



# Conditions for a Student of Knowledge

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## One: Introduction

In this episode, I will talk about what is required from a student of knowledge. One seeking knowledge needs to understand that knowledge has prerequisites/conditions which need to be met for one to attain knowledge or for it to be said that one has knowledge. The scholars call these the ‘conditions of knowledge’. When the speech of the scholars regarding this is analysed it is known that these conditions return back to four matters, which when combined, demonstrate that one has attained knowledge.

1. The condition of worship: that the person performs acts of worship
2. The condition of mannerism/etiquettes that a person needs to uphold
3. The condition of methodology to seek knowledge
4. The condition of having understanding

These four are what is going to be discussed in more detail. Prior to explaining these, I would like to mention that Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) described the people of knowledge, in the Qur’ān, with two main qualities:

1. Grounded in knowledge: those whose legs are deeply rooted in the ground, therefore, if one pushes them they will not easily fall over. This indicates that they are grounded in their understanding and precision in knowledge. Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) says:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُّحَكَّمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأَخْرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَمَمَا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ رَيْغَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلُهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلُّ مَنْ عِنْدَ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

“He is the One Who has revealed to you the Book, of which some verses are precise—they are the foundation of the Book—while others are elusive. Those with deviant hearts follow the elusive verses seeking ‘to spread’ doubt through their ‘false’ interpretations—but none grasps their ‘full’ meaning except Allah. **And/As for those well-grounded in knowledge**, they say: We believe in this—it is all from our Lord. But none will be mindful ‘of this’ except people of reason.”<sup>1</sup>

In this verse, Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) mentions that the Qur’ān is divided in to two: verses which are clear cut and verses which are vague/ambiguous. Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) then states that He knows meaning of the verses which are ambiguous and then He mentions those that are grounded in knowledge. There are two ways that this can recited: (1) To stop after Allāh; which means that Allāh is the only one who knows the meaning and those grounded in knowledge say they believe in everything from Allāh. (2) To continue after Allāh; which means that Allāh and those who are grounded in knowledge know the meaning of those vague verses.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-‘Imrān: 7

2. Rabbānīyūn: godly and acts upon his knowledge. Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) says:

﴿مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيهِ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُوْنُوا عَبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُوْنُوا رَبَّانِينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ﴾

“It is not appropriate for someone who Allah has blessed with the Scripture, wisdom, and prophethood to say to people: Worship me instead of Allah. Rather, he would say: Be devoted to the worship of your Lord ‘alone’—in accordance with what these prophets read in the Scripture and what they taught.”<sup>2</sup>

Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) mentions that it is not possible for a person to be given the Qur’ān and Sunnah and then for them to say to the people to worship and be a slave to them. It is not possible, that Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) chose a person to be a prophet and be bestowed with the Sunnah and they say such a thing. Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) will only chose a person who would call to His way; being devoted to the worship of Allāh alone in accordance with what the prophets read in the scripture and what they taught.

al-Qurtubī (رحمه الله) commented on this verse and said:

”فَمَعْنِي الرِّبَّانِيِّ الْعَالَمِ بِدِينِ الرَّبِّ الَّذِي يَعْمَلُ بِعِلْمِهِ؛ لَأَنَّهُ إِذَا لَمْ يَعْمَلْ بِعِلْمِهِ فَلَيْسَ بِعَالَمٍ“

“The meaning of al-Rabbānī is the ‘Ālim of the religion of the Lord who acts upon their knowledge; because if they do not act upon their knowledge then they are not an ‘Ālim”<sup>3</sup>

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) made a powerful statement regarding this word and said:

”وَالرِّبَّانِيُّ الَّذِي يَرِيُ النَّاسَ بِصَغَارِ الْعِلْمِ قَبْلَ كَبَارِهِ“

“al-Rabbānī is the one who cultivates the people upon small knowledge before the greater knowledge”<sup>4</sup>

This means that he educates the people accordingly and appropriately.

Upon contemplation, the verse speaking about being grounded in knowledge, is on the first page of Al-‘Imrān and the verse where Allāh talks about being a Rabbānī is the 79<sup>th</sup> verse of the same Sūrah. The sequence provides us with some benefit which is that in order to be someone who teaches and educates the people they have to be a person who has knowledge. Hence why Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) spoke about them as grounded in knowledge and then they are able to go out and teach the people.

The companions and those from the early generation would not refer to knowledge as mere information which a person has. Rather, it was someone who is grounded, acts upon their knowledge and educates people with that knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> Al-‘Imrān: 79

<sup>3</sup> Tafsīr al-Qurtubī

<sup>4</sup> Tafsīr al-Qurtubī

## Two: Condition of Worship

There are many characteristics which fall under this condition.

1. **a1-Ikhlas:** In order for an act of worship to be accepted by Allāh it needs to be sincerely for His sake alone.

Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) said:

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حَنِفاءَ وَيَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيمَةِ﴾

"even though they were only commanded to worship Allah 'alone' with sincere devotion to Him in all uprightness, establish prayer, and pay alms-tax. That is the upright Way."<sup>5</sup>

Also, Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبْلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

"As for those who struggle in Our cause, We will surely guide them along Our Way. And Allah is certainly with the good-doers."<sup>6</sup>

Seeking knowledge is a form of striving and therefore it should be performed for the sake of Allāh, then Allāh will guide you on the straight path.

Therefore, the first condition which one needs to have is 'Ibādah and this is not accepted without sincerity.

Every action is based on its intention as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى..."

"Verily, deeds are only with intentions and every person will have only what they intended..."<sup>7</sup>

The poet said:

"وَالْبَيْتُ لَا يُبَتَّنِي إِلَّا لَهُ عَمَدٌ \*\*\* وَلَا عِمَادٌ إِذَا لَمْ تُرْسَ أَوْتَادٌ"

"And the building is not built except that it has pillars \*\*\* and there are no pillars unless the pegs are set"

The pillar for worship is sincerity and without it ones worship will collapse. Thus, if one looks at the early scholars of Islām, they made sure that they worked on their intention.

Imām Sufyān al-Thawrī (رَجُلُ اللَّهِ) said:

"مَا عَالَجْتُ شَيْئًا أَشَدَّ عَلَيَّ مِنْ نِيَّتِي ، إِنَّهَا تَقْلِبُ عَلَيَّ"

"I have never dealt with anything more difficult than my intention, it keeps changing on me"<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> al-Bayyinah: 5

<sup>6</sup> al-'Ankabūt: 69

<sup>7</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 54 and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1907

<sup>8</sup> Al-Jāmi' li-al-Akhlāq al-Rāwī wa Ādāb al-Sāmi' by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 1/317

Sincerity requires continuous work and if one does not have the correct intention then their action will not be accepted.

Abū'l-Hassan 'Alī Ibn 'Umar Imām al-Dāraqutnī (رضي الله عنه) who was known as the 'Leader of the Believers in Hadīth' and was said to be at the level of Imām Ahmad and Imām al-Bukhārī said:

"طلبنا العلم لغير الله فأبى أن يكون إلا لله"

"We sought knowledge for other than Allāh and it refused to be except for Allāh"

In other words, this means that at the beginning when one is seeking knowledge then they may do it because their parents or others are encouraging them to seek it and therefore, their intention may not be purely for the sake of Allāh. However, after one begins to taste the sweetness of knowledge and realise what they are doing then their intention becomes for the sake of Allāh. Therefore, if a student's intention is not correct in the beginning they should continue to seek knowledge and should not stop but aim to perfect their intention.

Some of my scholars used to say that these issues of insincerity should not be brought to the beginner student of knowledge because they do not usually suffer with this. It is usually those who have started to seek knowledge, memorised a few things and start becoming fascinated with themselves, this is when it can enter their heart – May Allāh protect us from this.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"إِنَّ أَوَّلَ النَّاسِ يُقْضَى يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهِ... وَرَجُلٌ تَعْلَمَ الْعِلْمَ وَعَلِمَهُ وَقَرَا الْقُرْآنَ فَأَتَى بِهِ فَعَرَفَهُ نِعْمَةُ فَعَرَفَهَا قَالَ فَمَا عَمِلْتَ فِيهَا قَالَ تَعْلَمْتُ الْعِلْمَ وَعَلِمْتُهُ وَقَرَأْتُ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنَ قَالَ كَذَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّكَ تَعْلَمْتَ الْعِلْمَ لِيُقَالَ عَالِمٌ وَقَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ لِيُقَالَ هُوَ قَارِئٌ فَقَدْ قِيلَ ثُمَّ أُمِرَ بِهِ فَسُحِبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ حَتَّى أُلْقِيَ فِي النَّارِ..."

"Verily, the first people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection...Another man studied religious knowledge, taught others, and recited the Quran. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known, and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do with them? The man will say: I learned religious knowledge, taught others, and I recited the Quran for Your sake. Allah will say: You have lied, for you studied only that it would be said you are a scholar and you recited the Quran only that it would be said you are a reciter, thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire..."<sup>9</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"يَا نَعَيَا الْعَربِ! يَا نَعَيَا الْعَربِ! ثَلَاثًا ، إِنَّ أَخْوَفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمُ الرِّيَاءُ وَالشَّهْوَةُ الْخَفِيَّةُ"

"O' destruction to the Arab! O' destruction to the Arab! *Three times*. That which I fear most for you is showing off and the hidden desires"<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1905

<sup>10</sup> al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah 2/20

Ibn al-Athīr (رحمه الله) said:

"والشهوةُ الخفيةُ حُبُّ اطلاع الناسِ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ"

"and the hidden desires is the love to want people to see your actions"<sup>11</sup>

This can enter the human in many different ways and forms.

"نَظَرَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ، إِلَى أُبَيِّ بْنِ كَعْبٍ وَمَعْهُ نَاسٌ، فَعَلَاهُ بِالدَّرَّةِ، فَقَالَ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَا تَصْنَعُ؟ قَالَ: «إِنَّهَا فِتْنَةٌ لِلْمُتَبَّعِ، وَمَذَلَّةٌ لِلتَّابِعِ»"

"Umar Ibn al-Khattāb looked at Ubayy Ibn Ka'b and he was surrounded by people, so he flogged his whip, then Ubayy said: O Leader of the Believers, why have you done this? He said: This is a trial for the one followed and a humiliation for the one following."<sup>12</sup>

A student of knowledge should always remember this. Do not make yourself a person that people always have to be around because it is a trial for yourself and a humiliation for them.

It was mentioned in the biography of Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (رحمه الله) that he said – as narrated by Shu'bah (رحمه الله):

"ذِكْرُتُ، وَلَا أُحِبُّ أَنْ أُذْكَرَ"

"I am mentioned and I do not like to be mentioned"<sup>13</sup>

Also, Shu'bah (رحمه الله) said:

"رَبِّمَا ذَهَبْتُ مَعَ أَيُوبَ لِحَاجَةٍ، فَلَا يَدْعُنِي أَمْشِي مَعَهُ، وَيَخْرُجُ مِنْ هَا هُنَا وَهَا هُنَا؛ لَكِي لَا يُفَطَّنَ لَهُ"

"Perhaps I would go out with Ayyūb for a need and he would not let me walk with him, he would exit from over here and there; so that no one would recognise him"<sup>14</sup>

Hammād Ibn Zayd (رحمه الله) said:

"وَكُنْتُ أَمْشِي مَعَهُ، فَيَأْخُذُ فِي طُرُقٍ، إِنِّي لَا عَجَبُ لَهُ كَيْفَ يَهْتَدِي لَهَا، فِرَارًا مِنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ يُقَالَ: هَذَا أَيُوبُ"

"I would walk with him and he would take me through shortcuts and I was fascinated regarding how he would take these, out of escaping from the people and that they say: this is Ayyūb"<sup>15</sup>

Ayyūb (رحمه الله) did not like this and would run away from it. However, now we become angry if someone does not recognise us as sincerity is dying out.

Bishr Ibn al-Hārith (رحمه الله) said:

"مَا اتَّقَى اللَّهُ مِنْ أَحَبَّ الشُّهْرَةَ"

<sup>11</sup> al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Hadīth 2/516

<sup>12</sup> al-Zuhd by Ibn al-Mubārak

<sup>13</sup> Siyar 'Alām 6/22

<sup>14</sup> Siyar 'Alām 6/22

<sup>15</sup> Siyar 'Alām 6/22

"One has not feared Allāh if they love to be known"<sup>16</sup>

Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) said:

"أَرِيدُ أَنْ أَكُونَ فِي شَغْبٍ بِمَكَّةَ حَتَّى لَا أُعْرَفَ، فَدُبِلْتُ بِالشَّهْرَةِ"

"I want to reside in a valley of Makkah so I am not known; for verily I have been tested with fame"<sup>17</sup>

One story which touched me is regarding ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (رحمه الله).

It was mentioned that ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak went to a place to collect some water. There were many people crowding the well throwing their buckets in to collect water. Due to the crowd and no-one knowing who he was, he got pushed and almost fell. He said: All Praise be to Allāh; let this be life, that I live unknown to the people.

This was the sincerity of the scholars from the Salaf.

It was mentioned that: a man came from Tarasūs to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and told him that the people who are fighting the disbelievers all pray for you. Imām Ahmad's face changed and he said:

"لَيَتَهُ لَا يَكُونُ اسْتَدْرَاجًا"

"I hope this is not a reward for me in this life rather than the hereafter"<sup>18</sup>

Allāh (عزوجل) said:

﴿سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حِينٍ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ - وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ﴾

"We will gradually draw them to destruction in ways they cannot comprehend. I 'only' delay their end for a while, but My planning is flawless."<sup>19</sup>

Also, Allāh (عزوجل) said:

﴿فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرَحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخْذَنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ﴾

"When they became oblivious to warnings, We showered them with everything they desired. But just as they became prideful of what they were given, We seized them by surprise, then they instantly fell into despair!"<sup>20</sup>

Another story which was surprising is that which was mentioned by Abū Bakr al-Marrūdhī (رحمه الله):

"رَأَيْتُ طَبِيبًا نَصَارَانِيًّا خَرَجَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَحْمَدَ وَمَعْهُ رَاهِبٌ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّهُ سَأَلَنِي أَنْ يَحِيَّهُ مَعِي لِيَرِي أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، وَأَدْخَلْتُ نَصَارَانِيًّا عَلَى أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: إِنِّي لَا شَهِي أَنْ أَزَّاكَ مُنْذُ سِينَينَ، مَا بَقَاؤَكَ صَلَاحٌ"

<sup>16</sup> Hilyah al-Awliyā 8/346

<sup>17</sup> Siyar 'Alām 11/216

<sup>18</sup> Siyar 'Alām 11/210

<sup>19</sup> al-'A'rāf: 182-183

<sup>20</sup> al-An'ām: 44

**لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَحْدَهُمْ، بَلْ لِلْخَلْقِ جَمِيعًا، وَلَيْسَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا أَحَدٌ إِلَّا وَقَدْ رَضِيَ بِكَ. فَقُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ: إِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ يَكُونَ يُدْعَى لَكَ فِي جَمِيعِ الْأَمْصَارِ.** فَقَالَ: يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ، إِذَا عَرَفَ الرَّجُلُ نَفْسَهُ، فَمَا يَنْفَعُهُ **كَلَامُ النَّاسِ**"

"I saw a Christian doctor leaving from Ahmad and with him was a monk, he said: He asked me to come with him to see Abā 'Abdillāh. The Christian entered upon Abā 'Abdillāh and said to him: for many years I have hoped to see you, your presence is not only a benefit for Islām alone rather for all creation, and there is not from our companions anyone except that they are pleased with you. It was said to Abī 'Abdillāh: I hope that everyone around the world supplicates for you. He responded: O Abā Bakr, if a person knows themselves, then what benefit is the speech of the people"<sup>21</sup>

One time, Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) was told that everywhere people go they supplicate for him and speak highly of him. So they asked him, how he shows gratitude for this. He responded: I ask Allāh not to make me from those who show off.

Brothers and Sisters, this shows us the importance of not wanting to be at the forefront.

'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Abī Laylā (رحمه الله) said:

"أَدْرَكْتُ عَشْرِينَ وَمِائَةً مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ-، أَرَاهُ قَالَ: فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، فَمَا [كَانَ] مِنْهُمْ مُحَدِّثٌ إِلَّا وَدَأَنَّ أَخَاهُ كَفَاهُ الْحَدِيثُ، وَلَا مُفْتِ إِلَّا وَدَأَنَّ أَخَاهُ كَفَاهُ الْفَتِيَّا"

"I met one-hundred and twenty from the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (صلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). When they were in the Masjid, there would not be one who spoke except that he loved for his brother to suffice him of speech, nor would one give a verdict except that they loved for his brother to suffice him with the verdict."<sup>22</sup>

They loved to hide because they knew that Allāh loves the slave who is pure, sincere and hidden.

## 2. Acting upon the knowledge

The Salaf; from the Companions, Tābi'in, and atbā al-Tābi'in never considered someone to have knowledge unless they acted upon it.

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said: that one of the reasons for the blessing of knowledge being removed is not acting upon the knowledge.

Allāh (عزوجل) spoke badly about the people who do not act upon their knowledge. Allāh (عزوجل) said:

﴿كَبُرُّ مَقْتَنِا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

"How despicable it is in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do!"<sup>23</sup>

'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) said:

<sup>21</sup> Siyar 'Alām 11/211

<sup>22</sup> I'lām al-Muwaqqi'in by Ibn al-Qayyim 1/28

<sup>23</sup> al-Saff: 3

"كَانُوا يَعْنِي الصَّحَابَةَ يَقْتَرُبُونَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ فَلَا يَأْخُذُونَ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأُخْرَى حَتَّى يَعْلَمُوا مَا فِي هَذِهِ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ وَالْعَمَلِ قَالُوا فَعَلِمْنَا الْعِلْمَ وَالْعَمَلَ"

"We meaning the companions would learn from Allāh's Messenger ten verses and we would not take the next ten verses until we would learn what is within it from knowledge and action. He said: so we learnt knowledge and action."<sup>24</sup>

This is how the Companions were. They would take ten verses at a time. Do you not think that the Companions could memorise more? Of course they could. Do you not think that they knew the Arabic language? Of course they did. However, they spent time to learn the knowledge and how to act upon it.

'Alī Ibū Abī Tālib (رضي الله عنه) said:

"هَتَّفَ الْعِلْمُ بِالْعَمَلِ، فَإِنْ أَجَابَهُ، وَإِلَّا ارْتَحَلَ"

"Knowledge calls action, it either responds to it or otherwise leaves"<sup>25</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said:

"العلم والعمل قرینان"

"Knowledge and action are two intimate companions"

This means that knowledge and action go hand-in-hand and stay together.

As Allāh (عز وجل) said:

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ﴾

"except those who have faith and do good"<sup>26</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim mentions this in many places in his books that they come together or are absent together. They cannot exist without one another.

Bishr al-Hāfi (رحمه الله) said:

"أَدُوا زَكَةَ الْحَدِيثِ فَاسْتَعْمِلُوا مِنْ كُلِّ مِائَتِي حَدِيثٍ خَمْسَةَ أَحَادِيثٍ"

"Give the Zakāt of Hadīth and act upon five of every two-hundred ahādīth"<sup>27</sup>

One has to act upon what they learn.

al-Dhahabī (رحمه الله) said:

"وَأَمَّا الْيَوْمَ فَمَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فِي أَنَّاسٍ قَلِيلٍ، مَا أَقْلَى مِنْ يَعْمَلُ مِنْهُمْ بِذَلِكَ الْقَلِيلِ، فَحَسِبْنَا اللَّهَ وَنَعَمُ الْوَكِيلُ"

<sup>24</sup> Musnad Ahmad 22971

<sup>25</sup> Iqtidā al-'Ilm al-'Aml by al-Khatib al-Baghdadī p.35

<sup>26</sup> al-'Asr: 3

<sup>27</sup> Adab al-Imlā by al-Sam'ānī p.110

"As for today, then what remains from the few science are only a few amongst a few people, and how few are those amongst them who act upon that [knowledge] which is few. So we seek help from Allāh and He is the best protector"<sup>28</sup>

This was the statement of al-Dhahabī in the eighth century, then what about our current time? Every one of us should strive hard to act upon the knowledge we gain.

One of the beginner books that we study as a student of knowledge is the book: *Usūl al-Thalāthah* by Shaykh al-Islām Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdil-Wahhāb (رحمه الله) wherein he says:

"اعلم رحمة الله أنه يجب علينا تعلم أربع مسائل: الأولى: العلم. وهو معرفة الله، ومعرفة نبيه، ومعرفة دين الإسلام بالأدلة. الثانية: العمل به. الثالثة: الدعوة إليه. الرابعة: الصبر على الأذى فيه".

"Know, may Allāh have mercy upon you, that it is obligatory upon us to seek the knowledge of four matters: One: Knowledge, which is knowledge and awareness of Allāh, knowledge of His Prophet and knowledge of the religion of Islam with the evidences. Two: Righteous actions based upon ones knowledge. Three: Da'wah. Four: Patience upon the harms encountered upon this way"

Therefore, we learn that we have to act upon the knowledge.

It is fair to say that the condition of worship returns back to these two. If one has sincerity whilst following the Sunnah and secondly acting upon what one learn then they have come with the two back bones for worship.

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<sup>28</sup> Tadhkiratu al-Huffadh 3/157

### Three: Condition of Mannerisms/Etiquettes

There are characteristics which a student needs to uphold.

1. **Sincerity:** Anyone who seeks knowledge without sincerity then it will lead them to the Hell-Fire.

Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ لِيُجَاهِيَ بِهِ الْعُلَمَاءَ أَوْ لِيُمَارِيَ بِهِ السُّفَهَاءَ أَوْ يَضْرِفَ بِهِ وُجُوهَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ النَّارَ"

"Whoever seeks knowledge to contend with the scholars, or to use it to argue with the fools, or to have people's faces turn towards him, then he shall be admitted to the Fire"<sup>29</sup>

'Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said:

"أَوْلُ الْعِلْمِ النِّيَةُ، ثُمَّ الْإِسْتِمَاعُ، ثُمَّ الْفَهْمُ، ثُمَّ الْحِفْظُ، ثُمَّ الْعَمَلُ، ثُمَّ النُّشُرُ"

"Knowledge begins with the intention and then listening and then understanding and then memorizing and then acting upon it and then spreading it"<sup>30</sup>

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said:

"الْعِلْمُ لَا يَعْدَلُهُ شَيْءٌ إِذَا صَحَّتْ نِيَتُهُ"

"Knowledge, there is nothing equal to it, for the one who corrects their intention"

2. **Truthfulness:** it means that one singles out the action of seeking knowledge and not doing it half-heartedly.

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to a man in the battlefield:

"إِنْ تَصْدُقِ الَّهُ يَصْدُقُكَ"

"If you are truthful towards Allāh, Allāh will fulfil your wish"<sup>31</sup>

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) also said at the end of the same narration:

"صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَصَدَقَهُ"

"He was truthful to Allāh, so Allāh fulfilled his wish"<sup>32</sup>

Therefore – *my dear brothers* - Knowledge does not accept any partners<sup>33</sup>. It requires truthfulness from the seeker. The individual does not make seeking knowledge a pastime, rather it should take up the majority of the day. This knowledge requires effort and hard work, and it will not give you anything until it sees that the individual is sacrificing the most beloved time for it.

<sup>29</sup> Sunan al-Tirmidhī 2654

<sup>30</sup> Jāmi' al-Bayān al-'Ilm wa-Fadlīhī 1/118

<sup>31</sup> Sunan al-Nasā'ī 1953

<sup>32</sup> Sunan al-Nasā'ī 1953

<sup>33</sup> Everything has to serve knowledge, and is not a goal in and within itself.

### 3. High aspirations

The student of knowledge is in need of high aspirations.

Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَأَنْفُوا اللَّهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"O you who have believed, persevere and ensure and remain stationed and fear Allāh that you may be successful"<sup>34</sup>

Allāh mentioned these four characteristics and then finalised by stating the result that will occur, which is success.

A Daī once came to Ibn Bāz and said to him that he had given up in giving da'wah. Imām Ibn Bāz grabbed his hand and while reciting the Āyah folded his fingers with each of the characteristics. He then said: Have you come with these four in order for Allāh to give you success?

Therefore an individual can only truly gain knowledge through patience and endurance.

Let's take an example from the life of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه).<sup>35</sup>

Ibn 'Abbās said:

"لَمَّا تُوْفِيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قُلْتُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْأَنْصَارِ يَا فُلَانْ هَلْمَ فَلَنْسَانْ أَصْحَابَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَإِنَّهُمْ الْيَوْمَ كَثِيرٌ. فَقَالَ: وَاعْجِبَا لَكَ يَا ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ، أَتَرِي النَّاسَ يَحْتَاجُونَ إِلَيْكَ، وَفِي النَّاسِ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ تَرَى؟ فَتَرَكَ ذَلِكَ، وَأَقْبَلَتْ عَلَى الْمَسَالَةِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ لَيَبْلُغُنِي الْحَدِيثُ عَنِ الرَّجُلِ فَاتِّيهِ، وَهُوَ قَائِلٌ، فَأَتَوْسَدُ رَدَائِي عَلَى بَاهِهِ، فَتَسْفِي الرِّيحُ عَلَى وَجْهِي التُّرَابِ، فَيَخْرُجُ، فَيَرَانِي، فَيَقُولُ: يَا ابْنَ عَمٍّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مَا جَاءَ بِكَ؟ أَلَا أَرْسَلْتُ إِلَيْكَ؟ فَأَقُولُ: لَا، أَنَا أَحَقُّ أَنْ آتِيَكَ. فَأَسْأَلُهُ عَنِ الْحَدِيثِ. قَالَ: فَبَقِيَ الرَّجُلُ حَتَّى رَأَيْ، وَقَدِ اجْتَمَعَ النَّاسُ عَلَيَّ، فَقَالَ: كَانَ هَذَا الْفَتَى أَعْقَلَ مِنِّي"

"When the Prophet (ﷺ) died, I said to a man from the Anṣār<sup>35</sup>: O' so-and-so let us go<sup>36</sup> and ask [i.e.

seek knowledge] from the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), for today they are many. He said:

Amazement is with you O' Ibn 'Abbās, do you think that the people will be in need of you when

amongst the people are those from the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) that you can see? I dismissed this, and I went forth to ask questions, if a Ḥadīth from a man would reach me I would go to him, and he was asleep, so I spread my ridā at his door [i.e. to wait], the wind would blow dust on my face, then he would exit, and see me, he would say: O' cousin of the Messenger of Allāh what brought you here? Why did you not send a message so I would come to you? I said: No, I am more rightful to come to you. Then I would ask about the Ḥadīth. He said [i.e. Ibn 'Abbās]: The [Anṣāri]

<sup>34</sup> Al 'im'rān [3:200]

<sup>35</sup> Ustadh spent time to try and find who this person was, but he is not mentioned anywhere. This is the result for the one who does not seek knowledge.

<sup>36</sup> This shows that when seeking knowledge it is good to have a companion who has a similar vision.

man remained until he saw me, and the people were gathered around me, so he said: Truly, this boy was smarter than me.”<sup>37</sup>

There is a statement of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) that we should always try and remember:

**”ذللت طالبا فعززت مطلوبا“**

“I was a humble student and therefore I gained honour when I was sought”

This knowledge that he attained came via high aspirations and patience upon the hardships that come with seeking knowledge.

It has been narrated that Yāḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr said:

**”لَا يُسْتَطِعُ الْعِلْمُ بِرَاحَةِ الْجَسْمِ“**

“Knowledge cannot be attained with relaxation of the body”<sup>38</sup>

Knowledge is attained by exerting efforts and the one who comes with patience will be given patience by Allāh.

Therefore, it is impossible for comfort and seeking knowledge to come together, as is the case with water and fire.

Imām al-Sha’bī (رحمه الله), was asked how he attained all this knowledge, he said:

**”بنفي الاعتمام (لاعتماد) ، والسير في البلاد ، وصبر كصبر الحمار ، وبكور كبكور الغراب“**

“By not taking on any stress (not relying on oneself), by travelling through cities, by having patience like that of a donkey, and by rising early like the rising of crows”<sup>39</sup>

Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) said:

**”إِنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ لَنْ يُنَالَ حَتَّىٰ يُذَاقَ فِيهِ طَعْمُ الْفَقْرِ“**

“This matter (i.e. knowledge) is not gained until tasting the bitterness of poverty”<sup>40</sup>

Imām al-Shāfi‘ī (رحمه الله) said:

**”فَحَقٌّ عَلَى طَلَبَةِ الْعِلْمِ بِلَوْغِ غَايَةِ جَهَدِهِمْ فِي الْاسْتِكْثَارِ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ، وَالصَّبْرُ عَلَى كُلِّ عَارِضٍ دُونَ طَلَبِهِ، وَإِخْلَاصُ النِّيَةِ لِلَّهِ فِي اسْتِدْرَاكِ عِلْمِهِ نَصَّاً وَاسْتِبْنَاطًا، وَالرَّغْبَةُ إِلَى اللَّهِ فِي الْعُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ“**

“It is upon the student of knowledge, to reach the goal of their striving in increasing in knowledge, by having patience upon every obstacle, and to sincerely intend for the sake of Allāh in extracting the rulings, and the hope in Allāh that he will assist you”<sup>41</sup>

Abū Yūsuf (رحمه الله) said:

**”الْعِلْمُ شَيْءٌ لَا يُعْطِيَكَ بَعْضَهُ حَتَّىٰ تُعْطِيَهُ كُلَّهُ“**

<sup>37</sup> Sunan al-Dārimī 595

<sup>38</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 612 f

<sup>39</sup> Tārikh Dimashq by Ibn ‘Asākir no.25491

<sup>40</sup> Jāmi‘ Bayān al-‘ilm wa-Faḍlīh by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr no.434

<sup>41</sup> al-Risālah by al-Shāfi‘ī 1/19

"Knowledge is something that will not give you a part of it until you give it everything"<sup>42</sup>

No-one can encompass all of knowledge, but if you want part of it you have to give it everything.

#### 4. Implementing knowledge

Implementing the knowledge that one has is a means which allows it to solidify in the heart.

al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله) said:

"كُنَّا نَسْتَعِينُ عَلَى حِفْظِ الْحَدِيثِ بِالْعَمَلِ بِهِ"

"We used to seek assistance in memorising Ḥadīth by implementing them"<sup>43</sup>

Wakī' ibn al-Jarrāḥ (رحمه الله) said:

"إِذَا أَرْدَتَ أَنْ تَحْفَظَ الْحَدِيثَ فَاعْمَلْ بِهِ"

"If you want to memorise Ḥadīth then implement them"<sup>44</sup>

#### 5. Abstain from hastiness in seeking the goals and fruits

In this day and age, one matter that we have been tested with is hastiness in acquiring results. Some want to see the results of their actions in two or three days and complain that they have not learnt anything. The reason for this is that when a ground has holes in it the water will enter these holes until they are full; then the water will come to the surface. As students, there are many holes within us which need to be filled by knowledge. This knowledge will not come to the surface until these are filled. It is a problem when one wants to be a leader of a Shaykh straight away. This is a cancer.

Khabbāb ibn al-Arat (رضي الله عنه) said:

"شَكُونَا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهُوَ مُتَوَسِّدٌ بُرْدَةً لَهُ فِي ظِلِّ الْكَعْبَةِ، قُلْنَا لَهُ أَلَا تَسْتَنْصِرُ لَنَا أَلَا تَدْعُ اللَّهَ لَنَا قَالَ: كَانَ الرَّجُلُ فِيمَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ يُحْفَرُ لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيُجْعَلُ فِيهِ، فَيُجَاءُ بِالْمِنْشَارِ، فَبِوَضْعِ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ فَيُشَقِّ بِاثْتَنِينَ، وَمَا يَصُدُّهُ ذَلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ، وَمَا يُمْسِطُ بِأَمْشَاطِ الْحَدِيدِ، مَا دُونَ لَحْمِهِ مِنْ عَظِيمٍ أَوْ عَصِيبٍ، وَمَا يَصُدُّهُ ذَلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ، وَاللَّهُ لَيَتَمَّنَ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ حَتَّى يَسِيرَ الرَّاكِبُ مِنْ صَنْعَاءِ إِلَى حَصْرِ مَوْتٍ، لَا يَخَافُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ أَوْ الدُّنْبُ عَلَى غَنِمَةِ، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ"

"We complained to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) while he was sitting in the shade of the Ka'bah, we said to him: would you seek help for us? Would you pray to Allāh for us? He said: Among the nations before you a [believing] man would be put in a ditch that was dug for him, and a saw would be put over his head and he would be cut into two pieces; yet that [torture] would not make him give up his religion. His body would be combed with iron combs that would remove his flesh from the bones and nerves, yet that would not make him abandon his religion. By Allāh, this religion will prevail till a

<sup>42</sup> Al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī wa-Ādāb al-Sāmi' no. 1549

<sup>43</sup> Jāmi' Bayān al-'ilm wa-Faḍlīh by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr 1/709 no.1286 and 2/1031 no.1979

<sup>44</sup> Ulūm al-Ḥadīth by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ p.223

traveller from Ṣanā' [in Yemen] to Hadramawt will fear none but Allāh, or a wolf as regards his sheep, **but you [people] are hasty**"

Knowledge is an honour and therefore it cannot be gathered with hastiness.

If students leave these classes and attempt to seek knowledge themselves without organisation then they will end up running around and not achieving anything. Therefore, do not be hasty, take time and learn in small portions. This is the way that the AMAU student of knowledge programme has been organised; one can watch at their own pace and listen to classes again.

al-Zuhri (رضي الله عنه) said:

**"وَلِكُنْ حُدُّهُ مَعَ الْأَيَّامِ وَاللَّيَالِي ، وَلَا تَأْخُذِ الْعِلْمَ جُمْلَةً ؛ فَإِنَّ مَنْ رَامَ أَحَدَهُ جُمْلَةً ذَهَبَ عَنْهُ جُمْلَةً ، وَلِكُنِ الشَّيْءُ بَعْدَ الشَّيْءِ مَعَ الْلَّيَالِي وَالْأَيَّامِ"**

"Rather take it by days and nights, and do not take it all at once. For verily, the one who seeks it all at once will lose it all at once. Rather, it is taken step by step, by the days and the nights"<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, the student needs to learn gradually and this syllabus is built in this manner. The teachers will guide the student regarding what to learn first and the student can follow this advice and go over the classes as many times as they need.

## 6. Sticking to the Scholars, taking knowledge from them and referring back to them

Previously, the Scholars would say that: knowledge is sought and does not come to the student. However, in this current time, knowledge is knocking on all our doors. There are many benefits from online classes but the student still has to treat it like the gatherings of knowledge in their mannerisms. One should sit in these classes as they would sit in a physical gathering; cross-legged, in their best clothes, studying in a place where it is quiet and they can concentrate. Have a pen and paper and take notes. Therefore, the circles of knowledge encompass the online classes. If a student does not benefit from these classes there will come a time when they will not be able to benefit from the scholars and ask them the questions which they need responses to. That is why the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

**"إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ اِنْتَرَاعًا يَنْتَرِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ وَلِكُنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَمْ يُبْقِيْ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُؤُوسًا جُهَّالًا فَسُلِّمُوا فَأَفْتَوُا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا"**

"Verily, Allah does not withhold knowledge by snatching it away from his servants, but rather he withdraws knowledge by taking the souls of scholars, until no scholar remains and people follow ignorant leaders. They are asked and they issue judgments without knowledge. Thus, they are astray and lead others astray"<sup>46</sup>

Brothers and sisters, seize the opportunity that this online platform is providing. I want to mention how important it is that the student is present and attending these classes. I do not want to see a student who is still on the first video while many videos have been released for them due to laziness.

<sup>45</sup> Jāmi' Bayān al-'ilm wa-Faḍlīh by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr no.464

<sup>46</sup> Ṣahīḥ al-Bukhārī 100 and Ṣahīḥ Muslim 2673

Abū'l Abbās Ahmad known as Tha'lab (رحمه الله) was a scholar of the Arabic language. He said about his teacher Ibrāhīm al-Harbī (رحمه الله):

"ما فقدت إبراهيم الحربي من مجلس نحو أو لغة خمسين سنة"

"I have not seen Ibrāhīm al-Harbī miss a grammar or language class for fifty years"<sup>47</sup>

He made sure that he attended these classes and therefore became from the leading scholars of the world in the Arabic language.

Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (رحمه الله) said:

"إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ مَوَاهِبٌ، يُؤْتِيهِ اللَّهُ مِنْ أَحَبِّ مَنْ خَلَقَهُ. وَلَيْسَ يَنْالُهُ أَحَدٌ بِالْحَسْبِ. وَلَوْ كَانَ لِعِلْمٍ  
الْحَسْبُ لَكَانَ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِهِ: أَهْلُ بَيْتِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ"

"Knowledge is only a gift which is bestowed by Allāh to those He loves from His creation. No-one receives this through lineage. If it was received due to lineage then the first people for it would be the family of the Prophet ﷺ"<sup>48</sup>

al-Askarī mentioned that Abū'l Hasan al-Karkhī said:

"كُنْتُ أَحْضُرُ مَجْلِسَ أَبِي حَازِمٍ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ بِالْغَدَاءِ، مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَكُونَ دَرْسًا، لِتَلَّا أَنْفَضَ عَادِتِي مِنَ  
الْحُضُورِ"

"I would attend the place of sitting for the lesson of Abī Hāzim on Friday when there was no class; so that I am accustomed to attending"

They do this as per the line of poetry:

"والنفس كالطفل إن تهمله شب على \*\*\* حب الرضاع وإن تفطمها ينفطم"

"The soul is like a child if it is left it will grow upon \*\*\* love of breastfeeding and if it is weaned it will come off it"

If the child is not weaned it will continue to feed from the mother for many years. It is the mother's role to wean the child and discipline it. This is the parable of the soul.

It was mentioned that one night al-Hasan al-Basrī (رحمه الله) wanted to pray but his body would not let him. Therefore, he stayed up the whole night and did not let his body sleep. This was to show that he has control over his body.

If one is unable to control their own body then how will they be able to control other people affairs; like their family and others?

Wahb Ibn Jarīr narrated from his father that he said:

"جَلَسْتُ إِلَى الْحَسَنِ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ، سَنَةً مِنْهَا لَمْ آخُذْ مِنْهُ يَوْمًا وَاحِدًا، أَصُومُ وَأَذْهَبُ إِلَيْهِ"

"I sat his al-Hasan for seven years; a year of it I never missed one lesson. I would fast and go to him"<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Tārīkh Baghdađ 6/522

<sup>48</sup> Tabaqāt al-Hanābilah 1/75

<sup>49</sup> al-Du'afā' al-Kabīr by al-'Uqaylī 4/336

Qatādah is from the Scholars of the Tābi'in and he was one of the students of Anas Ibn Mālik. Students from all places would come to attend the lessons of Anas Ibn Mālik and for many years he did not miss one lesson that he was teaching nor was he late. Also, Qatādah did not miss attending a lesson as well. One day, Anas Ibn Mālik came late, so Qatādah sat next to the seat of his teacher and began to narrate the prior lesson. Anas Ibn Mālik noticed this from a far place, he told Qatādah to stand up and said: you have taken all my knowledge.

This was because he attended every lesson. Anyone who shows consistency will reap the reward of their efforts.

The poet said:

**"إِذَا أَنْتَ لَمْ تَرَعْ وَأَبْصَرْتَ حَاصِدًا \*\*\* نَدَمْتَ عَلَى التَّفْرِيْطِ فِي رَمَنِ الْبَدْرِ"**

"If you do not plant and saw a reaper \*\*\* you will regret over this negligence on the day of harvest"

The individual will regret that they did not plant their seeds and in the same way one will regret if they do not attend the circles of knowledge and learn.

Also, I want to mention that one should be early to these lessons. If it is a live class, the student should be ready and present before the teacher. One should not be late or absent. As we previously mentioned the statement of Imām al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله)، when he was asked how he attained all this knowledge, he said:

**"بُنْفِي الْاَغْتِمَامُ (الاعتماد) ، وَالسِّيرُ فِي الْبَلَادِ ، وَصَبْرُ كَصْبَرِ الْحَمَارِ ، وَبَكُورُ كَبَكُورِ الْغَرَابِ"**

"By not taking on any stress (not relying on oneself), by travelling through cities, by having patience like that of a donkey, and by rising early like the rising of crows"<sup>50</sup>

Even when the student who arrives early is sitting in wait of the class they will be rewarded.

Also, the student should catch up with any classes that they have missed in their spare time. They should attend the live classes even if they have missed other sessions and make up for it in their spare time.

Furthermore, it is important to refrain from merely relying upon the recordings. If a class is live then strive to attend if one can. This applies everywhere and not just to AMAU.

Also, when sitting in a circle of knowledge, it is important to note down the benefits which one hears. This can be written on a book or the materials which are provided by AMAU. A student should also have a book wherein they compile benefits which they come across while the Shaykh is talking.

The manner in which a student compiles notes and benefits are very important. Personally, I have given Friday sermons, lessons, and lectures from benefits which I have extracted whilst reading books. I was also able to compile research articles from these notes because they were all on a specific topic.

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<sup>50</sup> Tārikh Dimashq by Ibn 'Asākir no.25491

Another important matter to note is that when one is in a lesson they should be quiet. Do not be preoccupied with the phone or message anyone. The Salaf would not allow people to talk in their lessons.

Ahmad Ibn Sinān mentioned about the gatherings of ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibn Mahdi (رضي الله عنه) :

"كَانَ لَا يُتَحَدَّثُ فِي مَجْلِسٍ عَنْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَلَا يُبْرِزَ قَلْمَنْ، وَلَا يَقُولُ أَحَدٌ قَائِمًا، كَانَ عَلَى رُؤُوسِهِمُ الطَّيِّرُ أَوْ كَانُوكُمْ فِي صَلَاةٍ فَإِذَا رَأَى أَحَدًا مِنْهُمْ تَبَسَّمًا، أَوْ تَحَدَّثَ، لَبِسَ نَعْلَاهُ، وَخَرَجَ"

"They would not talk in the gatherings of ‘Abd al-Rahman, nor would they sharpen a pen, nor would they smile, nor would anyone stand. It was like there were birds on their heads or if they were in prayer. If he saw anyone smile or speak he would wear his slippers and leave"<sup>51</sup>

This is the level of tranquillity which is required when taking the inheritance of the Prophet ﷺ. The mercy of Allāh descends upon the circles of knowledge therefore it is a time of tranquillity.

A student of knowledge should not give up. One may feel that they have been attending lessons for a long time and haven't learnt anything but it will all come with patience.

It was mentioned that Imām Ahmad (رضي الله عنه) said:

"كُنْتُ فِي كِتَابِ الْحِيْضُورِ تِسْعَ سَنِينَ، حَتَّى فَهَمْتُهُ"

"I studied the chapter of menstruation for nine years until I understood it"<sup>52</sup>

The chapter of menstruation is a small chapter within the book of purification.

My teacher told me that he studies the book: Minhāj of Imām al-Nawawī for forty years. He spent ten years on each section and it was divided in to four: worship, transactions, criminal law and the Hudūd.

Muhammad al-Amīn al-Shanqītī (رضي الله عنه) mentions in the introduction of his Tafsīr; that his teacher explained an issue but it was unclear to him. Muhammad al-Amīn al-Shanqītī was a mountain of knowledge, however, this issue was still unclear to him. He went back to his house and researched the issue. He stated that he was researching whilst his servant was standing over him with a light. He was drinking green tea until one third of the night went and he continued until Fajr. When Fajr arrived he understood the issue and was no longer confused. He stated that without sleeping and finding the benefit through research it sufficed him from having to attend the teacher's lessons. The next day he informed the teacher who excused him for his absence.

Muhammad al-Amīn al-Shanqītī spent the whole night researching one issue. This shows us the hunger and desire they had.

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<sup>51</sup> Siyar ‘Alām 9/201

<sup>52</sup> Tabaqāt al-Hanābilah 1/268

Therefore, O' student of knowledge, do not feel shy or arrogant to attend the circles of knowledge. Attend, ask questions and engage in the class. If one is arrogant or shy they are not going to learn.

"لَا يَتَعَلَّمُ الْعِلْمُ مُسْتَحْيٍ وَلَا مُسْتَكْبِرٌ"

"One will not gain knowledge if they are shy or arrogant"<sup>53</sup>

Also, the student should not disconnect themselves from the circles of knowledge as this can fall under bad manners with the teacher.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"أَلَيْسَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي مَنْ لَمْ يُجِلَّ كَبِيرَنَا وَيَرْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا وَيَعْرِفْ لِعَالَمِنَا حَقَّهُ"

"He is not from my Ummah; one who does not respect their elders, have mercy upon their youngsters and know the rights of the Scholars"<sup>54</sup>

Some students interrupt the teacher whilst they are talking and want to ask a question. This is bad manners. Allow the teacher to finish and do not disconnect his speech. These are the mannerisms which a student needs to have.

Additionally, the student needs to learn the mannerisms to ask a question. The question needs to be posed with manners and respect.

It was mentioned regarding Imām Mālik that he was asked about an issue of inheritance for which he responded with the view of Zayd (رضي الله عنه). Ismā'il Ibn Suddī said: What about the view of 'Ali and 'Abdillāh Ibn Mas'ūd? Imām Mālik became angry and told him to leave the circle.

It is mentioned that one of the great scholars of Islām was teaching in his house and many students were gathered. A person knocked on the door, so the scholar said: open the door, if it is a person from the people of Hadīth then do not let them enter, however, if it is a person from the people of opinion then let them in. The individual said: Shaykh, it makes mose sense to let the people of Hadīth in. The scholar responded: No, the people of Hadīth should know to come on time but the people of opinion they are like this, so let them sit down. This teaches us that the student of Hadīth is different from everyone else.

The way we deal with the students of knowledge is different from what we expect from the general people.

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<sup>53</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī under the chapter: shyness in knowledge

<sup>54</sup> Makārim al-Akhlāq by al-Tabarānī no.147

## Four: Condition of Methodology

We have previously discussed the importance of having a methodology when seeking knowledge. In this section, we will discuss the levels that a student of knowledge will progress through. In AMAU there are three stages. I will discuss what these stages represent.

### 1. The stage of fundamentals

In this stage, the student places a strong foundation for themselves, by learning and memorising the most important principles. We have organised this as an introduction to each science so that the student has a correct perception of each science.

### 2. The stage of evidence

At this stage, the student will study and memorise the evidence; including how the evidence is being utilised, in the most important issues.

### 3. The stage of comparative knowledge

In this stage, the student learns the opposing views in each science in a generic form, alongside their most apparent arguments.

### 4. The stage of specialisation

After a student has tread the aforementioned three stages in attaining knowledge in the different sciences, they will now choose one of particular interest to concentrate on, author books in and become an expert in. AMAU has not included this and currently we are focusing on the first three stages.

I believe the student needs to engage this fourth level themselves after they have progressed through the initial three stages. The beauty of this stage is that it mainly consists of bonus content and it is not a must for one to study them. For example, the book: Kawkab al-Munīr is a specialist book in Usūl al-Fiqh. We will not teach this as part of the curriculum but it may be explained as a bonus book. Also, the book: Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah by Ibn Taymiyyah is considered from the stage of specialisation.

Progressing through these stages will allow one to become a grounded student of knowledge.

## Five: Condition of Understanding

Brothers and sisters, some people assume Fiqh is to know the rulings in matters through memorisation. Rather, Fiqh is when one is able to deduce a correct ruling in matters. When one is able to respond to doubts that are brought due to the knowledge they have learnt in various sciences, this is a manifestation of Fiqh. It is when one is able to sift through many opinions and come to the right one. A person of Fiqh does not contradict themselves in the rulings they give; they do not differentiate between issues which are the same and make similar issues which are different. Fiqh in simple term is precise understanding.

Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) said – in praise of the Scholars:

﴿وَتُلِكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَصْرِهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالَمُونَ﴾

“These are the parables We set forth for humanity, but none will understand them except the people of knowledge.”<sup>55</sup>

It is the people of Fiqh who understand these parables.

It was mentioned that one of the great scholars of Islām that if they did not understand a parable in the Qur’ān they would cry because it meant that they were not from the people of knowledge.

Therefore, one is not a person of knowledge unless they have understanding.

Precise understanding has been praised by Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) when he spoke about two Prophets; Dāwūd and Sulaymān:

﴿وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنْمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحَكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ - فَفَهَمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانٌ وَكُلُّا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَيْحِنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ﴾

“And ‘remember’ when David and Solomon passed judgment regarding the crops ruined ‘at night’ by someone’s sheep, and We were witness to their judgments. And We gave understanding of it [i.e., the case] to Solomon, and to each [of them] We gave judgement and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains to exalt [Us], along with David and [also] the birds. And We were doing [that].”<sup>56</sup>

Both of them had knowledge, but it was Sulaymān who was given understanding.

Also, Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) said:

﴿يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُولَئِي خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

“Allah grants wisdom to whoever He wills. And whoever is granted wisdom is certainly blessed with a great privilege. But none will be mindful ‘of this’ except people of reason.”<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> al-‘Ankabūt: 43

<sup>56</sup> al-Anbiyā: 78-79

<sup>57</sup> al-Baqarah: 269

'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said:

### "الفقه في القرآن"

"Understand of the Qur'ān"<sup>58</sup>

There may be a person who has a lot of knowledge and has memorised many different books but they do not have understanding or comprehension.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

"نَصَرَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا سَمِعَ مِنَا حَدِيثًا فَحَفِظَهُ حَتَّى يُبَلِّغَهُ قُرْبَ حَامِلٍ فِقْهٍ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ وَرَبَّ حَامِلٍ فِقْهٍ لَيْسَ بِفَقِيهٍ"

"May Allāh brighten the person who hears from us a Hadīth, memorises it until he passes it on. It may be that a person who has understanding will give it to another who has more understanding than them and there may be a person who has knowledge but does not have understanding"<sup>59</sup>

There is a person who may not remember a Hadīth, but when they are informed of it they can extract hundreds of benefits from that one narration. The one who memorised it may not even know these. My Shaykh used to say that there was a man who was called: 'the donkey of al-Furū' as he had memorised the book of Ibn Muflīh from beginning to end, however, did not understand anything from it.

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِلُوا التَّوْرَاةَ كُمَّ مَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلُ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا هُنَّ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُنَّ أَكْفَارٌ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

"The example of those who were entrusted with 'observing' the Torah but failed to do so, is that of a donkey carrying books. How evil is the example of those who reject Allah's signs! For Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people."<sup>60</sup>

Allāh (عزوجل) gives understanding to a select group of people.

The Companions were all knowledgeable, however, there was an event where only Abū Bakr (صلى الله عليه وسلم) understood what the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was saying:

إِنَّ عَبْدًا حَيَّرَهُ اللَّهُ بَيْنَ أَنْ يُؤْتِيهِ مِنْ رَّهْرَةِ الدُّنْيَا مَا شَاءَ، وَبَيْنَ مَا عِنْدَهُ، فَأَخْتَارَ مَا عِنْدَهُ. فَبَكَى أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَقَالَ فَدَيْنَاكَ بِأَبَائِنَا وَأَمَّهَاتِنَا. فَعَجِبْنَا لَهُ، وَقَالَ النَّاسُ انْظُرُوهُ إِلَى هَذَا الشَّيْخِ، يُخْبِرُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ عَبْدٍ حَيَّرَهُ اللَّهُ بَيْنَ أَنْ يُؤْتِيهِ مِنْ رَّهْرَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَبَيْنَ مَا عِنْدَهُ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ فَدَيْنَاكَ بِأَبَائِنَا وَأَمَّهَاتِنَا. فَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هُوَ الْمُخَيَّرُ، وَكَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ هُوَ أَعْلَمَنَا بِهِ"

"Allah has given one of His Slaves the choice of receiving the splendor and luxury of the worldly life whatever he likes or to accept the good (of the Hereafter) which is with Allah. So he has chosen that good which is with Allah. On that Abu Bakr wept and said: Our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you. We became astonished at this. The people said: Look at this old man! Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) talks about a Slave of Allah to whom He has given the option to choose either the splendor of this

<sup>58</sup> Tafsīr al-Tabarī

<sup>59</sup> Sunan Abī Dāwūd 3660

<sup>60</sup> al-Jumu'ah: 5

worldly life or the good which is with Him, while he says: our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you. But it was Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) who had been given the choice, and Abu Bakr knew it better than we.”<sup>61</sup>

Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) understood what the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was saying that it was in reality about the Prophet.

Also, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said:

”كَانَ عُمَرُ يُدْخِلُنِي مَعَ أَشْيَاخَ بَدْرِ، فَكَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ وَجَدَ فِي نَفْسِهِ فَقَالَ لِمَ تُدْخِلُ هَذَا مَعَنَا أَبْنَاءَ مِثْلُهُ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ إِنَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ عَلِمْتُمْ. فَدَعَا ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ . فَأَدْخَلَهُ مَعَهُمْ . فَمَا رُبِّيَتْ أَنَّهُ دَعَانِي يَوْمَئِذٍ إِلَّا لِيُرِيَهُمْ . قَالَ مَا تَقُولُونَ فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى {إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ} فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَمْرَنَا نَحْمَدُ اللَّهَ وَسَتَغْفِرُهُ، إِذَا نُصِرْنَا وَفَتَحَ عَلَيْنَا . وَسَكَتَ بَعْضُهُمْ فَلَمْ يَقُلْ شَيْئًا فَقَالَ لِي أَكَذَّاكَ تَقُولُ يَا ابْنَ عَبَاسٍ فَقُلْتُ لَهُ . قَالَ فَمَا تَقُولُ فُلْتُ هُوَ أَجَلُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَعْلَمُ لَهُ، قَالَ {إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ} وَذَلِكَ عَلَامَةً أَجَلِكَ {فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَابًا}. فَقَالَ عُمَرُ مَا أَعْلَمُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا مَا تَقُولُ“

”Umar used to make me sit with the elderly men who had fought in the Battle of Badr. Some of them did not like that and said to ‘Umar: Why do you bring in this boy to sit with us while we have sons like him? ‘Umar replied: Because of what you know of his position. One day ‘Umar called me and made me sit in the gathering of those people; and I think that he called me just to show them. ‘Umar then asked them: What do you say about the interpretation of the Statement of Allah: When comes Help of Allah (to you O, Muhammad against your enemies) and the conquest (of Mecca). Some of them said: We are ordered to praise Allah and ask for His forgiveness when Allah's Help and the conquest (of Mecca) comes to us. Some others kept quiet and did not say anything. On that, ‘Umar asked me: Do you say the same, O Ibn ‘Abbas? I replied: No. He said: What do you say then? I replied: That is the sign of the death of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) which Allah informed him of. Allah said: (O Muhammad) When comes the Help of Allah (to you against your enemies) and the conquest (of Mecca) (which is the sign of your death). You should celebrate the praises of your Lord and ask for His Forgiveness, and He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives. On that ‘Umar said: I do not know anything about it other than what you have said.”<sup>62</sup>

The Companions knew the importance of understanding.

‘Umar wrote a letter to Abū Mūsa al-Ash’arī when he was the governor of Irāq and said:

”الْفَهْمُ الْفَهْمُ“

”Understanding. Understanding.”<sup>63</sup>

It means to strive in understanding the issue and not merely being a parrot that memorises without understanding.

‘Ali (رضي الله عنه) was asked:

<sup>61</sup> Ṣahīḥ al-Bukhārī 3904

<sup>62</sup> Ṣahīḥ al-Bukhārī 4970

<sup>63</sup> Tārīkh al-Madīnah by Ibn Shabbah 2/775

"هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِّنَ الْوَحْيِ إِلَّا مَا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ قَالَ وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأَ النَّسْمَةَ مَا أَعْلَمُهُ إِلَّا فَهُمَا يُعْطِيهِ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا فِي الْقُرْآنِ، وَمَا فِي هَذِهِ الصَّحِيفَةِ قُلْتُ وَمَا فِي الصَّحِيفَةِ قَالَ الْعُقْلُ وَفَكَأُ الْأَسِيرِ، وَأَنْ لَا يُقْتَلَ مُسْلِمٌ بِكَافِرٍ"

"I asked 'Ali: Do you have the knowledge of any Divine Inspiration besides what is in Allah's Book? 'Ali replied: No, by Him Who splits the grain of corn and creates the soul. I don't think we have such knowledge, but we have the ability of understanding which Allah may endow a person with, so that he may understand the Qur'an, and we have what is written in this paper as well. I asked: What is written in this paper? He replied: (The regulations of) blood-money, the freeing of captives, and the judgment that no Muslim should be killed for killing an infidel."<sup>64</sup>

Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) said:

"إِنَّ الْعِلْمَ لَيْسَ بِكَثْرَةِ الرِّوَايَةِ، إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ نُورٌ يُقْذِفُهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْقَلْبِ"

"Knowledge is not knowing many narrations. Verily, knowledge is only a light that Allah places in the hearts."<sup>65</sup>

His student, Ahmad Ibn Sālih al-Misrī (رحمه الله) said that it means:

"نُورٌ: يُرِيدُ بِهِ فَهْمَ الْعِلْمِ، وَمَعْرِفَةَ مَعَانِيهِ"

"Light: what is intended by it is understanding the knowledge and knowing its meanings"<sup>66</sup>

Ibn Abdil-Barr (رحمه الله) said:

"الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ جَمَاعَةُ فُقَهَاءِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَعُلَمَائِهِمْ ذُمُّ الْإِكْثَارِ دُونَ تَقْضِيَةِ وَلَا تَدْبُرٍ"

"That which the people of Fiqh from the Muslims and Scholars agree upon is rebuking gathering a lot without understanding or contemplation"<sup>67</sup>

Khatib al-Baghdadi (رحمه الله) said:

"فَإِنَّ الْعِلْمَ هُوَ الْفَهْمُ وَالدَّرَايَةُ وَلَيْسَ بِالْإِكْثَارِ وَالْتَّوْسِعِ فِي الرِّوَايَةِ"

"Verily, knowledge is understanding and comprehension and it is not due to the amount and going overboard in [memorising] narrations"<sup>68</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said:

"فَالْفَهْمُ نِعْمَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ، وَنُورٌ يُقْدِفُهُ اللَّهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ، يَعْرِفُ بِهِ، وَيُدْرِكُ مَا لَا يُدْرِكُهُ غَيْرُهُ وَلَا يَعْرِفُهُ، فَيَقْبَهُمْ مِنَ النَّصِّ مَا لَا يَقْبَهُمْ غَيْرُهُ، مَعَ اسْتِوَائِهِمَا فِي حِفْظِهِ، وَفِيهِمْ أَصْلٌ مَعْنَاهُ. فَالْفَهْمُ عَنِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ عَنْوَانُ الصَّدِيقَيْةِ، وَمَنْشُورُ الْوِلَايَةِ التَّبَوَيْةِ، وَفِيهِ تَقاوَتْ مَرَاتِبُ الْعُلَمَاءِ، حَتَّى عُدَّ الْأَلْفَ بِوَاحِدٍ"

<sup>64</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari 3047

<sup>65</sup> Hilyat al-Awliya' 8987

<sup>66</sup> Tafsir Ibn Kathir 6/545

<sup>67</sup> Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm 2/1012

<sup>68</sup> al-Jami' li-Akhlaq al-Rawi 2/174

"Understanding is a blessing from Allāh upon His slave and it is a light which Allāh places in His heart through which they come to understand and they come across that which others do not and understand from a text that which others do not despite his memorisation being the same as the other and understanding the generality of the meaning. Having understanding of Allāh and His Messenger is the highest level of truthfulness, the reason of the sending of the Prophets and it is due to this that Scholars stations differ until one hundred people can be equal to one"<sup>69</sup>

Brothers and sisters, in order to have understanding there are matters that one must come with:

### 1. To correctly perceive the issue

There is a principle that is oft-mentioned which is:

"الحکم على الشيء فرع عن تصوره"

"The ruling upon something stems from a [correct] perception"

If you do not correctly perceive the issue then the ruling that follows may be incorrect. This will be demonstrated with some examples below.

Example:

- **Al-Mā al-Musta'mal** (Used Water): What is meant when the Fuqaha say: Al-Mā al-Musta'mal. Is this the water that pours off the limbs or that which is left from the water that has been used?
- **al-Kāfir al-Harbī** (Combatant disbeliever): In the books of Fiqh the disbelievers are categorised into four types. Is the Combatant disbeliever one who is engaged in war or is it one that does not fall in the other three categories?
- The Prophet ﷺ said: that which is cut from an Animal whilst it is alive is considered a corpse. Is this referring to when an Animal is injured prior to slaughtering it or not?
- **al-Muhsan al-Hurr**: This is mentioned in two places in the books of Fiqh; the book of fornication and the chapter of when a person unlawfully accuses a woman of fornication. What is the difference between the two usages?
- We know that Imān is speech and actions: but what does the word 'speech' actually mean in this context?
- When it comes to the names and attributes to Allāh we state that it is taken at its apparent meaning. What does this mean?

### 2. To know the ruling

After correctly perceiving the issue then a ruling can be placed.

Example:

- **Al-Mā al-Musta'mal**: After correctly understanding what is meant by this, an individual can then place the ruling that it is; pure and does not purify [according to the Shāfi'iyyah].

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<sup>69</sup> Madārij al-Sālikīn 1/65

- It is not obligatory to pay Zakat on gold that is used. What is the gold that this is referring to? Is it what the woman wears on her neck or that which she stores?

### 3. To know the evidence for this ruling

The student is now able to bring the evidence for the ruling that has been stated, and how the ruling has been extracted from the evidence.

Example:

- **Al-Mā al-Musta'mal:** If the student took the view that it is pure but does not purify, they will use the Ḥadīth:

**"أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَهَا أَنْ يَتَوَضَّأُ الرَّجُلُ بِقَضْلٍ طَهُورٍ الْمَرْأَةُ"**

"The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade that the male should perform ablution with the water left over by the female"<sup>70</sup>

### 4. To know the similarities and differences between various issues

A student of knowledge must be aware of that which is common between issues, and that which is different. Many books have been written on this topic.

Examples:

- An individual repeats the prayer if they forgot to perform ablution but not if they forgot they had impurity upon their clothing. What is the difference?

### 5. To know the levels of various issues

The student of knowledge must be aware of the levels of commands and prohibitions. This will then allow the student to give precedence to one over the other.

Examples:

- To give priority to the obligatory over the voluntary.
- Jihād (if an individual obligation) takes precedence over obedience to the parents.
- Ḥajj which is obligatory takes precedence over obedience to the parents.
- Zinā with the neighbour is worse than Zinā with a person from another city.

If one applies these five they will be a person who has Fiqh.

As Allāh (عَزَّوجَلَّ) said:

**﴿وَتَلَكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَصْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالَمُونَ﴾**

"These are the parables We set forth for humanity, but none will understand them except the people of knowledge."<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Sunan Abī Dāwūd 82

<sup>71</sup> al-'Ankabūt: 43

﴿يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَاءُ وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتيَ حَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

"Allah grants wisdom to whoever He wills. And whoever is granted wisdom is certainly blessed with a great privilege. But none will be mindful 'of this' except people of reason."<sup>72</sup>

'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said:

"الفقه في القرآن"

"Understand of the Qur'ān"<sup>73</sup>

#### Editor's Note

*These notes have been compiled by a student and have not been comprehensively reviewed by the teacher.*

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<sup>72</sup> al-Baqarah: 269

<sup>73</sup> Tafsīr al-Tabarī



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