The Memoir of the Listener and the Speaker in the Training of Teacher and Student

Ibn Jama-ah

Dr. Noor Muhammad Ghifari
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Ibn Jama‘ah’s

Translated with introduction and annotations by Dr. Noor Muhammad Ghifari

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FOREWORD

Man has witnessed a tremendous explosion of knowledge in modern times, ever known to previous ages. The aim of knowledge is self-awareness which goes a long way in establishing as well as improving social relationships. Yet despite great scientific progress in today's world we appallingly lack the sense of responsibility and this has generated moral chaos in modern society as says English poet W. H. Auden:

The situation of our time
Surrounds like a baffling crime.
We are all involved,
We are all suspect.

The contemporary scene sufficiently suggests that we have only a blurred vision of the objectives lying behind our quest for knowledge. In order to wiggle out of this baffling situation we need to refer to our earliest teachers who had contributed in their own ways to shaping up a just, balanced and harmonious society. And going by all considerations the all-time greatest Teacher of humanity is the Prophet of Islam whose Sunnah guides us in all matters, wordly and otherwise. As long as the Muslims followed the Sunnah of their Prophet they remained the masters of the world; and when they left this practice, they lost gains in every field of life.

No doubt the norms of every age change yet in its essence this book is definitely relevant to our age, and this is primarily for the reason that it hinges on the teacher-student relationship which infuses moral sense in society in a large measure. This significant tradition, peculiar to madrasahs is almost alien to Western-style educational institutions. Incidents of campus violence and taking teachers as hostages by students indicate a grim reality which is directly related to
the breakup of this tradition. Drawing upon this vital link between the teacher and the student, the learned author discusses different channels of knowledge with direct references to the Holy Quran and Sunnah and to the foregoing teachers. He also tells the reader how to get the maximum out of a book or a teacher. Furthermore, he talks about the lines on which a teacher should conduct his behaviour towards his pupils, and also the other way round.

To be sure, the book is of great promise to both teachers and students and Prof. Dr. Noor Muhammad Ghifari, the translator of the Arabic book, has done a useful job by introducing it to modern readership.

(S. Sharifuddin Pirzada)
Chairman

INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Praise is due to Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful the Knower of all, who deserves the highest dignity. Blessing and peace be upon Muhammad, the honoured prophet of Allah upon whom the holy Quran was revealed; and upon his family and his distinguished companions who will abide by him in the home of ease and affluence (paradise).

The most important aim of every person, that he wants to achieve from the very beginning of his manhood and for which he struggles is good education (proper guidance). The excellence of good education (proper guidance) is acknowledged by both Shari'a and wisdom, and all the arguments support for the dignity of the educated (guided) person. It is an established fact that the most deserving for the honour and for the attainment of the coveted dignity are those scholars who enriched the height of dignity and praise and they preserved the learning seats of their forerunner scholars until they succeeded the inheritance (Knowledge) of Prophets (peace be upon them), by the virtue of their knowledge. They well-versed themselves in the praise worthy manners and good qualities of the holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and the good conduct of the pious leaders from the holy Prophet’s family and his companions, and the tracks followed by the leaders from the preceding scholars. They also followed the right paths of the spiritual guides from the succeeding scholars.

Opinions of Different Eminent Scholars concerning Education and Manners

Ibn Sirin⁴ — said: They used to learn guidance (al Huda) as they used to learn knowledge.

Al-Hasan² It was binding upon a person to spend two years and then two years for self emendation.
Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna: The holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is the greatest standard, and the goods and the conduct are examined in the light of his manners, conduct and guidance. So, whichever is in accordance with it, that is right, and whichever is contrary to it, that is wrong and false.

Habib b. al-Shahid said to his son: O My Son!

Accompany with the jurists and the scholars, and learn from them and adopt their manner, it is lovelier to me than a great number of traditions.

One of the ancient scholars said to his son: O my son! If you learn a chapter of good manner, it is lovelier to me than if you learn seventy chapters of the other branches of knowledge.

Muhallad b. al-Husayn said to Ibn al-Mubarak: we are rich in traditions (scholars of Hadith), are more needy to us than we are to them.

Imam Shafi‘i was asked concerning his desire to acquire refined manners and methods. He replied, “I listen, word by word, to which I have not listened before, and the parts of my body desire to have ear so that they may be able to enjoy it.” He was further asked concerning his struggle to acquire it. He replied, “My struggle, to acquire it, is alike the struggle of a mother who lost her son, and she has no other son.”

Purpose of Book

The manner (method) in the light of above mentioned opinions of the scholars has this (high) dignity and (contrary to it) its excellences are (still) not known: I felt the need of the students to it and their hardship to follow it, which is either for (their) shyness which prevent them from presence (alertness during the lecture) or the tyranny (of the teacher) which creates in them aversion (from learning). So, I decided to write this short memoir for the teacher to remind him (of the manner and the methods of learning), and for the student to inform him about his responsibility (concerning learning), and (I have also pointed to those manners) which are common to the both. (I have also shed light on) how should he benefit from the book? (I have also furnished) guidelines on rules and regulations of the hostels both for the senior and the junior students. (I have done it so in the view of this) that hosciels for the students are very common in these days.

Salient Features of the Book

I have compiled in this book (only) such principle and view which is recognized by all, or which I listened from distinguished professors, or which I passed by during studies, or which I learnt during (my) discussions (with the learned and experienced scholars). However, I have mentioned such opinion or principle in it without documentation and arguments so that it may not be too lengthy and exhaustive for the reader.

I have collected it, by the grace of Allah, all such scattered manners (of learning) which I could not find collected in a book.

Chapters of the Book

I have compiled the book with five chapters, which cover the objectives of the book (and are entitled as follows):
1. On the excellence of knowledge and the scholar (and excellence of scholar and his offspring).
2. On the manners of the teacher, concerning himself, his students and his lesson.
3. On the conduct of the student; with himself, and his teacher, and his-fellows and his lesson.
4. On the methods of consulting books and which concern to it.
5. On the manners of the hostels of the educational institutions, and which concerns to it.

I have entitled this book “Tazkerat as-Same’ wa’al-Mutakallim Fi ’Adab al-’Alim wa’al Muta’allim” (The Memoir of the Listener and the Speaker in the Training of Teacher and Student).

May Allah Karim accept us for knowledge and noble deed, and grant us the highest degree of His pleasure.

Prof. Dr. Noor Muhammad Gifari
The Text

Tazkerat as-Sâmê' wa' al-Mutakillim
Fî 'Adab al-'Âlim wa' al Muta'allim
Chapter 1

EXCELLENCE OF KNOWLEDGE
AND THE SCHOLARS – THE MERIT
OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Says Allah Karim: “Allah will exalt those higher, who believe
among you and those who have knowledge, to high ranks”.
(al-Qur’ān, 58:11)

Ibn ‘Abbās (interpreting this verse) said: “Ulama” (scholars)
will exalt over the believers hundred degrees, and the length
between every two degrees will be one hundred years.”

Says Allah Karim: “Allah (Himself) is witness that there is no
Allah save Him. And the angels and the men of learning, main-
taining justice (too are witness). (In this verse) Allah Karim
started by Himself, secondly (He mentioned) by the angels and
thirdly by the men of learning. It is enough for the establishment
of their honour, dignity, grace and nobleness. Says Allah Karim:
Say (unto them, O Muhammad): Are those who know, equal
with those who know not?” (al-Qur’ān, 39:9).

- “Ask those who have committed to memory, if you know
  not” (al-Qur’ān, 16:43).
- “But none will grasp their meaning save the men of learn-
  ing.” (al-Qur’ān, 29:43).
- “But it is clear revelations in the hearts of those who have
  been given knowledge.” (al-Qur’ān, 29:49).
- “The erudite among His bondmen fear Allah alone.”
  (al-Qur’ān, 35:28).
- “Those (the men of learning) are the best of the created
  things. Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Eden
  underneath which rivers follow, wherein they dwell
  forever. Allah hath pleasure in Him. This is (in store) for
  him who feareth his Lord.” (al-Qur’ān, 98:7-8).
It can be elucidated in the light of these two verses that the men of learning fear Allah, and those who fear Allah are the best of the created things, so it can be concluded that only the men of learning are the best of creature. Says the holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

- “Whom Allah wants to favour, grants him the knowledge (understanding) of religion.”
- “Ulama (the men of learning) are the (real) possessors of (the knowledge — wealth) of the Prophets (peace be upon him).”

This degree is enough for dignity and pride (of the men of learning). There is no dignity greater than that of the Prophecy. Similarly, there is no honour greater than that of inheriting that dignity (of being the possessor of the knowledge) of the Prophet (peace be upon them).

- The holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said, When there were two persons before him: one adorer (of Allah) and the second scholar, “Excellence of scholar over that of adorer is like my excellence over a common man amongst you.”
- “Whoever walked (over a path) to seek knowledge, (he is rewarded as if) he walked over one of the paths, that lead to the paradise.”
- The angels spread their feathers over the student to show Allah’s pleasure for him.
- “Every living being in the skies and (in and on) the earth seeks forgiveness for the scholar, until the fish in water do so.”
- “Scholar’s excellence over an adorer alike the excellence of moon of 14th night over all the stars.”
- Ulama (the men of learning) are the possessors of (the wealth of) the Prophets (peace be upon them). The Prophets do not leave in legacy Dinár or Dirham, rather, they leave knowledge (as their legacy), and whoever possessed it, he obtained all the share.

It is to be noted that there is no excellence more than that of a man (of learning) who causes to engage them to seek forgive-

ness for him and to pray for his blessing, and spread their feather for him. A person envows for the prayer (for blessing) of Allah fearing man or for the (prayer of) whom he supposes to be pious, then, how will you estimate the excellence of the prayer of the angels?

The interpreters hold different opinions concerning the meanings of “spreading or lowering of the angels’ feathers”. It has been interpreted for humility (for ‘Alim), descending and presence with him, showing honour and excellence for him, lifting him over their feathers and helping him for the attainment of his (lofty) objective (of learning):

As regards the meanings of the animals’ inspiration to pray for (the blessing for) scholar, it is said that they had been created for the welfare and advantages of men, and ‘Ulama (the scholars) guide to show kindness to animals and to prevent harm from them.

Says the holy Prophet (peace be upon him): “The ink of ‘Ulama (Scholars) (with which they used to write) and the blood of the martyrs will be weighed on the Day of Judgement.” Some (traditionists) say that it will be done irrespective of the superiority of the martyr’s blood and the inferiority of the scholar’s ink.

- “There is nothing of greater excellence for a person than his understanding of (his) religion, because a jurist is more stranger to Satan than one thousand adorers.”
- “This knowledge will be preserved by the successors of every group (of ‘Ulama) who will protect it from the falsification of zealots, and plagiarism of ignorants.”
- “Three (categories of the) persons will recommend (the people for Allah’s forgiving) on the Day of Judgement: The Prophet (peace be upon them), then ‘Ulama and then the martyrs.”

Al-Qādī Husayn b. Muhammad reported by the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said, “Whoever loved learning and the men of learning, his faults would not be recorded throughout his life.”
The holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said, “Whoever respected an ‘Alim (man of learning) he would be (rewarded) as if he respected seventy Prophets (peace be upon them), and whoever esteemed a student, he would be rewarded as if he esteemed seventy martyrs.”

“Whoever offered this prayer (Salāt) following an ‘Alim, he will be rewarded as if he offered his prayer following a Prophet, and whoever offered prayer following a Prophet he would be forgiven.”

As-Samsahābī al-Malikī reported in his first book ‘Nāzam ad-Dur’, by the holy Prophet (peace be upon him): who esteemed an ‘Alim, he esteemed Allah, and who insulted an ‘Alim, he insulted Allah and His messenger.

‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said: It is sufficient for the excellence of knowledge that he who does not possess it, claims to possess it and he is happy when he is ascribed to it. Whereas, it is enough for the disapproval of the ignorance that (even) the ignorant shuns it.

- Someone amongst the old scholars reported to have said: That best of (Allah’s) bounties (for man) is wisdom, while the worst of the difficulties (and defects) is ignorance.
- ‘Abū Muslim al-Khwālī said, “(The presence of) Ulma on the earth are alike the stars in the sky. When these (stars of knowledge and guidance) appear for the people, they are guided with them, and they disappear, the people are bewildered.”
- ‘Abū al-‘Aswād ad-Dāwātī said, “Nothing is more glorious than knowledge, (so much so that) the kings are the rulers of the people, while ‘Ulama (the men of learning) are the rulers of the kings.”
- Wahbī said, “Honour springs from knowledge. Its possessor (the scholar) becomes respectable if he was not respectable and he becomes honourable, if he was not honourable (a layman); and he is associated if he was separated; and he becomes rich, if he was poor and he becomes graceful, if he was humble.”

Muād b. Jabal said, “Learn knowledge. Its learning is virtue, struggle for its attainment is worship; its remembering is the remembrance of Allah; its discussion (and research) is Jihad (holy struggle): taking pains for it leads to nearness (of Allah) and its teaching to an ignorant is charity.

Fudayl b. ‘Ayyād: ‘Alim (scholar) who is teacher (also) is considered very great in kingdom of the sky.

Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna: The most exalted men in the sight of Allah in status amongst those who are between Allah and His bondmen, are the Prophets (peace be upon them) and the ‘Ulama. He further said, “None is granted a gift, greater than (that of) the Prophecy, and after prophecy nothing is superior to the knowledge and Fiqh (understanding). When it was asked that who said that. He replied that all the jurists said so.

- Sādiq: Whoever wants to observe the Prophet’s meetings he may observe the ‘Ulama’s meetings. They will remind the observers of the (dignity of meetings of) prophets.
- ‘Imām al-Shaf‘ī said, “If the practicing jurists are not the friends of Allah, then Allah has no friend.”
- Ibn ‘Umar said, “A sitting to learn Fiqh (understanding) is superior to worship of sixty years.”
- Sufyān al-Thawrī and ‘Imām al-Shaf‘ī: There is nothing superior to the struggle for knowledge after the (fulfillment of) obligations.
- Al-Zuhrī: None can be equal to a jurist (in excellence).

Abū Dharr al-Ghifari and Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them): A chapter of knowledge that we learn is dearer to us than one thousand prostrations (sets) of voluntary Salat (Prayer) and a chapter of knowledge that we teach whether or not brought in practice is dearer to us than one hundred prostration in voluntary prayer.

In the above discussion, it has been brought to light that indulgence with knowledge is superior to the voluntary physical worships i.e. Sala-t (prayer), Saum (fast), Tasbih (remembrance of Allah), Du‘a (prayer for blessing) etc. Why? The advantages of knowledge are common to its possessor and the other people,
while the (benefits or rewards of) physical voluntary prayers are confined to the person who offers them. Moreover, knowledge corrects (refines) the others while the worships are in need of knowledge and depend upon it (for their proper performance), where as it (knowledge) does not depend upon them (the worships). Further, ‘Ulama are the heirs (successors) of the Prophets (peace be upon them), while the worshipers are not (the successors of the Prophets) — the obedience of an Alim is incumbent on the ignorant. Knowledge leaves its memoir after the death of the Alim (scholar), while the voluntary prayers (or such other worships) finishes with the death of him who performs. Moreover, in existence of knowledge there is revival of Islamic law and the preservance of the guiding signs of the nation.

It is noteworthy that the aforesaid excellence of knowledge and the men of learning is only for the practicing, pious, Allah fearing scholars, whose aim, by the knowledge, is to attain the pleasure of Allah and to seek His nearness in paradise; who do not seek knowledge with bad intention or for worldly desires of honour or possession or having great number of followers and students.

It is reported from the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said, “Who learnt to stir hatred against the ignorant or to show pride against the scholars or to divert the people’s attention towards him, Allah would put him in the fire.”

He (peace be upon him) said, “Who acquired knowledge for other than Allah or intended to please other than Allah, should choose his lodging in the fire.”

- It is also reported that he (peace be upon him) said, “Who acquired such knowledge with which he might seek Allah’s pleasure, but he acquired it to fulfil any worldly desire, would not find (smell) even the odour of the paradise.
- Abu Hurayrah reported that the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Those persons whose cases will be decided first, on the Day of Judgement are three (persons). Amongst these (three) there will be person who acquired knowledge and taught it also, and had recited the holy Quran. He will be brought to account for Allah’s bounties which were bestowed upon him, will be enumerated and he will admit these. Then, he will be enquired about what he did for them. He will answer, “I learnt and taught (knowledge) for you, and I recited the Quran for You”. Allah will say, “You told a lie, but he learnt so that the people might call you ‘Alim (scholar) and you recited the holy Quran so that the people might call you al-Qari (reader of the holy Quran) and it was called.” Then his case will be decided and he will be put in the hell with head down.

Hamad b. Salama reported, “Who learnt al-Hadith (the Prophet’s traditions) for the sake of other than Allah, he deceived Allah.”

Bishār22 said, “Allah revealed to Dā‘ūd (peace be upon him) that he should not appoint a seduced scholar (مُتَزْوِجُونَ) between Me and you. He will deceive you in concern of My love. Such scholars carry on highway robbery against My slaves.
GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER, CONCERNING, HIMSELF, HIS STUDENTS AND HIS TEACHING

This chapter contains three sections. The first section undertakes the manners concerning the teacher himself. These manners (or guidelines) are of twelve kinds. (Here are the details of these manners).

1. LASTING OBSERVATION OF ALLAH

There should be a lasting observance of Allah, in secret and open conduct (of the teacher), and guard against His fear in all his activities, and statements and actions, because he is custodian of whatever is entrusted to him from the knowledges, and whatever is granted to him from feelings and understanding. Allah says:

"O Ye who believe! Betray not Allah and His messenger nor knowingly betray your trees". (al-Qur’an, 8:27).

“They (rabbis and priests of the Jews) were bidden to observe, and thereunto were the witness. So fear not mankind, but fear Me”. (al-Qur’an, 5:44).

Imām Shafi’i: Knowledge is not (only) that which is committed to memory, (the actual) knowledge is that which is benefitted. The benefit of knowledge is calmness (with the fear of Allah), demure, submission and humility for Allah.

Imam Malik (b. Anas) wrote to (the caliph Hārūn) al-Rashid: “When you acquired knowledge, then its impression, calmness, sign, splendor and tolerance (which are the fruits of knowledge) should be visible upon you, this is in accordance with the Holy Prophet’s saying; ‘Ulama are inheritors of the Prophets”.

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‘Umar said: Learn knowledge, and learn for its dignity and splendor.

The old scholars said, “It is binding upon ‘Alim (the scholar) to be submitted to Allah secretly and openly, and he should guard against his ownself, and stop himself from which suspect him.”

2. PRESERVATION OF KNOWLEDGE

He should preserve the knowledge as it was done by the predecessor scholars, and maintain its excellence as Allah has graced it with honour and distinction. He should not humiliate it by going to or visiting the ignorant among the sons of the world without any pressing need. He (‘Alim) may visit a person who wants to learn from him, provided the visited person preserves his dignity and honour.

Al-Zuhri opined that the scholar can go to the student’s home to teach him. There are numerous statements of the old scholars in this context. The statement of Abū Shuja’ al-Jurjānī in this regard is noteworthy. He says: “I will not be disgraced if I serve the knowledge, and if I teach it to a person whom I meet. Should I plant with it the form of misfortune and pluck from it disgrace? Then following of ignorant is more prudence (than to follow the knowledge which brings about misery). If the scholars preserved the knowledge as it ought to be preserved (it is good), but if they plant it in the hearts of the people, it was (also) good.

If a genuine need arises or and a religious welfare calls, that surpasses the harm (of going to the residence of student), and the intention (of so going) is good, then, there is no harm (of going to the student’s residence), if Allah wills. The practice of some illustrious scholars among the ancestors i.e. al-Zuhri al-Shāfi’ī etc., who used to visit the kings and the rulers (to educate and guide them) and not to fulfill their worldly desires from them. If the visiting scholar brings knowledge and piety in graceful manner and dignity, then there is no harm of going to the student’s residence to benefit him. Sufyān al-Thawrī used to visit Ibrahim b. Adham to teach him. Abu ‘Ubayd Qasim b. Sallam used to visit ‘Alī b. al-Madinī to teach him Gharib al-Hadīth (wonderful traditions).

3. ADOPTION OF ABSTINENCE

The teacher should adopt abstinence from the love for the worldly goods and curtail it to a possible limit, until this (abstinence) may not be harmful for himself or his family members. Whatever is wanted by him moderately with contentedness is not considered as love for the worldly goods. The excellences of a scholar is decreased if he develops his love for the world, because he is the better knower of its avarice and temptation, its quick departure and much fatigue (which is undertaken for its acquisition) and tiring out, so he is more obliged to show abhorrence to it and to shun indulgence in it.

Imām Shāfi’ī: If I am asked to choose the wisest amongst the men, I would choose those who abstain from the love of the world, but, I am at a loss to know who is better than the ‘Ulama who are more in wisdom and more in excellence (than any other). Yahyā b. Mu‘ādh said, “If the world is perishable gold, and what will be in hereafter is lasting, it would be binding upon the wise to prefer the eternal earthenware over the perishable gold. What about the world that is perishable earthenware and the hereafter that is ever lasting gold?

4. PURITY OF KNOWLEDGE FROM WORLDLY DESIRES

The teacher should purify his knowledge from his ignorance that serves as a ladder by which is associated the worldly desires of rank or wealth or reputation or fame or service or preference over his colleague.

Imām Shāfi’ī: I desired that the people learn the knowledge not for acquiring any profession by virtue of it. Similarly the teacher might purify it from receiving money or service etc. from his students as a compensation of his indulgence for them and their (frequent) visits to him.

Mansūr23 was not used to seek the help of anyone who differed with him in need.
Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna: I was bestowed upon (by Allah) with the understanding of the Holy Quran, but when I accepted a purse from Abu Ja’far,24 this (understanding) was snatched from me. We beg Allah for remissness.

5. AVOIDING THE MEAN PROFESSIONS

A teacher should avoid to adopt the mean professions from and to indulge in such profession (or means of earning) which are worthless (as profession) and obscene by nature, and abominable by custom or by shara i.e. cupping, tanning, changing (of money) and dying (the clothes). Similarly, he should avoid from the positions and opportunities of suspicion, thought of distant nature. He should not perform any action that contains diminution of humanity or that is against the evident (and external appearing), though, it is permitted in inner meaning, because, thus, he places himself before the people’s eyes for suspicion, and places his self respect for slander. Thus, the people fall into bad opinions and the sin of slandering. If he happens to commit such action for any valid reason or need, he should inform the person who observes him about its reason, and his pretext and intention to commit it, so that he (who observes him) may not be sinner of holding bad opinion against him, or having aversion for him, and, thus, he will not benefit from his knowledge. So, he will enable such ignorant (witness) to benefit from his knowledge.

That was why the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) explained to those two persons who found him conversing with (his wife) Sufayya (at night), saying, “Hold good opinion about your Prophet (peace be upon him), she is (my wife) Sufayya.” Then he said, “The devil runs with the son of Adam as his blood circulates in his body. I am afraid that the devil may cause in your hearts any misunderstanding (about me) that may perish you.”

6. TO FOLLOW THE INDICATIONS (SIGNS) OF ISLAM

A teacher should strictly follow the indications (signs) of Islam and the external forms of the (Islamic) ordinances i.e. to establish SALA-T (five times daily obligatory prayers) in the mosques with congregations, to pay SALAM (salute) the high and low (and all and sundry), to enjoin right conduct and to forbid indecency; and to undergo patiently the hardships of the right path, and to speak truth in front of the rulers, and to not care of the (false) blame of those who find fault with the others, keeping in mind the following ordinance of Allah:-

“Tolerate (patiently) whatever may befall thee.

Lo! that is the steadfast heart of things”(al-Qur’an, 31:17).

He should also keep in mind the tolerance of the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and the other Prophets in facing the hardships for the sake of Allah, until they were rewarded by Allah.

Similarly, he should try to establish the Sunnah (the Prophet’s practices and actions) and to do away with the innovation (in Shari’ah) and to perform the ordinances of religion for Allah’s sake, and to introduce welfare of the Muslims according to Shari’ah and by the ways and means approved by it.

He should not be satisfied only with the lawfulness of his actions both the apparent and inner. Rather, he should try to perform them in the best and the most complete way, because ‘Ulama’ are the model for the common people, and the matters (concerning the performance of deeds) are referred to them. Moreover, they are the argument of Allah against the people, and those who have eyes (of knowledge) see to them for guidance, and those who do not know follow them. When ‘Alim (scholar), himself, will not benefit from his own knowledge, the other persons will be far away from him (in benefiting from his knowledge). Imam Shafi’i said, “Knowledge is not that which is preserved, rather, knowledge is that which is benefitted.” So, the fault of an Alim is a heavy loss, because it brings about such harms which are followed by the people.

7. REGULARITY IN RECITATION OF THE HOLY QURAN

The teacher is obliged to preserve the optional worships (and prayers and rites) of Shari’ah, both verbal and practice. He should
regularly recite the Holy Quran and praise Allah from heart and by tongue. Similarly, he is expected to observe other prayers and praises for the night and day (times), and also the other optional adorations of Allah from optional Prayers Fasting, Haj to the holy Ka’ba and prayer for the Holy Prophet because his love, his respect and honour is must when his honourable name is mentioned.

Imām Mālik turned pale and threatened when the glorified (name of the) Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was mentioned before him.

Ja’far b. Muhammad (as–Ṣadiq) used to turn pale when the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was mentioned before him.

Muhammad Ibn al-Qasim’s tongue used to get dry in his mouth with the Holy Prophet’s reverence.

He should ponder, while reciting the Holy Quran, over its meanings, commands, prohibitions, good tidings and frightful tidings. He should also observe the boundaries and limits set forth by it. He should guard against its forgetfulness after committing it to the memory, because there are the Holy Prophet’s traditions which threaten against it.

Moreover, he should have fixed praises and prayers to perform every day. If he cannot do so every day he should do it on the next day, and if he is too busy (or incapable) to do so, he should do so in two nights of Wednesday and Friday. He should recite the Holy Quran in all seven days of the week, and also read the Holy Prophet’s tradition. Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal used to do so, and he said, who recites the Holy Quran on all the seven days (of a week) he will never forget it.

8. ADOPTION OF GOOD MANNERS

He should conduct the people with good manners i.e. cheerful face, salutation, serving with meal, suppressing anger, refraining damage or harm from the people, rather than bearing it from them and preferring the other over himself in this regard, not claiming distinction (or preference) for himself, doing justice and claiming justice for himself, gratefulness for the excellence (of his scholarship), extending ease (for the people), struggling for meeting the needs (of the people), utilizing (his) honour in recommendation (for the needy), being merciful for the poor, loving the neighbours and the relatives, showing leniency for the students and helping them and behaving generously with them (If Allah wills, details of these good manners will be furnished soon). If he observes any of his students, who does not offer prayer, or does not maintain purity or does not perform any of his obligations, he should guide him gently and deal with him leniently as the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) did with the bedouin who urinated in the mosque, and with Mu’awiya b. al-Hakam who spoke during prayer.

9. WARDING OFF BAD MANNERS

A teacher is under obligation to purify himself apparently and inwardly from bad manners and to adopt good ones. Bad manners include: hatred, grudge, transgression, anger for the sake of other than Allah, delusion, pride, hypocrisy, vanity, (fondness off) reputation, niggardliness, impurity, insolence, greediness boasting, deluding one’s self, passionate longing for the world and boasting over it, flattery, adoring and dressing oneself for the show of the people, love for appreciation (from the people) without performing any appreciable action; shutting eyes from his own fault and searching the faults of the others, anger and party spirit for (the purpose) other than Allah, love and fear for other than Allah, backbiting, whispering, calumny, lie, talk ribaldry, hatred for the people though they are lower from him (in social status and grade). Beware and take care of those bad habits and mean ethics. These are the gates of all evils, rather these are all evil in themselves. Some jurists were involved in these evils, except those whom Allah protected from them, particularly the evils of jealousy, self-praise, hypocrisy and hatred for the people. The remedies of these evils are mentioned in the books on subtleties. Who wants to purify himself, he should read these books, the most beneficial amongst of these is Kitab ar-Ri’ayat (Book on Protection) authored by al-Muhashi.

As regards the remedy of jealousy, it is suggested that the jealous should bear in mind that his jealousy is (actually) objec-
tion against Allah’s wisdom as for selecting the person being enjoyed for bounty. A Poet points to the same reality:

“If you are angry with the division of (the bounties of) Allah among us; so, Allah, when does not favour you, knows better.”

In addition to it, jealousy consists of sorrow and tiring and torment of view that his scholarship, his power of comprehension and his excellence of mind, etc., are the bounties of Allah bestowed upon him. These (qualifications and qualities) are Allah’s trusts with him, so that he may fulfill their rights which are, thus, due upon him. He should bear in mind that their Grantor can snatch these bounties and trusts from the donee and the trustee in the twinkling of an eye; as He did with Bal’am and it is not difficult for Allah.

From the remedies of hypocrisy is to think that all the creatures can neither cause his (the hypocrite) welfar except what Allah has decided for him, nor can harm him except what Allah has ordained for him. He, for whom he is acting hypocrisy, can neither nullify his (any) noble deed nor can endanger his religion. Inspite of this (fact), he (the hypocrite scholar) keeps himself for the pleasure of such a person who, in fact, is neither empowered to advantage him nor to harm him. Moreover, Allah is knower of his intention and the ugliness of his hidden thoughts, as it is said by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

“Whoever listens, Allah listens with him; and whoever sees Allah sees with him.”

The remedy of despising the people is to (deeply) consider the following verses of the Holy Quran:

- “Let not a folk deride a folk who may be better then they (are)”. (al-Qur’an, 40:12).
- Lo! We have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in the conduct. (al-Qur’an, 49:13).
- Therefore ascribe not purity unto yourselves. He is the best aware of him who wardeth off (evils). (al-Qur’an, 53:32).

Perhaps, the contemplated person may be having more purity of heart, and more uprightness of actions, and more sincerity of intention in the sight of Allah (than the scholar who contempts him). As it is said that Allah has hidden three things (or persons) in three things: His friend amongst His bondmen, and His pleasure in His obedience and His anger in His refractoriness.

GOOD QUALITIES: Good qualities are: continuity of repentance (to Allah), sincerity, belief (in Allah), piety, patience, contentment, abstinence (from unlawful goods and actions), trust (entirely in Allah), commitment (to Allah), salvation of heart and soul, good supposition (about Allah and His bondmen), tolerance, good temper, preservation of beneficence, gratefulness for the blessing, mercy and kindness on the creation (of Allah), avoidance of disdain of Allah and the mankind. And love for Allah which is the best of all good qualities, and it is realized only in the obedience of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Says the holy Quran:

“Say, (O Muhammad to mankind); if ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins”. (al-Qur’an, 3:31).

10. REGULARITY IN OCCUPATIONS AND DEEDS

He should constantly wish to increase his exertion and efforts (to impart knowledge), and should be regular in his daily religious duties and worshipsh, and recitation (of the Holy Quran) and the other occupations of knowledge i.e. reading, studying, thinking, glossing, preserving, authoring and researching. He should not spend a moment from his life-time for any occupation other than that of knowledge or performance (in conformity with the knowledge) except to meet the need of eating or drinking or sleeping or taking rest after fatigue or maintaining the wife or guest or gaining strength, which is necessary for him to work or recovering it after pain (or exhaustion) or other which cause hinderance in his performances.

Believer’s remainder life, (if it is spent purposeless) holds no value. Who-ever wasted his two days (of life without acquiring, imparting or acting upon knowledge) he is stupid. Our old scholars were not used to postpone their regular occupations for
normal illness or slight pain. Rather, they used to cure it with knowledge and continued working as for as possible. As it is said:

“When we fall ill, we cure it with your memory. Sometimes when we put-off your (sweet) memory, we fall ill.”

This is for the reason that the excellence of knowledge is at par with the excellence of the inheritance of the Prophets (peace be upon him), and glory of the lights cannot be attained without taking pain. It is reported in Sahih Muslim by Yahya b. ‘Ali Kathir: “Knowledge cannot be acquired with repose of body”. In another tradition it is said, “The paradise has been surrounded with hardships and worries.” A poet says:

“You want to attain the (glory of) height, cheaply (and easily without painstaking), whereas honey cannot be taken without sting of bee.”

“Do not consider glory as a fruit, which you eat. (As a matter of fact) you cannot attain the glory unless you taste the juice of bitter plant (i.e. unless you undergo the severity of patience)”.  

Imám al-Sháfi’i said, “The student is under obligation to spend his maximum effort to increase his knowledge, and to face (happily the difficulties) that may fall upon him in this way. He should be sincere to Allah; Al-mighty, for acquiring knowledge, in text and interpretation. He should seek Allah’s help for undergoing all this.

Al-Rabí (Ibn Sulaymān al-Mudrādi) said, “I have neither observed Sháfi’i taking meal at day nor sleeping at night for his occupation with authoring books.

Contrary to all this, he should not struggle beyond his scope, so that he may not be exhausted and bored, and it may lead him to uncontrollable disliking. He should adopt the moderate way and every person can think better for himself.

11. ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE EVEN FROM THE LOWER

He should not decline to learn that which he does not know, though, he has to acquire it from a person who is lower than him in (social) status or family or age.

Rather, he should always be eager to acquire it from where he can have it, because wisdom is the lot of the Muslim, he will have it from where he finds it.

Sa’d b. Jubayr: A person will be ‘Alim (scholar) as long as he continues learning, and when he gives up learning and considers himself rich in knowledge, and becomes satisfied with the knowledge that he has acquired, then, he will be the most ignorant. An ‘Arab poet99 says:

“He is not stupid who puts lengthy question. Stupid is he who poses lengthy silence at ignorance”.

A fair number of the old scholars used to acquire knowledge, which they were not knowing, from their students. Al-Humaydi,27 the student of Imam al-Shafi’i said, “I accompanied al-Shaﬁ’i from Makkah to Egypt. I used to learn from him jurists norms and he used to acquire from me al-Hadith (the holy Prophet’s traditions).

Ahmed Ibn Hanbal: Shaﬁ’i said to us, “You are better knower of al-Hadith (the Prophet’s traditions) than me, so, whenever you have authenticated a tradition, let me know it so that I can take (and follow) it.”

So much so, that some of al-Sahaba (the companions) have reported the traditions of the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) from at-Tabi’in (successors of the companions). The most illustrious example of all this is the holy Prophet’s recitation (of the holy Quran) before ‘Ubayy (may Allah be pleased with him). He (peace be upon him) informed ‘Ubayy saying, “Allah desired me to read it out before you”. Then he recited:

“Those who disbelieve among the people of the scripture and the idolaters could not have left off (errin) till the clear proof came unto them”. (al-Qur’an, 98:1)

All this is meant to say that the learned (scholar) should not stop learning from the learner (student) or suppressed.
12. ACTIVITIES OF AUTHORING AND COMPOSING

Activities of composition and collection of material and the publication are of great excellence, and (they bear the testimony to) the perfect ability (of the author or the editor). They lead us to the realities of (the different branches of) the arts and the subtleties of (the different) lores, which need a great deal of research, study, criticism and reference. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, enumerating the advantages of publications, said, “It plants the memory, purifies the heart, sharpens the mind, beautifies the expression, earns good reputation and plenty of reward, and makes the (memory of the) author to live forever.”

The foremost objective of the publication should be to compile or to author or to bring out (such research) that contains common advantage and the (people’s) need to it is great. The author should author book only on such topic as has not been authored before him, or that is perplexed and awaits to be explained in his publication. He should avoid in his writing boring prolixity and confusing thought to be mentioned there in.

He should not let his contribution (book or article) out of his hand before its polish, revision and arrangement. In these days, some persons look down upon a publication or compilation of an author (compiler) whose qualifications and personality are known to them, only for their dispute with one another. The writings of the author are not criticized, who owns ink and paper, and writes (for his personal motives), as he wishes, poetry and short-stories. But why, the publications of that author are condemned, who writes a subject of Islamic Shari’ah?

Whoever is not able to do so (because he does not fulfill the qualifications and qualities of a good writer or author), his writings will be criticized and rejected. (As a matter of fact), such writing contains ignorance and thoughtlessness, and if its writer is content with it and (he contributes) the alike to it, he is wasting his time for an occupation for which he is not qualified. Actually, he claims perfection, which is far away from him.

13. GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER, CONCERNING HIS LESSON

This section comprises twelve sub-sections:

13.1. Preparation for Teaching

When the teacher decides to sit (or to enter the class room) for teaching, he should clean himself from impurity and vile (if any), and purify himself and apply perfume and put on such a good dress as is appreciated by the people. The purpose of all this is to honour the excellence of knowledge and Shari’ah.

When the people came to Malik to learn the Prophet’s traditions from him, he used to bathe, applied perfume, dressed well and clothed his head and then sat on (his) seat to teach, and the fragrance continued burning, until, he concluded his lecture. He said, “I want to honour the tradition of the holy Prophet (peace be upon him), while sitting in the chair.

Then, (after having prepared for teaching) should offer two Rakat of Salat (sets of) for desiring good, if the time is not such at which offering a prayer is prohibited. He must intend to impart knowledge and its teaching, and to spread the advantage of Shari’ah, and to preach the ordinances of Allah; which are entrusted to him; and he is obliged to tell them to the people, and to increase knowledge; and to mention the truth; and to refer to the right; and to gather the persons for remembrance of Allah; and to pay Salaam (peace) to his muslim brothers and pray for mercy over the pious ancestors.

13.2. Preparation for Teaching (Continued)

When he exits from his house for teaching, he should perform this prayer (for mercy) over the holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

“O Allah! I seek refuge in thee from (this that) lest I misguide or am misguided, and I cause to sin or am caused to sin, I do wrong or am wronged (by any-other), or I cause ignorance or I am made ignorant. You are the Most Excel-
lent, Your are the Most Praiseworthy. There is none to be worshipped save You.”

Then, he will say:

“In the name of Allah, by the name of Allah, Allah suffices me, in Him I put my trust. There is neither strength nor power but in Allah, the Sublime, the Tremendous. O Allah! conform my mind and yield the right from my tongue.”

Then, he will continue praising Allah (silently) until he reaches the class room (seat of teaching). When he reaches there, he will pay Salaam to the audience. He will offer two Rik’at (in two sets) of (standing) prayer. If the class congregates in the mosque, than Salat must be offered. Then he should request Allah for guidance, help, protection.

Manners of Sitting During the Lesson

The teacher should sit in the class room, facing to the holy Ka’ba, if possible, with grace, calmness, and humility in quadrangular form or such that is not a hateful form of sitting. He should neither sit with his buttocks on the heels nor sit on his humps nor sit placing one foot on the second, nor sit stretching his one or the both feet without any proper excuse, nor sit leaning upon his hand to his one side behind his back.

Activities not Permitted During the Lesson

He should guard against the twisting of his body from his place, and his hand from idle doing, and from petting it into his second hand, and his eyes from suspicious looking without any need. He should avoid joking and laughing, because much laughing decreases the reverence (of the teacher and the others also) and causes to fall the dignity, as it is said that who laughed, made light himself, and who committed or mentioned frequently, it would be known by him.

He should not teach when he is hungry or thirsty or feeling sorrow or angry or drowsiness or grief. He should also not teach when he is feeling very cold or very hot, because he may reply or verdict wrong, because in such circumstances proper thinking is impossible.

13.3. Venerating the Learned During the Lesson

He should sit in front of all the audience, and show respect for those who is distinguished among them in knowledge, and age and soundness and honour. He will behave with them according to their eminence in leadership (if any). All the others should be treated gently, and honour them with good salute, and smile of face and more respectful manner. He should not avoid to stand for the great scholars of Islam, for their honour. There is wide range of traditions and statements concerning the honour of scholars and the students.

He will pay attention to the people moderately according to their need. However, he will prefer one who talks to him or asks from him or discusses with him for his any reason, and so he will pay more attention to him, whether he is younger or a common person. If a teacher does not do so, he will be considered as haughty and proud.

13.4. Fundamentals of Lesson

Start should be made with the recitation from the Book of Allah; al-Quran, for blessing, before starting a discussion and teaching, as it is usually done. If it is a prescribed condition in the school, then it should be followed. Then, immediately after the recitation (of the holy Quran), the teacher should pray for seeking (Allah’s) blessings for himself, for the audience and for the Muslims.

Then, he will seek Allah’s protection from Satan; the cursed, and praise Allah and pray for the mercy over the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his family and his companions and seek Allah’s pleasure for the common muslims and for their leaders and their teachers (and spiritual guides). Then, he will pray for himself, for the audience and their parents (of all) and also for those who are staying at the school with good intention. Some scholars used to mention themselves last in prayer (for blessing) for the audience, and this was done for their honour, and for