



# PREREQUISITES OF A STUDENT OF 'ILM

*By SiblingsOfIIm*

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# EXAMPLES FROM THE LIVES OF SCHOLARS

- Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله had split his hours of the night in three: one third for seeking knowledge; one third for sleeping and one third for worship.
- Imam Bukhari رحمه الله never ate any curry for forty years. He would suffice on dry chapatti or four to five almonds.
- Ibn Suhnun’s servant fed him dinner whilst he was writing but he didn’t even realise!

# EXAMPLES FROM THE LIVES OF SCHOLARS

- Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله had split his hours of the night in three: one third for seeking knowledge; one third for sleeping and one third for worship.
- Only for the acquisition of one ḥadīth – which he had already heard, but wanted to hear it from a Sahabi who was connected to a higher chain, Sayyiduna Jābir رضي الله عنه travelled from Madinah to Damascus, approximately 1500 KM. [Bukhari]

# VIRTUE OF KNOWLEDGE

There are numerous Aḥadīth which state the virtue of knowledge:

➤ Uthmān ibn Affān رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The most superior among you are those who learn the Holy Qur'ān and teach it.”

[Bukharī]

➤ Abdullah ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “A single scholar of religion is more formidable against Shaytān than a thousand devout people.” [Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah]

# VIRTUE OF KNOWLEDGE

Statements of prominent scholars:

- Abdullah ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه said: “The scholars have stations which are seven hundred ranks above the (ordinary) believers, and between each rank is a distance of five hundred year journey.”
- Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله said: “Seeking knowledge is better than voluntary prayers.”  
[Majmu’ Sharh Al-Muhadhab]
- Mu’āwiyah رضي الله عنه who said, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: “Whomsoever Allah wishes well for, He gives him understanding in religion.”

# NIYYAH (INTENTION)

One's intention should be the attainment of the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

*Constantly tell yourself: "I am seeking 'ilm so that I may become aware of what The Creator and The Sustainer becomes pleased with, And those actions which displease Him. I shall perform those actions which please him and distance myself from those actions which displease him. And once knowing this I will not suffice with acting upon it myself rather I will also inform others."*

# NIYYAH (INTENTION)

- Renew one's intention at every juncture in one's study. Before studying, whilst studying, and after completing studies.

(Agreed Upon) **إنما الأعمال بالنيات**

(Sahih al-Bukhari) **إنما الأعمال بالخواتيم**

# NIYYAH (INTENTION)

- The incident of the King and Imam Ghazālī رحمه الله .
- An action done purely for Allāh's sake is undoubtedly superior to one that is coupled with a desire to gain something worldly. However, if the motive for performing an act of worship is mixed with ostentation, even to the slightest degree, then the action will not be accepted by Allāh.

# NIYYAH (INTENTION)

What happens if an action is started with a pure intention, but the notion of ostentation occurs afterwards?

- Imām Aḥmad and Ḥasan al- Baṣrī (may Allāh have mercy on them) have expressed hope that the person will still be rewarded based on his initial intention in spite of the enter of ostentation whilst performing the action.
- You've completed the first step of realisation, now complete the step of renewing!

# SEEKING 'ILM — ADAB TOWARDS TEACHERS

- In the past they (*the seekers*) would go and search out a teacher and take from him what he knew. Statement attributed to Ibn Sirin رحمه الله:

إن هذا العلم دين: فانظروا عمن تأخذون دينكم

- As institutions became established, a new set up began. The system we have today. However many of the principles of etiquettes and foundational bond between a student and teacher remain the same. Two things are vital for a Student of 'Ilm:

1. Ita'at (obedience)
2. Khidmat
3. Azmat

Each of the above require a balance.

# SEEKING 'ILM — ADAB TOWARDS TEACHERS

A student should:

- Follow his teacher and humble himself before him/her.

Knowledge cannot be gained except through humbleness and listening attentively. A student should follow the advice given to him by his teacher in studying and he should leave his opinion to the side because the mistake of his teacher will be more beneficial for him than his own correct opinion". (Imam Gazzali)

- Honour his teacher and praise him/her.
- Not forget his teacher's favours.
- Be patient when being reprimanded by a teacher.
- Thank our teachers for their guidance.

# SEEKING 'ILM — ADAB TOWARDS TEACHERS

Some practical examples:

- Not point one's feet in the direction of the teacher.
- Not to sit with one's back facing the teacher.
- Not to engage in arguments, debates or disagreements with the teacher.
- Maintaining good punctuality.
- Having the presence of the mind and soul during lessons ensuring that full concentration is given.

In general scenarios look at what the situation dictates. Remember, each teacher has their own personality, so respect each one accordingly.

# SEEKING 'ILM — ADAB TOWARDS TEACHERS

How do you respect a teacher when studying online? Like right now! (Although I'm not your teacher!)

- The manner in which you address/write to your teacher.
- Behave as though you are in their presence.
- Respect for teacher, as well the dars of Qur'an and ḥadīth he is delivering can be shown just as you would if you were in front of him/her by creating your working space as an environment of learning.

# THE CORRECT MIND-SET

Maintaining the correct mind-set whilst studying is extremely important. Why did you start? What motivated you?

- Write these things down and constantly remind yourself.
- A student of i'lm is a Shaytān's workshop, you're prone to the whispers of Shaytān because of the field of work you're into – be more vigilant and prepared.

# THE CORRECT MIND-SET — PUNCTUALITY

A student can be deceived into believing that if he was to miss a lesson he can catch up by attending other lessons or get notes from a fellow student or read one of the many books available on the topic. This thought is in fact a big deceit from Shaytan because the method of attaining the knowledge from other than a teacher cannot be compared with the blessings which are attained by taking the knowledge directly from a teacher.

➤ Example of Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyyah رحمه الله.

# SPREADING I'LM

Remember what we learnt in the intention section? I'lm is not only to implement yourself, rather to also share with others.

We have many tools today that create ease of spreading the I'lm we learn – you would obviously share the appropriate subjects.

If every student that has attended the course today writes a post worth one paragraph on the same topic for a week, we would have our own book consisting of over hundred pages!

# SPREADING I'LM

We have:

- Social Media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook etc)
- Messaging Services (WhatsApp, MSN Messenger etc)
- Word of Mouth
- Your actions

# TAZKIYYAH – SPIRITUALITY

*Tazkiyah* refers to the cleansing of one’s heart from the spiritual illnesses – and this is detrimental for a student in order for the pure I’lm to seep into one’s heart.

*Imam Shafi رحمه الله to Waki` ibn Jarrah رحمه الله (his teacher)*

شَكَوْتُ إِلَى وَكَيْعٍ سُوءَ حِفْظِي      فَأَرْشَدَنِي إِلَى تَرْكِ الْمَعَاصِي  
وَأَخْبَرَنِي بِأَنَّ الْعِلْمَ نُورٌ      وَنورُ اللَّهِ لَا يُوْتِي لِعَاصِي

*I complained to Waki’ about my poor memory:*

*“Give up your sins!” was his advice to me;*

*“For knowledge is a light from Divinity,  
and the Light of God is veiled by iniquity.”*

# CONCLUDING WORDS

- Go over these notes constantly.
- You're the heir of the ambiya, remember that! The title comes with great responsibility.
- Constantly ask Allah for assistance, make du'a. Bring the dhikr of Allah into your life.

■ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَوِدِعُكَ مَا قَرَأْتُ وَمَا حَفَظْتُ، فَرُضُهُ عَلَيَّ عِنْدَ حَاجَتِي إِلَيْهِ، إِنَّكَ عَلَى مَا تَشَاءُ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنْتَ حَسْبِي وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

■ اللَّهُمَّ لَا سَهْلًا إِلَّا مَا جَعَلْتَهُ سَهْلًا وَأَنْتَ تَجْعَلُ الْحَزْنَ إِذَا شِئْتَ سَهْلًا

■ اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ لِي فِي قَلْبِي نُورًا وَبَصْرًا وَفَهْمًا وَ عِلْمًا إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

REMEMBER SIBLINGS OF I'LM AND THEIR ADMINS IN YOUR DU'AS.

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JAZAK' ALLAH HU KHAYRAN

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