit to seeking the knowledge that Allah has revealed to His Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, which is obligatory for all accountable individuals to understand.

The success of this intention and achieving its ultimate purpose depend on several essential factors that must be present:

The First Requirement: Sincerity (Ikhlas)

The intention must be purely sincere, free from anything that taints its purity.

For one's intention to be truly sincere for Allah, one must struggle against the self, as it naturally inclines toward desires such as seeking status, leadership, prestige, wealth, and praise. The soul yearns for these things, desires them, and finds them appealing. However, these inclinations must be resisted and avoided.

If left unchecked, Satan may exploit them to infiltrate a Muslim's heart, corrupting their intention and whatever is built upon it. The narrations from the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, state:

"Indeed, actions are judged by intentions, and every person shall have only what they intended. So, whoever migrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, then his migration is to Allah and His Messenger. But whoever migrates for worldly gain or to marry a

woman, then his migration is for whatever he migrated for."

Allah the Almighty says:

"So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord – let him do righteous work and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord."

(Al-Kahf: 110)

And He, the Almighty, also says:

"And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth." (Al-Bayyinah: 5)

A Muslim must always remain highly vigilant and extremely cautious, guarding against the hidden ways through which Satan infiltrates, corrupting one's intentions. He should repel Satan's whispers from the outset.

Allah has decreed Satan as an eternal adversary, as He says:

"I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them, and from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them grateful." (Al-A'raf: 16-17)

Blocking Satan's influence involves the following:

1. Seeking help from Allah, seeking refuge in Him from Satan, and making frequent supplications.
2. If your inner self tempts you with thoughts like, "You will attain high status, and people will point to you in admiration, or you will become famous in your country or elsewhere," then counteract these thoughts by striving in the pursuit of knowledge. This way, you will reach the noble aspiration of eternal success.

If your inner self tempts you with "You will become this or that," then say to yourself:

"O soul, be honest! This is merely a mirage of deception. Beware of the darkness of arrogance and the delusion of self-deception!"

And say:

"O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the evil of my own soul. O Allah, help me against myself. O Allah, let the believer know that sincerity is the only way to attain the highest levels of honor and elevation and to be granted the abode of the righteous."

It is narrated from the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, that he said:

"Glad tidings to the sincere ones: those who, when present, are not recognized, and when absent, are not missed. They are the lamps of guidance, from whom every dark trial is lifted."

Just as sincerity and a righteous intention elevate a person to the highest levels, insincerity and corrupt intentions, such as hypocrisy and arrogance, drag a person to the lowest depths.

Among the dangers of hypocrisy is that it may cause a person to be veiled from his Lord, and he will be thrown into the lowest pit of Hell. Do not let hypocrisy take hold of your heart, for neither your soul nor any action contaminated with hypocrisy will be accepted.

Allah Almighty will expose the deceitful and uncover their hidden falsehood. However, if a person performs their deeds solely for Allah and sincerely devotes themselves to Him, Allah will elevate their status, honor them, and protect their deeds from being nullified.

The Second Requirement: Seeking Help from Allah Almighty

Allah Almighty said to His Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, in the first revelation sent down to him:

"Recite in the name of your Lord who created." (Al-'Alaq: 1)

True success lies in progressing according to the guidance of the All-Wise Teacher. A seeker of knowledge must frequently seek Allah's assistance, after prayers, at night and during the day, while reading, before reading, and after reading.

The Third Requirement

Repentance, Seeking Forgiveness, and Adhering to Piety

It is narrated from the Prophet; *peace be upon him and his family*:

"Whomever Allah wills good for, He grants them understanding of the religion."

Building upon this, if a person is sinful and has not repented to Allah, then they should know that Allah does not will good for them in their state of disobedience.

In this regard, Imam Al-Shafi'i expressed in his poetry:

I complained to my teacher about the weakness of my memory,

*So he guided me to abandon sins.
And he informed me that knowledge is light,
And the light of Allah is not granted to a sinner.*

This is indeed true, for we have found that Allah, the Exalted, has made knowledge and light an immediate reward for those who strive and seek guidance.

Allah the Almighty says:

*"And those who are guided, He increases them in guidance."
(Muhammad: 17)*

And He also says:

*"If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion (to distinguish
between right and wrong)." (Al-Anfal: 29)*

And He says:

*"O you who have believed, fear Allah and believe in His Messenger;
He will grant you a double portion of His mercy and will provide for
you a light by which you will walk." (Al-Hadid: 28)*

In the hadith, it is narrated:

"Whoever sincerely devotes themselves to Allah for forty days, wisdom will flow from their tongue."

Or as it has been reported.

A seeker of knowledge must frequently engage in repentance, seeking forgiveness, and adhering to piety, and they must not take any sin lightly or become complacent in disobeying Allah Almighty.

These three matters should always be present in the mind of a student, both at the time of forming their intention and after it.

While actively seeking knowledge, they must frequently make supplications, seek forgiveness, and ask for Allah's help, ensuring that they do not grow weary in doing so.

Indeed, Allah Almighty never tires of responding to supplications, nor does He sever the hope of those who seek Him, for He is All-Hearing, Most Forgiving, and Most Merciful, He is ever near and answers those who call upon Him.

Indeed, sincerity may be the secret behind the immense multiplication of rewards, increasing tenfold, seventyfold, or even beyond what Allah wills.

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, emphasized the status and importance of sincerity, saying:

"All people are doomed except the knowledgeable. The knowledgeable are doomed except those who act upon their knowledge. Those who act are doomed except the sincere. And the sincere are in great danger."

A truly sincere person engages in righteous deeds, avoids evil, and does not act based on desires or personal gain. They are not concerned with fame, praise, or the approval of people. Rather, they prefer obscurity over fame and private deeds over public ones, fearing hypocrisy.

They distance themselves from the dangers of hidden shirk (associating others with Allah in intentions), striving to be among the righteous hidden servants, those who, when present, are unknown, and when absent, are not missed.

How Should a Student Be While Seeking Knowledge?

A student must remain humble during their pursuit of knowledge.

First:

They must be devoted to their Lord and Creator, submitting their affairs to Him. They should seek His guidance, repent from their sins, hope for His rewards, and fear His punishment.

This means purifying their soul, surrendering it sincerely to their Lord, and firmly believing that they are a servant of Allah, possessing no authority over their knowledge or affairs unless Allah paves the way for them.

They should not depend on their own abilities or strength but should trust in Allah's decree. They must be content with whatever Allah has decreed for them, whether ease or hardship, wealth or poverty, good health or affliction.

They should not envy anyone for the blessings they have received, nor should they boast about their own merits. They must remain steadfast regardless of their circumstances, whether in hardship or ease. They should never complain to anyone about poverty or suffering.

In every state, they should be content, knowing that their Lord is Most Generous.

The treasures of the heavens and the earth are in His hands, and whatever is taken from them is removed only by His knowledge and wisdom. They must believe that whatever Allah does is filled with mercy and goodness for them. This conviction removes worldly worries from their hearts and expels anxieties from their minds.

By embracing contentment, they attain peace, realizing that whatever Allah decrees is for their ultimate benefit.

Such a person becomes a true servant of the Most Merciful, genuinely faithful, subduing their desires, humbling themselves before the Almighty, submitting to His grandeur, and standing in reverence before His majesty.

Their character is shaped by dignity, self-respect, and the honor of servitude to Allah.

It is narrated in tradition:

"The believer is gentle and humble." "The believer is noble and not disgraceful."

Second:

Regarding their teachers, a student must respect and honor them. They should not raise their voice in their presence and must remain courteous when asking and answering questions, as well as in discussions and dialogues.

They should not think themselves too superior to learn from any teacher, for true greatness lies in humility.

Third:

Regarding their fellow students, a student should not consider themselves above them, nor should they insult them in speech. Instead, they must respect, honor, and appreciate them.

They should not see themselves as better than their peers, nor should they belittle them by underestimating their worth. Even if they possess more knowledge or understanding, they should remain humble. The more knowledgeable and intelligent they are, the more humility and fairness they should exhibit in dealing with

others.

It is often observed that those who are the humblest and just in their interactions tend to be the most successful and respected. True humility does not diminish a person but rather elevates them.

A student must acknowledge that any knowledge they have acquired is a gift from Allah. They should never attribute their success to themselves but should instead thank Allah for His blessings.

True gratitude to Allah lies in humbling oneself before Him and remaining humble towards others. A person should not boast over anyone, recognizing that all blessings come from Allah alone.

They should then praise Allah for what He has granted them and ask Him for further blessings. A student should not expect recognition or reverence from their peers. They should not seek to be honored, praised, or given special treatment.

If others acknowledge their virtues and treat them with due respect, then that is a blessing. Otherwise, demanding such recognition would lead to blame and criticism.

May Allah's peace be upon Prophet Sulayman, son of Dawud. Despite his high status in the world, he remained humble. When he reflected on Allah's blessings upon him, he said:

"This is by the grace of my Lord to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful." (An-Naml: 40)

And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family.

He was the humblest of people, never seeking to elevate himself over others. He neither looked down upon the weak nor sought superiority over the noble and the distinguished.

If he sat among his companions, he did not assign himself a place of honor. He never required them to stand for him or elevate him above themselves.

This aligns with what Allah the Almighty said:

"So by the mercy of Allah, you were gentle with them. And had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you." (Aal-e-Imran: 159)

However, Allah the Almighty was protective over His Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, due to his immense humility. Thus, Allah commanded people to honor and respect him, saying:

"Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak loudly to him as you do to one another, lest your deeds be nullified while you perceive it not." (Al-Hujurat: 2)

And in teaching the companions proper etiquette, Allah said:

"That would cause distress to the Prophet, and he would be shy to tell you. But Allah is not shy of the truth." (Al-Ahzab: 53)

A student must embody the highest level of humility. This includes avoiding any behavior that may lead to misunderstandings or create conflict.

Humility purifies the heart, whereas arrogance and discord taint the sincerity of relationships and damage the bond of brotherhood.

Allah the Almighty has commanded the rectification of social ties in His words:

"So fear Allah and mend relationships among yourselves." (Al-Anfal: 1)

However, this obligatory duty of reconciliation, which Allah has prescribed in the Quran, cannot be fulfilled unless the root causes of discord are removed.

One must eliminate the sources of Satan's influence, which disrupt unity and breed resentment, and then uphold the rights of Islamic brotherhood.



Envy (Hasad)

Students of knowledge vary greatly in intelligence and other abilities. Some are sharper and quicker in understanding than others, while some have slower comprehension. Some are naturally outspoken and confident, while others are reserved and hesitant. Some are liked and admired by their peers, while others are less favored. Some are wealthy, while others are deprived. Some have strong expression and eloquence, while others struggle with limited articulation. Some have pleasant voices, while others

do not. Sometimes, a student who is less knowledgeable may receive more attention from fellow students and teachers than someone who is more knowledgeable.

This is the reality of life, and it reflects the wisdom behind Allah's words:

"And We have made some of you a trial for others. Will you then be patient?" (Al-Furqan: 20)

This is the way of Allah in His creation. At times, Allah grants your fellow student, teacher, or neighbor an easier and more comfortable life, fulfilling their desires and worldly pleasures.

He enables them to acquire wealth and directs people's hearts toward them, making them influential and beloved in society.

Meanwhile, another student may have greater knowledge and higher status, yet live in hardship, or it may be the opposite, someone with less knowledge attains a higher status than those superior to them. Another may be deprived of all such blessings.

Some struggle to earn a mere bite of food, enduring exhaustion, barely knowing the taste of meat, butter, or honey. They may lack proper clothing and are recognized only by their poverty and struggles.

Their peers and companions, however, may enjoy comfort and luxury, indulging in the pleasures of the world, satisfying their every desire with ease.

Indeed, Allah's distribution of worldly means is neither a sign of honor nor humiliation for anyone. No! Allah granted Pharaoh wealth and adornments, while depriving Musa and Harun of them.

Musa (peace be upon him) once reached such a state of hardship that he was forced to eat leaves from trees.

Until he cried out:

"My Lord, indeed I am in need of whatever good You send down to me." (Al-Qasas: 24)

Imam Ali , peace be upon him, said : By Allah, Musa asked his Lord for a piece of bread only to satisfy his hunger!

A wise and believing student of knowledge must understand that Allah's grace is given to whomever He wills. If they accept

whatever Allah has apportioned for them, they will attain peace and tranquility without being preoccupied with complaints about their condition.

Allah's decree is wise, and He distributes wealth and knowledge among His servants as He wills.

"That is the bounty of Allah, which He grants to whom He wills, and Allah is the Possessor of great bounty." (Al-Hadid: 21)

One who truly understands Allah's wisdom and justice will realize that His distribution is always in the best interest of His servants.

It is known that poverty is the emblem of the righteous, the adornment of the pious, and the companion of the Prophets and Messengers. It is known that whoever is pleased with it attains the pleasure of Allah, and whoever is displeased with it incurs His displeasure. Allah, Exalted is He, does not give except to one whom He has honored, and He does not withhold except from one from whom He withholds for wisdom. It is also known that poverty is Allah's decree, and whoever dislikes it cannot repel it.

Thus, the poor person finds relief from hardship. Poverty is closer to piety and farther from sins that arise from negligence in financial obligations. It is also farther from the distractions of the heart, from envy of people, and from hostility toward them because of wealth.

The intelligent believer knows that this is a trial and a test by which Allah tests His servants. Whoever succeeds in this test will attain the best outcome that Allah has prepared for those who succeed. The seeker should know that Allah, Glorified and Exalted, will reward him for patience, for resisting envy, and for being content with Allah's decree. Thus, the believer becomes one to whom goodness comes from every direction, and poverty becomes a blessing that deserves gratitude.

Yes, envy is a great and destructive affliction. It requires strong faith, high aspiration, and firm certainty. To be safe from envy, the following is required:

First: to know that Allah is the One who apportions among His

servants with wisdom.

Second: to strive against one's own soul, restrain it, and say to it: "O soul that commands evil, that leads to loss and obedience to Satan, do you wish to be included among those Jews whom Allah described as being envious?"

"Or do they envy people for what Allah has given them of His bounty? But We had already given the family of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom, and We granted them a great kingdom."

Surah An-Nisā' (4), Verse 54

Third: to increase supplication, to humble oneself before Allah, and to seek refuge in Him from Satan the accursed and from the evil of the soul that commands evil.

Fourth: to supplicate in secret so that your soul does not become preoccupied with envy, and to say:

"O Allah, increase me in gratitude for Your blessings and in bounty from Your grace.

O Possessor of immense favor, grant me from Your bounty.

Increase me and do not diminish me.

Honor me and do not humiliate me.

Give me and do not deprive me.

Grant me and do not withhold from me.

Expand my provision.

Enrich me and elevate me.

Grant me success.

Set right for me my religion, my worldly life, and my Hereafter.

Do not test me with what afflicts me.

Grant me a light by which I walk among people, guide me in darkness, and increase me in knowledge.

O Allah, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

You know what benefits me and what harms me.

Grant me what benefits me and turn away from me what harms me.

Make me content with what You have decreed for me.

O Ever-Living, O Self-Sustaining, I seek Your help through Your mercy.

Send blessings and peace upon Muhammad and his pure family.

There is no power and no might except with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great.

And all praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.”

Know that envy is a natural disposition found in every human being. However, the believer strives against this inclination that the soul is drawn toward and does not respond to its call. Resisting it and pushing it away entitles a person to reward and a good outcome, for reward is in proportion to hardship. In that hardship lies what truly deserves to be called the greater struggle.

A Bad Habit

A student may hold a high rank and status, either in his school among his peers, or in another place. This may cause him to dislike that others learn from someone else, because he fears a loss of his own status in their eyes. Thus, he resists, objects, and sits back. This is from the work of Satan, for he is a clear enemy and a manifest misleader. The student must beware of being like this, for whoever behaves in such a manner has failed and lost.

The believing student strives with all his effort to teach his peers or his relatives, whether he himself is the teacher or the knowledge is taken from others. For if others acquire knowledge from someone else, this does not diminish his reward or his standing in the sight of Allah in any way, nor does it diminish him in the eyes of people. Rather, the student should know that Allah, Glorified and Exalted, is the One who elevates, lowers, honors, and humiliates.

Let the student be keen to preserve his rank, status, and honor if his intention is purely for Allah, Exalted is He, for these are not guided by anyone to ruin except by Satan. The student must adhere to following the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, so he does not seek teaching for reward, nor intend recompense or gratitude. Rather, he seeks only the pleasure of Allah, and does not see for himself any superiority over others, even if they are in need of knowledge from him.

As for those who believe that if you benefit your students, advise them, or address them with closeness and affection, or guide them, then those students will become more attached to you and loyal to

you, this closeness becomes submission and authority over them, then no one is permitted to monopolize them. Even if they were in need, they have no right to prevent them from others. Such students are not guided, and their effort is misguidance, and they will reap nothing but loss. So we say to them: repent to right guidance, correct your intentions, and seek reward from your Lord.

Do not seek status and rank for yourselves. Seek elevation from Allah, Exalted is He, and enter houses through their proper doors. For honor lies in piety.

“Indeed, the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you.”

Surah Al-Ḥujurāt (49), Verse 13

Allah, Exalted is He, also says:

“And to Allah belongs all honor, and to His Messenger, and to the believers.”

Surah Al-Munāfiqūn (63), Verse 8

We have now learned the meaning of cooperation that Allah has prescribed in the Qur’an, where He says:

“And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.”

Surah Al-Mā'idah (5), Verse 2

Yes, the student may not be free from the whisperings of the soul that commands evil, and from the provocations of Satan during the pursuit of knowledge, before it, and after it. However, in the pursuit of knowledge, Satan’s provocations may increase. A student may be at the same level as his peers, but as days pass, some advance over others in memorization, intelligence, understanding, sound discussion, strong argumentation, and then excel among their peers.

They may then gain praise from teachers, closeness among relatives and gatherings, which leads to envy from their peers, followed by belittlement, hatred, and harm. Thus, a teacher may distinguish a successful student among his students and favor him with praise, prompting other teachers to envy him.

When this occurs, the student must beware of falling into the

traps of Satan, and must strive against himself with the strongest struggle. For the soul that commands evil shows no mercy, and if a person does not cut it off from the beginning, it will continue to grow.

He must seek refuge in Allah and ask Him from His bounty, knowing that this is a trial and a test. Let him be patient, struggle against himself, and persist until this trial passes. If he is patient and struggles until success, he will surely attain the beautiful promise. His reward will be without measure, he will be protected by blessings, good outcomes, and immense mercy. He will attain the reward of this world and the Hereafter, the honor of this world and the honor of the Hereafter, the elevation of this world and the elevation of the Hereafter, and the dignity of this world and the dignity of the Hereafter.

As for one who submits to the whispers of the soul and obeys Satan the accursed, and causes harm to his peers through belittlement, hatred, and envy, he has exposed himself to expulsion, curse, humiliation, deprivation, and severe wrath from Allah. We seek refuge in Allah from His anger. Such a person has lost both this world and the Hereafter. That is the clear loss.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

*“Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak,
from the evil of what He created,
and from the evil of darkness when it settles,
and from the evil of those who blow on knots,
and from the evil of an envier when he envies.”*

Surah Al-Falaq (113), Verses 1-5

So beware, O seeker of knowledge, of leaving the guardianship of the Most Merciful for the guardianship of Satan, and of leaving the guardianship of Allah for enmity with Allah.



Arrogance (Self-Admiration)

Some students may possess superior intelligence and strong memorization.

This is a favor and a blessing from Allah. However, through this,

Satan may find a way into the heart of its possessor, causing him to admire himself, boast about his qualities, and take pride in his excellence.

Then Satan creates a comparison between him and his peers, leading him to see himself as occupying a higher rank while viewing his classmates as being in a lower position.

When these whispers take hold, he begins to look at his peers with contempt and disdain, belittling them and considering them deserving of mockery, thus becoming one of Satan's students and allies.

Afterward, it is said: people of intelligence are not free from such whispers and passing thoughts. However, what is required at that point is to increase praise and gratitude to Allah, for these are tremendous blessings that must be acknowledged, not denied. They should be made a means to remember Allah alone, to thank Him, and to show humility toward the believers, kindness, and mercy.

Do you not see how Allah guided His Prophet and directed him to gratitude for those blessings which He enumerated in Surah ad-Duḥā, saying:

*“Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter?
And He found you lost and guided you.
And He found you in need and made you self-sufficient.”
Surah Ad-Duḥā (93), Verses 6–8*

Then He directed him to gratitude for those blessings, saying:

*“So as for the orphan, do not oppress him.
And as for the petitioner, do not repel him.
And as for the blessing of your Lord, proclaim it.”
Surah Ad-Duḥā (93), Verses 9–11*

Thus, the intelligent person is humble in his religion, grateful to Allah, and gives up claiming superiority. He does not see himself as above others, but treats his brothers and peers with kindness, especially the general body of believers.

He does not take what Allah has blessed him with such as intelligence, understanding, and increased knowledge as a means

to elevate himself above his peers, belittle them, mock them, or laugh at their poor understanding.

In truth, whoever does so is not safe from having those blessings stripped away from him—his insight, intelligence, and understanding nor from humiliation and being led astray, as Satan seeks to do.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And whoever Allah does not grant light—he has no light.”

Surah An-Nūr (24), Verse 40

Therefore, the seeker of knowledge must beware of belittling other seekers of knowledge and of mocking his peers. He must also be cautious of laughter that implies contempt, for it may reflect a corrupt inner state.

As for the one who is mocked, Allah warns those who mock others, saying:

“So let those beware who oppose his command, lest a trial strike them or a painful punishment afflict them.”

Surah An-Nūr (24), Verse 63



Cooperation

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.”

Surah Al-Mā'idah (5), Verse 2

If a student is in a large school that includes many students and teachers, then it is obligatory upon him and upon all students and teachers to cooperate in righteousness and piety. This is achieved when every student and every teacher perform his work in the best manner.

The student fulfills what his teacher has instructed him to do: he safeguards his lessons, observes the prayer times, refrains from harming others, abides by the school's regulations, and performs his duties with diligence and excellence. The teacher, likewise, performs his work in the school with energy, sincerity, and good conduct. All of this is part of fulfilling trusts.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due.”

Surah An-Nisā’ (4), Verse 58

And Allah, Exalted is He, also says:

“O you who believe, do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trusts while you know.”

Surah Al-Anfāl (8), Verse 27

And Allah, Exalted is He, says in praise of the believers:

“And those who are faithful to their trusts and their covenants.”

Surah Al-Mu’minūn (23), Verse 8

In general, seeking knowledge, spreading knowledge, and teaching it are among the greatest forms of righteousness. Allah, Exalted is He, has made cooperation in righteousness obligatory upon His servants, as stated in the first verse. Based on this, everyone who assists in spreading knowledge or encourages it is included among those who cooperate in righteousness and piety.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

And among the greatest forms of calling to Allah, those whose doers Allah has praised is His saying:

“And who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah and does righteous deeds and says, ‘Indeed, I am of the Muslims?’”

Surah Fuṣṣilat (41), Verse 33

Thus, the teacher or worker in a school should seek reward from Allah alone and know that he is working for Allah’s sake. He must not look down upon those below him or consider himself superior to them. Rather, he works for the reward of his Lord and for fulfilling His command to cooperate with seekers of knowledge. He should not feel offended if he is told: “Do such-and-such,” for offense in this regard comes from the whispers of Satan, who seeks to divert people from deeds of righteousness and piety.

It is also obligatory upon every worker in a school to avoid harshness in speech and behavior. He should employ gentleness when dealing with students and others, and avoid strict commands that may repel hearts. For gentleness brings about what harshness

does not.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

*“And say to My servants that they should speak that which is best.
Indeed, Satan sows discord among them.”*

Surah Al-Isrā’ (17), Verse 53

Allah, Glorified be He, commanded His Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, to instruct His servants to use gentle speech, soft expressions, and kind words in their conversations and discussions, and to adopt the best manner of address. This is because harshness in speech causes Satan to incite discord among people, corrupt their intentions, and spread enmity and hatred.

Allah, Exalted is He, also says regarding the covenant He took from the Children of Israel in the time of Moses, *peace be upon him*:

“And speak good words to people.”

Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Verse 83

And Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Good and evil are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then the one between whom and you there was enmity will become as though he were a close friend.”

Surah Fuṣṣilat (41), Verse 34

The meaning of this verse is similar to the earlier verse: it calls for gentleness, kindness, and softness in dialogue and discourse. Thus, the believer, especially, the seeker of knowledge and the teacher should adhere to the manners prescribed by Allah, embody noble character, and act upon it.

Allah, Exalted is He, described His Messenger, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, saying:

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are harsh against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.”

Surah Al-Fath (48), Verse 29

And Allah, Exalted is He, also says:

“O you who believe, whoever among you turns back from his religion—Allah will bring forth a people whom He loves and who love

Him: humble toward the believers, firm against the disbelievers.”

Surah Al-Mā'idah (5), Verse 54

Students and teachers should know that harsh speech among believers is detested, that gentle speech is among the noblest qualities in Islam, and that good speech is one of the best obligations and duties among believers. Allah has prescribed it in the Qur'an and called to it with mercy, emphasizing it repeatedly in many verses, because of its great impact on dignity, status, and honor with the Possessor of Majesty and Honor.

As an addition to what has already been mentioned, Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.”

Surah An-Naḥl (16), Verse 125

Allah has also given examples of good speech and evil speech in His Noble Book, and there are many such examples in the Sunnah as well. However, what we have mentioned here is sufficient for one whose heart is attentive and whose hearing is present.

A person is prone to mistakes and forgetfulness, and his speech may slip due to ignorance, anger, or other causes. Thus, he may violate proper conduct with his Lord in his words toward his peers or his students and transgress limits. In such cases, we are required to adopt one of two approaches:

First: To treat it with the remedy prescribed by Allah, Exalted is He, as He says:

“Good and evil are not equal. Repel evil with what is better.”

Surah Fuṣṣilat (41), Verse 34

Thus, an evil word should be answered with a good word. Allah has praised His servants, the Most Merciful, for this quality in Surah Al-Furqān, where He says:

“And when the ignorant address them harshly, they say words of peace.”

Surah Al-Furqān (25), Verse 63

This verse has two explanations:

The first: they say words of peace, meaning they refrain from

retaliation and do not respond with harm.

The second: as mentioned in another verse:

“Peace be upon you; we do not seek the ignorant.”

Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ (28), Verse 55

Second: To respond with silence and forbearance, as Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Take what is given freely, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant.”

Surah Al-Aʿrāf (7), Verse 199

Allah also showed His Prophet ﷺ how to respond to the harm of the People of the Book and the polytheists in Surah Al-Māʾidah:

“So pardon them and overlook; indeed, Allah loves those who do good.”

Surah Al-Māʾidah (5), Verse 13

This rank is higher than silence and avoidance; it is the rank of forgiveness and overlooking. The verse indicates that this is from excellence, and that Allah loves those who practice it.

If Allah, Glorified is He, commanded His Messenger ﷺ to pardon the harm of the People of the Book and the polytheists about whom He said:

“You will surely hear much harm from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allah.”

Surah Āl ʿImrān (3), Verse 186

Then forgiving harm from believers should take precedence, whether the harm is little or much. Whoever does so have a great status and a high rank with Allah. Thus, the student must adopt Islamic manners, seek illumination from the light of the Qurʾan, and strive against himself. He should not respond to an insult with an insult, nor allow himself to be driven by anger. Rather, he should know that he is rewarded for restraining anger.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous—those who spend in ease and hardship, who restrain anger, and who

"pardon people; and Allah loves those who do good."

Surah Āl 'Imrān (3), Verses 133–134

This is a great reward.

The poet Abu Nuwās said:

*"Bear the ignorance of your kin with forbearance,
and turn away from it in peace.*

*How often silence is a cure
for a disease of speech.*

*A man's safety lies in silence,
and his destruction lies in speech."*



Preoccupying the Self with Its Own Faults

The student must occupy himself with his own faults and sins, and must not busy himself with pursuing the private matters of others or spying on them. Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has prohibited the believers from doing so in Surah Al-Ḥujurāt. Whoever is among the believers must fear Allah and abandon spying and pursuing the faults of others.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

"And do not spy on one another, nor backbite one another."

Surah Al-Ḥujurāt (49), Verse 12

The Sunnah contains many warnings and severe threats regarding this matter. However, what has been mentioned in the Qur'an is sufficient for the people of the Qur'an.

The intelligent person is one who keeps himself occupied with his own shortcomings. Thus, the student busies himself with correcting his own faults and does not allow himself to be distracted by: so-and-so is good, so-and-so is bad, so-and-so is noble, so-and-so is lowly, so-and-so is malicious, and so-and-so is hypocritical. For this is from blameworthy excess and condemned character.

Allah, Exalted is He, says regarding such matters:

"O you who believe, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice. He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins."

Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33), Verses 70–71

Advice for the Believers

The Commander of the Believers, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allah be pleased with him), said:

“O my son, place yourself as a measure between yourself and others.

Love for others what you love for yourself, and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself. Do not oppress, just as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good, just as you like good to be done to you. Consider bad from yourself what you consider bad from others. Be content with what people accept from you, as you accept from yourself.

Do not say what you do not know, and even what you know—do not say everything.” (From *Nahj al-Balāghah*)

Encouragement to Conceal Faults

Rather, it is fitting for a believer that if he becomes aware of a fault of his brother, he conceals it and does not expose it, nor speak about it. There is great reward in this. Many narrations have been reported from the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, regarding this matter.

Among them is his saying, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

“Whoever learns of his brother’s fault and conceals it, Allah will conceal his faults on the Day of Resurrection.”

And he *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, also said:

“Whoever conceals the fault of a believer, it is as if he revived a buried infant.”

Matters That Cause Discord Among the Ranks

Narrations have been reported from the Prophet ﷺ warning against matters that corrupt affection among believers and cause division and mutual hostility between them. The Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, said:

“Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the most false of speech. Do not spy on one another, do not search out faults, do not envy one another, do not turn away from one another, and do not hate

one another. Be servants of Allah as brothers.

A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim: he does not wrong him, abandon him, or belittle him. It is sufficient evil for a person to despise his Muslim brother. The blood, wealth, and honor of every Muslim are sacred to another Muslim.

Allah does not look at your outward forms or your bodies, but He looks at your hearts and your deeds.

Piety is here,” and he pointed to his chest three times. “Piety is here. It is enough evil for a person to despise his Muslim brother. All of a Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim: his blood, his wealth, and his honor.”

Obstacles in the Path of the Seeker of Knowledge

1. Relatives

There may be obstacles in the path of the seeker of knowledge. Among them are relatives. Indeed, a seeker of knowledge is rarely free from something of this nature. One of his parents, or one of them, or his entire family may stand in his way and cause him harm. In such cases, the seeker of knowledge must be patient in the face of harm, persist in seeking knowledge, and frequently seek the help of Allah, Exalted is He.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Our Lord, pour upon us patience and cause us to die as Muslims.”
Surah Al-Aʿrāf (7), Verse 126

Among the supplications of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, —taught to him by Jibrīl, *peace be upon him*, on the Day of Ḥunayn is:

“O Allah, to You belongs all praise. To You is my complaint, and You are the One whose help is sought.”

The seeker of knowledge must show kindness toward his parents, speak gently to them, and not be harsh with them, for their right is great. If the student has free time, he should devote it to serving his parents. Thus, whenever he finds time, he should endure what he faces of harm from his parents due to his pursuit of knowledge, seek help from Allah as mentioned earlier, and remain patient. Indeed, relief comes with patience.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

*“And whoever fears Allah, He will make for him a way out,
and will provide for him from where he does not expect.”*

Surah At-Talāq (65), Verses 2–3

This is a promise from Allah. So let the seeker of knowledge have certainty in Allah’s promise.

2. Poverty

Poverty is among the obstacles faced by seekers of knowledge and their supporters. Rather, it is one of the Sunnahs by which knowledge is attained. These include: intelligence, patience, asceticism, contentment, perseverance, attachment to teachers, and long periods of time.

Let the seeker of knowledge praise Allah for granting him the ability to pursue knowledge, and beware of being distracted by the adornments and pleasures of worldly life. For if Allah had not granted him success and protection, the adornment of worldly life would have distracted him from the remembrance of Allah and the pursuit of knowledge.

The believer, especially the seeker of knowledge, should not look at those who are well-off in worldly matters or superior in livelihood. Doing so may cause him to belittle the blessing Allah has granted him. Instead, he should reflect upon those who are less fortunate than he is in livelihood, health, and means.

He should also look to the people of affliction, illness, and hardship. This leads to gratitude for the blessing he is upon and appreciation of it. Through this, he attains the reward of those who are grateful and earns the pleasure of the Lord of the worlds.

The Prophet ﷺ advised Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, instructing him to look at those below him and not to look at those above him. This is also the counsel of Allah, Exalted is He, to His Prophet ﷺ in the Noble Book. Allah, Exalted is He, says:

*“And do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given
enjoyment to groups of them.”*

Surah Tā Hā (20), Verse 131

And Allah, Exalted is He, also says to His Prophet *May Allah bless*

him and his family and grant them peace:

“And keep yourself patient with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face, and do not let your eyes pass beyond them, desiring the adornment of worldly life.”

Surah Al-Kahf (18), Verse 28

The Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, was commanded to remain patient with the poor believers and not to turn his gaze toward the people of the world, wealth, and luxury. Then Allah, Exalted is He, said concerning the poor among the believers and those deprived of worldly wealth, reminding His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, of His favor upon them:

“Say, ‘In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy—in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate.’”

Surah Yūnus (10), Verse 58

And Allah, Glorified be He, also says:

“So let not their wealth or their children impress you. Allah only intends to punish them through them in worldly life.”

Surah At-Tawbah (9), Verse 55

Thus, the believer, especially the seeker of knowledge, must walk in the light of these divine counsels found in the Noble Qur’an, and adopt the noble character with which the Prophet ﷺ and the righteous before him were characterized.

The seeker of knowledge should know that poverty and wealth are not measures of a person’s rank among people, nor are they signs of superiority. Rather, true superiority lies in piety, as Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And We test you with evil and with good as a trial.”

Surah Al-Anbiyā’ (21), Verse 35

And Allah, Exalted is He, also says:

“And We have made some of you a trial for others—will you be patient?”

Surah Al-Furqān (25), Verse 20

Thus, poverty is a trial, and wealth is likewise a trial. If the poor person is patient with his poverty, content with his Lord’s decree,

and does not envy anyone for what Allah has granted them of His bounty, he attains through this the reward of the patient. This is a lofty rank that none attains except those who combine patience, knowledge, and certainty.

Allah has narrated how people looked at the adornment of Qārūn and how they were divided into two groups: a group from the people of the world and a group from the people of the Hereafter.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Indeed, Qārūn was from the people of Moses, but he tyrannized them. And We gave him treasures whose keys would burden a band of strong men. When his people said to him, ‘Do not exult; indeed, Allah does not like the exultant.’”

Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ (28), Verse 76

Then Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“So he came out before his people in his adornment. Those who desired the worldly life said, ‘Oh, would that we had like what Qārūn has been given. Indeed, he is one of great fortune.’ But those who were given knowledge said, ‘Woe to you! The reward of Allah is better for one who believes and does righteousness.’”

Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ (28), Verses 79–80

Thus, the seeker of knowledge must adopt the character of those who were given knowledge and not imitate those who pursue worldly life.

The seeker of knowledge should know that many of the Prophets, Messengers, righteous people, and believers lived in poverty and hardship, while some of the righteous lived in abundance; yet the criterion was never wealth or poverty.

So, if you, O seeker of knowledge, experience the hardship and severity of poverty, know that this is the Sunnah of Allah among the righteous, the Prophets, the Messengers, and many of the believers.

And you will never find any change in the Sunnah of Allah.

Know that Allah, Glorified and Exalted, did not decree poverty in this worldly life as humiliation for His servants or as punishment for the righteous. Rather, He made it a means of reward for them.

Its benefit is limited, its duration is short, and no one attains a blessing through it except that it is accompanied by another blessing. No pleasure in it is pure from hardship, and its sweetness is never free from bitterness. All things in it are destined to perish and fade away.

Allah, Exalted is He, has given us a parable for worldly life so that we are not deceived by it. He says:

“And present to them the example of the worldly life: it is like rain which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, then it becomes dry remnants scattered by the winds.”

Surah Al-Kahf (18), Verse 45

The seeker of knowledge should know that he will not attain from worldly life except what Allah has written for him. He should not grieve over what he misses, nor feel distress over what Allah has decreed for him.

The believer, especially the seeker of knowledge, should be content with what Allah has apportioned for him, grateful for His favors, and abundant in praise of his Creator.

He should know that Allah, Exalted is He, is Wise and All-Knowing regarding the interests of His servants. Allah has informed us that He distributes provision with wisdom. Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And if Allah were to expand provision for His servants, they would transgress throughout the earth; but He sends it down in due measure as He wills. Indeed, He is, of His servants, All-Aware and All-Seeing.”

Surah Ash-Shūrā (42), Verse 27

Decrees may be written upon some people from a land such that they are prevented from attaining their objectives. In such situations, there is nothing before a person except patience and submission to the decree of Allah, the All-Wise.

Indeed, the human being is anxious and fearful; he is greatly disturbed when afflicted by calamities, when hardships descend upon him, and when the earth becomes constricted despite its

vastness. He then seeks to escape his condition as quickly as possible.

However, this attempt is futile, because it contradicts what Allah has decreed for worldly life.

The first priority is that a person be patient and content with Allah's decree over a long period. It is narrated in the ḥadīth that the Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, was asked: "Which people are tested most severely?" He said: "The Prophets, then those most like them, then those most like them. A person is tested according to the strength of his religion; if his religion is strong, his trial is more severe, and if his religion is weak, he is tested according to it. A servant continues to be tested until he walks upon the earth without sin." (Reported authentically)

3. Lack of Understanding

The seeker of knowledge may spend many days engaged in seeking knowledge, exerting effort and diligence, yet he sees his peers or fellow students around him receiving understanding and clarity, while he remains deprived of it. He gains little benefit, and the doors of understanding remain closed before him. As a result, he may begin to speak to himself about abandoning the pursuit of knowledge.

So we say to him: O seeker of knowledge, do not abandon seeking knowledge, and do not despair of the mercy and bounty of Allah. Be patient in seeking knowledge, increase supplication, seeking forgiveness, and repentance.

Allah, Glorified and Exalted, says:

"Call upon Me; I will respond to you."

Surah Ghāfir (40), Verse 60

Know that what your soul whispers to you about abandoning the pursuit of knowledge is nothing but whisperings from Satan. Be patient, for relief comes with patience. Allah loves the patient and sincere, and soon Allah will open for you the doors of sound understanding, illuminate your chest with the lights of knowledge and wisdom, and grant you success.

It has reached us about Shaykh al-Islām, the great scholar, the vast ocean of knowledge, Dhū al-Faḍl al-Shahīr, ‘Abdu-Allah bin Ali Al-ghalibi (*may Allah have mercy on him*), that he sought knowledge in the Great Mosque of Ṣan‘ā’ for a full year. The year ended, yet he did not know anything beyond the alphabet. Nevertheless, he did not abandon the pursuit of knowledge.

He continued in seeking knowledge with patience, diligence, and effort, until Allah opened for him the doors of understanding and knowledge.

He then became, after his teacher, the leading shaykh of his time, the reference point for scholars, and the imam of his era. Through him, Allah revived many sciences and spread knowledge throughout the lands of al-Shām.

Allah rewarded him with the best reward in this world and the Hereafter.

So do not despair, O seeker of knowledge, of the mercy and favor of Allah. Seeking knowledge is an obligation, so do not let Satan be your fourth companion. Know that you are upon a good path as long as you remain steadfast in seeking knowledge.

Arrogance

The seeker of knowledge must purify his heart from arrogance, for arrogance is one of the causes of being deprived of understanding.

Allah, Exalted is He, has informed us that He turns the arrogant away from comprehending His signs. Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant upon the earth without right.”

Surah Al-A‘rāf (7), Verse 146

Arrogance manifests itself in rejecting the truth, pushing it away, and not being content with it, as well as in belittling people and despising them. Therefore, the seeker of knowledge must especially discipline himself, strengthen his resolve to accept everything that comes from Allah and His Messenger *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, be gentle toward people, show humility to them, and treat them with kindness.

Whoever is gentle with people before the truth, shows them kindness, and humbles himself to them, he is among the humble.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, has narrated for us the story of Iblis and his arrogance, and how Allah expelled him from His mercy and cursed him with the greatest of curses, because he did not possess a heart that understood nor an ear that listened.

There are positions in which feet may slip. So the seeker of knowledge must beware of slipping in them, and remember one of the greatest matters of importance, which is:

Love for the family of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, following them, showing loyalty to them, and honoring them; and showing enmity toward their enemies, and speaking of their virtue.

Allah, Exalted is He, has made this obligatory in His Mighty Book and upon the tongue of His Noble Messenger *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*.

The seeker of knowledge may feel some discomfort toward this, such is human nature. However, the believer gives precedence to the pleasure of Allah, Exalted is He, over the pleasure of himself, and submits to the rulings of Allah that have come in His Book and upon the tongue of His Messenger *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, saying: "We hear and we obey."

Concealing Affliction

What befits a believer is to conceal the calamity that has befallen him and not to expose his weakness to people. Islam has prohibited humiliation, abasement, and disgrace.

It has been reported from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

"Whoever grieves over worldly matters becomes displeased with his Lord. Whoever complains about a calamity that has befallen him complains about Allah. And whoever humbles himself to a rich person in order to obtain what is in his hand has angered Allah."

It is also narrated from him *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

“Whoever sits with a rich person and humbles himself to him, two-thirds of his religion is gone.”

Thus, it is befitting for the believer to be content with what has befallen him of affliction until relief comes, without humiliating himself to anyone, even if that person is his brother.

It is also reported in the ḥadīth:

“Whoever gives from himself humiliation without being compelled has no excuse.”

The closest path to the truth, the safest way, and the most guided approach in dealing with calamities is that the Muslim remain firm in his standing, elevated in aspiration, neither humbling himself out of need nor displaying excessive weakness. Rather, he turns to his Master, beseeching Him with supplication, revealing his brokenness only to Him, not exposing his weakness to creation.

For Allah, Exalted is He, has said:

“And if Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it except Him; and if He intends for you good, then none can repel His bounty.

He causes it to reach whom He wills among His servants.

And He is the All-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.”

Surah Yūnus (10), Verse 107

The Character of a Muslim

People humble themselves and lower their religion and worldly matters for the sake of anyone among the believers, either because of harm they fear from him in his authority or status, or because of hope they have in what he possesses. However, Allah, Exalted is He, has cut off people’s control over lifespans and provisions entirely, so no one has any share in them.

Thus, people humiliate themselves out of fear of poverty, while poverty will inevitably come, even though Islam built the reality of monotheism upon trust in Allah, Exalted is He. People have no control over anything, and they neither bring benefit nor cause harm.

Beneficial Matters

These Are Beneficial Matters That Suit Our Situation, So Pay Attention to Them

The First Benefit: What Should Be Given Priority

This benefit deserves special attention. Rather, it is obligatory to direct students' focus toward what they must give precedence to and fix their attention upon at the beginning of seeking knowledge.

Therefore, the responsible student must, in the first stage, direct his concern to the following:

First: Knowledge of Allah, Glorified and Exalted. This is achieved by reading the Book of Creed (al-'Aqīdah), or Sabīl ar-Rashād, or The Thirty Fundamental Principles. This is sufficient for the first stage.

Second: Knowledge of purification and prayer. This can be achieved by studying the Book of Purification and Prayer.

Third: Recitation of al-Fātiḥah and whatever is easy from the shorter chapters of the Qur'an, with firm memorization.

These three matters are essential; knowledge and application of them are required from every accountable person, and they are among the individual obligations. If the student perfects these three, then suitable books should be chosen according to his capacity and intelligence. At this stage, two important points must be observed:

First: The student should not busy himself with other subjects. He should not study grammar or morphology until he has mastered what we have mentioned, because knowledge and practice of these three matters are obligatory upon every accountable person, whereas grammar and morphology are not.

The Second Benefit

The Importance of Lessons of Encouragement

Among the important matters is that teachers should not neglect lessons of encouragement and exhortation. These lessons are extremely important for every Muslim, especially for seekers of knowledge. This includes books such as Kanz ar-Rashād and its explanation, Al-Arba'īn as-Salaqlaiyyah by Imām 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥamzah, *May Allah mercy upon him*, and other books written on encouragement and admonition. They are many in number, and many of them are available in print. Therefore, a lesson of

exhortation should be scheduled daily, for this revives and purifies hearts and renews energy and motivation.

The Third Benefit

Attention to Establishing Sound Creed

The teacher must give attention to firmly establishing correct creed in the hearts of students. He should not restrict himself to what is written in books alone. Rather, he must explain, clarify, and expose the foundations of deviant sects, such as the Zaydī doctrine, and clarify to students what constitutes the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah.

He should cite examples from their own statements, such as the claim that Allah creates the actions of servants, while others claim that Allah is exalted above this in an exaggerated manner. Likewise, they claim intercession for the people of major sins and promise deliverance from Hell, while others exaggerate in denying this. He must then clearly explain that Ahl al-Sunnah are the people of truth supported by evidence, and emphasize detailed explanation whenever the situation requires it.

The Fourth Benefit

Emphasizing the Status of the Commander of the Believers

The teacher must explain and clarify to students that we are obligated to obey the Messenger *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, by believing that his successor is Imam Ali, peace be upon him, and that he is the leader of the Ummah after him is the Commander of the Believers. He must clarify this with evidence.

If the teacher does not preserve and explain the proofs, then he should keep with him the book *Lawāmi‘ al-Anwār*, which was authored by our teacher and Shaykh of the Ummah, the master of Ahl al-Bayt, Majd Aldeen ibn Muḥammad ibn Maṣṣūr al-MaYahūdī *May Allah mercy upon him*.

Students should then read the narrations transmitted from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, understand them, and explain them. For knowing the status of the Commander of the Believers is part of the completeness of faith, as

mentioned by Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn, *peace be upon him*, in Muqaddimat al-Aḥkām.

The teacher must not restrict himself to The Precious Creed (Aliqd Althameen) alone, for the times of tribulations and disagreements require more than The Precious Creed and Sabeel Alrashad, may Allah give us correct understanding of Him and His religion.

The Fifth Benefit

Calling to and Warning Against the Methods of Deviants

The teacher must warn students against the plots, tricks, and doubts by which deviants aim to mislead people's hearts. He should teach them the knowledge that protects them from falling into the traps, schemes, and doubts of the deviants.

This is part of the sincere advice that the Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, called to and urged upon. Rather, Allah, Exalted is He, has made sincere advice a criterion for religion, and included it among the four qualities that save from loss in Sūrat al-ʿAṣr.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“By time, Indeed, mankind is in loss, Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds and advise one another to truth and advise one another to patience.”

Surah Al-ʿAṣr (103), Verses 1–3

The Sixth Benefit:

Making Use of Free Time

Senior students and teachers should occupy part of their free time and vacation periods with reading beneficial books, for this contains great benefit. I will recommend you some of the books for reading:

Lawāmiʿ al-Anwār, Sharḥ al-tuhaf, MaʿJamaʿ al-Fawāʿid, al-Murājatʿ, al-Naṣṣ wa al-Ijtihād, Kashf al-Irtiyāb, al-Naṣāʾih al-Kāfiyah, Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn, Maqtal al-Ḥusayn, al-Ifādah, Maṣābiḥ Abī al-ʿAbbās, Tafsīr Ahl al-Bayt, al-Ghadīr, Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah, al-Aḥkām, Sīrat al-Hādī, *peace be upon hom*, al-Aḥādīth al-Wardiyyah, and al-Shāfi.

Through reading, creed will become firmly established, and the teacher will benefit students with many advantages. A person should not waste time in matters from which he can benefit.

The poet said:

*I tasted the pleasure of living until
I found companionship only in home and book.
I found nothing more enjoyable than knowledge—
So leave me with it, whether awake or asleep.*

The Sixth Benefit:

Reward of Guidance and Calling to Allah

If a student has memorized the Qur'an, possesses insight into creed, has studied Sabīl ar-Rashād, al-'Aqd al-Thamīn, knows the rulings of purification and prayer, and has acquired some understanding of jurisprudence in the early stages, then if guidance is sought from him, he should guide.

He should not take pride in seeking knowledge or boast about having attained it. For knowledge, if it is sought for calling to Allah, Exalted is He, and for guiding His servants, then Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has made knowledge and wisdom a reward for His righteous servants.

Allah, Exalted is He, says in Sūrat Yūsuf:

*“And when he reached maturity, We gave him judgment and
knowledge. And thus do We reward the doers of good.”*

Surah Yūsuf (12), Verse 22

The meaning is that Allah gave Yūsuf knowledge and wisdom when he reached maturity and strength. Then Allah informed us that such a gift is the reward He gives to those who do good.

This is glad tidings from Allah, Exalted is He, and a promise that He rewards those who do good with knowledge and wisdom. The proof that guidance is among the ranks of the righteous who are promised knowledge and wisdom is His saying:

*“And who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah, does
righteous deeds, and says: ‘Indeed, I am among the Muslims?’”*

Surah Fuṣṣilat (41), Verse 33

Allah's established practice is that reward corresponds to the

type of deed. Thus Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“If you are grateful, I will surely increase you.”

Surah Ibrāhīm (14), Verse 7

And in the ḥadīth:

“Show mercy to those on earth, and the One in the heavens will show mercy to you.” “Whoever makes Allah hear good, Allah will make him hear good; and whoever shows mercy, Allah will show mercy to him.” And other verses and narrations reported from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace.*

However, achieving these outcomes is dependent upon sincerity of intention and soundness of purpose for the benefit of the Lord of the worlds. So let the Muslim beware of corrupting his intention with ostentation, for Allah, Exalted is He, does not accept deeds except those that are purely for His Noble Face.

The Seventh Benefit

Warning Against Issuing Fatwas

Many questions and inquiries may come to the guide. In such cases, we advise him not to rush into issuing fatwas. Rather, he should record the questions that need answers and ask the scholars about them. By doing so, he benefits the questioners and protects himself from the consequences of issuing incorrect fatwas.

There is a well-known issue regarding zakāh: that zakāh becomes obligatory on all produce that comes out of the earth, whether it reaches the minimum threshold or not. The people of our lands have acted upon this view, having inherited it from their predecessors and followed them. Therefore, guides should not declare them mistaken. Rather, guides should present their evidences according to their school of thought and not oppose them, because it is a matter of juristic disagreement in which opinions have differed. The established position in the school is that one may not exit from this disagreement except through personal juristic effort (ijtihād), according to what is mentioned in Muqaddimat al-Azhār. Thus, the guide should not cause confusion among the people.

The Eighth Benefit

Ease and Facilitation

The guide must make repentance easy for those who seek it. He should encourage people to act upon what lies ahead and not obligate them to make up past prayers, fasting, or zakāh of previous years, for that may discourage them from repentance and turn them away from obedience to Allah.

If fear of Allah becomes firmly rooted in their hearts and they restrain themselves, they will hasten to free themselves from sin. If they ask the guide about the ruling regarding this, then the first priority is to refer them to the senior scholars, so they may guide them to what is obligatory upon them and what Allah has decreed in matters of disagreement, according to what is stated in al-Azhār.

The Ninth Benefit

The Right of Verified Scholars

The guide must connect people to scholars, for scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets, as stated in the well-known ḥadīth narrated from Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī, *peace be upon him*. People must love scholars, mention their virtues, recognize their status, and know how to distinguish them. He must warn against corrupted scholars when the situation requires it. However, it is not sufficient merely to mention verified scholars while ignoring others who oppose them. Rather, warning against opposition is also necessary.

In summary, knowing the verified scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt is an obligation, just like knowing the Qur’an. Here the Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, said in the widely transmitted ḥadīth:

“I am leaving among you that which, if you hold fast to it, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my Ahl al-Bayt. The Subtle, the All-Aware has informed me that they will never separate until they return to me at the Fountain.”

He then explains and clarifies the meaning of this ḥadīth.

Likewise, the famous ḥadīth of the Ark, in which the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, said:

“The likeness of my Ahl al-Bayt among you is like the Ark of Noah: whoever boards it is saved, and whoever turns away from it

is drowned.”

This is among the foundational principles of religion that all accountable persons must know.

He then explains and clarifies that the Zaydiyyah are those who adhere to the Ahl al-Bayt and do not oppose them, and clarifies who is truly meant by “Ahl al-Bayt.”

In our time, those who represent the Ahl al-Bayt are our master, the proof of the religion, Majd Al-deen al-Maūdi, *May Allah have mercy upon him*, and among the scholars with him are figures such as Sayyidī Ḥusayn ibn Yaḥyā al-Ḥūthī and his brothers. All those who follow them and walk upon their path, whether from the Ahl al-Bayt or from their Shī‘ah—then their ruling is the same.

The Tenth Benefit

Giving Attention to Issues of Disagreement

Attention must be given to clearly explaining fundamental issues of disagreement, with frequent clarification, repetition, and detailed explanation. This includes clarifying the evidences of those issues and repeating them in gatherings and appropriate occasions.

Examples include the issue of seeing Allah, and that Allah is not confined to a place; likewise, the issues of compulsion and free will; and that the truth lies with ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and the seekers of truth from the Ahl al-Bayt; and the issue of loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt. It also includes clarifying the danger of opposing the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and the invalidation of the Islam of those who oppose him in such matters.

Likewise, the issue of intercession for the people of major sins and their eventual exit from the Fire; and that none will enter Paradise except by Allah’s mercy; and that the Ummah will split into seventy-three sects, all of which will perish except one.

These matters must be given due importance by the guide, because of what results from them. Mistakes in them are not easy to overlook, and they are among the most important foundations of religion. Thus, the guide should not restrict himself to what is mentioned in al-‘Aqd ath-Thamīn or Sabīl ar-Rashād alone, for the situation requires more detailed clarification.

The Eleventh Benefit

The Severity of Obligation upon the Soul

Let the teacher, guide, and student know that Allah, Exalted is He, has built religious obligation upon what the soul dislikes and restrained it from what it desires. Acts of obedience are disliked by the soul, and sins are beloved to it.

Therefore, the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, said:

“Paradise is surrounded by hardships, and Hellfire is surrounded by desires.”

However, obligations differ in difficulty from one person to another. Some obligations are more difficult for certain souls than for others, and sins likewise vary in how attractive they are to souls. This is a known reality for every accountable person.

Based on this, the accountable person needs great striving, strong intention, and firm resolve in order to fulfill the commands of Islam and restrain his soul from disobedience. Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Truthful, narrated the words of Yūsuf, *peace be upon him*, when he said:

“And I do not acquit myself. Indeed, the soul is ever commanding to evil, except whom my Lord has mercy upon. Indeed, my Lord is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

Surah Yūsuf (12), Verse 53

Thus, the soul requires constant struggle and continuous patience in order to accept the rulings of Allah, Exalted is He. Along with this, it needs fear of Allah’s punishment and wrath, hope in what Allah has prepared for the righteous of the gardens of bliss, attentive listening to admonitions and reminders, and keeping company with the righteous.

It is also necessary to repeatedly remind the soul of these matters, to seek Allah’s help frequently, to increase supplication and seeking forgiveness, along with sincerity of intention and rectification of purpose. For whoever seeks guidance sincerely, Allah will not leave him.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And those who strive for Our sake—We will surely guide them to Our paths.”

Surah Al-‘Ankabūt (29), Verse 69

Striving against the soul is the greatest form of jihad, as mentioned in the reports.

Among the difficult obligations imposed upon the soul in the Ummah of Muḥammad *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, is Allah’s favoring of the Ahl al-Bayt of His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, obligating love for them, loyalty to them, and support for them. Because of this obligation, many people have perished, while others have attained happiness through it.

In truth, none accepts this obligation except one whose heart Allah has tested with faith. For the true believer is the one who gives precedence to obedience to Allah over the desires of his own soul, believes in the truthfulness of Allah’s promise, and trusts His pledge.

This obligation weighed heavily upon the minds of many of the early generations. Some stood firm upon it, upheld it, and passed it on to those who came after them until the Day of Judgment. Others recoiled from this divine ruling, turned away from it, resisted it, opposed it, and fought against it, yet this did not benefit them in the least. Rather, they earned humiliation and loss.

The intelligent, discerning person, when he realizes that this ruling is from Allah, Exalted is He, submits to Allah’s judgment, is content with it, and knows that he has no power to love Allah while harboring enmity toward Allah’s allies, especially His chosen ones. Thus, he attains happiness in this world and the Hereafter, Allah elevates his rank in this world, increases him in remembrance and good mention, and grants him reward for his humility, submission, and surrender to Allah’s rulings.

As for his recompense in the Hereafter, no soul knows what has been hidden for them as a delight of the eyes.

Thus, when we examine the reason and the ultimate purpose behind adopting and upholding this divine ruling, we find that it

lies in a person's awareness that within it is preservation of his dignity, protection of his honor, and safeguarding of his worth. Submission to humiliation and disgrace is not dignity, it is degradation.

One who accepts this ruling is not acknowledging humiliation for himself; rather, he is seeking true honor, dignity, elevation, and nobility. In reality, this is a noble pursuit that every rational person seeks.

However, whoever errs by seeking honor from other than its rightful source gains nothing but humiliation, disgrace, and loss. Had he known his true worth, recognized the value of his soul, understood the measure of his Creator, and realized what Allah deserves of reverence and obedience and had he believed in the truthfulness of Allah's promise and threat, he would not have fallen into what he fell into. He would have attained the desired honor, dignity, elevation, and nobility, along with the reward of this world and the excellent reward of the Hereafter.

The Twelfth Benefit

Knowing One's Proper Worth

This benefit completes the one before it. It concerns a person's knowledge of his proper worth, and in knowing this there is great benefit. As it is said: "Whoever knows his own worth will not be ruined."

A rational person does not overstep the rank that Allah has placed him in and made appropriate for him. A human being is a servant from among the servants of Allah, created, fashioned, and sustained by Allah, Glorified and Exalted. He did not create himself, nor was he brought into existence except by the One who created him.

Whoever realizes that he is a servant of Allah, that Allah has no partner, and that He alone possesses absolute power; and that he himself is weak, possessing no power to bring benefit or harm to himself except by Allah's will; and that he is in constant need of Allah's mercy, grace, kindness, care, protection, guidance, and obedience; and that Allah's punishment is severe and His taking is

painful; and that he has no escape from all of this except through submission and obedience, then such a person does not transgress against himself in his conduct and does not overstep the limits that his Lord, the Most High and the Most Great, has set.

The Thirteenth Benefit:

The Path to Safety

This benefit follows from what preceded it. A person may have full knowledge of his own worth and may know that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, deserves reverence and obedience, yet forgetfulness may overcome him, heedlessness may dominate him, and his soul that commands to evil may seize control over him. This drives him toward envy, self-admiration, arrogance, involvement in crimes, and the committing of sins.

The path to safety from this is the remembrance of Allah, Glorified and Exalted.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Indeed, prayer restrains from immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater.”

Surah Al-‘Ankabūt (29), Verse 45

Prayer, as has been narrated, is the establishment of Allah’s remembrance. Remembrance is what restrains the soul, subdues its rebellious impulses, and suppresses its arrogance.

When a person’s soul urges him toward disobedience, he remembers Allah’s power, His punishment, and what He has prepared for the sinners. Here Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Indeed, those who are mindful of Allah, when a suggestion from Satan touches them, they remember, and then they become clear-sighted.”

Surah Al-A‘rāf (7), Verse 201

Thus, remembrance of Allah repels the whisperings of Satan and the illusions of the soul that commands to evil.

The Fourteenth Benefit

Being Mindful of People’s Feelings

The guide must not rebuke people harshly before their relatives or disgrace them if they err, nor belittle them for their mistake.

Rather, he should treat them in a manner that preserves their dignity and shows them respect.

If some mistakes occur, then let him address them with gentleness and kindness, away from public exposure. Correcting people publicly is often inappropriate and ineffective. All of this falls under the principle of maintaining reconciliation and keeping guidance free from confrontation and hostility.

This approach is more appropriate and more correct. And although it may be necessary at times to prioritize the lesser of two harms, it remains a foundational principle: when two harms conflict, the lesser harm is chosen, and this is a well-established legal maxim acknowledged by people of reason and applied by scholars of foundational principles.

The Fifteenth Benefit

Adhering to the Bequest

The guide, in any country, must not go beyond the bequest of the scholars. This is because he should not interfere in matters that do not concern him. Thus, he must not intervene in promoting a candidate without nomination, nor exploit his authority to incite partisan conflict or encourage division. Rather, he must restrict himself to the mission entrusted to him, which is teaching people the principles of religion and reminding creation of Allah's promise and warning.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says:

“O you who believe, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice. He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins.”

Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33), Verses 70–71

The Sixteenth Benefit

Proper Etiquette

If the people of the locality belong to different households and hold diverse inclinations, wisdom dictates that one should not show preference toward any particular household. Rather, he should treat all of them equally.

If he shows inclination toward one group, others may envy him, and it is not appropriate for him to create division among them. He

must show concern for each individual among them and remind them in gatherings that he is a messenger to all of them equally , not a messenger from one group to another. He must be patient, endure hearing the speech of the ignorant, and show forbearance toward their harm.

This is found in the Qur’anic counsel to Luqmān when he said:

“O my son, establish prayer, command what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you.”

Surah Luqmān (31), Verse 17

Allah, Exalted is He, also said to His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace:*

“Take what is given freely, enjoin what is right, and turn away from the ignorant.”

Surah Al-A’rāf (7), Verse 199

Thus, the guide must adhere to these divine manners and discipline himself by the etiquette of the Qur’an if he seeks success in his work and wishes to reach the pleasure of his Lord and His reward.

The Seventeenth Benefit Maintaining Connection

If the teacher relocates to another area and people continue to come to him and benefit from him, he should not abandon them under the pretext that they have already learned jurisprudence of purification and prayer. Rather, they should continue to benefit from him, maintain their understanding, keep their connection with him, and take advantage of his presence.

If circumstances arise between him and them that interrupt continuity, then it is obligatory for him to visit them weekly during holidays, remind them, admonish them, teach them, and guide them.

For a tree, if its caretaker abandons it in its early days and neglects watering and care, will wither, decay, and die, and the winds will scatter it. Likewise, is the tree of knowledge planted by the guides.

The Eighteenth Benefit

Ease and Lightening the Burden

What befits the guide is to lighten matters for people during times of fatigue, work, or morning labor. Thus, he should not prolong prayer and exhortation, and he should take people's circumstances into account. He should not delay the evening prayer, but rather perform it at its earliest time.

This is particularly important for the people of villages and rural areas who experience fatigue during the day. Whoever wishes to read may complete that after the evening prayer. Likewise, lightening the burden is required in all prayers. If the congregation finds comfort in this, then there is no harm, and it should not be objected to.

The Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, disliked causing hardship to people, and this practice is in accordance with the conduct of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt, *peace be upon them*. There is no disagreement on this matter.

In general, the guide should be accommodating toward people and meet them where they are, except in matters that contradict the tolerant Islamic law. He should take care of their affairs, the rectification of their religion and worldly life, and increase supplication for the reform of their religion, worldly life, families, and children.

Allah, Exalted is He, says to His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

“And pray for them. Indeed, your prayer is reassurance for them.”

Surah At-Tawbah (9), Verse 103

And Allah, Exalted is He, says regarding those who give charity:

“And they consider what they spend as a means of closeness to Allah and the prayers of the Messenger. Indeed, it is a means of closeness for them.”

Surah At-Tawbah (9), Verse 99

Thus, the guide must adopt these Qur'anic manners.

The Nineteenth Benefit

Avoiding What Causes Discomfort

It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, *peace be upon him*, that he said:

“Leave out what people dislike, even if you have an excuse.”

In some lands, it may be objectionable for the Friday preacher to mention, after sending blessings upon the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, the names of ‘Zaid ibn Alī, al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn, and to send blessings upon them collectively.

If this is the case, then it is better to avoid mentioning them explicitly, particularly during the sermon, and to suffice with sending blessings upon them generally after mentioning the five People of the Cloak, saying: “May Allah’s blessings be upon them all.”

He should reflect before delivering the sermon on whether mentioning them will bring benefit or harm, so that people do not use this as a means to criticize the guide or cast doubt upon him, thereby exploiting the opportunity.

The guide should not make this a general rule in all situations. Rather, what is intended is leaving optional and recommended matters. As for obligatory duties, they must not be abandoned, even if objection occurs.

The Twentieth Benefit

The Need for Constant Reminding

What the guide should focus on reminding students of are the matters contained in this book. He should remind them, warn them, and repeat this often, especially since trials and tests have affected students. He should direct them to what protects them from the evils of trials, just as Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“And seek help through patience and prayer.”

Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Verse 45

And in the ḥadīth:

Whenever the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, was distressed by a matter, he would hasten to prayer.

He should encourage them to seek tranquility with Allah, to humble themselves before Him, to feel intense need of Him, to

manifest dependence upon Allah, Exalted is He, in all matters, to abandon reliance upon oneself and one's own strength, to turn entirely to Allah, rely upon Him in all affairs, seek needs from Him alone, and believe firmly in his heart that he is a weak servant who possesses nothing except by Allah's dominion.

He should guide them to increase supplication, seeking forgiveness, remembrance of Allah through glorification, praise, exaltation, and magnification, recitation of the Qur'an, and sending blessings upon the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and at the head of all of that is seeking knowledge, teaching it, and spreading it.

He should also guide them to the doors of goodness and warn them against the paths of evil, the footsteps of Satan, and persistence in sins. All of this applies to students specifically and to others in general.

The Twenty-First Benefit

Making Things Easy for Beginners

The guide must be gentle with students at the beginning. He should not be harsh with them in acquiring knowledge or memorization, as this may cause them to turn away from seeking knowledge.

Likewise, he should be gentle with them in matters of etiquette. He should not be overly strict with them regarding manners, permission-seeking, attendance, and similar matters. Rather, he should gradually train them in etiquette as their learning improves.

The guide should also act this way with elders. He should not rebuke them, complain about them, or accuse anyone of negligence or lack of concern while they are listening. Rather, he should mention only good things and show care for them. He should not expect from them except honesty.

This will increase their acceptance of him and encourage them to be diligent in teaching their children. He should also encourage their attendance, increase connection with them, visit their sick, attend their gatherings, supplicate for them, know their names and households, inquire about the absent, pray for them, maintain ties

with them, advise them, and spread goodness among them. All of this is firmly established in the authentic Sunnah.

The Twenty-Second Benefit

“Whoever Makes Allah Hear Good, Allah Will Make Him Heard”

When a guide arrives in a town where there was a previous guide before him, he must not criticize that earlier guide, whether for ignorance, lack of insight in teaching, or negligence, whether such shortcomings truly existed or not. Rather, he should build upon whatever good he finds and avoids stirring discord.

It is often narrated by the people of a town that so-and-so said this or did that, and that such-and-such occurred. The guide must not rush to attribute mistakes to the former guide or to diminish him on account of such reports, for the general public often transmit matters that are far from reality, and many of their narrations are based on assumption and conjecture.

The guide must be extremely cautious in this regard. If he errs at the outset by following his soul’s inclination to criticize the former guide, he may later find himself regretting it; having fallen into blame and fault-finding, seeking thereby to elevate himself, gain status among people, and achieve notoriety. This falls under the meaning of the narrated ḥadīth:

“Whoever makes Allah hear good, Allah will make him heard.”

Such conduct will never earn a person true elevation or honor. Rather, it only brings about humiliation through the very intention he sought, as is indicated by this ḥadīth and many other narrations reported from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*.

The Twenty-Third Benefit

The Spirit of Worship

Among the important tasks of guidance is teaching prayer and purification. For this reason, books were compiled such as al-Azhār, ‘Ulūm ad-Dīn, and The Book of Purification and Prayer.

These books have gathered everything related to purification and prayer, yet there remains something not mentioned in them.

This is what we wish to emphasize in this benefit.

In addition to what is found in those books, the guide should concern himself with teaching worshippers the meanings of prayer. He should explain to them the words of orientation, help them reflect upon them, and bring to mind the meanings that these words carry.

Likewise, he should explain the words of al-Fātiḥah and the sūrah, the words of glorification, magnification, exaltation, and praise, and the words of the testimony of faith. He should explain to them the wisdom behind bowing, prostration, standing, and sitting.

He should teach them that prayer is not complete by its outward form alone, and inform them that this inward meaning is the soul of prayer. Prayer without it is like a body without a soul.

If the guide does not know how to explain this fully, then let him suffice with explaining it at its beginning, namely, humility. This is the humility praised by Allah, Exalted is He, in Sūrat al-Mu'minūn, where He says:

*“Successful indeed are the believers,
those who are humble and submissive in their prayer.”
Surah Al-Mu'minūn (23), Verses 1-2*

Thus, the guide should not restrict himself to what is found in al-Azhār. For prayer that includes remembrance of purification, fulfillment of its conditions, pillars, obligations, and recommended acts, and in which the worshipper reflects upon its meanings, then, by Allah's willing, it is an accepted prayer. Such a prayer restrains its performer from immorality and wrongdoing, and fulfills what Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has promised His believing servants in His Noble Book.

However, all of this has outward conditions, among them sincerity of intention for Allah, the Lord of the worlds, that it not be corrupted by ostentation, love of praise, seeking status, or ulterior motives.

It is also required that the one performing it is not negligent regarding the zakāh of his wealth. For Allah, Glorified and Exalted, does not accept the prayer of one who withholds zakāh.

And it is required that the performer of the prayer be among the righteous and mindful. Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“Indeed, Allah accepts only from the righteous.”

Surah Al-Mā'idah (5), Verse 27

The Twenty-Fourth Benefit

Treating Tribalism

It is common for rivalry, envy, hostility, and cold relations to exist between households, especially in tribal communities. The effects of partisanship and tribalism are often seen, and parents pass them down to their children. A guide or outsider may not feel this, but the guide must focus his admonition on warning against envy and hatred, emphasizing what is mentioned in the books of exhortation.

He should stress the sanctity of the believer, the obligation of brotherhood, and the love that must exist among believers. He should remind them of the severe warnings against abandoning these principles and encourage them by mentioning the reward in doing so and the excellence of good conduct.

All of this is addressed in books of exhortation and guidance, such as *Kanz ar-Rashād* and its commentary, *aş-Şafwah*, and the explanation of *al-Arba'īn*, and similar works.

What is intended is that he repeatedly reads the chapters related to this topic, encourages beneficial chapters, and does not neglect this subject in any sermon or Friday address. This illness is hardly absent from any community, and he must teach people the requirements of Islamic brotherhood and remove ignorance from their hearts. Success and guidance come from Allah alone.

The Twenty-Fifth Benefit

Calling to Knowledge and Action

What the guide should direct people toward is that the one who strives for his own benefit and the benefit of his children and parents is among those promised great reward, as narrated from Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī and others.

He should explain that the one who is resurrected on the Day of Judgment will be raised according to what he directed himself

toward whether seeking knowledge or neglecting it.

Thus, if a guide is present in a locality, it becomes obligatory upon the people of that locality to learn their religion from him. After they have learned from him, they should teach what they learned to others. If there is no guide in their locality, then it is obligatory upon them to send their children to the people of knowledge so that they may learn and then return to teach their families.

Allah, Exalted is He, says:

“So why should not a group from every community go forth to gain understanding of the religion and warn their people when they return to them, so that they may be cautious.”

Surah At-Tawbah (9), Verse 122

It is not required that all of them go out to seek knowledge. Rather, they should direct them to those who are fit for it and capable of undertaking it.

The Twenty-Sixth Benefit

Self-Admiration (‘Ujb)

One must beware of self-admiration and warn against it. It is when a person looks at himself with admiration and self-satisfaction, or judges himself to be pure, righteous, and chaste, or says words of someone pleased with himself, such as: “We have fulfilled the obligations and avoided the prohibitions,” thinking that this is the peak of perfection.

Or similar statements that show a person’s admiration of himself and satisfaction with himself. What we mentioned is only some examples of self-admiration, not a complete definition. It can occur among students, teachers, guides, and others, and hardly any Muslim is completely free of it.

A situation where this may happen is when a student or guide lives in a place where he sees only people far below him in piety, or people who neglect the obligations of Islam or waste them, or someone extremely heedless of Allah’s remembrance and seeking knowledge, so he begins to see himself as having rank and status because of that.

What a believer should do in such a case is accuse himself of falling short in obeying Allah. Here Allah the Exalted says:

“Do not claim yourselves to be pure; He knows best who is truly mindful of Him.” (Surah An-Najm, Ayah 32)

It is also narrated from the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī, *peace be upon him*: the believer does not reach evening or morning except that he holds suspicions about himself (meaning: he considers himself blameworthy and under accusation). The meaning is that the believer is never satisfied with himself. Rather, he continues to accuse himself of neglecting Allah’s due, and of shortcomings in remembering Him. He constantly reproaches himself and condemns himself for his negligence and deficiency.

The cause that leads to self-satisfaction is ignorance. Therefore, Allah the Exalted says:

*“Only those of His servants who have knowledge truly fear Allah.”
(Surah Fāṭir, Ayah 28)*

What is meant by “knowledge” here is firm, deep knowledge of Allah, along with certainty in His promise and His warning. When Allah’s greatness fills a person’s heart, he does not regard his deeds as great, and he does not admire himself because of them.

This knowledge of Allah is not restricted to students alone. It is available to the student and the non-student, the reader and the non-reader.

Whoever attains knowledge of Allah and thereby gains true fear of Him has two main means: reflecting on Allah’s creations, and looking at Allah’s blessings upon a person.

First: Reflecting on Allah’s Creations

The Wise Qur’an directs minds and thoughts to fields in which they can reflect, such as Allah’s saying:

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that sail through the sea with what benefits people, and what Allah sends down from the sky of water giving life thereby to the earth after its death, and dispersing therein every creature, and directing the winds, and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth—are signs for a

people who use reason.” (Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayah 164)

And His saying:

“Were they created from nothing, or are they the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain.”

(Surah At-Ṭūr, Ayat 35–36)

And His saying:

“If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth and subjected the sun and the moon, they will surely say: Allah. So how are they turned away?” (Surah Al-‘Ankabūt, Ayah 61)

And His saying:

“Say: Who provides for you from the sky and the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? And who brings the living out of the dead and brings the dead out of the living? And who manages all affairs? They will say: Allah. So say: Will you not then be mindful?” (Surah Yūnus, Ayah 31)

(Surah Yūnus, Ayah 31)

“That is Allah, your true Lord. So what is there after the truth except misguidance? How then are you turned away?” (Surah Yūnus, Ayah 32)

In summary, a person does not look at anything except that within it is a sign of the existence of the All-Powerful Creator. And how excellent is the saying of the poet:

How astonishing, how can the God be disobeyed?

How can the denier deny Him?

In everything there is a sign for Him,

pointing to the fact that He is One.

A sufficient proof lies in the human being himself, among creation, pointing to the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing. How could it not be so, when Allah has filled the universe with clear signs, eloquent proofs, and decisive evidences?

Allah the Exalted says:

We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth.

Surah Fuṣṣilat (41:53)

Secondly: Reflecting on Allah’s Blessings upon the Human

Being

Likewise, Allah has reminded His servants in His Book of His blessings upon them and has called them to reflect upon them. Among these are the blessings of creation, hearing, sight, intellect, speech, tongue, and lips.

Allah the Exalted says:

Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided them with good things, and favored them greatly over many of those We created. Surah Al-Isrā' (17:70)

And among these blessings are health, life span, provision, memory, speech, the blessing of women and children, and countless others.

Allah the Exalted says:

And if you were to count the blessings of Allah, you would not be able to enumerate them.

Surah An-Nahl (16:18)

Yes, these are two gateways open to every person of intellect: the path to acquiring knowledge of Allah and what leads to obedience and reverence. Therefore, the guide must clarify for people the path of knowing Allah, by reminding them to reflect on creation and to enumerate Allah's blessings and remember Him.

The Twenty-Seventh Benefit

Patience in Adversity and Hardship

A guide may encounter acceptance in some lands and rejection in others. If that happens, he must not allow this to drive him away from them. Rather, he should be patient as much as he is able and strive in that path following the way of the prophets.

The Prophet Nūḥ (*peace be upon him*) remained among his people for nine hundred and fifty years, calling them day and night.

Allah the Exalted says:

He said, "My Lord, indeed I invited my people night and day, but my invitation only increased them in flight.

And every time I invited them so that You might forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears, covered themselves with their garments, persisted, and grew arrogant with great arrogance.

*Then I called to them openly.
Then I proclaimed to them publicly and privately.”
Surah Nūḥ (71:5–9)*

The consequence of Prophet Yūnus (peace be upon him) is also known, when he turned away from his people in anger before being commanded and he was swallowed into the belly of the while.

Allah the Exalted says:

*And do not be like the companion of the while.
Surah Al-Qalam (68:48)*

And Allah the Exalted says:

*So be patient as those of determination among the messengers
were patient, and do not be impatient for them.
Surah Al-Aḥqāf (46:35)*

The Twenty-Eighth Benefit

Forbearance, Endurance, and Patience

The guide should train himself in forbearance, patience, and tolerance. He should not retaliate against harsh words with harshness, nor respond to ignorance with ignorance. Rather, he should increase in gentleness, pardon poor manners, and especially excuse what is done out of ignorance. He should not seek retribution for such behavior, for that softens hearts.

From this comes the saying of Allah the Exalted to His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

*So it was by mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them. And
had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed
from around you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them.
Surah Āl ‘Imrān (3:159)*

Allah the Exalted also says:

*Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example
for whoever hopes in Allah and the Last Day.
Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33:21)*

The conduct and biography of the Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, are well known and famous.

He never responded to harm except with kindness, and this is widely recognized and well documented. Even with the polytheists who mocked him, it is narrated that he said in one instance:

“O Allah, guide my people, for they do not know.”

Anas ibn Mālik reported: “I served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years, and he never once said to me, ‘Why did you do this?’ or ‘Why did you not do that?’”

Allah the Exalted also said to His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

Take what is easy, command what is right, and turn away from the ignorant. Surah Al-A‘rāf (7:199)

It is narrated from him *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, that he said: “Insulting a believer is wickedness, and fighting him is disbelief.”

From the Prophet’s conduct it is preserved that he never took revenge for himself at all, except when the sanctity of Allah was violated, then he took action for Allah. An Arab once said to him while he was distributing spoils, “Be just.” The Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, replied: “Woe to you! Who will be just if I am not just? You will be ruined if I am not just.”

It is also narrated that the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, said: “Gentleness is not found in anything except that it beautifies it, and it is not removed from anything except that it makes it ugly.” “Allah is Gentle and loves gentleness.”

“Whoever is deprived of gentleness is deprived of all good.”

It is narrated that the first sermon he delivered when he entered Madinah was: “O people, spread peace, feed others, maintain family ties, pray at night while people sleep, you will enter Paradise in peace.”

In the advice of the Commander of the Faithful to his son al-Ḥasan, *peace be upon him*, he said to the compassionate adviser: “My son, make yourself a standard between yourself and others... and do not say what you do not like to be said to you.”

Thus, rebuking people, humiliating their secrets, exposing their faults, and addressing them with bad manners are all from the whisperings of Satan. This is not from sincere advice, nor is it a method of teaching or upbringing. Rather, guidance is the guidance of Muhammad *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, not the morals of the pre-Islamic people who fought Islam most fiercely.

As the poet said:

*Do not act ignorantly toward us,
For we will surpass the ignorance of the ignorant.*

Where are these pre-Islamic manners from the morals of the Messenger of Allah *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, which Allah praised in His saying:

*Lower your wing to the believers.
Surah Al-Hijr (15:88)*

And His saying:

*It was by mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them.
Surah Āl 'Imrān (3:159)*

And His command to pardon, to seek forgiveness for them, and to consult them, even though consulting them is not an obligation, so as to teach the community manners.

Allah the Exalted says:

*O you who believe, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate
justice. He will amend your deeds and forgive your sins.
Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33:70-71)*

And Allah the Exalted says:

*Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example
for whoever hopes in Allah and the Last Day.
Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33:21)*

The wise person should think carefully before speaking, weighing his words and considering their consequences. He should ask himself whether it is appropriate to say such words. If he would dislike someone else addressing him in that way, then he should not say it.

As it is said in the proverb: "Measure yourself by your own

standard, and judge others by the same.”

Knowledge and guidance do not lie in humiliating people, tearing down their status, belittling them, or seeking fame by exposing their faults. Guidance and knowledge are not achieved through insulting people, shaming them, or uncovering their secrets.

Rather, humility, gentleness, refinement, good speech, and noble character are among the finest morals and the most elevated qualities. Through them, people of honor, dignity, and leadership rise. Harshness in speech, poor manners, and rudeness, on the other hand, are ugly traits that lower one’s status, repel hearts, and increase aversion, especially when coming from those who claim to call to Allah and guide people for His sake.

If such behavior is ill-mannered and inappropriate, then it is even more harmful and further from guidance when used in da’wah and religious instruction. Good manners hold a great rank in Islam. The Qur’an and the Sunnah repeatedly emphasize them. Those most deserving of embodying these noble manners are the people of knowledge, students of knowledge, guides, callers to Allah, and those who act for His religion.

It should be understood that rudeness, harsh speech, and crude behavior do not lead to reform. Rather, they lead to corruption.

Among the harms of harshness and severity from a guide:

1. Turning people away from him, especially when coupled with blame and rebuke.
2. Acting contrary to the etiquette taught by Allah and the manners of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace.*
3. Causing people to hate him and turn away from him.

It is unclear what benefit a guide gain from harshness, exaggeration, or persistence in attacking others. Perhaps he seeks strength, authority, or prestige in the eyes of his supporters. Yet this contradicts the description Allah gives of the believers:

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those with him are firm against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.

Surah Al-Fath (48:29)

And Allah says:

*Allah will bring forth a people whom He loves and who love Him—
humble toward the believers, mighty against the disbelievers
Surah Al-Mā'idah (5:54)*

If a person seeks leadership, honor, and prestige through harshness, then he is mistaken. It has been said: “No one attains leadership except the forbearing.” Forbearance, forgiveness, and overlooking faults are the true foundations of leadership and honor. This is the very quality that softened people’s hearts toward the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, as Allah says:

*So it was by mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them. And had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, ask forgiveness for them, and consult them in matters.
Surah Āl 'Imrān (3:159)*

Had this noble character not existed, people would have fled from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and turned away from him.

One of the poets—al-‘Abbās ibn al-Aḥnaf—said:

*Bear a great offense from a beloved person,
even if you are wronged, say: I am the oppressor.
For if you do not pardon a fault out of love,
you will part ways while you are still attached.*

Another poet, Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī, said:

*Do not despair if matters fall short,
for leniency is generous and restraint is wise.
Forgive, and do not exhaust your patience completely,
for every matter has many paths to its goal.*

A guide should not see patience toward people and enduring their harm as weakness. Rather, it is among the greatest forms of wisdom, the noblest manners, and the most expansive path. The opposite, seeking severity and harshness, leads only to harm. True success, assistance, and firmness come from Allah alone, and from

Him we seek help and guidance.

The Twenty-Ninth Benefit Knowledge for All People

The guide should instill in the hearts of the people and the residents of the land in which he lives that knowledge is for everyone, young and old, readers and non-readers alike. Knowledge is not restricted to literacy, writing, or age. Rather, knowledge requires two things: a sound intellect and attentive hearing. Knowledge is an obligation upon every sane, hearing Muslim.

The intellect is indispensable, and so is hearing, because one cannot understand what is said without it. If these two faculties are present in a person, then seeking knowledge becomes obligatory, whether one is young or old, a reader or illiterate, male or female.

As for one who is deaf and cannot hear what is said, then Allah the Exalted excuses him. Allah says:

*Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.
Surah Al-Baqarah (2:286)*

And He says:

*Allah does not burden a soul except with what He has given it.
Surah At-Ṭalāq (65:7)*

Therefore, the guide must ensure that all people are given access to knowledge according to their level, those capable of intelligence and reading, as well as those who learn through listening.

He should also encourage writing as a means of knowledge, for both adults and children, and likewise encourage attentive listening. He should train them, at the very least, to listen, and to make use of their free time for this purpose.

The Thirtieth Benefit: Differences in Intelligence

A guide may have several students who attend lessons regularly. Some of them may be more intelligent, eager, and capable of handling more lessons than others. In such cases, the guide must increase instruction for these intelligent students by giving them additional lessons and special attention, and by assigning them

material according to their capacity.

One of the mistakes in judgment and teaching is to restrict oneself to general lessons alone, without considering the varying abilities of students, the breadth of their understanding, and their differing aspirations. If a teacher has several students and among them are those who possess intelligence and strong comprehension, then it is inappropriate to neglect them, limit their progress, or waste their time.

Indeed, the intelligent and motivated student benefits from knowledge in one month more than a less capable student benefits in an entire year.

This is a principle I have personally observed repeatedly: Some highly intelligent and eager students advance rapidly in knowledge, surpassing their peers. If their lessons are restricted and they are denied advancement, they may not progress beyond basic levels for months or even years.

Many times students have said: "Teacher, we study with you lessons that are at the same level as our peers, and you do not allow us to advance or increase lessons, because our classmates cannot handle it. So we are forced to slow down to match them."

From what has been mentioned, it becomes clear that the guide must pay special attention to the intelligent students by giving them additional lessons beyond the general ones and by caring for them personally. Even if the guide had only a single student who possessed intelligence, eagerness, and sound religion, it would be sufficient reason for him to devote himself to that student.

As stated in the prophetic proverb: *"People are like camels, among a hundred you will hardly find one fit to ride."*

And in the popular saying: "One in a hundred, and one is a blessing."

If the guide sincerely devotes himself to any group or even to a single individual and achieves the desired goal, the situation will be as the poet said:

I cast my staff and settled upon the goal, as weary eyes find rest after long journeys.

This is because whoever is like this is qualified to carry knowledge, reform lands and people, and revive religion. The poet has mentioned the prerequisites of knowledge that cannot be attained without them:

My brother, you will not attain knowledge except through six qualities;

I shall inform you of them clearly and plainly: Intelligence, eagerness, patience, sufficient provision, companionship of a teacher, and long years of dedication.

The Thirty-First Benefit

The Guide's Position toward the Disobedient

If the guide resides in any town and some of its people are from among the openly sinful and disobedient, he should not shun them. Rather, he must show them gentleness, respect, and good character. He should sit with them, speak kindly to them, and treat them with courtesy and honor.

This gentleness, good manners, and noble conduct are what will lead them to repentance and reform. Indeed, the great morals with which the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, came drew people to him and led them to enter his religion.

Allah the Exalted says:

So it was by mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them. And had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you.

And Allah the Exalted says to His Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*:

Indeed, you are of great moral character.

Surah Al-Qalam (68:4)

This is the obligatory path for guidance.

If it is said: commanding good in the matter of disobedient people requires firmness and the manifestation of opposition and hostility, as Allah says:

You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allah.

Surah Al-Mujādilah (58:22)

The answer is that dealing with sinful and disobedient people involves different situations:

The first case: What has already been mentioned at the beginning of this discussion.

The second case: After the initial stage, the guide applies admonition and reminders in a manner suited to the individual, and signs of repentance and reform may appear, even if they are not yet firmly established.

The third case: That the individual truly repents, both outwardly and inwardly, and clear signs of that appear.

The fourth case: That the individual stops openly displaying sin, but does not show repentance or reform; rather, he has merely become cautious.

The fifth case: That the individual does not stop his sinful behavior at all, but continues openly committing sins despite kindness, gentleness, and all that has been mentioned in the first stage.

These are five possible situations, and each has its own ruling.

In the first four cases, hostility and severing ties are not appropriate. In the fifth case, hostility and severing ties become appropriate until the individual desists and repents.

The evidence for all of this is found in Allah's statement regarding the first situation:

*Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction,
and argue with them in the best manner.*

Surah An-Naḥl (16:125)

This was the practice of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and his method in calling people to Allah. The Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, *peace be upon him*, have said that one should not confront the people of wrongdoing immediately, except after clear failure and the absence of benefit.

As for the second situation, the conduct of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, toward the hypocrites and his method with them applies. He did not expose

them publicly nor reveal their faults, even though the Qur'an had uncovered some of their realities. Yet he left many of them concealed and did not disgrace them.

Allah the Exalted says:

And among those around you of the Bedouins are hypocrites, and among the people of Madinah are those who persist in hypocrisy. You do not know them; We know them.

Surah At-Tawbah (9:101)

These individuals were treated according to the outward rulings applied to the believers. The wisdom behind concealing faults is to prevent exposing some people, those who were hypocrites at the time of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, from public disgrace, so that they might secretly enter Islam and cooperate with the People of the Book in secrecy.

As for the remaining hypocrites whose reality the Qur'an exposed, the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, still applied to them the outward rulings of the believers. They were people who outwardly displayed Islam while inwardly disbelieving. They neither openly denied nor openly displayed disbelief. Therefore, the rulings of Islam were applied to them as believers.

We have already explained their case earlier under the third situation and clarified their ruling, due to the lack of certainty regarding their inner state. Rather, the ruling is based on outward appearance.

The evidence for what we mentioned in the fourth situation is Allah's statement:

Allah does not forbid you from being kind and just toward those who have not fought you because of religion nor driven you out of your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

Surah Al-Mumtahanah (60:8)

Likewise, the silence of the Commander of the Faithful regarding severing ties with some of his companions, despite his knowledge of their acts of disobedience, was because of what appeared from their steadfastness in their striving, their standing with him, and

their participation in struggle alongside him. Thus, he refrained from hostility toward them and applied to them the rulings of believers until they openly displayed disobedience, openly opposed obedience, and withdrew their hands from obedience. Only then did hostility toward them become justified.

Therefore, in the fourth situation mentioned, severing ties is not required, as long as concealment remains as we described and as long as the path of guidance is not abandoned.

The Thirty-Second Benefit

The Exemplary Method

Indirect admonition is more effective in reforming the sinner's soul and more beneficial in achieving the intended purpose. Especially when the preacher directs his admonition without addressing the person directly and without making it apparent that he is referring to him.

Thus, the guide should not direct his admonition at a specific individual by pointing out a particular sin. Rather, he should make the admonition general for the people, warn against sins in general, mention the consequences, and highlight the gravity of the act, adding detail according to what the situation requires.

This is the method of the Noble Qur'an and the method of the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*. The guide should choose the most beneficial approach in admonition—one that is eloquent, impactful, and gentle—and avoid what leads to alienation, aversion, and resentment.

The guide should also avoid allowing anyone to attack another person verbally. It is narrated from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, that he said:

“Let none of you convey to me anything about my companions, for I love to come out to you with a sound heart.”

The Thirty-Third Benefit

A Comprehensive Benefit , Purity of the Heart from Corruption

It is narrated that the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, was asked: “O Messenger of Allah, who is the

best of people?" He said: "Everyone whose heart is pure and whose tongue is truthful."

It was said: "We know what a truthful tongue is, but what is a pure heart?" He said: "It is the heart that is pious, pure-free from sin, injustice, rancor, and envy."

Corruption of the heart inevitably leads to corruption of righteous deeds and stains their purity, so that no benefit or uprightness remains in them. When envy settles in the heart, it drives its owner toward imagination, fabrications, lies, and false accusations against people concerning matters he himself does not believe. It pushes him to belittle matters, exaggerate them, and then to harshness and hostility, until he cuts off what Allah has commanded to be maintained, spreads corruption in the land, and ruins himself.

The envious person finds no relief except when he sees someone to compete with someone he can provoke, harm, and corrupt. People have long recognized, even in their ignorance, that envy is borne only by the ignoble. As for people of dignity, they rise above it.

It is said:

Envy does not dwell except in a lowly soul, Nor does honor or noble character fall to one of its kind.

Envy is the seed of corruption from which grow hatred, malice, rivalry, slander, gossip, transgression against people, foul suspicion, severing of ties, corruption in the land without right, and betrayal of trust.

It burdens its possessor with opposition to truth, hostility toward creation, and constant disputation. He accepts no excuse, does not pardon a mistake, does not forgive a sin, and when this happens, mercy is stripped from his heart, harshness takes hold of it, and cruelty overwhelms him.

At that point, he sees the ruin of others as his own gain, even though it is nothing but loss because envy is itself pure loss.

The envious person remains in constant turmoil, his chest constricted, because the worldly pleasures he covets exist in the

hands of others, not his own. This, in itself, is sufficient torment.

It has already been mentioned that Iblīs, when he saw that Adam had attained the honor Allah granted him, was overcome by envy. Because of that envy, he refused obedience and rejected submission. He said:

“He said, ‘Because You have led me astray, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them, and from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them grateful.’”

(Qur’an 7:16-17)

This is because the envier has no strategy other than plotting against those who possess blessings.

The poet said:

“The envier is afflicted when he cannot attain its like; Thus all people become his enemies and rivals.”

It would have been more appropriate for the envier to turn to his Lord and ask Him for His bounty, for Allah’s favor is not diminished by giving it to others. As Allah the Exalted says:

“And do not wish for that by which Allah has favored some of you over others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of His bounty. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing of everything.”

(Qur’an 4:32)

So whoever is prevented from something before attaining it should not be distressed by it afterward. Indeed, Allah’s bounty is vast, and His command is wise.

We seek refuge in Allah from envy, for when it settles in the heart, it is extremely difficult to cure. Removing it is hard, and extinguishing its heat is difficult. It is said proverbially: “The final remedy is cauterization,” meaning that fire is extinguished only by fire. Thus, envy consumes the envier. Even if what was envied disappears, regret at that point does not benefit him.



The Nature of Envy

Yes, the nature of envy that a person finds within himself is something he cannot easily rid himself of, because it is an instinct and an inborn disposition upon which souls have been created. Human nature, by its disposition, calls toward wrongdoing, injustice, and corruption.

Allah, Glorified and Exalted, when He called His servants to abandon envy, did not intend that they uproot it completely from within themselves, nor that they suppress it without feeling it or experiencing its pull. Rather, what He intended is what lies within a person's ability and capacity.

Thus, a person is obligated to restrain his tongue and his hand, and to restrain all his limbs from acting upon what the nature of envy calls him to do. He is able not to belittle anyone, not to violate anyone's honor, to humble himself toward his brothers, to pray for goodness for them in this world and the Hereafter, to strive sincerely for their benefit, to remember their virtues, to protect their honor, to defend them, and not to harbor resentment in his heart. Whoever does this have obeyed the inclinations of his soul.

But whoever follows the desires of his soul, then he has not exercised patience, as Allah the Exalted says:

“But as for the one who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained the soul from desire, then indeed Paradise will be the refuge.”

(Qur'an 79:40-41)

So the true believer is the one whose obedience to his Lord outweighs his obedience to the desires of his own soul.

And this is the love by which Allah praised the believers, as in His saying:

“And those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.”

(Qur'an 2:165)

For love of Allah, the Exalted, necessitates preferring obedience to Him over obedience to one's own soul, and giving precedence to what Allah loves over what one's own soul loves.



Striving Against the Self (Jihād al-Nafs)

Likewise, all acts of obedience are only attained by opposing the soul and restraining it from its desires. Every command that Allah, the Exalted, gives His servant contains something that the soul calls toward its opposite.

For example, affirming belief in Allah and His Messenger: the soul resists it, argues against it, and struggles with the doubt that its nature demands. The servant is not required to remove doubt completely from himself; rather, he is required not to respond to the call of doubt, to weaken it, and to break its force by looking, reflecting, and pondering over the signs of Allah and the Book of Allah.

From here Allah the Exalted says:

“And We send down of the Qur’an that which is a healing and a mercy for the believers.”

(Qur’an 17:82)

Through reflection on the Book of Allah, doubt is repelled, weakened, and broken. Thus, the servant is always in need of striving against his soul, opposing it, disciplining it, and forcing it into obedience in every act of obedience.

Success in gaining control over the soul and compelling it to struggle depends on attaining reverent fear of Allah and fear of His punishment.

Were it not for the great hardship that the servant endures in struggling against his soul and repelling its desires in everything he has been commanded, he would not deserve the lofty ranks in Paradise. Therefore, Allah the Exalted said, as mentioned previously:

“But as for the one who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained the soul from desire, then indeed Paradise will be the refuge.”

(Qur’an 79:40–41)

Allah the Exalted calls the servant to His obedience—so whoever responds to Allah’s call and turns toward His obedience is a believer. But whoever turns away from the call to Allah’s

obedience, inclines toward responding to desire, and obeys it, has thereby departed from responding to Allah's call.

Such a person has worshiped his desire instead of Allah. Therefore, the name of disbelief and its rulings become applicable to him, even if some of its legal rulings are not outwardly enforced upon him.

Allah the Exalted says:

"Have you seen the one who takes his own desire as his god?"

(Qur'an 45:23)

At the beginning of this matter, the influence of the soul's desires may gradually weaken. The person at first finds severe difficulty, suffering intense hardship, exhaustion, and heavy struggle. Then that difficulty and suffering lessen in the second stage, and continue to diminish further, until finally the soul becomes compliant and is easily led.



Conclusion

One should frequently engage in supplication and humble entreaty to God Most High at appropriate times, especially during moments of solitude with oneself and calmness, and among the transmitted supplications:

(All praise is Yours, O Allah; there is no deity except You, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed. O Allah, remove from us worry, grief, and tribulation, what is apparent of it and what is hidden. Our Lord, pour upon us patience and cause us to die as Muslims. Glory be to You, our Lord, Lord of Might, above what they ascribe, and peace be upon the messengers, and praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.)

Seeking forgiveness has great benefit in it, good for this world and the Hereafter, so a person should not neglect it.

Finally, I have set down in these pages all that I deemed beneficial for the rightly guided and seekers of knowledge. I ask God to make it something good and beneficial; it falls under the obligation of offering sincere advice.

Our Lord, pour upon us patience and cause us to die as Muslims.

Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Might, above what they ascribe; and peace be upon the messengers; and praise be to God, Lord of the worlds.

And may God send blessings upon Muhammad and his pure family, and grant abundant peace.



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