

HANBIL EDUCATIONAL SERIES: [19] GENERAL: YOUNG ADULT-ADULT

30 Days of Guidance

CULTIVATING THE CHARACTER
& BEHAVIOR OF ISLAAM
SELF-STUDY/TEACHER'S EDITION

A SHORT JOURNEY WITHIN THE WORK AL-ADAB AL-MUFRAD
WITH SHEIKH ZAYD IBN MUHAMMAD IBN HAADEE AL-MADKHALEE

COMPILED AND TRANSLATED BY:
AMR SUKRI ALATI KHALIL IBN-ABELATYI AL-AMRETKEE

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**30 Days of Guidance: Cultivating The Character & Behavior of Islaam
A Short Journey through the work al-Adab al-Mufrad with
Sheikh Zayd Ibn Muhammad Ibn Haadee al-Madkhaalee
[Self-Study/Teachers Edition]**

Compiled and Translated by Abu Sukhailah Khalil Ibn-Abelahyi al-Amreekee

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From the Publisher

GOLDEN WORDS UPON GOLDEN WORDS...FOR EVERY MUSLIM.

“Imaam al-Barbahaaree, may Allaah have mercy upon him said:

May Allaah have mercy upon you! Examine carefully the speech of everyone you hear from in your time particularly. So do not act in haste and do not enter into anything from it until you ask and see: Did any of the Companions of the Prophet, may Allaah’s praise and salutations be upon him, speak about it, or did any of the scholars? So if you find a narration from them about it, cling to it, do not go beyond it for anything and do not give precedence to anything over it and thus fall into the Fire.

Explanation by Sheikh Saaleh al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him:

‘**D**o not be hasty in accepting as correct what you may hear from the people, especially in these later times. As now there are many who speak about so many various matters, issuing rulings and ascribing to themselves both knowledge and the right to speak. This is especially the case after the emergence and spread of new modern day media technologies. Such that everyone now can speak and bring forth that which is, in truth, worthless; by this, meaning words of no true value - speaking about whatever they wish in the name of knowledge and in the name of the religion of Islaam. It has even reached the point that you find the people of misguidance and the members of the various groups of misguidance and deviance from the religion speaking as well. Such individuals have now become those who speak in the name of the religion of Islaam through means such as the various satellite television channels. Therefore be very cautious!

It is upon you, oh Muslim, and upon you, oh student of knowledge, individually, to verify matters and not rush to embrace everything and anything you may hear. It is upon you to verify the truth of what you hear, asking, ‘Who else also makes this same statement or claim?’, ‘Where did this thought or concept originate or come from?’, ‘Who is its reference or source authority?’ Asking what are the evidences which support it from within the Book and the Sunnah? And inquiring where has the individual who is putting this forth studied and taken his knowledge from? From who has he studied the knowledge of Islaam?

Each of these matters requires verification through inquiry and investigation, especially in the present age and time. It is not every speaker who should rightly be considered a source of knowledge, even if he is well spoken and eloquent and can manipulate words captivating his listeners. Do not be taken in and accept him until you are aware of the degree and scope of what he possesses of knowledge and understanding. Perhaps someone's words may be few, but possess true understanding, and perhaps another will have a great deal of speech yet he is actually ignorant to such a degree that he doesn't actually possess anything of true understanding. Rather he only has the ability to enchant with his speech so that the people are deceived. Yet he puts forth the perception that he is a scholar, that he is someone of true understanding and comprehension, that he is a capable thinker, and so forth. Through such means and ways he is able to deceive and beguile the people, taking them away from the way of truth.

Therefore, what is to be given true consideration is not the amount of the speech put forth or that one can extensively discuss a subject. Rather, the criterion that is to be given consideration is what that speech contains within it of sound authentic knowledge, what it contains of the established and transmitted principles of Islaam. Perhaps a short or brief statement which is connected to or has a foundation in the established principles can be of greater benefit than a great deal of speech which simply rambles on, and through hearing you don't actually receive very much benefit from.

This is the reality which is present in our time; one sees a tremendous amount of speech which only possesses within it a small amount of actual knowledge. We see the presence of many speakers, yet few people of true understanding and comprehension.' ”

[The eminent major scholar Sheikh Saaleh al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him- 'A Valued Gift for the Reader Of Comments Upon the Book Sharh as-Sunnah', page 102-103]

THE SEEKING OF PROOF & EVIDENCE IS FROM THE WEAPONS OF THE BELIEVER

﴿ *Is not He better than your so-called gods, He Who originates creation and shall then repeat it, and Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Is there any god with Allaah? Say: 'Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful.'* ﴾-(Surah an-Naml: 64)

Explanation: ﴿ **Say: "Bring forth your proofs.."** ﴾ This is a command for the Prophet, may Allaah's praise and salutation be upon him, to rebuke them immediately after they had put forward their own rebuke. Meaning: *'Say to them: bring your proof, whether it is an intellectual proof or a proof from transmitted knowledge, that would stand as evidence that there is another with Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted'*. Additionally, it has been said that it means: *'Bring your proof that there is anyone other than Allaah, the Most High, who is capable of doing that which has been mentioned from His actions, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted.'* ﴿ **...if you are truthful.** ﴾ meaning, in this claim. From this it is derived that a claim is not accepted unless clearly indicated by evidences."

[Tafseer al-Aloosee: vol. 15, page 14]

Sheikh Rabee'a Ibn Hadee Umair al-Madkhalee, may Allaah preserve him said,

‘**I**t is possible for someone to simply say, *"So and so said such and such."* However we should say, *"Produce your proof."* So why did you not ask them for their proof by saying to them: *"Where was this said?"* Ask them questions such as this, as from your weapons are such questions as: *"Where is this from? From which book? From which cassette?..."*’

[The Overwhelming Falsehoods of 'Abdul-Lateef Bashmeel' page 14]

The guiding scholar Imaam Sheikh 'Abdul-'Azeez Ibn Abdullah Ibn Baaz, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said,

‘**I**t is not proper that any intelligent individual be misled or deceived by the great numbers from among people from the various countries who engage in such a practice. As the truth is not determined by the numerous people who engage in a matter, rather the truth is known by the Sharee'ah evidences. Just as Allaah the Most High says in Surah al-Baqarah, ﴿ **And they say, "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian." These are only their own desires. Say "Produce your proof if you are truthful."** ﴾-(Surah al-Baqarah: 111) And Allaah the Most High says ﴿ **And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allaah's path. They follow nothing but conjectures, and they do nothing but lie.** ﴾-(Surah al-'Ana'an: 116)’

[Collection of Rulings and Various Statements of Sheikh Ibn Baaz -Vol. 1 page 85]

Sheikh Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul-Wahaab, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said,

‘**A**dditionally, verify that knowledge held regarding your beliefs, distinguishing between what is correct and false within it, coming to understand the various areas of knowledge of faith in Allaah alone and the required disbelief in all other objects of worship. You will certainly see various different matters which are called towards and enjoined; so if you see that a matter is in fact one coming from Allaah and His Messenger, then this is what is intended and is desired that you possess. Otherwise, Allaah has certainly given you that which enables you to distinguish between truth and falsehood, if Allaah so wills.

Moreover, this writing of mine- do not conceal it from the author of that work; rather present it to him. He may repent and affirm its truthfulness and then return to the guidance of Allaah, or perhaps if he says that he has a proof for his claims, even if that is only a single statement, or if he claims that within my statements there is something unsupported, then request his evidence for that assertion. After this if there is something which continues to cause uncertainty or is a problem for you, then refer it back to me, so that then you are aware of both his statement and mine in that issue. We ask Allaah to guide us, you, and all the Muslims to that which He loves and is pleased with.’

[Personal Letters of Sheikh Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul-Wahaab- Conclusion to Letter 20]

Sheikh ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abdur-Rahman Abu Bateen, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, ‘**A**nd for an individual, if it becomes clear to him that something is the truth, he should not turn away from it and or be discouraged simply due to the few people who agree with him and the many who oppose him in that, especially in these latter days of this present age.

If the ignorant one says: “*If this was the truth so and so and so and so would have been aware of it!*” However this is the very claim of the disbelievers, in their statement found in the Qur’aan ﴿ **If it had truly been good, they would not have preceded us to it!** ﴾-(Surah al-Ahqaaf: 11) and in their statement ﴿ **Is it these whom Allaah has favored from amongst us?** ﴾-(Surah al-Ana’am: 53). Yet certainly, as Alee Ibn Abee Taalib, may Allaah be pleased with him, stated “*Know the truth and then you will know it’ people.*” But for the one who generally stands upon confusion and uncertainty, then every doubt swirls around him. And if the majority of the people were in fact upon the truth today, then Islaam would not be considered strange, yet, by Allaah, it is today seen as the most strange of affairs!”

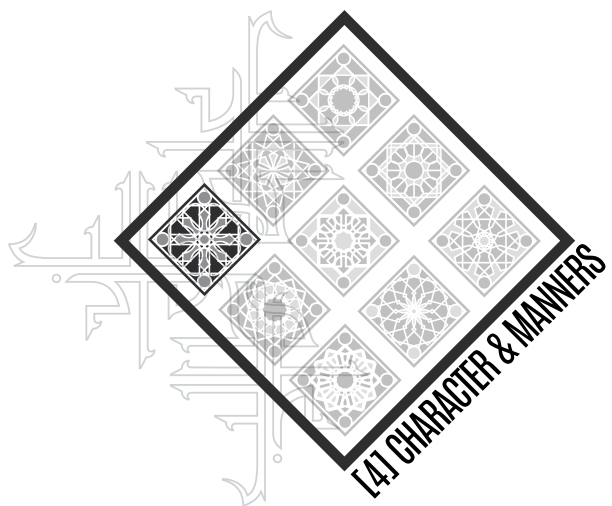
[Durar As-Sanneeyyah -vol. 10, page 400]

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A Short Journey through the work al-Adab al-Mufrad with
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Compiled and Translated by:
Abu Sukhailah Khalil Ibn-Abelahyi





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Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Saaleh al-‘Utheimeen, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said,

“Also from your contemplating Allaah is that you do so with regard to your inner secrets and what is in your heart. Look to what is in your heart! Associating partners with Allaah, showing off, deviations, jealousy, hatred and dislike displayed towards the Muslims, love of the disbelievers and other such things that Allaah is not pleased with. Scrutinize and be attentive to your heart for Allaah has said, ﴿ **Indeed We created man, and We know what his own self whispers to him.** ﴾ - (Surah Qaaf:16)

So contemplate Allaah in these three places, in your actions, your statements, and within your heart so that your contemplation may be complete. This is why, when the Prophet, may Allaah’s praise and salutations be upon him, was asked about *Ihsaan*, he replied, **{... that you worship Allaah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then indeed He sees you}**. Worship Allaah as if you see Him and witness Him with your eye, and if you cannot do so as if you were seeing Him then worship Him on a station below this by remembering that indeed He sees you. So the first station is to worship Him out of hope and desire. The next is to worship Him out of fear and awe this is why he said, **{and if you do not see Him, then indeed He sees you.}**

As such, it is necessary for a person to contemplate His Lord and that he know that Allaah is watching over him. Anything that you say or do or keep secret, Allaah, Exalted is He, knows it.”

(From his explanation of ‘Riyaadh as-Saaliheen’ may Allaah have abundant mercy upon him)

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THE “30 DAYS OF GUIDANCE” SERIES

The goal of the “*30 Days of Guidance*” book series is to better enable us, as worshipers of Allaah, to embody and reflect in the various different areas of life for a Muslim, our connection and adherence to the believer’s path of the first three believing generations. Many Muslims, due to lacking opportunities to study consistently and be cultivated at the feet of noble steadfast scholars, have an inconsistency they themselves recognize an inconsistency between the clear path of Islaam of the first Muslims, which they have connected themselves to, and what they have actually been successful in making a daily reality in their practice of Islaam. Sheikh Saaleh Ibn al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him, explained the importance of striving to rectify this,

“... For the one who proceeds upon the methodology of the best generations even if that is during the very last days of the existence of earth, then he is safe, saved, and protected from entering the Hellfire. As Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, said, ﴿And the first to embrace Islaam of the Muhaajiroon (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansaar (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhaajiroon) and also those who followed them exactly (in faith). Allaah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.﴾—(Surah Al-Tawbah:100)

*So Allaah, the Most Exalted, the Most Magnificent, has included and described them as those who follow Muhaajiroon and the Ansaar, upon a condition, “**who followed them exactly (in faith).**” Meaning truly followed them with precision and integrity, not merely putting forth a claim or outwardly attributing or attaching themselves to them without actually realizing their guidance. This is true whether that shortfall is caused by ignorance or by the following of desires. Not everyone who attributes himself to the first three generations is true in his assertion unless he follows them precisely and with integrity. This is in fact a condition, a condition placed by Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted. The wording “**exactly (in faith).**” meaning precisely, with integrity, as well as entirely.*

What is required in truly following them is that you study the methodology of the Salaf, that you understand it, and that you are firmly attached to it. But as for individuals who simply attribute themselves to them, while they do not really understand their methodology nor their way, then this does not really benefit them with anything, and does not actually help them in anyway. Such people are not from those upon the way of the Salaf and should not be considered Salafees. Because they are not following the first generations precisely with integrity, as indeed Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, has placed this as the condition for their following of them to be true.

....The one who proceeds upon the methodology of the Salaf must have two characteristics, as we have previously mentioned. Firstly, actually understanding the methodology of the first generations, and the second matter is adhering firmly to it, even when it causes him hardship and discomfort. As he will certainly encounter a great deal of that from those who oppose this path of guidance. He will encounter harassment. He will encounter stubbornness. He will encounter false accusations. He will face having directed towards him evil names and false labels. However, he must remain patient in the face of this, as he is convinced and satisfied with what he stands upon. He should be not shaken or troubled in the face of a whirlwind of difficulties. He should not be affected or changed by what he encounters of different trials, but remains patient when facing them until he meets his Lord.

Accordingly, one must firstly learn the methodology of the first three generation, and then follow it exactly with integrity, while being patient with what you encounter from the people due to this adherence. Yet this in and of itself is also not enough, it is additionally necessary to spread the methodology of the first generations. It is required to invite the people to Allaah and invite them to the way of the Salaf, to explain it to the people and spread this way among them. The one who does this is Salafee in reality and truth. But as for the one who claims Salafeeyah, yet he does not truly understand the methodology of the Salaf, or he does indeed understand it yet fails to truly follow it, but simply follows what the people are upon, or merely follows what happens to agree with his desires. This one is not Salafee, even if he calls and labels himself that.

This fact demands from us that we place great importance in fully comprehending the way of the first generations and studying their methodology in beliefs, character, and actions in every environment and situation. As the path and methodology of the first three generations is that methodology upon which the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations be upon him, was upon, and is that way which those who follow the best of generations and walk upon their path, will proceed upon until the Final Hour is established...

...As such, it is required that the one who claims this way, or connects himself to the Salaf make this descriptive name a reality and make his attachment to them something which truly reflects the way of the first generations in beliefs, and in statements, and in actions, and in general dealings. So that he may be a true Salafee and that he may be a righteous example to others and someone who sincerely reflects the way of the righteous first generations of Islaam.”^[1]

We ask Allaah for success in each of our efforts to both learn and reflect the clear path of the first three generations, in every area of our individual lives, the lives of our spouses, and the lives of our children. And the success is from Allaah.

[1] From the lecture “Salafeeyah, Its Reality And Its Characteristics” <http://www.alfawzan.af.org.sa/>

COMPILER'S INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allaah alone, we praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Him from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whoever Allaah guides, no one can lead him astray and whoever is caused to go astray, there is no one who can guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah alone with no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His worshipper and Messenger, peace and salutations be upon him, his household, his Companions, and all those who follow his guidance until the day of Judgment. To proceed:

Perhaps there can be no better introduction to the subject of character and behavior in Islaam than considering an accurate and encompassing overview of our religion of Islaam, clarifying both its foundations and what it aims to accomplish in human life. Imaam Sa'adee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, ^[1]

“The First Quality (of Islaam)

The religion of Islaam is built upon the foundation of faith in Allaah, as is mentioned in the statement of Allaah, the Exalted: *﴿ Say (Oh Muslims), We believe in Allaah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibraaheem , Ismaa'eel, Ishaaq, Ya'qoob, and to al-Asbat [the twelve sons of Ya'qoob], and that which has been given to Musaa and 'Isaa , and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted in Islaam.﴾*-(Surah al-Baqarah: 136)

So the tremendous fundamentals that Allaah has commanded His worshippers to adhere to are those essential fundamentals which all the prophets and messengers stood upon and called to.

What they contain is aimed towards bringing forth true understanding, true belief, and faith in every matter that Allaah Himself informed us of through the statements of His Messengers, as well as making every effort to encourage those outward behaviors that Allaah is pleased with.

Indeed, as the foundation of the religion is faith in Allaah, while the fruits of such faith are the striving towards every matter that Allaah loves and is pleased with, and undertaking those matters upon sincerity for His sake alone.

Can you conceive of a religion better, more valuable, or superior to this?

Islaam enjoins belief in everything that was revealed to the prophets, the affirmation that they were all indeed messengers, and the acknowledgement that the origin of the truth that they all came with is their one Lord. In addition, it prohibits making distinctions between them, as certainly all of them were truthful messengers of Allaah who believed in him sincerely.

[1] A Summarized Jewel Regarding the Excellent Qualities of the Religion of Islaam by Sheikh Abdur-Rahman ibn Naasir as-Sa'dee

It is impossible that any one of them would put forth any opposition to guidance or speak with evil misguidance.

This religion directs to every truth and acknowledges every matter that is, in fact, truthful and genuine. It recognizes every authentic religious guidance that Allaah revealed to His messengers and works along with every aspect of sound, natural, intellectual guidance that benefits. It does not reject truth from any of its different aspects or directions. Nor does it accept or affirm any falsehood, or circulate around any claim of falsehood or deception. It is predominant over the other religions and ways of life, as it enjoins the best of deeds, as well as the most excellent aspects of good character, and enjoins the overall well-being of those who worship Allaah.

Islaam encourages justice, kindness, mercy, and goodness while preventing injustice, oppression, transgression, and all aspects of bad character. There is not any characteristic of completeness and overall uprightness that all the prophets and messengers acknowledged as correct, except that Islaam acknowledges and affirms it. Moreover, there is not anything which brings about religious benefits or true worldly benefits that the previous revealed legislations called to, except that Islaam promotes and encourages it, nor is there any matter that is detrimental or corrupting except that Islaam prohibits it and commands us to distance ourselves from it.

So what is intended with this is that the beliefs of this religion are those through which our hearts are purified and our souls rectified, and through which we are established upon the best aspects of good character and the most worthy of actions and endeavors.”

Understanding that excellent character and good behavior are actually from the very goals and objectives of Islaam, helps us understand their true importance. Similarly, it is important for us, as Muslims, to understand the danger of restricting or reducing Islaam to a set of inward beliefs only, divorced from both character and behavior. Imaam Sa’adee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, has mentioned in another of his works, his explanation of the Qur’aan, concerning the verse ﴿ *Oh you who have believed, enter into Islaam completely and do not follow the footsteps of Shaytaan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.* ﴾ (Surah al-Baqarah: 208) [2]

“This is the command of Allaah, the Most High to the believers to enter ﴿...into *Islaam completely*...﴾, meaning in all of the commands and guidelines of the religion, and to not abandon from them any matter. And do not be of those who have taken their desires as their lord, such that if a matter from the Sharee’ah conforms to their desires then they comply and act upon it, while if it conflicts with their desires, they turn away and abandon it.

Rather, it is obligatory that your desires be made to comply and conform to the commands and guidelines of the religion, and that you do everything that you actually have the ability to do from good and beneficial actions. Additionally, those matters which you do not have the ability to do, you still affirm and hold to them, intending and resolving to do them, such that you understand and recognize how to establish them.

[2] Tayseer al-Kareem ar-Rahman fee Tafseer Kalaam al-Manaan’ - explanation of Surah al-Baqarah

When someone enters into Islaam completely, it is not possible nor conceivable that this be anything other than differing from and opposing the various paths of Shaytaan. And Allaah says, ﴿...and do not follow the footsteps of Shaytaan﴾ meaning: those actions which transgress against what Allaah has commanded. ﴿...Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy﴾ a clear enemy means: that he, meaning Shaytaan, doesn't direct you towards anything except that it is evil, disgraceful, and that which will bring some harm to you."

Undoubtedly, realizing and reflecting excellent character and good behavior as found in the Sunnah is from the guidance of Islaam which must be given attention by the Muslims seeking success. We must recognize that neglecting it is something which our clear enemy Shaytaan desires and works to move us towards. The importance of this essential aspect of Islaam has been indicated by many scholars throughout their works, as well as indicated in the source texts. In our present century the noble scholar of hadeeth Sheikh Muhammad Naasiruddeen Al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, ^[3]

"And the reality is, in respect to myself, I was in my first days of seeking knowledge and Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, guided me to understanding the importance of purely worshiping Allaah alone without any partners or associates. I had come to be aware of the state which the Muslim world was living in, that they were far away from properly realizing this essential worship of Allaah alone. I used to suppose that the problem facing the Muslim world was only their being far from properly understanding the meaning of the statement "*La ilaha illa Allaah*" (there is none worthy of worship except Allaah).

However, after some time it became clear to me that there was another problem which was directly connected to this first fundamental issue of the Muslims being far from properly understanding the meaning of the statement of tawheed. This additional problem was that, except to a very small and minimal degree, the majority of the Muslims were not truly reflecting the authentic character and behavior of Islaam."

When we look into the source texts of Islaam we find this importance shown in many places. It is found in the answer of the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, to Mua'adh Ibn Jabal, may Allaah be pleased with him, when he requested advice from the Messenger before traveling to call to Allaah and invite people to Islaam, ^[4]

{... "*Be a worshipper of Allaah, and do not associate anything with him in that.*" I said, "*Oh Prophet of Allaah, advise me further.*" He said, "*If you commit an evil deed follow it with an act of goodness*" I again said, "*Oh Prophet of Allaah, advise me further.*" He said, "*Be steadfast upon the truth and make your character one of goodness.*"}

And he, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, also said in another narration, ^[5]

{*The believer is straightforward and noble, while the evildoer is disingenuous, lowly, and lacking noble character.*}

Moreover, when the Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, first called to Allaah and His religion, he did so as a complete path of guidance encompassing beliefs,

[3] Fataawa Jeddah - Cassette 34

[4] Silsilaatul Ahadeeth as-Saheehah no. 1228

[5] Silsilaatul Ahadeeth as-Saheehah no. 935

statements, and deeds, and gave importance to the essential establishment of good character upon the indispensable foundation of establishing the worship of Allaah alone. This can be seen in the well-known story of Abu Dhar, may Allaah be pleased with him, and how he eventually embraced Islaam. In the narrations of that account it mentions how he first sent his brother to investigate and gather information about the call of the man named Muhammad in Mecca, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon, and then return back to him. The narration in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree mentions that when the brother of Abu Dhar, may Allaah be pleased with him, returned from traveling to listen to the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, he said to Abu Dhar, *“I saw him inviting to excellent character.”* [6] This importance is also well emphasized in al-Adab al-Mufrad, the original work whose commentary this course book is derived from. In one such narration Imam al-Bukhaaree authentically reports that Abu Hurairah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, said, [7]

{The best of you in Islaam, are those of you who have the best character.}

Such narrations are numerous in the well-known books of hadeeth narrations, because both character and behavior have a fundamental importance in the life of a Muslim as he should be shaped and guided by the pure preserved source texts of revelation, meaning the Noble Qur’aan and the authentic Sunnah as understood by the first generations of Muslims. There is no doubt that rectifying our characters and reforming our behavior to conform to the guidance of the affirmed Sunnah is part of the command to ***﴿...enter into Islaam completely...﴾***.

For this reason, after the essential endeavor of rectifying our aqeedah, or fundamental beliefs, and establishing the obligatory pillars of worship such as the salaah, we must ask ourselves where we stand individually, in terms of truly reflecting the guidance of the Sunnah in these two important areas. Have we recently asked ourselves how much of the guidance of Islaam related to character and good behavior we have been able to learn and actually practice? How many affirmed praiseworthy aspects of excellent character and good behavior we have made a part of our lives? And how many blameworthy aspects of bad character and bad behavior have we worked diligently to turn away from and abandon for Allaah’s pleasure? One of the benefits of true gatherings of dhikr, not gatherings upon innovation, is the worshipers of Allaah moving towards and coming closer to the Sunnah by gradually rectifying the heart, tongues, and limbs upon authentic knowledge, always seeking Allaah’s guidance and forgiveness for their shortcomings. The well known scholar Ibn Rajab, may Allaah have mercy upon him, mentioned in his explanation of the Qur’aan that al-Hasan al-Basree is reported to have said [8]:

“Frequently seek the forgiveness of Allaah in your homes, at your tables, upon your lanes and roads, and in your sittings and gatherings. As you do not know when the forgiveness from Allaah may descend upon you.”

We ask Allaah to make the sittings of the Muslims striving to rectify ourselves and our families, with this course, a blessed gathering of remembrance, forgiveness, and true success.

[6] Saheeh al-Bukharee 3861, and Saheeh Muslim 2474

[7] Al-Adab al-Mufrad, no 285

[8] Tafseer Ibn Rajab vol 1 page 150

This is the first in a new series of books whose aim was explained in the section coming before this introduction. By Allaah's mercy, seven years ago we were blessed to produce our first course book upon a specifically designed learning framework, as mentioned at that time,

"The origin and basis for this format of study which we have developed is from the excellent book of the guiding scholar Sheikh Saaleh Ibn Fauzaan al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him, in his book *"Mulkhis fee Sharh Kitaab at-Tawheed"*. In the introduction he states (page 5),

"This is an abridged commentary of the work "Kitaab at-Tawheed" of Sheikh al-Islaam Muhammad 'Abdul-Wahaab, may Allaah have mercy upon him, which I have composed upon a modern educational methodology, in order to make it easier to understand for the beginners in their studies. I hope that Allaah will bring benefit through it, and grants it a contributing role in the spreading of knowledge and the correction of the beliefs of the Muslims..."

His basic framework for the beginner's study of that essential book was initially the foundation for the (ongoing) development of an extended course on *"Kitaab at-Tawheed,"* as well later being further adapted and modified for other knowledge based projects - including the present course -by incorporating some of those same beneficial characteristics."^[9]

With this new series of books we take an additional step by using a format intended to facilitate consistent easy study by an individual or together with others, and by laying the groundwork for implementing two distinct online course paths based upon each book in the series.

- 1)The first is a full course testing regimen to assist with self-study as a supplement to the purchased books.
- 2)The second is planned, periodic, full live ILT classes based upon the series (instructor led training) also to be offered online.

This first course and course book discusses some aspects of the best character which a Muslim should reflect and exemplify in relation to the sole Creator as well as towards His Creation. The original work that it is based upon, al-Adab al-Mufrad, is unique in that it contains both the original narrations as well as the narrations of those exemplary Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them all, who learned the guidance of those narrations from the Messenger of Allaah, practiced them steadfastly upon knowledge and patience, and then taught that guidance to others among themselves and from the next generation.

This course follows the established framework of utilizing three print publications:

[Self-Study/Teachers Edition] - all course materials, appendices, and answer key

[Directed Study Edition] - all course materials, appendices, without answer key for groups

[Exercise Workbook]- supplementary course workbook formatted to facilitate homework

[9] Publisher's Introduction to "Al-Waajibaat: the Obligatory Matters" First Edition 1430

OVERVIEW OF THE ORIGINAL SOURCE WORK

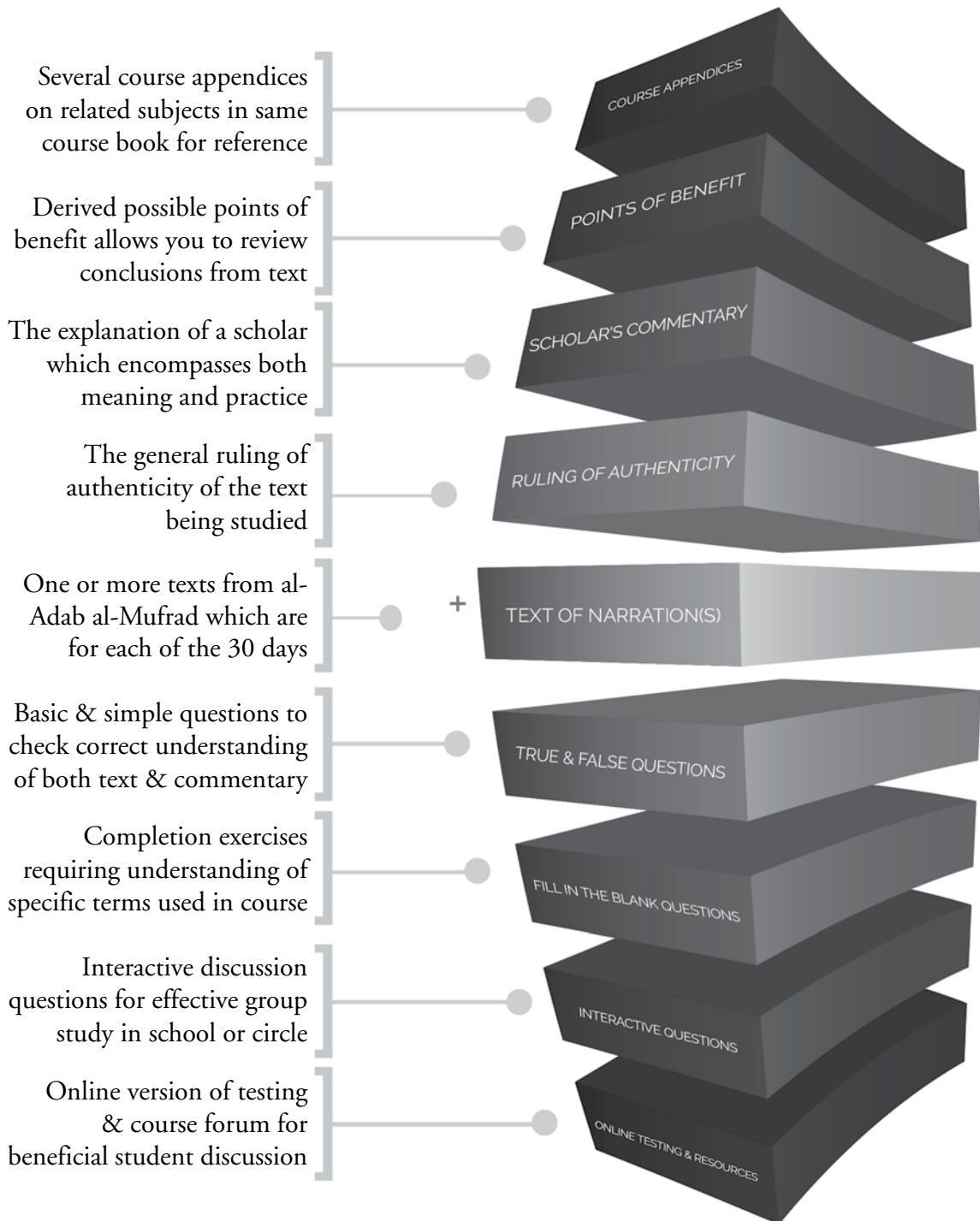
The work *al-Adab al-Mufrad* is one of the most well known small works by the exemplary Imaam Abu ‘Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Isma’eel al-Bukhaaree, may Allaah have mercy upon him. Its main focus is serving as a rich storehouse of guidance and guidelines for the development and perfection of the character, conduct, and behavior of every Muslim in their dealing with the Creator and the creation.

The original work has over six hundred smaller subject chapters and over a thirteen hundred total narrations with over nine hundred ahadeeth from the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, and nearly four hundred athaar narrations from the Noble Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them all. The edition used in the explanation of Sheikh Zayd Ibn Muhammad, may Allaah have mercy upon him, *Saheeh al-Adab al-Mufrad*, is a work of hadeeth verifications and minor explanatory notes by the guiding scholar Sheikh Muhammad Naasirudeen al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, and includes 993 narration which the sheikh assessed to be authentic.

OVERVIEW OF THIS SPECIFIC “30 DAY” COURSE



EDUCATIONAL ELEMENTS OF NEW “30 DAY” COURSE STRUCTURE



This course book is structured in a simple way in order to:

1. Make it easy to read and understand the selected original authentic narrations
2. Build upon that basic knowledge and understanding found in the original narration through the clarifying words of explanation and practical discussion from a well-known, distinguished scholar
3. Offer possible points of benefits from both the narration and scholarly commentary. ^[10]
4. Offer a basic level of relevant questions in order to enable review and testing the student's knowledge of what has been presented from these authentic narrations
5. Offer the reader an additional level of interactive discussion through on site forums to help him consider his current situation as a Muslim and possible ways to best implement this guidance in the daily lives of himself and his family.

The overall goal is to enable each reader to steadily cultivate these authentic aspects of character and authentic behaviors and manners which are both founded upon the authentic transmitted Sunnah and reflected in the way of the Companions and all those who followed them in goodness, step by step.

One of the distinguishing characteristics throughout the incredible commentary of Sheikh Zayd Ibn Muhammad Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, of *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, is his focus upon and discussion of the overall evidenced path of humble submission inwardly and outwardly a Muslim should be proceeding upon to be successful, by walking step by step in the footsteps of the Companions and those who followed them from the previous sincere Muslims as they followed the Prophet of Islaam.

This regular affirmation of the true sufficiency of the Qur'aan and authentic Sunnah is something only found in the words and advices of those guiding scholars who proceeded upon the way of the Salaf, the three distinguished generations. Similarly, the true focus upon the Hereafter and working towards it is the heart of the message of the Qur'aan, which these noble scholars understood and strive to teach us.

[10] It should be noted that the points of benefit are general and connected directly to the context of the sections narrations. There may be other external discussion points which apparently contradict specific points, but usually these are actually within of a different specific area of knowledge, different context, or intended meaning. However, any points that are not understood should be referred back to one of the scholars for the best understanding of the intended guidance in the original text as well as that of any external discussion.

Included along with the course, as part of the course book, there are six separate appendices:

Course Appendix 1:

What Is Having Good Character With Allaah?

The first appendix from Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Saaleh al-‘Utheimeen, may Allaah have mercy upon him, addresses an important issue which is often neglected in relation to the subject of having good character. This is especially true regarding some of the people of innovation and desires whose concepts of, and unbalanced focus upon, good character alone reflects a dangerous neglect for the priority of establishing the correct beliefs of worshipping Allaah alone and then establishing that devoted worship inwardly and outwardly. In this appendix, one of the leading scholars of our time establishes, without question, that the one who establishes good character with the creation while neglecting good character with the Creator is someone of ignorance of the rights of Allaah.

Course Appendix 2:

Brotherly Interaction & The Encouragement Towards Harmony

The second appendix Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Haadee al-Madkhalee, may Allaah preserve him, discusses many important aspects related to that brotherhood which is established upon the worship of Allaah and firm adherence to the Sunnah. Better understanding some of the objectives and goals of brotherhood enables the striving Muslim to benefit from brotherhood as well as to better benefit his Muslim brothers. It also contains a discussion of some of the shortcomings and obstacles encountered in establishing this brotherhood properly as the noble Companions, may Allaah be pleased with all of them, and first generations of believers did.

Course Appendix 3:

Important Guidelines For Every Muslim In Our Age Of Numerous Trials And Difficulties

The third appendix contains four brief summaries, from well known different scholars, of some of the important guidelines and actions needed by every Muslim who encounters one of the many trials that we regularly face in this age. These four concise lists from four different noble scholars of our time provide an excellent overview of how to protect ourselves and steer ourselves away from falling into trials while others foolishly rush towards them. Certainly having the specific guidance of our scholars of how to protect ourselves from trials and tribulations which would harm us, as well as being able to inform our Muslim brothers and sisters of them, is a tremendous blessing and is connected directly to the behavior and character that a Muslim should reflect in every place and in every situation.

Course Appendix 4**Ten Essential Advices For Guiding Upon the Path of Islaam**

The fourth appendix consists of ten advices offered by the noble Sheikh as-Suhaymee , may Allaah preserve him, that he offered to our Muslim brothers in Iraq, as well as to the people of the Sunnah around the world. From the issue of having taqwa and giving priority to establishing the worship of Allaah alone in both knowledge and action, to several matters connected to our collective efforts of calling to the religion and shortcomings related to that, these ten advices assist us in strengthening our connection to the authentic pure Sunnah, its principles, and the scholars who explain them.

Course Appendix 5:**The Behavior of Being Hasty to Claim Knowledge & Speak**

The fifth appendix addresses the important issue of following the practice of the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah of being cautious and wary to stand up before the people and speak as a person of knowledge before having properly developed steadfastly upon Sharee'ah knowledge. The discussion by Sheikh al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, is based upon his assessment of specific challenges and problems within the overall efforts of those who are calling to the understanding of the first Muslim generations, and a brief discussion of the cure. There is also a small closing addition from one of the young scholars, Sheikh Khalid Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Uthmaan, may Allaah preserve him, that helps us understand how this subject affects us in our present age of digital media and communication.

Course Appendix 6:**15 Essential Fundamentals That Should Be Understood By Every Muslim Living Among Non-Muslims**

The sixth appendix from a young scholar, Sheikh Ahmad Ibn Mubarak Qadhlaan al-Mazru'ee, may Allaah preserve him, discusses in a very simple way based upon clear evidences from the source texts of Islaam, fifteen principles or essential fundamentals. The understanding of these fifteen fundamentals helps build the character of the Muslim upon the authentic beliefs that enable it to grow correctly, by the permission of Allaah, and then protect it inshAllaah, even in those environments dominated by beliefs and practices of which oppose Islaam.

The noble Sheikh Siddeeq Hassan Khaan, ^[11] may Allaah have mercy upon him, said,

“Verily, truth will not cease to remain dignified, mighty, and precious. It is not attained while turning away from it, nor does it reach those loafers who turn away from it ...

... Truth is only known to he who gathers these five traits, the greatest of which are: sincerity, comprehension, fairness, the fourth- and it is the least present and most absent- vigilance in finding the truth, and the dire need for it”

Sheikh ‘Abdur-Razzaaq ibn ‘Abdul-Muhsin al-’Abbaad ^[12], may Allaah preserve them both, says:

“As for the seeking of Sharee’ah knowledge, then there is nothing equivalent to it in value. And I would stop here for a moment, to relate a statement of Imaam Ahmad so that we can take from within it that which benefits this subject from another direction. This is within his statement, may Allaah the most high have mercy upon him, “There is nothing as valuable as knowledge, once you have made correct your intention in seeking it.” So he was asked “What is making correct one’s intention for it?” He replied, “It is that you make your intention in seeking it the removal of ignorance from yourself and from others.” This is the meaning of correcting one’s intention for the seeking of knowledge.

This same meaning is also conveyed by an account narrated within the Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, of when the members of ‘Abdul Qais tribe came to the Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him. When they came he greeted them saying {Welcome! O people of ‘Abdul Qais! Neither will you be disgraced nor will you be regretful.} They said, “Oh Allaah’s Messenger! We cannot come to you except in the sacred month and there is the infidel tribe of Mudhar intervening between you and us. So please order us here to do something of good deeds so that we may then inform our people whom we have left behind at home, such that we all may enter Paradise by acting on them.”

This is an example of making sound and correct one’s intention in seeking knowledge as they said, “Please order us to do something of good deeds so that we may inform our people whom we have left behind at home, and that we may enter Paradise by acting on them.” This is what is proper and required, for the one seeking Sharee’ah knowledge makes this the foundation of their efforts in seeking of knowledge. Meaning that the objectives in seeking knowledge should be two areas.

The first objective is that by this knowledge that he acquires, it will enable him to enter Paradise, and we recently discussed the hadeeth narration, {Whoever goes forth upon the path of seeking knowledge, Allaah makes easy for him the path to Jannah.} ^[13]

[11] Qatfuth-Thamar fee Bayaan Aqeedati-Ahlil-Athar pg. 175

[12] The title of the lecture is ‘Legislative knowledge: Its Virtues, Mannerisms and Means of Attaining it.’

[13] Narrated in Saheeh Muslim: 2699/ Sunan at-Tirmidhee: 2945/ Sunan Ibn Maajah: 225/ & Musnad Ahmad: 7379- from the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah. Declared authentic by Sheikh al-Albaanee in Saheeh at-Targheeb wa al-Tarheeb: 69, 89, as well as in other of his books.

So he seeks this knowledge in order that by acting upon it when gained, he will be able to enter Paradise, and this is his goal in seeking knowledge. Such that he is not seeking knowledge in order to obtain leadership, nor authority over the people, nor prominence amongst them, nor some worldly benefits, or for any other similar reason. But rather his seeking Sharee'ah knowledge and what he intends through gaining it is that it enable him to successfully enter Paradise. This is first objective and primary goal.

*The second objective is that through this knowledge he be able to remove ignorance from other people. Know, if any one of us were to consider the condition of the majority of people around the Muslim world, and then ask ourselves are they truly living upon the clarity of guidance of Allaah's religion? Are the different essential affairs clear and understood by them? Or is it the case that they have been set upon and ravaged by misconceptions and false understandings, nearly ruined by the following of their desires, just weakly performing the various matters of required worship? Additionally, it will be clear that matters of misguidance have become common and dominate the Muslim affairs in many different matters, such that if someone of insight passes among the people he will recognize the severe need of the people for knowledge of the religion. This then drives him in struggling to gain knowledge himself in order that later he can return to help guide other people. As Allaah says, ﴿ **And it is not proper for the believers to go out to fight all together. Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they who are left behind may get instructions in religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware of evil.** ﴾—(Surah at-Tawbah: 122)*

This is why there were previously those from among the people of knowledge who traveled from land to land wherever they could find knowledge and its scholars, visiting any lands where they were able to acquire more understanding of the religion of Allaah. Then afterwards one of them would return to their original homeland as a person of knowledge, a scholar of fiqh, as someone capable of issuing rulings and judging between the people according to the sources of Islaam. By this, Allaah elevated their status and their standing among the people, and enabled them to bring forth tremendous benefit to others."

I pray that Allaah enable all those Muslims striving to benefit from this course book to help each other in cultivating and developing the good character and praiseworthy behaviors found in its pages, as well as in leaving the blameworthy characteristics and behavior also mentioned. And the success is from Allaah.

Additionally, I wanted to bring to the reader's attention a doubt that sometimes stands as an obstacle to the rectification we want and are committed to bringing to our families. Sometimes it is said regarding our children, "He doesn't want to do it", or "They are just not interested in studying." Regarding this, it is important to remember when directing our children to gain beneficial knowledge that even if they do not initially have a desire and sincere intention in doing so that Allaah can later bless them and correct their intention. Never stop encouraging your children upon knowledge just because they lack any intention to study and are only doing so due to their parents' directions. This is something which the first generations of Muslims also encountered. 'Awn bin Amarrah said,

“I heard Hishaam ad-Dastooaa’ee humbly say, “By Allaah, it is not possible for me to truly say that I went out for even a single day seeking hadeeth purely seeking the face of Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, alone.”

Imaam adh-Dhahabee commented ^[14] on this saying,

“By Allaah, neither can I. Indeed the first generations sought knowledge for the sake of Allaah, and it ennobled them, such that they became leaders that others followed and turned to. Yet there were some people from among them who at first did not seek knowledge for Allaah’s sake alone. Despite this they still acquired knowledge, then afterwards began to be resolute and sincerely determined, and so took themselves to account. The knowledge pulled them towards true sincerity of intention while they were on the path of seeking it.

This is just as Mujaahid and others mentioned, “We sought this knowledge while we did not have a significant intention for that, then Allaah granted us sound intention for it afterwards.” And some of them even said, “We sought this knowledge for other than the sake of Allaah, but it was refused. Then our intention came to be for Allaah sake.” So this is also something which is good. And then they afterwards spread this gathered knowledge with a righteous intention.”

CALLING OURSELVES TO ACCOUNT FOR SINS & SHORTCOMINGS IN CHARACTER & BEHAVIOR

This course examines and discusses many beneficial actions and deeds encouraged by the Sunnah that we should learn with sure knowledge and then strive to practice consistently and as frequently as is suitable. Likewise there are a number of important discussions related to those sins and transgressions that the sincere Muslim must acknowledge are wrong and harmful and then work to abandon and turn away from. However, there is a common roadblock that often prevents a Muslim from successfully changing. It is a trap that the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, himself warned us about. This is the danger of hearing and learning about transgressions but failing to turn away from such prohibited actions. Sheikh Zayd Ibn Muhammad Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said,

“The Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, reminded the Muslims of the threat of punishment for the one who hears a reminder, advice, or clarification about a sin yet continues to commit that transgression. Meaning by this those who continually engage in what they’re doing of sins and transgressions while they know they are wrong and sinful. The believers are not those who persist upon the wrongdoing of committing a sin once they have come to understand that it is something prohibited by Allaah. Rather they are those who seek forgiveness for the transgressions and wrong that they do.” ^[15]

Sometimes we are deceived by a misunderstanding about the nature of the difficulty or issues which will fall upon us when we do so. Yet ‘Umar bin Dhar, who was from our Salaf, may Allaah have mercy upon them all, said, ^[16]

[14] Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 7 page 149-156

[15] In his commentary mentioned within Day 28 of this course

[16] Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 6 page 385 – 390

“Every sadness you encounter is a trial upon you, except for the sadness of the one who has repented from his sin or transgression.”

Other times what leads to this is simply being comfortable, pleased, and impressed with what little effort we have put forth for the pleasure of Allaah, while overlooking or minimizing our transgressions and sins. Another of the righteous Muslims from the early generations, Masrooq said,^[17]

“It is enough to show a person’s knowledge that he has fear of Allaah, the Most High in what he does. And it is enough to show a person’s ignorance that he is impressed with his own actions and deeds.”

Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Saaleh al-’Utheimeen, may Allaah have mercy upon him, discusses the need for us to give importance to carefully considering ourselves inwardly and outwardly, weighing our behavior and deeds and evaluating what good or harm they may or may not bring us:^[18]

“... In some of the transmitted narrations it states that when a believer commits a sin, he considers it to be something significant and alarming, in the same way he would view his situation if he had an entire mountain floating dangerously above his head. This is compared to the hypocrite, who when he commits the sin considers the matter as something insignificant, like when a fly lands on his nose, and he easily brushes it away, meaning that he does not see it as something to really take notice of. As such, we see that the believer is someone who gives importance to correcting the sins and mistakes that he makes. He pays attention to them until he is able to free himself from committing them, through repenting and seeking forgiveness from Allaah, or performing acts of substantial goodness which will wipe away and eventually erase the harmful effects of the evil acts which he committed. So in considering yourself, if you see within your heart heedlessness and a laxness towards your sins and transgressions, then know that your heart has some degree of sickness. Because it is not possible for the living heart to be comfortable with any disease or affliction within it. And the diseases of the heart are from the sins which we commit. Just as was mentioned by ‘Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, in a verse of poetry:

*I’ve seen that it is sins which cause the hearts to die,
and in time these sins lead to the disgrace of being addicted to them.*

*While the abandoning of sins gives life to the hearts,
and what is best for your own self is that you rebel against committing them.*

In any case, I say that it is an obligation upon us, and I first direct this statement to myself before directing it to you, and I ask Allaah to assist all of us. I say that is obligatory upon us to give importance to our own souls and that we call them to account. If someone is a businessman, he doesn’t go to sleep until he has reviewed the accounts of his regular transactions, how much he has spent, what his expenses were, and how much profit he made. Considering this, it is more important and suitable that we give our due attention to and focus on the business of the Hereafter.

[17] Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 4 page 63-69 (These footnote citations from Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa usually only indicate the first page of the biographical section where they were taken from)

[18] From a recorded lecture by the Sheikh entitled “Our Burdens” after the explanation of some aspects of Surah ash-Sharh

It is that business and that enterprise which is of greatest importance and lasting impact.

Moreover, consider the business efforts of the people who are only concerned with this worldly life. How do they actually benefit from them? The worldly results do not truly benefit them, and if it can be said to benefit them to some degree, then it is from the aspect of meeting their physical needs only. Yet a worldly business endeavor has considerable worries and concerns attached to it. Some of your merchandise may be lost in transit, so this is something to be concerned about. Or in your region there may be danger from hijackers or robbers, which causes you even more anxiety and restlessness. But the business of working for the Hereafter is the opposite of this completely.

﴿Oh You who believe! Shall I guide you to a commerce that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allaah and His Messenger, and that you strive hard and fight in the cause of Allaah with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but know! If you do so He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwelling in Gardens of Eternity, that is indeed the great success.﴾ - (Surah As-Saff: 10-12).

Your result of this “business” of the Hereafter is that you are saved from eternal punishment, and through your working on it Allaah forgives your sins, and through this business you are made to enter Jannah....”

So we must consider our own actions carefully, both the good and the bad, and take ourselves to account before we are taken to account on the Day of Reckoning. This important foundation of focusing on working towards our own individual success in the Hereafter, is something stressed repeatedly by the noble mountain of knowledge Sheikh Zayd Ibn Muhammad Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, within his commentary of Al-Adab al-Mufrad.

As I have mentioned, in this course there is a discussion of the importance of turning away from sins, and following them with good deeds. An additional aspect of this is the importance of the believers assisting each other upon that same important matter, meaning leaving transgressions and wrongdoing and helping each other as Muslims replace personal shortcomings and wrongdoings with good character and righteous behaviors. Sheikh Zayd Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, states,^[19]

“It is only proper that the scholars do not cause the people to despair or become discouraged concerning the mercy of Allaah. Instead, they must encourage and guide them to enter the ways and doors of goodness seeking closeness to Allaah. Allaah has named Himself the Forgiver, the Most Merciful. He is the One Who forgives the transgressions of the wrongdoers and has mercy towards those who have made mistakes, those who have been influenced and overcome by the shaytaans from among men and jinn who cause them to fall into grave sin and wrongdoing.””

And Abu Muleeh narrated that Maymoon, may Allaah have mercy upon them both, said,

[19] Within Day 17, page 153 of this course book

“The one who did some wrongdoing privately should repent privately, and the one who did some wrongdoing publicly should repent publicly. As indeed the people are those who blame and rebuke, and don’t forgive. Whereas Allaah is the one who forgives, and does not rebuke and blame.” [20]

A sign of the true scholars is that they direct the sincere people towards rectification, even after they have committed sins, and do not leave them to fall further into the trap of deceptions and tricks of Shaytaan, unless they are stubborn upon their wrongdoing. In this same way, we should strive to cultivate within ourselves properly fulfilling the collective obligation of enjoining what is good, assisting others to come closer to what is pleasing to Allaah, working to strengthen them upon repentance, and turning away from every wrongdoing and those matters which are displeasing to Allaah. al-Fudhayl Ibn Iyaadh explained the difference between advising and exposing, he said, [21]

“A believer covers up personal sins and advises their Muslim brother, while the wrongdoer exposes and enjoys their falling into error.”

This is especially true for those people we are responsible for from our families and households, and our young Muslim brothers and sisters in Western communities generally. It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Qilaabah that, [22]

“One day Abu Dardaa passed by a man who had committed a sin, who had around him some people who were hitting him and insulting him. He stopped and said to them, “Don’t you believe that if he had fallen down a well you would help him get out from it? The replied, “Of course we would.” So he said, “Then do not insult your brother and thankfully praise Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, who protected you from falling into that same sin.”” They asked him, “But shouldn’t we be angry with him for this?? He replied, “Have anger due to what he has done, but if he turns away from it, then he is again treated as your brother.”

Similarly it has been narrated in Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa, that Ibn ‘Adee said about Zadhaan that he was a young Muslim who repented at the hand of Ibn Mas’ood and Abu Hishaam ar-Rumaanee. Zadhaan himself further transmitted the account saying, [23]

“I was a young man who had an excellent voice. One time some of us had nabeedh, a fermented intoxicating drink, which we were drinking. I was among them sitting and singing to them. Ibn Mas’ood happened to pass where we were, entered upon us, and after seeing what we were doing, he began breaking the containers of nabeedh. He scattered their pieces and then broke the musical instruments we also had. Then he said to me “Oh young man, if I were you I would instead use that good voice for the Qur’aan.” Then he left us and went out. So I said to my friends, “Who was that? They said, “That was Ibn Mas’ood.” Upon hearing this, I resolved myself to repent from what we were doing.

So I went out after him, crying, and when I caught up to him I took hold of his thobe. He stopped and turned to me and embraced me. While also crying he said to me, “Welcome to someone who, due to turning to repentance, I love for the sake of Allaah.” Then we sat down, and he took some dates out of his pocket and gave them to me.”

[20] Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 5 page 71-78

[21] Jaame’e al-’Uloom wal-Hikam, pg 77

[22] Found in Shu’ab al-Emaan of Imaam al-Bayhaquee: narration 6180 and al-Musannaf of Abdur-Razzq: vol 11, page 180

[23] Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 4 page 280

This account reflected what Sheikh Zayd Ibn Haadee mentioned above, about the people of knowledge helping the sincere Muslims rectify themselves. It also brings us back to the previous reminder from Sheikh al-'Utheimeen, may Allaah have mercy upon him, for the person who is currently falling short and heedless of how he or she is living their lives. As he says, ^[24]

“So if you see within your heart heedlessness and a laxness towards your sins and transgressions when considering yourself, then know that your heart has some degree of sickness. Because for the living heart is not possible that it is comfortable with any disease or affliction within it.”

We see in the above narration that the young Muslim man, Zadhaan, recognized his transgression and heedlessness, and actively turned away from it when the reminder reached him. Are each of us willing to do the same, or will we continue to neglect taking ourselves to full account and simply remain upon heedlessness in our affairs as Muslims? We ask Allaah for assistance.

Ibn al-Qayyim explains in detail what happens to our hearts when we simply choose to continue heedlessly following our desires, and how this corrupts our hearts, character, and behavior. He also guides us towards how we can improve and rectify all three. ^[25]

“And there is no doubt that the heart becomes rusted just like copper, silver, and other metals do, and it is polished with dhikr, as dhikr will clean it until it is left as shiny as a mirror. If it is left, it once again becomes rusty, and if you remember Allaah, it is once again polished.

And the heart becomes rusted because of two things: heedlessness and sin, and it becomes polished with two things: repentance and dhikr. So, whoever is heedless more often will have more rust on his heart, and the amount of rust will be in accordance with how heedless he is. If the heart becomes rusted, its owner will not be able to see things for what they are. He will see falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood, because when the rust builds up, it causes a fog that prevents him from seeing things as they are. So, if the rust builds up and blackens the heart, his understanding and comprehension become ruined. He will not accept the truth as truth, and will not reject falsehood as falsehood. This is the greatest form of punishment that can afflict the heart. This all stems from heedlessness and the following of one's desires, as they put out the light of the heart and blind it:

﴿...and do not obey he whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his own lusts, and whose affair has been lost.﴾ -(Surah al-Kahf:28)”...

In the same passage he discusses the importance of turning to the reliable people of knowledge for guidance as we seek to rectify ourselves. He says,

“...As such, if the servant of Allaah wants to imitate someone, let him consider if the one he wishes to imitate is from those who remember Allaah or from the heedless ones? Is he led by his desires, or by revelation? If he is someone led by his desires and is from the heedless, his affair is lost. The word lost in this verse has been explained to mean lacking understanding and direction in comprehending what he should be doing and what will lead to his guidance and success, so he is lost. It has also been explained to mean wasted, in that he has wasted what blessings he has. It has also been explained to mean destruction, and has been explained to mean opposition to the truth.

[24] From a recorded lecture by the Sheikh entitled “Our Burdens”

[25] al-Wabil as-Sayyib’ p. 37

All of these are similar and related in meaning, and the point is that Allaah forbade us from obeying those who have these traits. So, a man should look to his teacher, role model, and leader, and if he finds these traits in him he should avoid him. If he finds one who is usually remembering Allaah, following the Sunnah, and his affair is not lost — rather, he is doing his job — he should hold tightly to that person. The only difference between the living and the dead is in regards to the remembrance of Allaah, because the difference between the one who remembers his Lord and the one who doesn't is like the difference between the living and the dead.” [26]

How many people sincerely want to turn to Allaah and begin to change their lives and benefit themselves, after having previously wasted much of their time in that which was of little or no benefit? It is important to know that our priorities and changing how we use our time are important tools to successfully doing so. Sheikh Zayd Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was asked by a moderator of a gathering, *“How can a Muslim be blessed in how he spends his time?”* [27]

The sheikh asked to clarify, “How can he achieve...?”

Moderator, “...Achieve blessing.... in relation to his time.”

Sheikh Zayd then responded, “From its causes is first, the favor of Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, in assisting him in this, and then through the specific causes that enable him to accomplish this. He must also protect his time, and continually strive in those matters which will bring him good in his religion and his worldly affairs.

He must not act heedlessly or be lax in how he spends his time, letting it escape, but instead guards it from being wasted because it is something precious. Indeed, he does not know how much time he has left in this world.

Therefore, he should continually be diligent in making the amount of time he has remaining something for the sake of benefiting his religion. This is done by working to gain an understanding of Allaah's religion, continually striving in gaining Sharee'ah knowledge and spreading that knowledge, and by first and foremost establishing the matters obligatory upon him, then protecting his tongue and limbs from evil, and engaging in the remembrance of Allaah. These are from the best of things that one can engage in that leads to the rectification of his heart and his body. Yes.”

[26] al-Wabil as-Sayyib' p. 37

[27] From an audio lecture in the voice of the Sheikh, may Allaah have mercy upon him

It is important to point out to the reader preparing to use this course book, that part of preparing for our full reckoning in the Hereafter is taking a good hard look at how we use our time as Muslims and what activities we fill our time with. Doing so gives us an honest look at our priorities and what is actually important to us. In both the texts of the Sharee'ah as well as what we experience in our lives, one of the blessings we often do not take advantage of fully is our time. One of the best ways to really consider and assess our personal use of time is to compare ourselves to those early righteous Muslims who have been successful in using their time in the best way. Ibn Mas'ud, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations, of Allaah be upon him, said:

{The two feet of the son of Adam will not move from near his Lord on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about five (matters): about his life and how he spent it.....} until the end of the hadeeth.^[28]

If we truly realized the importance of Sharee'ah knowledge and how essential it is to the well being of ourselves and our families and Muslims, much of the time we waste in that which does not truly benefit us would be used for leading ourselves to our own success in this world and the next. Many of us allow any small matter to distract us from the beneficial endeavor of consistently seeking a small amount of knowledge everyday. This is even more dangerous when this lack of focus is directly related to falsely following a modern innovated methodology which falsely calls the Muslims to focus on politics, economic success, current events, or some other distorted focus. One of the goals of this course is to enable the reader to strive to not be among those who lose their blessing of time in every small distraction. Imaam adh-Dhahabee mentioned in his landmark work Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubalaa,

"It has reached us that Yahya bin Yahya al-Laythee was once sitting in the circle of knowledge of Maalik Ibn Anas, may Allaah have mercy upon him, when an elephant passed by outside the door of Maalik. So the people who were attending that gathering got up and went out to look at the elephant, all except for Yahya bin Yahya. He was the only one who did not stand up to leave. So Imaam Maalik was impressed by this and so asked him, "Who are you, and what land are you from?" And after that time he never stopped having tremendous respect for him."^[29]

May Allaah make us of those who are distinguished by attention and focus on that which matters most in the sight of Allaah, and upon those things which will be heaviest on our scales on the Day of Reckoning. While working on the course, one of the many things that truly benefited me personally, was striving to implement whatever I was learning, and constantly being brought back to the reminder that our time is best spent either in gaining beneficial knowledge or implementing beneficial knowledge in a wide range of righteous deeds which bring us true success. There is no doubt that the successful Muslims of the early generations used their time wisely in so many different areas of doing good, as have all the guided Muslim who followed them upon the straight path throughout the centuries. Imaam adh-Dhahabee mentioned in the biography of Abu Waleed al-Baajee, a few lines of poetry he composed,

[28] Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 2422; classed as authentic by Sheikh al-Albaanee in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi: 1969 and in Silsilaatul Ahadeeth as-Saheehah hadeeth no. 964

[29] Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 10, page 519

If you have come to know with certain knowledge

That all of one's life is only like a single passing hour.

Then why aren't you stingy with how you spend it!

Making all of it in that which brings good, rectifies, and is obedience to Allaah. [30]

The righteous worshippers of Allaah from the first generations divided their days between those things that benefited themselves personally and the believers generally. There are many clear examples of this. Musa Ibn Isma'eel said about the well known scholar Hammad Ibn Salamah.

"I did not see Hammad Ibn Salamah laughing due to his truthfulness and sincerity. He was someone who was always busy. He was either narrating hadeeth, reading, glorifying Allaah in dhikr, or praying. He divided his entire day up for these endeavors." [31]

Similarly, they were known to divide their nights upon actions that brought success and rectification. Taariq bin Shehaab narrated that the Companion of the Prophet Salmaan al-Farsee, may Allaah be pleased with him, said,

"When nighttime comes, the people have three different positions in relation to it. Among them are those who make the night something which counts for him and not something against him. And among them are those who make the night something which counts against him and not for him. And among them are those who make the night something which neither counts for them nor against him".

So he was asked, "How is this so?" He replied,

"A person takes opportunity of the darkness of the night, which most of the people neglect, by purifying himself and standing to pray, and this counts for him and not against him. Another person takes opportunity of the darkness of the night and spends it committing sins which Allaah has forbidden, and this counts against him and not for him. A third person sleeps the entire night until morning, which neither counts as something for him nor something against him." [32]

It has been narrated that Al-Haakim, from the early generations, said,

"I traveled to Toosa twice. While there I asked Abu an-Nadhr at-Toosee how he found the time to record and write down these many different rulings of the religion that he had written down. He replied to me saying,

"I divide my night into three parts. For one third I write and compile, for one third I sleep, and with one third I recite the Qur'aan." [33]

[30] Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 18, page 535

[31] Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 7, page 444

[32] Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 1, page 505

[33] Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 15, page 490

It can be noted that one of the longest explanations of fiqh issues with the original commentary by Sheikh Zayd Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was the explanation of how to properly implement the standing at night and every type of beneficial deed that this encompasses. This important division of time is similar to that which has been reported about Imaam ash-Shaafa'ee, may Allaah have mercy upon him. Rabee'a bin Sulaymaan said that Imaam Shaafa'ee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, would divide his night into different parts. In the first third he would write matters related to knowledge, in the second third he would pray, and in the last third he would generally sleep.

SHAYTAAN WANTS US TO LOSE OPPORTUNITIES TO PLEASE ALLAAH

One good way of understanding how we lose our time is by remembering who is pleased when we allow our time to slip away without being used for something good, meaning Shaytaan. While considering the example of Imaam Shaafa'ee and some of the other righteous people of the early generations, we should understand how Shaytaan struggles to keep us away from such a beneficial and balanced use of our nights, and very importantly how what we do or fail to do at night affects what we are able to do during our days. It is mentioned in the narration of Abu Hurairah, may Allaah be pleased with him, in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Saheeh Muslim, and other collections of hadeeth, that the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him said,

{During your sleep, Shaytaan knots three knots at the back of the head of each of you, and he breathes the following words at each knot, 'The night is long, so keep on sleeping,' If that person wakes up and celebrates the praises of Allaah, then one knot is undone, and when he performs ablution the second knot is undone, and when he prays, all the knots are undone, and he gets up in the morning lively and in good spirits; otherwise he gets up in low spirits and lazy.} ^[34]

The guiding scholar Sheikh 'Abdul-Muhsin al-'Abbad, may Allaah preserve him, stated in his audio commentary to the narration of this hadeeth in Sunan Abu Dawud,

"His statement, ***{...he gets up in the morning lively and in good spirits.}*** Meaning that he is in good spirits and he is lively because he got up to engage in worship during the night, and he came to a state of being cheerful through engaging in that worship. So he is in good spirits and has general ease and satisfaction and enthusiasm. Whereas if he had remained sleeping, and had not put forth anything of these acts of worship, not getting up nor standing to pray, then when he finally woke he would be in low spirits and lazy."

So in light of this consider carefully, my Muslim brother and sister, consider carefully what else Shaytaan wants for our entire lives, during both day and night. Certainly he wants us to be far from all the beneficial forms of worship, trapped in both shirk and innovations, lazy to do good, and occupied with distractions that are of very little worth to us in both this world and the Hereafter. Consider how the noble guiding scholar Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Ibraheem Aal-Sheikh, may Allaah have mercy upon him, explained to us the general strategy of Shaytaan against the Muslims, and many of the specific tools of deception he uses against the believers,

[34] Saheeh al-Bukhaaree 3269

*“Indeed from the greatest obligations in the religion is to remember and consider the many signs of Allaah and the passing of days in His creation, to discuss His favors and to warn against those things which bring about His wrath and anger. This is only due to what these matters contain of bringing about tremendous good for us as well as it acting as a protection from the arrival of Allaah’s punishment in this world and our shifting away from our state of blessed goodness. Allaah, the Most High says, ﴿ **And remind, for verily, the reminding profits the believers.** ﴾ – (Surah adh-Dhaariyaat: 55) And Allaah, the Most High says, ﴿ **But warn by the Qur’aan him who fears My Threat. .** ﴾ – (Surah Qaaf: 45) And Allaah, the Most High says, ﴿ **And proclaim the Grace of your Lord** ﴾ – (Surah ad-Duhaa: 11) And Allaah, the Most High says, ﴿ **...and remind them of the blessings of Allaah. Truly, therein are evidences, proofs and signs for every patient, thankful person.** ﴾ – (Surah Ibraheem: 5).*

Moreover, the greatest of favors which Allaah has blessed His servants with was the sending of his worshipper and messenger Muhammad, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, with the way of guidance and the religion of truth, as these are both considered beneficial knowledge and righteous endeavors and actions. Undoubtedly, the foundation of this way and its basis is the worship of Allaah alone with no partners and turning away and abandoning the worship of anything other than Him.

Through his being sent as a Messenger, those hearts which accepted him came to shine after having been in darkness, they became devoutly submissive after having been rigid in opposition, and they became hearts characterized by strength after having been upon weakness. They became hearts upon honor and glory after being upon humiliation and disgrace, upon knowledge after being ignorant. They became hearts which conquered lands and won over the hearts of creation, hearts which elevated the Word of Allaah and brought the various statements of disbelief to a position of lowliness, failure, and disgrace. They eradicated the authority of the Jahileeyah (time of ignorance) and practices of associating others with Allaah. And all praise is due to Allaah for this.

Except that Iblees, and we seek refuge in Allaah from Him, the one who possesses an immense enmity to the sons and daughters of Aadam, the one who is complexly saturated by disbelief and an arrogant desire for spreading oppression, then increased his prolific efforts to turn people away from the obedience of Allaah, ar-Rahmaan. But when his efforts in completely extinguishing this light of the sent messenger’s guidance hopelessly failed, he responded as such a one does. He turned and began working to divert people away from the truth, encouraging them towards the different forms of disbelief, atheism, and forms of immorality. He called them to follow innovations in the religion, and increased his buzzing whispers inviting to various wrongdoing and evil acts. He brought forth misconceptions and desires which were easy to follow and many kinds of seductive temptations, accomplishing this through the hands of those who were already from the party of Shaytaan, and those who responded to them from the shaytaans from among men.

Through different deceptions, he falsely made the world incredibly attractive, making it appealing in a way that captivated, while magnifying the worldly desires connected to it. He worked towards strengthening and spreading all those things which act as barriers and obstacles for Muslims engaging in the different forms of remembrance of Allaah, and performing the ritual prayer, from

many types of entertainment and amusement and different kinds of things which intoxicate us. Eventually it was something heavy upon many hearts to listen regularly to the Qur'aan, and the people generally fell into negligence and heedlessness of the reminders in the Qur'aan of possible punishment. This continued until they stopped giving importance to the restraining guidance of the Qur'aan, its unambiguously clear reminding threats. This happened particularly after the passing of the age of the three exemplary generations. Thereafter he intensified his call and efforts, persisted in opening the door to misguidance and evil as wide as possible, and has never stopped working in this way.” [35]

The first three exemplary generations were successful in pushing back and defeating the weak plan of Shaytaan, through firm adherence to the Sunnah of the best of creation. They followed the focus and priorities of the Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, and later that of the Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them all, in how they divided and spent both their days and nights. May Allaah make us of those who are successful in spending our days and nights as worshippers of Allaah, until we stand before Him of the Day of Judgement upon this accomplishment.

THE CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF WORSHIP HELD BY THE FIRST BELIEVERS

As mentioned before, a good example of this was Imaam Shaafa’ee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, who after spending his days in matters pleasing to Allaah, would divide his night into different parts of matters pleasing to Allaah. Additionally, the reader should take note here that commented on this statement by Rabee’a bin Sulaymaan, about Imaam Shaafa’ee, Imaam adh-Dhahabee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said,

“His actions during these three parts were all worship due to his intention in them.” [36]

This brings us to an important discussion related to behavior and deeds, and determining the correct understanding of what is considered general worship. Many Muslims do not understand that adopting these good aspects of character and slowly training ourselves upon the aspects of good behavior mentioned in this course can be considered part of that general worship for which they were created. If done properly with the correct intention and goal, they can be. Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Saaleh al-’Utheimeen, may Allaah have mercy upon him, conveys this understanding which our Salaf held of the true definition of worship. It is an understanding and definition which distinguishes those who proceed upon the way of the Salaf from many of the people who have innovated their own understanding of worship into their practice of Islaam. The sheikh, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was asked a question on the radio program Nur Alaa Darb, concerning whether general work is considered worship absolutely or without qualification. He replied,

“As for general work, then it is not correct that we say absolutely that work is worship, except in the case where one’s work is being undertaken specifically or intentionally as an act of worship for Allaah. There is no doubt that the work undertaken in this way is certainly considered worship. But that work done for the sake of gaining in our worldly affairs only- is not considered worship,

[35] Fataawa wa Rasaa’il Samaahatul-Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Ibraheem vol: 13: page 184-187

[36] Siyaar ‘Alaam an-Nubalaa: vol 10. page 35

unless it is performed as part of a greater matter which the Sharee'ah calls for and requires.

*An example of this is the one who works to take care of himself and his family in order to prevent them from having to ask the people for help, striving to stand as sufficient upon what Allaah grants him of wealth. For this reason there is found in a hadeeth from the Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, that he said, **{One who strives to help the widows and the poor is like the one who fights in the way of Allaah.}** The narrator said: I think that he added also: **{He is considered like the one who stands up for prayer without rest and as the one who observes voluntary fasts continuously}**.^[37]*

*So, one's efforts for work and livelihood in the world are considered according to the intention of the one undertaking them. The one who seeks goodness, it will be good for him, and the one who desires something evil or wrong, that effort will be judged according to what he actually intended. This is due to the statement of the Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon them, **{Actions are to be judged only by intentions and a man will have only what he intended...}**"^[38]*

How many groups, sects, and modern organizations, as well as the speakers and callers who spread their destructive and deficient ideas, dismiss such basic efforts which a striving Muslim does for himself and his family? Simply because he is not engaged in their innovated distorted "jihad", or their innovated distorted efforts of "da'wah", or their innovated efforts to engage in "Sharee'ah politics", they belittle this effort as being of little, if any, worth, despite it being done with good intention and adherence to the Sunnah. Yet we see from the first generations generally, and from those scholars who followed them in belief and practice, that everything that we undertake with sincerity, conformance to the Sunnah, and seeking Allaah's pleasure, can be part of our lives spent in general worship of Allaah. As Sheikh Zayd Ibn Haadee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, mentions within his commentary.^[39]

*"The first of them: the comprehensive worship of Allaah alone, and not associating any partner with him outwardly or inwardly whether in speech or action. Meaning that the adult responsible Muslim directs every form of worship towards Allaah alone, excluding anyone else from his actions or statements whether they be outward or inward. And Ibn Taymeeyah defined worship in a statement he made saying, **"Worship is the name for every matter which Allaah loves and is pleased with from statements and actions whether done outwardly or inwardly."** So encompassed within this definition are those acts which are obligatory, required, or recommended, as well as staying away from those acts which are prohibited or discouraged and disapproved of..."*

He also said,^[40]

"...Whenever Allaah gives His worshipper strength, health, and well-being, he should use them for those things which are pleasing to Allaah. He should use them to rectify the affairs of his religion and his worldly life. He is in a state of noble worship in which Allaah has blessed him with these blessings, and so he utilizes his health, his strength, his wealth and other than that from the blessings of Allaah in the obedience of Allaah. Therefore he receives rewards from Allaah from more directions than can be counted."

[37] Riyadh as-Saaliheen hadeeth 225 as authentically narrated in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree & Muslim

[38] Audio file of Sheikh al-'Utheimeen from the program Nur Alaa Darb

[39] In his commentary mentioned within Day 30 of this course

[40] In his commentary mentioned within Day 6 of this course

Lastly, he also mentioned, ^[41]

“...The fourth form of worship is the maintaining of family ties. This includes everything that the word “maintaining” encompasses of meaning, such as connection by knowledge of them, connection by assisting them with wealth according to its Sharee’ah conditions, and maintaining relations by visiting them according to what you are able to do. This is one of those means by which the worshipper gains closeness to Allaah, the Blessed and the Most High, as well as being one of those rights it is required to fulfill as something which is obligatory, which we have discussed in more than one place within this short series of lectures.”

An excellent discussion of this false, restricted understanding of worship held and advocated by many in our age is from our guiding scholar Sheikh Muhammad ‘Amaan Al-Jaamee, may Allaah have mercy upon him. He stated,

“...For that reason, this should be the priority of life for both the individual and the society, as it is the very reason they have been created, ﴿And I created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me alone﴾ – (Surah adh-Dhaariyaat: 56).

Yet many Muslims have errors in their understanding of this worship, which has been placed in this tremendous position. And this statement itself may be something surprising and strange to you, oh noble listener! And it is right that you might be surprised. But in a moment I will explain to you the validity of what I have stated after some clarifying points for you to consider if you have been granted success in understanding and fairness, and certainly fairness is from faith itself.

The definition of the term ‘ibaadah’

The meaning of the word ibaadah in the Arabic language is yielding and subordination. It is said, the road is ‘ma’bud or subservient, if it is compliant to the traveler and easy to travel.

In the Sharee’ah its meaning is as follows: some of the people of knowledge have defined ibaadah as “that which encompasses every matter that Allaah loves and is pleased with inwardly and outwardly, from statements and actions.” Sheikh al-Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah also gave a summarized definition which encompasses what is necessary and excludes that which isn’t necessary when he stated. “Worship is having the utmost humility to Allaah in affairs, along with the utmost love for Him.” And after this definition it becomes clear that worship is something expansive and far-reaching, and its boundaries are very wide...

...From the significant errors found within the ranks of the Muslims today is that every group of Muslims, indeed perhaps almost the majority of individuals among them, try to take from Islaam that single focus, aspect, or part of Islaam that they consider most suitable and agreeable, turning away from the other aspects that are also part of Islaam. They believe that adherence to this individual part that they have chosen is sufficient for them to be Muslim, and they make unnecessary the other aspects of Islaam and areas of worship.

[41] In his commentary mentioned within Day 30 of this course

For example, some individuals or groups may adhere to and place emphasis solely on good character and excellent behavior with others, or perhaps someone may place emphasis on directing all acts of ritual worship to Allaah alone, meaning not supplicating to anyone other than Allaah, and not seeking closeness, to or the pleasure of, Allaah through acts such as sacrificing animals and vows, for example, directed towards someone other than Allaah.

Yet at the same time they are not satisfied with the guidelines and rulings of Islaam in the other valid aspects of economic laws and governmental structure and guidelines; rather, they think that it is now necessary to implement foreign laws and legal structures in this area of our lives in Muslim lands, regardless of whether these laws and legal structures are taken from the western countries or from the eastern countries, or are regionally developed municipal laws or codes. Does Islaam itself accept such a way of proceeding and acting and this perspective of arbitrarily selecting whatever one wishes? The answer is no.

*The Qur'aan rejects this position and considers it to be disbelief. Allaah says, ﴿ **Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest? Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment. And Allaah is not unaware of what you do.**﴾ (Surah al-Baqarah: 85). This is a failure to be satisfied with Allaah as your Lord, as the One to whom your worship is directed, the One who is the only lawgiver, and with Islaam as a single united religion and methodology, and a failure to be satisfied with Muhammad as your Messenger, leader, and overall model, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him.*

*A person's Islaam will not be sound and correct until he stands as a worshipper submitting to his Lord in every single matter, and is someone who is pleased with his Lord's judgment and decree in every aspect and direction of his life. This includes his fundamental beliefs, his dealings with the people, his character, his affairs of governance and economics, and in his entire life and death. As Allaah has said, " Say **"Verily, my salaah, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allaah, the Lord of mankind, jinn and all that exists).**"-(Surah al-Anaam:162)..."^[42]*

TWO SUPPLICATIONS FOR YOUR SUCCESS

The noble Sheikh Ubayd Ibn 'Abdullaah al-Jaabiree, may Allaah preserve him, brought forth the following two authentic hadeeth narrations from the introduction of Sunan Ibn Maajah, along with his beneficial explanation.^[43]

Hadeeth 250: It was narrated that Abu Hurairah, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, "One of the supplications that the Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, used to say was: **{Oh Allaah, I seek refuge with You from knowledge that is of no benefit, from a supplication that is not heard, from a heart that does not fear You, and from a soul that is not satisfied.}**"

[42] Tasheeh Al-Mafaaheem fee Jawanib Min Al-Aqeedah: pg. 11

[43] Qata'u al-Lujaajah Be Sharh Saheeh al-Muqadamah Min Sunan al-Imaam Ibn Maajah, pgs. 262-263

Hadeeth 251: It was narrated that Abu Hurairah, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, “The Messenger of Allaah, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, used to say:

{O Allaah, benefit me by that which You have taught me, and teach me that which will benefit me, and increase my knowledge. All praise is due to Allaah in all circumstances.}”

The Sheikh, may Allaah preserve him, stated,

*“The first hadeeth narration includes wording from the wordings found within supplications by which a person seeks refuge in his Lord, seeking protection from dangers and troubles. That is the wording of seeking refuge which means **“I seek refuge with You.”** This includes asking Allaah, the Most Perfect and the Most High, for protection from four matters of trial, which if a single one of them reaches someone, he has undoubtedly been struck with a misfortune. So how would it be if all of these matters together afflicted someone: a supplication that is not heard, knowledge that is of no benefit, a soul that is not satisfied, and a heart that does not fear Allaah? The person who has all four of these matters together has been afflicted with a tremendous ruin and loss. As such this supplication is deserving of being memorized by a Muslim, and used to supplicate to Allaah by it at those times or situations when it is known that supplication are answered, such as between the calling of the adhaan and the iqamah for ritual prayer, during prostrations in ritual prayer, after the saying the tashahud in ritual prayer but before ending with the closing salaam, as well as when standing at night in worship. As each one of these four trials bring ruin; but even one of them will break your back as a Muslim.*

*Ibn Maajah, may Allaah have mercy upon him, placed this under the clarifying heading, **“Gaining Benefit From Knowledge And Acting In Accordance With It.”** As gaining benefit, if mentioned alone, involves deeds, as there is no value to knowledge that is not implemented and acted upon. Both of these words were brought together in the heading, **“Gaining Benefit From Knowledge And Acting In Accordance With It.”** As certainly, benefiting goes back to the matter or condition of the heart first, that being gaining knowledge and having the ability to properly derive and comprehend issues and understand them, then take the proper ruling from the related evidences, then conclude what the intended commands are, and any additional meanings that can be reached, and developing the aptitude for this. Then putting forth acts and deeds such that they have an effect that can be recognized outwardly upon the student. That effect being that he does what Allaah has commanded, and that he stays away from what Allaah has prohibited; this is the acting which is meant. As for the second hadeeth narration, it includes an additional supplication. It is asking Allaah’s assistance with a number of issues: **{ Oh Allaah, benefit me by that which You have taught me, and teach me that which will benefit me, and increase my knowledge.}** . These are three issues which the worshipper is asking his Lord about. Take note and recognize that these requests **{benefit me by that which You have taught me, and teach me that which will benefit me}** and his statement **{and increase my knowledge.}** are both done in accordance to a command that comes forth in the Qur’aan. as in the Noble Book it is mentioned, ﴿ **Say, my Lord increase me in knowledge** ﴾ -(Surah Taha: 114).*

*Indeed, the person whom Allaah makes happiness and contentment easy for him is inspired to be guided, and directed to success by increasing him in knowledge and the fear of Allaah, hoping for His reward and fearing His punishment. Just as was mentioned by Allaah, ﴿ **It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allaah.** ﴾ -(Surah Faatir: 28). As for the part { **All praise is due to Allaah in all circumstances.** }, then this sentence encompasses complete surrender and submission to all of Allaah's decrees and matters of predetermination. It means all praise is due to Allaah in every situation, if something occurs or does not happen, what one supplicated for comes about or even when it does not come about, one still says: "All praise is due to Allaah in all circumstances."*

I encourage the reader to strive to take on and frequently use these two tremendous supplications, recalling this excellent commentary, along with others supplications, whenever you are striving to gain correct understanding and then to correctly implement that understanding of the various matters of Islaam discussed in this course. In closing I say, as our dear and noble sheikh the guiding scholar Sheikh Ahmad Ibn Yahya an-Najmee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, has stated in his introduction to the book *'Al-Fataawa al-Jaleeyah'* part 2,

"I do not free myself from committing mistakes in this work, as indeed no one is free of this. And I hope that if the noble reader encounters something that it is obligatory to warn about that they should draw my attention to that as someone whom indeed I would thank, and that they inform me of that mistake, clarifying to me what the mistake in what was stated is and how it conflicts with Sharee'ah evidences. The brother who advises me will find me as one who submits and yields to the truth, turning towards it.

That which I do request from the reader is that they offer supplications for me in my absence. As indeed I am in need of such supplications, that Allaah forgive my sins, and gives me insight into my shortcomings, and that He blesses me with steadfastness upon the truth until I meet him as one clinging even to the very edges of the Sunnah, having proceeded upon the straight methodology and way, and having placed my reliance upon the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."

That which is correct from my efforts as a student is from the guidance of Allaah and only through His mercy, and that which is deficient is only from myself and Shaytaan, the accursed enemy of those who believe. May the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon the Messenger of Allaah, his household, his Companions, and all those who followed his guidance until the Day of Judgement. And all praise is due to Allaah alone, Lord of all the worlds.

*Abu Sukhailah Khalil Ibn-Abelahyi
Taalib al-Ilm Educational Resources
the 11th of Safar, 1438 (Corresponding to November 9th, 2016)*

Day 1: Do you understand the nature of Islaam?

NARRATION 287 FROM AL-ADAB AL-MUFRAD:

Ibn ‘Abbas said, “The Prophet, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, was asked, ‘Which religion is most beloved to Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted?’ He replied, *{The simple Haneefeeyah}*”

SHEIKH AL-ALBAANEE’S ASSESSMENT OF THIS NARRATION:

Authentic due to multiple chains of narration: as mentioned in Silsilaatul Ahadeeth as-Saheehah: no. 881

EXPLANATION OF NARRATION(S) BY SHEIKH ZAYD IBN MUHAMMAD IBN HAADEE

This hadeeth contains evidence of the merits of the simple *Haneefeeyah*, meaning the religion of Ibraaheem, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, as well as an explanation of its nobleness. It indicates the reality that the original, sound, revealed Sharee'ahs of guidance that were given to the prophets are all beloved to Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, though some of them are more beloved to Allaah than others. Also, the most beloved religion to Allaah is the simple *Haneefeeyah*, the clear way of Ibraaheem, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him.

This is what Allaah guided His prophet Muhammad to, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, as shown in Allaah's true statement ﴿*Then, We have inspired you (Oh Muhammad saying): "Follow the religion of Ibraaheem (Abraham) Hanifa (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allaah) and he was not of the Mushrikoon (polytheists, idolaters, disbelievers, etc.)*﴾—(Surah An-Nahl:123).

This simple religion is the realization of directing worship only to Allaah alone, and turning away from associating anything with Him in what is due to Him. It is being steadfast upon acts of obedience and turning away from acts of disobedience and transgression. It is seeking closeness with Allaah, the Most Glorified and the Most Exalted, by every righteous action that is correct and acceptable to him which has been decreed for the responsible ones from among mankind and jinn.

It is required that you know that all the valid revealed Sharee'ahs of guidance that were given to the prophets and messengers stand in complete accordance with the essential message of calling to the worship of Allaah in respect to affirming His Lordship over His creation, as well as His being the only One deserving and worthy of all forms of worship, and that Allaah should be known according to the lofty names and attributes He informed us of. They all also completely agree in regard to the indispensable fundamentals of both the revealed commands and prohibitions, what matters are considered permissible and which are prohibited, as well as what the creation's obligations and duties are.

Any religion that does not stand upon this foundation of establishing the worship of Allaah alone, and everything required by that foundation, is in fact a false religion. As such, when those who associated others with Allaah in their worship established their religion upon matters which negated the sole worship of Allaah alone, and so transgressed wrongly and unjustly, then Allaah judged that religion to be one of falsehood, and that those upon it were lost, and whose end would be to suffer forever in His Hellfire.

POINTS OF BENEFIT

1. There are matters that Allaah loves and hates, as affirmed by many verses in the Qur'aan and authentic narrations.
2. There was a single religion given to all the prophets and messengers, even though they were given different Sharee'ahs, until the sending of the final Sharee'ah with the seal of the Messengers, Muhammad, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him.
3. The prophet Ibraaheem has been singled out as a model and example for us to follow, in that, he was upon guidance and was the most beloved to Allaah.
4. The foundation of *Haneefeeyah* is worshiping Allaah alone and rejecting all false worship directed towards other than Allaah.
5. The single path of guidance revealed by Allaah through the ages includes:
 - performing acts of obedience
 - seeking closeness to Allaah through good deeds
 - commands and prohibitions
 - guidance regarding what was permissible and prohibited
6. The foundations of the guidance given to every prophet and messenger was the same, even though they may have differed in minor matters due to Allaah's wisdom.
7. The correctness of anything that claims to be the true religion of Allaah can be judged according to how it establishes and guides the creation toward the true worship of Allaah alone, and how it prohibits and directs the creation away from associating anything with Allaah in what is due to Him of worship.
8. Those who wrongly worship other than Allaah are upon a false religion which is not from him, and if they die as adults in that state their destination is the Hellfire.

LEVEL 1: TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING:**TRUE & FALSE QUESTIONS**

[Circle the correct letter for each individual sentence from today's content.]



3 min

01. The Prophet Muhammad called to a different religion than the religion of Ibraaheem, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon them. [T / F]
02. Allaah is pleased with our worship as long as most of what we do as worship is for Allaah. [T / F]
03. The revealed guidance which was given to different messengers shared some fundamental aspects and differed in other fundamental aspects. [T / F]

FILL IN THE BLANK QUESTIONS

[Enter the correct individual words to complete the sentences from today's content.]



6 min

04. _____, which is mentioned in the verse in the lesson, refers to the religion of Ibraheem.
05. Allaah is the only One deserving and worthy of all forms of _____.
06. Any _____ that does not stand upon the foundation of establishing the worship of Allaah alone is in fact a false _____.

LEVEL 2: INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS & EXERCISES**COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING QUESTIONS**

[In a study group or circle of learning with other students, these questions can be answered fully or partially by one student from the lesson, with another student completing the answer to the same question, by giving a comparable but different which is also correct.]



21-36 min

07. In our daily lives, how can we know what Allaah loves and what Allaah hates?
08. Give an example of a false practice of any religion that directs an act of worship to the creation, instead of directing it to Allaah alone.
09. List five deeds which are acts of obedience to Allaah which we should do as part of our worship of Allaah alone.

ANSWER KEY

DAY 1: DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF ISLAAM?

TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING:

TRUE & FALSE QUESTIONS

[Circle the correct letter for each individual sentence from today's content.]

01. The Prophet Muhammad called to a different religion than the religion of Ibraaheem, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon them. [T / F]
This is incorrect. The religion of Ibraaheem and that of the Prophet Muhammad, may the praise and salutations of Allaah be upon him, were one and the same as is indicated by the mentioned verse and other authentic evidences.
02. Allaah is pleased with our worship as long as most of what we do as worship is for Allaah. [T / F]
This is incorrect. Allaah only accepts that we worship Him alone without any partners or associates from the creation, in every single form and act of worship. The verse in Surah an-Nahl indicates this command to worship Allaah fully, and to not be of those who join their worship of Allaah alongside some worship of other than Allaah.
03. The revealed guidance which was given to different messengers shared some fundamental aspects and differed in other fundamental aspects. [T / F]
This is incorrect. There was only a single religion which Allaah sent to all of his prophets and messengers, who were the same in regard to their essential message as well as their fundamentals. They only differed in specific secondary aspects.

FILL IN THE BLANK QUESTIONS

[Enter the correct individual words to complete the sentences from today's content.]

04. Hanefeeeyah, which is mentioned in the verse in the lesson, refers to the religion of Ibraheem.
05. Allaah is the only One deserving and worthy of all forms of worship.
06. Any religion that does not stand upon the foundation of establishing the worship of Allaah alone is in fact a false religion.

INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS & EXERCISES

COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING QUESTIONS

[In a study group or circle of learning with other students, these questions can be answered fully or partially by one student from the lesson, with another student completing the answer to the same question, by giving a comparable but different which is also correct.]

07. In our daily lives, how can we know what Allaah loves and what Allaah hates?
Answers will vary per student, and should be discussed from any authentic source or sound perspective. Generally, we are able to know by referring back to the Book of Allaah, the authentic Sunnah, and the scholars.
08. Give an example of a false practice of any religion that directs an act of worship to the creation, instead of directing it to Allaah alone.
Answers will vary per student, and should be discussed from any authentic source or sound perspective. An example would be supplicating to those in graves, rather than supplicating to Allaah for one's needs.
09. List five deeds which are acts of obedience to Allaah which we should do as part of our worship of Allaah alone.
Answers will vary per student, and should be discussed from any authentic source or sound perspective. Two examples would be performing the ritual prayer properly, following the guidelines of Islaam in relation to permissible food and clothing.



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THE NAKHLAH EDUCATIONAL SERIES:

MISSION

The Purpose of the ‘Nakhlah Educational Series’ is to contribute to the present knowledge based efforts which enable Muslim individuals, families, and communities to understand and learn Islaam and then to develop within and truly live Islaam. Our commitment and goal is to contribute beneficial publications and works that:

Firstly, reflect the priority, message and methodology of all the prophets and messengers sent to humanity, meaning that single revealed message which embodies the very purpose of life, and of human creation. As Allaah the Most High has said,

﴿ *We sent a Messenger to every nation ordering them that they should worship Allaah alone, obey Him and make their worship purely for Him, and that they should avoid everything worshipped besides Allaah. So from them there were those whom Allaah guided to His religion, and there were those who were unbelievers for whom misguidance was ordained. So travel through the land and see the destruction that befell those who denied the Messengers and disbelieved.* ﴾—(Surah an-Nahl: 36)

Sheikh Rabee’ a ibn Haadee al-Madkhalee in his work entitled, ‘*The Methodology of the Prophets in Calling to Allaah, That is the Way of Wisdom and Intelligence.*’ explains the essential, enduring message of all the prophets:

“So what was the message which these noble, chosen men, may Allaah’s praises and salutations of peace be upon them all, brought to their people? Indeed their mission encompassed every matter of good and distanced and restrained every matter of evil. They brought forth to mankind everything needed for their well-being and happiness in this world and the Hereafter. There is nothing good except that they guided the people towards it, and nothing evil except that they warned the people against it. ...

This was the message found with all of the Messengers; that they should guide to every good and warn against every evil. However where did they start, what did they begin with and what did they concentrate upon? There are a number of essentials, basic principles, and fundamentals which all their calls were founded upon, and which were the starting point for calling the people to Allaah. These fundamental points and principles are: 1. The worship of Allaah alone without any associates 2. The sending of prophets to guide creation 3. The belief in the resurrection and the life of the Hereafter

These three principles are the area of commonality and unity within their calls, and stand as the fundamental principles which they were established upon. These principles are given the greatest importance in the Qur’aan and are fully explained in it. They are also its most important purpose upon which it centers and which it continually mentions. It further quotes intellectual and observable proofs for them in all its chapters as well as within most of its accounts of previous nations and given examples.

This is known to those who have full understanding, and are able to consider carefully and comprehend well. All the Books revealed by Allaah have given great importance to these points and all of the various revealed laws of guidance are agreed upon them. And the most important and sublime of these three principles, and the most fundamental of them all is directing one's worship only towards Allaah alone, the Blessed and the Most High."

Today one finds that there are indeed many paths, groups, and organizations apparently presenting themselves as representing Islaam, which struggle to put forth an outwardly pleasing appearance to the general Muslims; but when their methods are placed upon the precise scale of conforming to priorities and methodology of the message of the prophets sent by Allaah, they can only be recognized as deficient paths- not simply in practice but in principle- leading not to success but rather only to inevitable failure. As Sheikh Saaleh al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him, states in his introduction to the same above mentioned work on the methodology of all the prophets,

"So whichever call is not built upon these foundations, and whatever methodology is not from the methodology of the Messengers - then it will be frustrated and fail, and it will be effort and toil without any benefit. The clearest proofs of this are those present day groups and organizations which set out a methodology and program for themselves and their efforts of calling the people to Islaam which is different from the methodology of the Messengers. These groups have neglected the importance of the people having the correct belief and creed - except for a very few of them - and instead call for the correction of side-issues."

There can be no true success in any form for us as individuals, families, or larger communities without making the encompassing worship of Allaah alone, with no partners or associates, the very and only foundation of our lives. It is necessary that each individual knowingly choose to base his life upon that same foundation taught by all the prophets and messengers sent by the Lord of all the worlds, rather than simply delving into the assorted secondary concerns and issues invited to by the various numerous parties, innovated movements, and groups. Indeed Sheikh al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, stated:

"... We unreservedly combat against this way of having various different parties and groups. As this false way- of group or organizational allegiances - conforms to the statement of Allaah the Most High, ﴿ But they have broken their religion among them into sects, each group rejoicing in what is with it as its beliefs. And every party is pleased with whatever they stand with.﴾—(Surah al-Mu'minoon: 53) And in truth they are no separate groups and parties in Islaam itself. There is only one true party, as is stated in a verse in the Qur'an, ﴿ Verily, it is the party of Allaah that will be the successful.﴾—(Surah al-Mujadilaah: 58). The party of Allaah are those people who stand with the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, meaning that an individual proceeds upon the methodology of the Companions of the Messenger. Due to this we call for having sound knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah."

(Knowledge Based Issues & Sharee'ah Rulings: The Rulings of The Guiding Scholar Sheikh Muhammad Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee Made in the City of Medina & In the Emirates – [Emiratee Fatwa no 114. P.30])

Secondly, building upon the above foundation, our commitment is to contributing publications and works which reflect the inherited message and methodology of the acknowledged scholars of the many various branches of Sharee'ah knowledge who stood upon the straight path of preserved guidance in every century and time since the time of our Messenger, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him. These people of knowledge, who are the inheritors of the Final Messenger, have always adhered closely to the two revealed sources of guidance: the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah- may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, upon the united consensus, standing with the body of guided Muslims in every century - preserving and transmitting the true religion generation after generation. Indeed the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, informed us that, ***{ A group of people amongst my Ummah will remain obedient to Allaah's orders. They will not be harmed by those who leave them nor by those who oppose them, until Allaah's command for the Last Day comes upon them while they remain on the right path. }*** (Authentically narrated in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree).

We live in an age in which the question frequently asked is, "*How do we make Islaam a reality?*" and perhaps the related and more fundamental question is, "*What is Islaam?*", such that innumerable different voices quickly stand to offer countless different conflicting answers through books, lectures, and every available form of modern media. Yet the only true course of properly understanding this question and its answer- for ourselves and our families -is to return to the criterion given to us by our beloved Messenger, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him. Indeed the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, indicated in an authentic narration, clarifying the matter beyond doubt, that the only "Islaam" which enables one to be truly successful and saved in this world and the next is as he said, ***{... that which I am upon and my Companions are upon today.}*** (authentically narrated in Jaam'ea at-Tirmidhee) referring to that Islaam which stands upon unchanging revealed knowledge. While every other changed and altered form of Islaam, whether through some form of extremism or negligence, or through the addition or removal of something, regardless of whether that came from a good intention or an evil one- is not the religion that Allaah informed us about when He revealed, ﴿ ***This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islaam as your religion.***﴾—(Surah al-Maa'idah: 3)

The guiding scholar Sheikh al-Albaanee, may have mercy upon him, said,

"...And specifically mentioning those among the callers who have taken upon themselves the guiding of the young Muslim generation upon Islaam, working to educate them with its education, and to socialize them with its culture. Yet they themselves have generally not attempted to unify their understanding of those matters about Islaam regarding which the people of Islaam today differ about so severely.

And the situation is certainly not as is falsely supposed by some individuals from among them who are heedless or negligent - that the differences that exist among them are only in secondary matters without entering into or affecting the fundamental issues or principles of the religion; and the examples to prove that this is not true are numerous and recognized by those who have studied the books of the many differing groups and sects, or by the one who has knowledge of the various differing concepts and beliefs held by the Muslims today.”(Mukhtasir al-’Uloo Lil’Alee al-Ghafaar, page 55)

Similarly he, may Allaah have mercy upon him, explained:

“Indeed, Islaam is the only solution, and this statement is something which the various different Islamic groups, organizations, and movements could never disagree about. And this is something which is from the blessings of Allaah upon the Muslims. However there are significant differences between the different Islamic groups, organizations, and movements that are present today regarding that domain which working within will bring about our rectification. What is that area of work to endeavor within, striving to restore a way of life truly reflecting Islaam, renewing that system of living which comes from Islaam, and in order to establish the Islamic government? The groups and movements significantly differ upon this issue or point. Yet we hold that it is required to begin with the matters of tasfeeyah –clarification, and tarbeeyah -education and cultivation, with both of them being undertaken together.

As if we were to start with the issue of governing and politics, then it has been seen that those who occupy themselves with this focus firstly posses beliefs which are clearly corrupted and ruined, and secondly that their personal behavior, from the aspect of conforming to Islaam, is very far from conforming to the actual guidance of the Sharee’ah. While those who first concern themselves with working just to unite the people and gather the masses together under a broad banner of the general term “Islaam”, then it is seen that within the minds of those speakers who raise such calls -in reality there is fact no actual clear understanding of what Islaam is. Moreover, the understanding they have of Islaam has no significant impact in starting to change and reform their own lives. Due to this reason you find that many such individuals from here and there, who hold this perspective, are unable to truly realize or reflect Islaam even in areas of their own personal lives in matters which it is in fact easily possible for them to implement. As he holds that no one - regardless of whether it is because of his arrogance or pridefulness - can enter into directing him in an area of his personal life!

Yet at the same time these same individuals are raising their voices saying, “Judgment is only for Allaah!” and “It is required that judgment of affairs be according to what Allaah revealed.” And this is indeed a true statement. But the one who does not possess something certainly cannot give or offer it to others. The majority of Muslims today have not established the judgment of Allaah fully upon themselves, yet they still seek from others to establish the judgment of Allaah within their governments...

...And I understand that this issue or subject is not immune from there being those who oppose our methodology of tasfeeyah and tarbeeyah. As there is the one who would say, "But establishing this tasfeeyah and tarbeeyah is a matter which requires many long years!" So, I respond by saying, this is not an important consideration in this matter, what is important is that we carry out what we have been commanded to do within our religion and by our Mighty Lord. What is important is that we begin by properly understanding our religion first and foremost. After this is accomplished then it will not be important whether the road itself is long or short.

And indeed I direct this statement of mine towards those men who are callers to the religion among the Muslims, and towards the scholars and those who direct our affairs. I call for them to stand upon complete knowledge of true Islaam, and to fight against every form of negligence and heedlessness regarding the religion, and against differing and disputes, as Allaah has said, ﴿...and do not dispute with one another for fear that you lose courage and your strength departs﴾—(Surah Al-Anfaal: 46).

(Quoted from the work, 'The Life of Sheikh al-Albaanee, His Influence in Present Day Fields of Sharee'ah Knowledge, & the Praise of the Scholars for Him.' volume 1 page 380-385)

The guiding scholar Sheikh Zayd al-Madkhalee, may Allaah protect him, stated in his writing, 'The Well Established Principles of the Way of the First Generations of Muslims: It's Enduring & Excellent Distinct Characteristics' that,

"From among these principles and characteristics is that the methodology of tasfeeyah -or clarification, and tarbeeyah -or education and cultivation- is clearly affirmed and established as a true way coming from the first three generations of Islaam, and is something well known to the people of true merit from among them, as is concluded by considering all the related evidence. What is intended by tasfeeyah, when referring to it generally, is clarifying that which is the truth from that which is falsehood, what is goodness from that which is harmful and corrupt, and when referring to its specific meanings it is distinguishing the noble Sunnah of the Prophet and the people of the Sunnah from those innovated matters brought into the religion and the people who are supporters of such innovations.

As for what is intended by tarbeeyah, it is calling all of the creation to take on the manners and embrace the excellent character invited to by that guidance revealed to them by their Lord through His worshiper and Messenger Muhammad, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him; so that they might have good character, manners, and behavior. As without this they cannot have a good life, nor can they put right their present condition or their final destination. And we seek refuge in Allaah from the evil of not being able to achieve that rectification."

Thus the methodology of the people of standing upon the Prophet's Sunnah, and proceeding upon the 'way of the believers' in every century is reflected in a focus and concern with these two essential matters: tasfeeyah or clarification of what is original, revealed message from the Lord of all the worlds, and tarbeeyah or education and raising of ourselves, our families, and our communities, and our lands upon what has been distinguished to be that true message and path.

The Roles of the Scholars & General Muslims In Raising the New Generation

The priority and focus of the 'Nakhlah Educational Series' is reflected within in the following statements of Sheikh al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy upon him:

"As for the other obligation, then I intend by this the education of the young generation upon Islaam purified from all of those impurities we have mentioned, giving them a correct Islamic education from their very earliest years, without any influence of a foreign, disbelieving education."

(Silsilat al-Hadeeth ad-Da'eefah, Introduction page 2.)

"...And since the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, has indicated that the only cure to remove this state of humiliation that we find ourselves entrenched within, is truly returning back to the religion. Then it is clearly obligatory upon us - through the people of knowledge- to correctly and properly understand the religion in a way that conforms to the sources of the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah, and that we educate and raise a new virtuous, righteous generation upon this."

(Clarification and Cultivation and the Need of the Muslims for Them)

It is essential in discussing our perspective upon this obligation of raising the new generation of Muslims, that we highlight and bring attention to a required pillar of these efforts as indicated by Sheikh al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, and others- in the golden words, *"through the people of knowledge"*. Since something we commonly experience today is that many people have various incorrect understandings of the role that the scholars should have in the life of a Muslim, failing to understand the way in which they fulfill their position as the inheritors of the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, and stand as those who preserve and enable us to practice the guidance of Islaam. Indeed, the noble Imaam Sheikh as-Sa'dee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, in his work, *"A Definitive and Clear Explanation of the Work 'A Triumph for the Saved Sect'"* pages 237-240, has explained this crucial issue with an extraordinary explanation full of remarkable benefits:

"Section: Explaining the Conditions for These Two Source Texts to Suffice You -or the Finding of Sufficiency in these Two Sources of Revelation.

Overall the conditions needed to achieve this and bring it about return to two matters:

Firstly, the presence of the requirements necessary for achieving this; meaning a complete devotion to the Book and the Sunnah, and the putting forth of efforts both in seeking to understand their intended meanings, as well as in striving to be guided by them. What is required secondly is the pushing away of everything which prevents achieving this finding of sufficiency in them.

This is through having a firm determination to distance yourself from everything which contradicts these two source texts in what comes from the historical schools of jurisprudence, assorted various statements, differing principles and their resulting conclusions which the majority of people proceed upon. These matters which contradict the two sources of revelation include many affairs which, when the worshiper of Allaah repels them from himself and stands against them, the realm of his knowledge, understanding, and deeds then expands greatly. Through a devotion to them and a complete dedication towards these two sources of revelation, proceeding upon every path which assists one's understanding them, and receiving enlightenment from the light of the scholars and being guided by the guidance that they possess- you will achieve that complete sufficiency in them. And surely, in the positions they take towards the leading people of knowledge and the scholars, the people are three types of individuals:

The first of them is the one who goes to extremes in his attachment to the scholars. He makes their statements something which are infallible as if their words held the same position as those of the statements of the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, as well as giving those scholars' statements precedence and predominance over the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah. This is despite the fact that every leading scholar who has been accepted by this Ummah was one who promoted and encouraged the following of the Book and the Sunnah, commanding the people not to follow their own statements nor their school of thought in anything which stood in opposition to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah.

The second type is the one who generally rejects and invalidates the statements of the scholars and forbids the referring to the statements of the leading scholars of guidance and those people of knowledge who stand as brilliant lamps in the darkness. This type of person neither relies upon the light of discernment with the scholars, nor utilizes their stores of knowledge. Or even if perhaps they do so, they do not direct thanks towards them for this. And this manner and way prohibits them from tremendous good. Furthermore, that which motivates such individuals to proceed in this way is their falsely supposing that the obligation to follow the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, and the giving of precedence to his statements over the statements of anyone else, requires that they do without any reliance upon the statements of the Companions, or those who followed them in goodness, or those leading scholars of guidance within the Ummah. And this is a glaring and extraordinary mistake.

As indeed the Companions and the people of knowledge are the means and the agency between the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him, and his Ummah- in the transmission and spreading his Sunnah in regard to both its wording and texts as well as its meanings and understanding. Therefore the one who follows them in what they convey in this is guided through their understandings, receives knowledge from the light they possess, benefits from the conclusions they have derived from these sources -of beneficial meanings and explanations, as well as in relation to subtle matters which scarcely occur to the minds of some of the other people of knowledge, or barely comes to be discerned by their minds. Consequently, from the blessing of Allaah upon this Ummah is that He has given them these guiding scholars who cultivate and educate them upon two clear types of excellent cultivation.

The first category is education from the direction of ones knowledge and understanding. They educate the Ummah upon the more essential and fundamental matters before the more complex affairs. They convey the meanings of the Book and the Sunnah to the minds and intellects of the people through efforts of teaching which rectifies, and through composing various beneficial books of knowledge which a worshiper doesn't even have the ability to adequately describe what is encompassed within them of aspects of knowledge and benefits. Works which reflect the presence of a clear white hand in deriving guidance from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah, and through the arrangement, detailed clarification, division and explanation, through the gathering together of explanations, comparisons, conditions, pillars, and explanations about that which prevents the fulfillment of matters, as well as distinguishing between differing meanings and categorizing various knowledge based benefits.

The second category is education from the direction of ones conduct and actions. They cultivate the peoples characters encouraging them towards every praiseworthy aspect of good character, through explaining its ruling and high status, and what benefits comes to be realized from it, clarifying the reasons and paths which enable one to attain it, as well as those affairs which prevent, delay or hinder someone becoming one distinguished and characterized by it. Because they, in reality, are those who bring nourishment to the hearts and the souls; they are the doctors who treat the diseases of the heart and its defects. As such they educate the people through their statements, actions as well as their general guided way. Therefore the scholars have a tremendous right over this Ummah. The portion of love and esteem, respect and honor, and thanks due to them because their merits and their various good efforts stand above every other right after establishing the right of Allaah, and the right of His Messenger, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him.

Because of this, the third group of individuals in respect to the scholars are those who have been guided to understand their true role and position, and establish their rights, thanking them for their virtues and merits, benefiting by taking from the knowledge they have, while acknowledging their rank and status. They understand that the scholars are not infallible and that their statements must stand in conformance to the statements of the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah's praise and salutations be upon him. And that each one from among them has that which is from guidance, knowledge, and correctness in his statements taken and benefited from, while turning away from whatever in mistaken within it.

Yet such a scholar is not to be belittled for his mistake, as he stands as one who strove to reach the truth; therefore his mistake will be forgiven, and he should be thanked for his efforts. One clarifies what was stated by of any one of these leaders from among men, when it is recognizes that it has some weakness or conflict to an evidence of the Sharee'ah, by explaining its weakness and the level of that weakness, without speaking evilly of the intention of those people of knowledge and religion, nor defaming them due to that error. Rather we say, as it is obligatory to say, "And those who came after them say: ﴿ Our Lord! forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful. ﴾ -(Surah al-Hashr: 10).

Accordingly, individuals of this third type are those who fulfill two different matters. They join together on one hand between giving precedence to the Book and the Sunnah over everything else, and, on the other hand, between comprehending the level and position of the scholars and the leading people of knowledge and guidance, and establishing this even if it is only done in regard to some of their rights upon us. So we ask Allaah to bless us to be from this type, and to make us from among the people of this third type, and to make us from those who love Him and love those who love Him, and those who love every action which brings us closer to everything He loves.”

Upon this clarity regarding the proper understanding of our balanced position towards our guided Muslim scholars, consider the following words about the realm of work of the general people of faith, which explains our area of efforts and struggle as Muslim parents, found in the following statement by Sheikh Saaleh Fauzaan al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him.

“Question: Some people mistakenly believe that calling to Allaah is a matter not to be undertaken by anyone else other than the scholars without exception, and that it is not something required for other than the scholars according to that which they have knowledge of -to undertake any efforts of calling the people to Allaah. So what is your esteemed guidance regarding this?” The Sheikh responded by saying:

“This is not a misconception, but is in fact a reality. The call to Allaah cannot be established except through those who are scholars. And I state this. Yet, certainly there are clear issues which every person understands. As such, every individual should enjoin the good and forbid wrongdoing according to the level of his understanding. Such that he instructs and orders the members of his household to perform the ritual daily prayers and other matters that are clear and well known.

*Undertaking this is something mandatory and required even upon the common people, such that they must command their children to perform their prayers in the masjid. The Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah praise and salutations be upon him, said, { **Command you children to pray at seven, and beat them due to its negligence at ten.** } (Authentic narration found in Sunan Abu Dawood). And the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah praise and salutations be upon him, said, { **Each one of you is a guardian or a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for those under his guardianship....** } (Authentic narration found in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree). So this is called guardianship, and this is also called enjoining the good and forbidding wrongdoing. The Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah praise and salutations be upon him, said, { **The one from among you who sees a wrong should change it with his hand, and if he is unable to do so, then with his tongue, and if he is not able to do this, then with his heart.** } (Authentic narration found in Saheeh Muslim).*

So in relation to the common person, that which it is required from him to endeavor upon is that he commands the members of his household-as well as others -with the proper performance of the ritual prayers, the obligatory charity, with generally striving to obey Allaah, and to stay away from sins and transgressions, and that he purify and cleanse his home from disobedience, and that he educate and cultivate his children upon the obedience of Allaah’s commands. This is what is required from him, even if he is a general person. As these types of matters are from that which is understood by every single person. This is something which is clear and apparent.

But as for the matters of putting forth rulings and judgments regarding matters in the religion, or entering into clarifying issues of what is permissible and what is forbidden, or explaining what is considered associating others in the worship due to Allaah and what is properly worshiping Him alone without any partner- then indeed these are matters which cannot be established except by the scholars”

(Beneficial Responses to Questions About Modern Methodologies, Question 15, page 22)

Similarly the guiding scholar Sheikh ‘Abdul-‘Azeez Ibn Baaz, may Allaah have mercy upon him, also emphasized this same overall responsibility:

“...It is also upon a Muslim that he struggles diligently in that which will place his worldly affairs in a good state, just as he must also strive in the correcting of his religious affairs and the affairs of his own family. As the people of his household have a significant right over him that he strive diligently in rectifying their affair and guiding them towards goodness, due to the statement of Allaah, the Most Exalted, ﴿ Oh you who believe! Save yourselves and your families Hellfire whose fuel is men and stones ﴾ -(Surah at-Tahreem: 6)

So it is upon you to strive to correct the affairs of the members of your family. This includes your wife, your children- both male and female- and such as your own brothers. This concerns all of the people in your family, meaning you should strive to teach them the religion, guiding and directing them, and warning them from those matters Allaah has prohibited for us. Because you are the one who is responsible for them as shown in the statement of the Prophet, may Allaah’s praise and salutations be upon him, { Every one of you is a guardian, and responsible for what is in his custody. The ruler is a guardian of his subjects and responsible for them; a husband is a guardian of his family and is responsible for it; a lady is a guardian of her husband’s house and is responsible for it, and a servant is a guardian of his master’s property and is responsible for it....} Then the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah’s praise and salutations be upon him, continued to say, {...so all of you are guardians and are responsible for those under your authority.} (Authentically narrated in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree & Muslim)

It is upon us to strive diligently in correcting the affairs of the members of our families, from the aspect of purifying their sincerity of intention for Allaah’s sake alone in all of their deeds, and ensuring that they truthfully believe in and follow the Messenger of Allaah, may Allaah’s praise and salutations be upon him, their fulfilling the prayer and the other obligations which Allaah the Most Exalted has commanded for us, as well as from the direction of distancing them from everything which Allaah has prohibited.

It is upon every single man and women to give advice to their families about the fulfillment of what is obligatory upon them. Certainly, it is upon the woman as well as upon the man to perform this. In this way our homes become corrected and rectified in regard to the most important and essential matters. Allaah said to His Prophet, may Allaah’s praise and salutations be upon him, ﴿ And enjoin the ritual prayers on your family... ﴾ (Surah Taha: 132) Similarly, Allaah the Most Exalted said to His prophet Ismaa’ael, ﴿ And mention in the Book, Ismaa’ael. Verily, he was true to what he promised, and he was a Messenger, and a Prophet. And he used to enjoin on his family and his people the ritual prayers and the obligatory charity, and his Lord was pleased with him. ﴾ -(Surah Maryam: 54-55)

As such, it is only proper that we model ourselves after the prophets and the best of people, and be concerned with the state of the members of our households. Do not be neglectful of them, oh worshipper of Allaah! Regardless of whether it is concerning your wife, your mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, your brothers, or your children; it is upon you to strive diligently in correcting their state and condition...”

(Collection of Various Rulings and Statements- Sheikh ‘Abdul-‘Azeez Ibn ‘Abdullah Ibn Baaz, Vol. 6, page 47)

CONTENT & STRUCTURE:

We hope to contribute works which enable every striving Muslim who acknowledges the proper position of the scholars, to fulfill the recognized duty and obligation which lays upon each one of us to bring the light of Islaam into our own lives as individuals as well as into our homes and among our families. Towards this goal we are committed to developing educational publications and comprehensive educational curricula -through cooperation with and based upon the works of the scholars of Islaam and the students of knowledge. Works which, with the assistance of Allaah, the Most High, we can utilize to educate and instruct ourselves, our families and our communities upon Islaam in both principle and practice. The publications and works of the Nakhlah Educational Series are divided into the following categories:

Basic / Elementary: Ages 4-11

Secondary: Ages 11-14

High School: Ages 14- Young Adult

General: Young Adult –Adult

Supplementary: All Ages

Publications and works within these stated levels will, with the permission of Allaah, encompass different beneficial areas and subjects, and will be offered in every permissible form of media and medium. As certainly, as the guiding scholar Sheikh Saaleh Fauzaan al-Fauzaan, may Allaah preserve him, has stated,

“Beneficial knowledge is itself divided into two categories. Firstly is that knowledge which is tremendous in its benefit, as it benefits in this world and continues to benefit in the Hereafter. This is religious Sharee’ah knowledge. And secondly, that which is limited and restricted to matters related to the life of this world, such as learning the processes of manufacturing various goods. This is a category of knowledge related specifically to worldly affairs.

...As for the learning of worldly knowledge, such as knowledge of manufacturing, then it is legislated upon us collectively to learn whatever the Muslims have a need for. Yet, if they do not have a need for this knowledge, then learning it is a neutral matter upon the condition that it does not compete with or displace any areas of Sharee’ah knowledge...”

(“Explanations of the Mistakes of Some Writers”, Pages 10-12)

So we strive always to remind ourselves and our brothers of this crucial point also indicated by Sheikh Sadeeq Ibn Hasan al-Qanoojee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, in: ‘*Abjad al-Uloom*’, (page 89)

“...What is intended by knowledge in the mentioned hadeeth is knowledge of the religion and the distinctive Sharee’ah, knowledge of the Noble Book and the pure Sunnah, of which there is no third along with them. But what is not meant in this narration are those invented areas of knowledge, whether they emerged in previous ages or today’s world, which the people in these present times have devoted themselves to. They have specifically dedicated themselves to them in a manner which prevents them from looking towards those areas of knowledge related to faith, and in a way which has preoccupied them from occupying themselves from what is actually wanted or desired by Allaah, the Most High, and His Messenger, who is the leader of men and Jinn. Such that the knowledge in the Qur’aan has become something abandoned and the sciences of hadeeth have become obscure. While these new areas of knowledge related to manufacturing and production continually emerge from the nations of disbelief and apostasy, and they are called, “sciences”, “arts”, and “ideal development”. And this sad state increases every day, indeed from Allaah we came and to Him shall we return....

...Additionally, although the various areas of beneficial knowledge all share some level of value, they all have differing importance and ranks. Among them is that which is to be considered according to its subject, such as medicine, and its subject is the human body. Or such as the sciences of ‘tafseer’ and its subject is the explanation of the words of Allaah, the Most Exalted and Most High, and the value of these two areas is not in any way unrecognized.

And from among the various areas there are those areas which are considered according to their objective, such as knowledge of upright character, and its goal is understanding the beneficial merits that an individual can come to possess. And from among them there are those areas which are considered according to the people’s need for them, such as ‘fiqh’ which the need for it is urgent and essential. And from among them there are those areas which are considered according to their apparent strength, such as knowledge of physical sports and exercise, as it is something openly demonstrated.

And from the areas of knowledge are those areas which rise in their position of importance through their combining all these different matters within them, or the majority of them. Such as revealed religious knowledge, as its subject is indeed esteemed, its objective one of true merit, and its need is undeniably felt. Likewise one area of knowledge may be considered of superior rank than another in consideration of the results that it brings forth, or the strength of its outward manifestation, or due to the essentialness of its objective. Similarly the result that an area produces is certainly of higher estimation and significance in appraisal than the outward or apparent significance of some other areas of knowledge.

For that reason the highest ranking and most valuable area of knowledge is that of knowledge of Allaah the Most Perfect and the Most High, of His angels, and messengers, and all the particulars of these beliefs, as its result is that of eternal and continuing happiness.”

We ask Allaah, the most High to bless us with success in contributing to the many efforts of our Muslim brothers and sisters committed to raising themselves as individuals and the next generation of our children upon that Islaam which Allaah has perfected and chosen for us, and which He has enabled the guided Muslims to proceed upon in each and every century. We ask him to forgive us, and forgive the Muslim men and the Muslim women, and to guide all the believers to everything He loves and is pleased with. The success is from Allaah, The Most High The Most Exalted, alone and all praise is due to Him.

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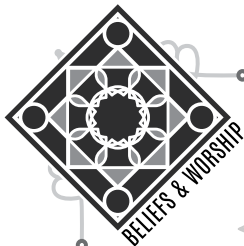
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A Short Journey Within the Work al-Ibanah al-Sughrāh With
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‘Abdullah ar-Raajhee
(may Allaah preserve him)

The role of Islaam in today’s world is something, which is indisputable and often contested. Yet people have different understandings of Islaam which range from dangerous extremism, which distorts the religion, all the way to vulnerable laxity, which nullifies many of the authentic beliefs and practices of revealed guidance. As such, it is a blessing for Muslims today that our well-known scholars continue to work diligently in examining openly and clarifying the false ideas and practices that are attributed to Islaam by both non-Muslims and by Muslims themselves.

This work approaches the challenge of learning important fundamentals in a way that allows an individual to proceed through discussions related to them a day at a time over thirty days, all based upon the explanations of one of today’s noble guiding scholars. This book also includes seven essential appendices that cover important issues and guidance related to weighing and assessing the many of claims of what is “Islamic” today.

Compiled and Translated by:
Abu Sukhailah Khalil Ibn-Abelahyi

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Cultivating The Character & Behavior of Islaam

A Short Journey Within The Work Al-Adab Al-Mufrad With

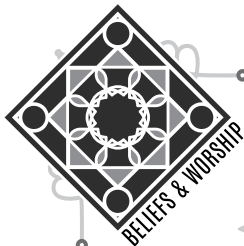
Sheikh Zayd Ibn Muhammad Ibn Haadee al-Madhkhaalee
(may Allaah have mercy on him)

*Do you understand the nature of Islaam? * What do you have that is equal to this world? * Are you wealthy? * Are you prepared for your reckoning? * Are you always working for good while you can? * Do you remember the benefit in your difficulties? * Which of these two pairs has a greater influence in your life? * Whom do you really love and why? * Who are your close friends? * Do you protect yourself from the harm of others? * Are you a miser or someone who is incapable? * Do you know the best of supplications? * Do you ask Allaah's protection from your own evil? * Do you seek refuge from bad conditions and worship at night? * Do you know which trials contain some betterment for you? * Do you supplicate for your family as both a parent and as a child? * How well do you treat your mother and father? * How do you fulfill your responsibilities towards your household? * Do you know who are the best and worst of Muslim women? * Is your life balanced as was the lives of the Companions? * Do you understand how to give the best of charity? * How do you spend your money? * How many ways of giving charity and doing good do you do * How are you towards your neighbors? * How do you deal with your own faults and those of others? * How do you treat younger Muslims? * How do you interact with other Muslims? * Do you work to change your bad habits? * Do you know the benefits of maintaining family ties? * Do you know what things bring you closer to Jannah?*

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*What should be in my heart when I intend to do good? * How can I safeguard my intention for Allaah in everything I do? * How can I bring myself peace, and establish love for Allaah's sake? * When I feel that my emaan has gone down what should I do? As a Muslim, how can I make my heart steadfast? * How can I treat the hardness that I sense in my heart? * How should I study and memorize Qur'aan more? How do I keep my mind from being always distracted? * How can I deal with the things that affected my practice of Islaam? * Should I read the fictional writings of disbelievers? * How do I know if I'm spending my time beneficially? How can I stop thinking about the days before I was guided?*

*How can I stop smoking for Allaah's sake? * How to guard my eyesight from what's harmful around me? * How can I change the fact that I'm always thinking about someone? How should I handle still feeling bad for my past mistakes?*

How can I fight against the whispers that make me doubt things?

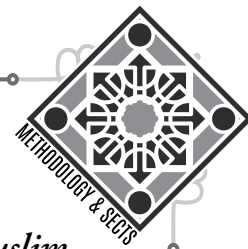
*How do I know if my evil thoughts take me outside Islaam? * How do I know if my bad thoughts mean I am a hypocrite? * How can I wipe away the many wrong things that I did in the past? * Can I use the money I earned when I was sinful and heedless? How can I correct the previous wrongs that I did to other people?*

** How can I strengthen my practice of Allaah's religion? How do I know which worldly things I should leave for Allaah's sake? * How can I be a sincere worshiper and traveler in this life? * How can I understand the humiliation upon us as Muslims?*

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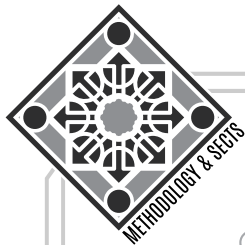
*What are the conditions of correct Islaam? * What does it mean that Islaam will be strange? * Is faith only what is in our hearts? * Who is truly considered a Muslim? * When is it necessary for me to ask a scholar? * Is there both free will and Allaah's decree? * What does it mean to worship others as well as Allaah? * Which innovations in Islaam are good? * How can we know who are from the saved sect? * Who is part of that group of victorious Muslims? * Why are there divisions among the Muslims? * What should my position be towards the schools of fiqh? * What does it mean that the world is cursed? * Which Sufee path is based upon the Sunnah? * Can I study from books without a scholar? * Should we praise the righteous scholars? * What is the guidance of Islaam about our health? * What should I do after falling into sin again and again? * Do I have to make up for my previous negligence?*

** What is considered impermissible imitation of non-Muslims? * How should I interact with the non-Muslims I know? * As a Muslim man can I have friends who are women? * What is the ruling about alcohol and about modern drugs? * Are there kinds of music that are permissible in Islaam? * What kinds of media and shows can I watch as a Muslim? * Should we recite the Qur'aan even without understanding? * Is it from the Sharee'ah to make dhikr while working? * What are the rights of both Muslim wives and Muslim husbands? * What is the correct understanding of trusting in Allaah? * As a new Muslim do I need to change my name?*

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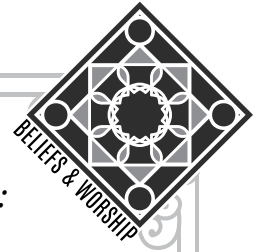
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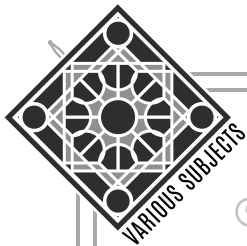
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(May Allaah have mercy upon them)

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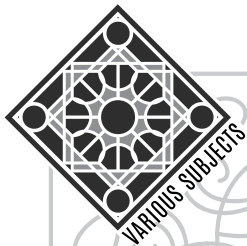
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