

The Two Essentials

Shaykh Mashhoor bin Hasan bin Salmaan
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[Also further related points of benefit translated and commented on by
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Allaah - the Most Perfect, the Most High responded to the supplication of His Prophet Ibraaheem ('alayhis-salaam) when he said:

"Our Lord! Send to them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them Your Signs, teaching them the Book and the Wisdom and purifying them. Indeed You are the Most Powerful, the Most Wise."

[Soorah al-Baqarah 2:129].

So Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - said:

"It is Allaah who has sent to the unlettered people a Messenger from amongst themselves, reciting to them His Signs, purifying them and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom, whereas before that, they had been in clear misguidance." [Soorah al-Jumu'ah 62:2].

So here the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has been characterised with two tasks: ta'leem (teaching) and tazkiyah (purification). In his request, Ibraaheem ('alayhis-salaam) mentioned ta'leem before tazkiyah. However, Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - answered him, but by giving tazkiyah precedence to ta'leem.

And Allaah blessed the Believers by sending the Messenger who carried out these two tasks, so He - the Mighty and Majestic - said:

"As We sent to you a Messenger from amongst yourselves, reciting to you Our Signs, purifying you, and teaching you the Book and the Wisdom, that which you did not know." [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:151]

So in this ayah (verse) also, Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - mentions purification before teaching. Thus, as is known, purification is one of the fruits of acting upon knowledge; and that knowledge causes harm for its possessor if it is not accompanied by action. Indeed, whosoever increases in knowledge, but does not increase in taqwaa (piety and obedience to Allaah), then let him be suspicious about his knowledge.

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (d.751H) rahimahullaah - said: "The Scholar who does not act upon his knowledge, will be punished before the worshippers of idols."

And our Salaf (Pious Predecessors) used to inherit purification from each other, as part of good and fine manners. This was due to their sitting with the Shaykh and accompanying him. So 'Abdullah ibn Maslamah al-Qa'nabee (d.221H) said: "We used to sit with Imam Maalik and take from his manners and conduct, just as we would take from his knowledge."¹

However, in the later generations, Sharee'ah knowledge has almost become restricted to just colleges and universities and sitting in front of the doctors and

¹ The likes of this has been related by adh-Dhahabee in Siyaar A'laamun-Nubalaa (3/285).

teachers for short periods of time. So the students do not take any benefit from good manners and conduct - even if those teachers have a share of it. And we often see and hear about many shortcomings of both the students and the teachers! Thus, the religion has become weak, yaqeen (certainty of faith) has dwindled, sabr (patient perseverance) - with its wide Islamic understanding - has passed away, as has zuhd (praiseworthy abstinence from this world) except for those whom my Lord has mercy upon.

So knowledge alone, without good manners and conduct, will not produce any fruit in a way that the people can be benefited by its possessor - from what is seen and what is spoken. And through seeking knowledge alone, the Muslims will not be saved from hypocrisy. Rather, seeking knowledge must be accompanied by good manners and conduct, so that he remains safe, derives benefit and is saved from sin and its causes, and also from being burdened. This is attested to by what at-Tirmidhee relates:

The Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"There are two qualities which do not come together in a hypocrite: Good manners and conduct, and the understanding of the religion." ²

So in this hadeeth, good manners and conduct are mentioned before understanding of the religion. Indeed, the greatest and most valuable fruits of purification are sabr (patience) and zuhd (praiseworthy abstinence from this world). Whilst the greatest and most precious fruits of 'ilm (knowledge) is yaqeen (certainty). So he who gains both patience and certainty, in this way, then he is one of the leaders of the religion, and this is testified to by the saying of Allaah - the Most High:

"We made from them leaders, giving guidance by Our Command, because they had sabr (patient perseverance) and had yaqeen (certainty) in Our Signs." [Soorah Sajdah 32:24].

So patience is the fruit of purification, whilst certainty is the fruit of knowledge and teaching. And here also patience is mentioned before certainty. Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) used to say:

"Through sabr and yaqeen leadership in the religion is attained." ³

Indeed! That is so because he who gains them both, then he has attained and actualised the two tasks of Allaah's Messenger (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and has thus become an inheritor of the Prophet - and the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is the leader of all the leaders.

² Saheeh: Related by at-Tirmidhee (no.2837), from Abu Hurayrah (radiyallaahu anhu). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in as-Saheehah.

³ Related by Ibn al-Qayyim in Madaarijus-Saalikeen (1/132).

Ibn Waddah relates in al-Bida' wan-Nabee 'Anhaa (p.74) that the Imam al-Hasan al-Basree (d.110H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"If there was a man who reached the first Salaf (Pious Predecessor), then this man was raised up today, he would not recognise anything of Islam." And al-Hasan put his hand on his cheek and said: "Except for this prayer." Then he said: "Then how is it - by Allaah - for one who lives in this bad time, not having reached the Salaf-us-Saleh (Pious Predecessors). So he sees an innovator calling to his innovation, and a worldly person calling to the world. But Allaah protects him from that and makes his heart lean towards those Salaf-us-Saleh, asking about their way, seeking their narrations and following their path. Allaah will recompense him with a great reward. So be like that if Allaah wills."

Finally, we must draw attention to the Fact that the Salaf-us-Saaliheen (Pious Predecessors) - may Allaah be pleased with them all - actualised these two tasks and therefore they achieved rectification of themselves and rectification of others.

'Abdullah ibn al-Mubaarak (d.181H) used to say: "The latter part of this Ummah will not be rectified, except by that which rectified its first part: zuhd and yaqeen."

And zuhd cannot be attained except by means of sabr, which cannot be attained except through tazkiyah (purification). And yaqeen cannot be attained except through purified Sharee'ah knowledge.

So would that we had realised that our misfortune lies in the absence of these two matters from our lives, and that he who calls to them, persisting in this and refusing to be pre-occupied from them by anything else, then he is upon the correct Manhaj (methodology) and upon the Straight Path.

[End of extract from Al-Asalah magazine]

Further Related Points Of Benefit:

"وكلام الإمام أحمد في هذا الباب جار على كلام من تقدم من أئمة الهدى،

"As for the statements of Imam Ahmad pertaining to this topic, then they are just a continuation of the statements that preceded from the Imams of Guidance.

ليس له قول ابتدعه ولكن أظهر السنة وبينها،

He didn't introduce any new opinions (in the matter), but rather manifested the Sunnah and made it clear.

وذب عنها وبين حال مخالفيها وجاهد عليها،

He safe guarded it, and made clear the state of all those who opposed it. He fought for it,

وصبر على الأذى فيها لما أظمرت الأهواء والبدع،

and was patient upon the harms in doing so, when desires and innovations appeared.

وقد قال الله تعالى: { وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةً يَهْتَدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ } [السجدة: 24]

Indeed Allaah -the most high- has said:

"And We made from amongst them leaders guiding by Our command, when they were patient and [when] they were certain of Our signs."
(32:24)

فالصبر واليقين بهما تنال الإمامة في الدين،

Thus it is with both patience and certainty that one attains (true) authority in the deen.

فلما قام بذلك قرنتم باسمه من الإمامة في السنة ما شهر به وصار متبوعاً
لمن بعده، كما كان تابعاً لمن قبله.

And it was when Imam Ahmad established both of them, that his name was affiliated with authority in the sunnah and it became as renowned as it is. Thus he was emulated by those after him, just as he emulated those before him.

وإلا فالسنة هي ما تلقاه الصحابة عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، وتلقاه
عنهم التابعون ثم تابعوهم إلى يوم القيامة.

And even then the sunnah is that which the companions acquired from the messenger of Allaah - Salla Allahu 'alaihi wa sallam - and that which the successors inherited from the companions, and like wise inherited by those who succeeded them until the last day,

وإن كان بعض الأئمة بها أعلم وعليها أصبر.

even though from them were authorities who were more knowledgeable of it and likewise more forbearing.

والله سبحانه وتعالى أعلم وأحكم، والله أعلم."

And Allaah -glorified and exalted is He- is the most knowledgeable and the ultimate authority, and Allaah knows best."

[Majmoo' al Fataawa of Ibn Taymiyyah (Volume 3. Page 358)]

Follow up commentary:

Absolute authority is not something that can be obtained by way of degrees and fortunes nor by way of dictatorship and fascism, but rather it is something that Allaah instills in the few select and chosen slaves. It is when they learn, believe and have certainty, preach, and bear the harms in doing so, that Allaah raises their rank above the rest. And in order to become a truly great leader, you have to have been a true follower of the great leaders before you. The messengers followed revelation, the companions followed the messenger, and the luminaries there after followed the way of the companions. And that is where true success lies.