

financial crisis hit Kuwait, many people were left crippled with debt and I began to read books on the study of law. Moreover, my long struggle with the Public Authority for Minors' Affairs, the institution responsible for managing my father's estate, led me to the study of *waqf*—Islamic charitable endowments—and relevant judicial cases. Personally, I grew fascinated with Islamic architecture, so I began collecting books on the architecture of Spain and North Africa. Soon I found that I had built my own new library with works on such a wide variety of subjects such as architecture, engineering, accounting, Islamic law, and all that could satisfy my inquisitive appetite.

More recently, now that I am retired, nostalgia has brought me back to my love for literature and history. I read most of the works of the Iraqi intellectual Dr. Ali Al-Wardi, the novels of Alif Shafak, the historical essays of Youssef Ziedan, and almost anything I can find on the history of Sufism in Islam. The love of reading knows no age, and what better advice might I give you than to instill in your children the love of books. Do this and they will always carry such love for the rest of their lives.

Reading is an art of contemplation and reflection, and one who does not read can easily be misled with ideas that may be distorted by extremism. To prove my point, a conservative friend of mine once came to visit and he noticed our dog in the backyard. He remarked that dogs are unclean animals and that the angels do not enter a house in which a dog resides. So I asked him to which of the schools of Islam he adhered, and he answered that he followed the doctrine of Malik. Now the doctrine of Malik is the commonly accepted school of Islamic thought within the State of Kuwait, and so I told my friend, "In that case you should have no problem