

MANNERISMS OF THE FEMALE STUDENT OF KNOWLEDGE

By

Umm Salamah Bint 'Alee Al-'Abaasee

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Firstly, Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ, said, “Allâh says,

‘Whosoever shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him.

My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask (something) of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about (seizing) the soul of My faithful servant. He hates death, and I hate hurting him.¹

This hadith shows that the most beloved thing to Allâh is to get close to Him with the obligatory duties He has enjoined. The one who wants to go beyond that does voluntary deeds, and the more voluntary deeds you do, the closer you will be to Allâh.

Allâh says, “*Were he to ask (something) of Me, I would surely give it to him.*” So the slave must hasten to do voluntary deeds if he wants Allâh to love him and to accept his Du’aa.

Ahl Al-‘Ilm are agreed that the best and greatest voluntary deed is seeking knowledge.

¹ Buhkari 8/509

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Imaam An-Nawawi said, “The Salaf are agreed that busying oneself with knowledge is better than other voluntary deeds like prayer, fasting, and Tasbeeh...It is the light of the heart...Whoever Allâh wills good for, He gives him knowledge of the religion.”

Imaam Ahmad said, “Seeking knowledge is the best deed for the one who has the right intention. He must want to remove ignorance from himself and those around him.”

Imaam Maalik said, “The best thing one can do is to seek knowledge, that he learn it and teach it.”

These are some of the statements of the people of knowledge on seeking knowledge, and they are agreed it is better than all of the voluntary deeds. One of the Salaf said, “If I knew that prayer was better than narrating Ahadith I would have left narrating Ahadith and prayed (i.e. voluntary prayers).”

Therefore, this is the best voluntary action by which you can get close to Allâh.

Second Now that we know this, we must also know that when we seek knowledge it must be with a sincere intention.

﴿ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا

الزَّكَاةَ ۚ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ ۗ ﴾²

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) and give Zakât, and that is the right religion”.

² Surah Al-Baiyina:5

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Al-Imaam Ash-Shawkaani said, “The student of knowledge must first fix his intention and know that the knowledge he seeks and desires is knowledge of the Shari’ah that Allâh has legislated for His slaves and for which he sent His messengers and revealed the Books. He must not mix this intention with any desire for the Dunyaa or any of the desires that have nothing to do with Allâh, like seeking to get money or honor or fame by way of his knowledge.”

These great words from Al-Imaam Ash-Shawkaani show that the knowledge that is praised is knowledge of the Kitaab and the Sunnah, meaning the Shari’ah.

So the student of knowledge must know he is learning the Shar’ of Allâh for which He sent the Messengers and revealed the Books, and he must have the intention of seeking it for Allâh, and he must beware of corrupting this intention with any Dunyaawi intent, like chasing money or fame. And whoever desires other than Allâh with his knowledge is in grave danger.

The Prophet said the second man to be questioned on the Day of Judgment would be a scholar. *“Second will be a man who studied religious knowledge. Then he taught it to others and recited the Quran. He will be brought for Judgment. God will remind him of His favors (showered on him in the world). He will admit them (having enjoyed them in his life). Then God will ask him: What did you do with them? He will reply: I acquired knowledge and imparted it and also recited the Quran for Your sake. God will observe: You have told a lie, for you got knowledge to be renowned as a scholar; and you recited the Quran to be marked as a Qari (one who recites the Quran according to the rules). Then orders will be passed against him. So he will be dragged along on his face and thrown into Hell”*³.

In addition, the Prophet said, *“A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown into the Fire; his intestines will spill forth and he will go around them as a donkey goes around the millstone. The people of Hell will gather around him and will say: O So and so, what is the matter with you? Did*

³ Muslim

you not enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil? He will say: Yes, but I used to enjoin good and not do it, and I used to forbid evil and do it.”⁴

This is an even worse calamity because it is an exposition in public.

Therefore, the first thing is that the student of knowledge must have a sincere intention to seek knowledge and teach knowledge for the sake of Allâh.

Second: The student of knowledge must ponder upon his knowledge.

Allâh says,

﴿ فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لِدُنْيِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ ﴾⁵

So know (O Muhammad (peace be upon him)) that, Lâ ilâha ill-Allâh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh), and ask forgiveness for your sin,

This is proof that knowledge comes before action because Allâh mentions knowing before the order to ask forgiveness for sins. A person must know this before he begins to teach others.

﴿ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ﴾⁶

Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds,

Here, faith was put before acting with what you know.

⁴ Bukhari and Muslim

⁵ Surah Muhammad:19

⁶ Surah Al-'Asr:3

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Sufyaan bin Uyaynah said, *“The scholar is not the one that knows the Halaal and the Haraam. The scholar is the one who knows what is Halaal and acts on it, and knows what is Haraam and stays away from it.”*

Abdul-A’laa At-Taymi said, *“Whoever is given knowledge that he does not use has not been given beneficial knowledge.”*

Therefore, if the knowledge given to people does not show in their actions, then in reality they have no knowledge.

Sufyaan Ath-Thawri said, *“If I act with what I know then I’m the most knowledgeable of people. If I don’t act with what I know then I’m the most ignorant of people.”*

This is the reality of knowledge – which it leads to action. Those who do not act with their knowledge are ignorant.

Abud-Dardaa’ said, *“You will not be a scholar until you act with what you know and benefit from it.”*

Also, the Prophet used to seek refuge from knowledge that has no benefit
“Allaahummah inni a’udhu bika min ‘ilmin laa yanfa’.”

This meant he sought refuge from knowledge with no benefit and knowledge he would not act upon.

Therefore, the reality of knowledge is that it leads us to having Khashyah (humility) before Allâh, and that it leads the person to what will benefit him.

Thirdly, The student of knowledge must have patience in seeking knowledge and in teaching it.

There is an excellent example for us in Musa, when he went to al-Khidr and reached him and said,

﴿ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَنِي مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾ قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾

Mûsa (Moses) said to him (Khidr): "May I follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (guidance and true path) which you have been taught (by Allâh)?" He (Khidr) said: "Verily you will not be able to have patience with me! And how can you have patience about a thing, which you know not? Mûsa (Moses) said: "If Allâh wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in aught."

Also, knowledge cannot be attained by being relaxed and in a state of comfort. If you do not give it your all, you will only be given part of it.

Abu Hurayrah used to follow the Prophet ﷺ though he would be starving in order to seek knowledge. He abandoned seeking sustenance in order to seek knowledge, and he followed the Prophet ﷺ around and he reached a level no one else was able to reach. At one point Abu Hurayrah said,

*"I asked, 'Messenger of Allâh, who will be the person happiest with your intercession on the Day of Rising?' The Messenger of Allâh replied, 'I think that none would ask about this before you since I know your eagerness for hadith [learning]. The person happiest with my intercession on the Day of Rising will be the one who says: "There is no god but Allâh" sincerely from his heart.'"*⁸

The Prophet ﷺ knew Abu Hurayrah would ask this because of Abu Hurayrah's dedication to seeking knowledge.

Therefore, the student of knowledge must have patience until he reaches his goal and attains good. Seeking knowledge cannot be gathered together

⁷ Surah Al-Kahf :66-69

⁸ Buhkari

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with ease in sleep and in food and in drink because knowledge is not attained with ease.

The student of knowledge must work hard to learn, and this way he will be given and increase in good. As long as he is patient, Allâh will give him more good, and if he is not patient, he will not reach a high level or status in the knowledge, which we know no voluntary deed comes close to.

Therefore we must be patient and fight our soul and desires and ask Allâh, “*O Lord, increase me in knowledge,*” as the Prophet ﷺ would when following the example of the previous prophets. Therefore, we must always ask Allâh to give us Fiqh and beneficial knowledge.

NOTE: We ask Allâh ﷻ to forgive us of our shortcomings and that He allows all of us to benefit from these notes. We ask that you keep in mind that these are just notes not a word for word translation of the lecture. In addition, we ask that you continue to make du’aa for us in our efforts in seeking knowledge