

الاحلاق الفاضلة

NOBLE MANNERS



Based upon 4 Pillars

By

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All praise is for Allah, Lord of All that exists. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, having no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger. May the peace and salutations be upon him, his family, and all of his companions. As to what follows:

Firstly, I ask Allah, The Mighty and Sublime to grant us all success, uprightness, and assistance upon every good; that He blesses us all with beneficial knowledge and righteous action; and that He rectifies for us all of our affairs! And that He guides us toward having the most excellent character; for indeed no one guide to its excellence except Him. Likewise, I ask that He averts from us evil character; for no one can avert from us its evil, except Him.

The speech related to this meeting will be about “Moral Character.” Surely, it has been authenticated in the narration from our Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that he said:

*“Verily, I have only been sent to perfect noble character” or
“righteous character.”*

He also said: صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

“Verily, the dearest of you to me and the closest of you to me on the Day of Judgment will be those of you who are best in conduct.”

Numerous narrations have come from him صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ encouraging virtuous conduct and complete manners. Also, a clarification of what having good conduct leads to, from tremendous and abundant reward. Rather, he was asked صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about the greatest of what a person may enter paradise with...and so he replied:

“Having taqwa of Allah and good character.”

For this reason, it is befitting that the Muslim gives good care and consideration to morals and manners, and he has a great concern for it because it is the epitome of his happiness and success in his worldly life as well as his hereafter.

The discussion about morals and manners is a wide and vast discussion. However, I will condense the talk regarding this matter upon four matters that are regarded as pillars for morals and manners. Hence, Islamic mannerisms are established upon four pillars. Whoever has concern for them is considered, by the permission of Allah, to be from the people of morals and manners. And whoever is deprived of them or anything from them, then morals and manners will be deprived from him according to what he has missed from these pillars. These four pillars regarding morals and manners have been gathered together in four narrations. In each narration is that which points to a pillar from the pillars of morals and manners.

Abee Zayd al-Qayrawaane, (the Imam famous well - known as, Malik As-Sagheer) (May Allah have mercy on him) says:

“The narrations of morals and manners have been combined into four narrations”

- The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **“Whoever believes in Allah and the last day then let him say (a word that is) good or be silent.”**
- And the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **“From the goodness of a person’s Islam is that he leaves off that which does not concern him.”**
- Also, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to the one who sought advice from him: **“Do not become angry!”**
- Likewise, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **“None of you (truly) believes until he loves for his brother, what he loves for himself.”**

Hence, these four narrations- are all from forty hadeeth of the narrations regarding morals and manners-collected by Imam Nawawee (May Allah be pleased with him). All of the narrations related from the prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ pertaining to conduct, returns back to these four narrations. This benefits us (knowing) that whoever is given success toward the understanding of these narrations, as well as the application of them then verily the pillars of conduct will be gathered with him and that which they stand upon.

Building upon what has already preceded, especially the report of Imaam ibn Abee Zayd (May Allah have mercy upon him) I say...Morals and manners is established upon four pillars:

The first pillar: Safeguarding the tongue and its evidence is the statement of the prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

“Whoever believes in Allah and the last day, then let him say (a word that is) good or be silent.”

This is the first pillar, and whoever does not safeguard his tongue will not be from the people of morals and manners. Hence, from the tremendous foundations and strong supports which morals and manners are established upon...is safeguarding the tongue. Meaning: taking it into account and holding it back from speech, except for what is beneficial in it. Then the prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

“... then let him speak good or be silent.”

In it is a call to pondering over one's speech prior to speaking; because speech, before it exists, you own it...and when it has exited it owns you! For this reason, from the beauty of an individual is that he reflects upon his statement before he speaks. Also, when you reflect upon your speech before you speak is limited to three statements or three matters:

- Either it will be made clear to you that it is good, a clear evident good; and so him speaking with it will not be of any harm.

- Either it will be made clear to you that it is evil, a clear manifest evil; By way of either backbiting, lying, ridicule, gossip, or other than that from the evident evil. Hence, in this situation you are to refrain from it, and you are not to disclose anything from this matter...not even one word.
- The third matter: (this statement) is not a doubtful matter upon you. Meaning that you do not know whether or not the statement in which you say is good or evil. You have become uncertain/hesitant, it has not been made clear to you and it is doubtful to you. Then, in this situation also you are to refrain from speaking due to the statement of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

“So whoever avoids doubtful matters safeguards his religion as well as his honor.”

Likewise due to his statement صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

“Leave what makes you doubt, for what does not make you doubt.”

Hence, this is an essential principle on the topic of morals and manners that is a must that the person safeguards his tongue, and that he preserves his speech so that he does not speak except with good.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾

'O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. {Surah al-Ahzab 33:70}

And in the narration, the prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

“May your mother be bereaved of you ‘O Mu’adh! Is there anything that flings the people into the Hell-fire (prostrate) upon their faces other than what their own tongues have harvested?!”

Therefore, this is the first principle of morals and manners: That the Muslim safeguards his tongue. And likewise as I have (mentioned)...whoever does not safeguard his tongue then he will not be from the people of good manners and behavior. So, from the principles of morals and manners and its pillars which are established upon it is: The safeguarding of the tongue and its preservation.

The second pillar from the pillars of morals and manners: Distancing oneself far away from meddling and being involved in what does not concern him; and that the individual does not delve himself into what does not concern him. Thus, the meddling person will not be one of morals and good manners, because his meddling and delving himself into what does not concern him removes him from good manners and takes him outside of its boundary. However, when he is far away from

meddling...he is far away from entering into what does not concern him. Hence, this is from the characteristics of good manners. Rather it is from the pillars of good manners. The proof of this is the statement of the prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

“From the goodness of the person's Islam is that he leaves off what does not concern him.”

The meaning of his statement صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ “...that he leaves off what does not concern him.” Meaning by way of legislative guidelines ...not the guidelines according to ones desire, and this is a matter that maybe one is heedless regarding because some of the people may apply this narration with other than its intended meaning. For example, if one is commanded with good and prohibited evil...then he says to the one commanding (the good) and prohibiting (the evil):

“From the goodness of a person's Islam is that he leaves off that which does not concern him.”

This is from having an evil understanding of the narration because from what concerns the Muslim by means of legislative guidelines is: “Ordering with good and prohibiting from evil”...this is from what concerns the Muslim, not from what does not concern him because he is commanded to do so in the Book of Allah and in the sunnah of His Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Hence from what concerns the Muslim is that he orders with good and prohibits from evil. However, the usage of the narration for ordering the good and prohibiting evil is used as evidence in other than its proper place because the intent by the statement

“...that he leaves off what does not concern him”...meaning by legislative guidelines.

Ibn Rajab (May Allah have Mercy on him) clarified this matter with a good clarification in his explanation of this hadith from his book *Jami' al-uloom wal-hikm* (The compilation science and rulings).

The second pillar is from the pillars of moral and good manners. Distancing ones self far away from meddling, and being far away from meddling, and being far away from what is of no concern...Meddlesome in speech, sight, and hearing. All of this, if the person falls into it, he exits from the realm of morals and good manners.

The third pillar from the pillars of morals and good character: the avoidance of being driven by human emotions, in particularly anger. When the person gets excited and he becomes angry, upon him is that he does not proceed at the time of his anger. Meaning that he does not carry out a statement or an action because any statement he carries out at the times of anger, and any action he carries out at the time of anger, in most cases will be away from the realm of morals and manners. Surely, it has been said regarding the dispraise of anger and its ugliness:

“Anger... the first part of it is insanity and the final stage is regret”,

Because the one who acts at the time of his anger with speech or action, acts without discipline. For this reason, it is upon the individual to not allow himself to be driven by human emotions. If he becomes emotional then he should sit down.

He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: *“When one of you becomes angry while he is standing, then let him sit down, and if the anger has left him (that is good), otherwise let him lie down.”*

He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also said *“When one of you becomes angry then let him remain silent!”* His statement “...then let him remain silent” meaning that he refrains from speaking at the time of anger. His statement “...then let him sit down” meaning: refraining from doing any actions at the time of anger. Thus these two matters (of refraining from) –speech and action- at the time of anger are two things required from the Muslim. However, when the person carries on with statements and actions at the time he is emotional, and then surely this no doubt will cause him to fall into matters and actions that are in contradiction with good manners and behavior. Therefore, there is a need, for the one who desires for himself to be of good character, to not allow himself to be driven by human emotions. The statement of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is a proof of this...his statement: “Don’t become angry.” When someone said: “Advise me” he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said

“Do not become angry.”

He repeated it to him. It has come in some of the narrations that this companion said:

“So I pondered over that and I found that anger involves evil.”

When the person is driven by his emotions and by his anger this is conducive to falling into major evils and many actions where its end results are not praiseworthy.

The fourth matter from the pillars of morals and good manners: Soundness of heart; that is there will not be in the heart of the person any jealousy, malice, grudges, resentment, or anything like this from the diseases of the heart and its illnesses.

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا... ﴿١٠﴾

“And do not put in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed.” {Surah Hashr 59:10}

Hence, soundness of the heart is an affair that is required and (sought for); and that which is in the chest of inner evil, and inward corruption, it is not possible for him to be from the people of good character; because hidden corruption, and its deviation in turn effects its outward (actions).

“Verily in the body is a morsel of flesh; when it is good the entire body is good, and when it is corrupt then all of the body is corrupt, surely it is the heart.”

And it shows the status this has regarding the issue of good character in the statement of His Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

“None of you will (truly) believe until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.”

Hence, this is the narration (used as) a support on the topic of good character. When the person has reached the extent of actualizing this narration, and he has gained mastery over this narration, then he will safeguard his heart, and cleanse his soul from evil and inner corruption . Then verily he -by the permission of Allah-will actualize in himself good character at the time of his most splendid image (i.e. when he is physically looking his best) and in his most beautiful apparel. He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said “None of you truly believe until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.”

The point is that these four pillars establish good character upon them and it is a benefit from the Imam ibn Abee Zayd Al-Qayruwaanee (May Allah have mercy upon him) and Al-Hafiz ibn Rajab (May Allah Most High have mercy upon him) has transmitted his speech in his book “Jami ‘al-uloom wal-hikm.” And so I advise myself and all of my brothers and sisters who are listening...May Allah bless you all...that we be concerned with these narrations and that we be concerned with its understanding, its actualization, and its application.

I ask Allaah the Most Generous, Lord of the great throne by His Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes that He guides us all to having good manners as none guides to its goodness except Him and that He averts from us evil character; for no one can avert from us its evil, except Him.

The Shaykh continues supplicating
We ask Allaah to make this a benefit