



Commentary on the Book Sincere Counsel to the Students of Sacred Knowledge- Part 2¹

Explained by: Shaikh Yahya Ibn ‘Ali al-Hajuri (may Allah preserve him)

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Text:

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ - رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ
الْحِسَابُ

"O my Lord! Make me one who performs As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and (also) from my offspring, our Lord! And accept my invocation. "Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and (all) the believers on the Day when the reckoning will be established." [14:40-41]

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Commentary: This is the supplication of the Prophet of Allah, Ibrahim (may peace be upon him).

Text: "...Once I learned the virtue of marriage and having children, I read the whole Quran..."

Commentary: That is: I recited the entire Quran and completed it.

Text: "...And then asked Allah, the Most High, to give me ten children..."

Commentary: That is: that the supplication after completing the Quran is answered. This statement that the supplication after the completion of the Quran is answered does not have any evidence even though a group of the People of the Knowledge supplicated after completing the Quran. However, we do not know of any proof for it.

¹ The following is a translation and transcription of the second tape of the Shaikh's commentary. The original tape can be found here: http://www.sh-yahia.net/nwe_sounds/durus/Gesture%20to%20the%20liver%20advice%20boy/002.mp3

² The English translation of the text is based on the translation of the book *Sincere Counsel To the Students of Sacred Knowledge* printed by Dar as-Sunnah Publishers

Text: "...He answered my request..."

Commentary: He made supplication for ten children and Allah answered his supplication

Text: "...So I decided to write him these words encouraging him to take my path in studying..."

Commentary: That is: encourage him and [stir] his ambition and direct him to an easy path to tread [when seeking knowledge] if he is treading it. This is because a student when he is in the beginning stage, he requires some affairs and encouragement. If he has ambition, then he requires guidance on the path he should take to acquire knowledge. Guidance is from a Scholar; who understands. So he [Ibn al-Jawzi] combines here for his son between encouragement, guidance, and the means to acquire knowledge. Likewise, [the means] to benefit from knowledge.

Text: "...I acknowledge that none can abandon the one He gives success to and none can guide the one He leads astray..."

Commentary: [Allah, the Exalted said]:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

Verily! You (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided [28:56]

He (Allah) gives guidance to whoever He wills and He protects them and keeps them safe out of His bounty. And He leads astray whomever He wills and He humiliates them and He afflicts them out of His justice³. Whoever Allah guides and gives success will not be abandoned. Whoever Allah leads astray, none can guide. The meaning is none can abandon the one who is guided by Allah

³ **Translator's Note:** These two lines the Shaikh mentioned are taken from the text of *Aqeedatul-Tabawiyah* line (no. 36)

Text: "...Allah, Most High, has also said:

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

And recommend one another to the truth and recommend one another to patience..."[103:3]

Commentary: So like this a person should not despair and think: "that is it, advise won't benefit." Perhaps this [advice] will be from the means which Allah will bring about benefit. Knowing that success is from Allah; however, this is a means. An admonishment is from the angle of recommending one another with truth and patience. This is whether the advice is to his son or other than his son.

Text:

فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى

Therefore remind (men) in case the reminder profits (them) [87:9]

Commentary: This verse is explained by another verse:

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And remind (by preaching the Quran, O Muhammad) for verily, the reminding profits the believers [51:55]

The reminder, in regards to the believer, benefits.

Text: "Chapter One: Encouragement and Intimidation Prior to This Beneficial Exhortation"

Commentary: This is the first chapter in this advice to his son to bring the intellect into the fore and be one who possess a strong intellect, be smart, and not be in a state of heedlessness. So it is said to this son of his who is disobedient to his father, like it was said:

أخي لن تنال العلم إلا بستة سأنبيك عن تفصيلها ببيان
ذكاء وحرص واجتهاد وبلغه وصحبة أستاذ وطول زمان

My brother you will not attain knowledge except with six things
I will inform you of their explanation with clarification

Intelligence, eagerness, seriousness, and what will suffice a person's needs [i.e. something of
sustenance/livelihood]

And accompanying a teacher and a long time⁴

Some mention as well Taqwa of Allah

Text: "...Bring it to the fore, use it in contemplation and spend time alone with yourself. You will
conclude that you are a created being...."

Commentary: Bring it to the fore, use it in contemplation and spend time alone with yourself. That is: reflect. "Bring your mind to the fore" that is: be intelligent. Use it to contemplate. That is: protect it. For verily the heedless one does not take heed. Whoever comes, the heedless one goes with. Unlike the one who has intelligence and does not have heedlessness, but instead good understanding. He knows what Allah has facilitated for him in terms of what is harmful to him and what is beneficial. The intellect is what distinguishes between good and evil, beneficial and harmful, truth and falsehood. There is no hadith specific on the intellect as the People of Knowledge mention, such as Imam Ibn Qayyim in *Manaar al-Muneeb*⁵. However, every evidence such as "reflect", "ponder", "men of understanding" and verses like these indicate the excellence of the intellect in the Quran and Sunnah. If an [exact] textual evidence not established, then it is established in general. I have written a treatise on the excellence of the intellect⁶.

⁴ **Translator's Note:** Tareekh Baghdad wa Dhaylahu (14/45) and it is ascribed to Imam al-Juwayni

⁵ **Translator's Note:** Shaikh Yahya mentions in his checking of the Book *Risaalah Fi Bayaan Ma lam Yathbut fihi Hadith min al-Bab*: "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah said in his book Naqd al-Manqool (pg. 60): "Chapter: The Ahaadith on the intellect are all lies". Hafidh Ibn Hajar said in al-Mataalib al-'Aliyah (3/13): "The Ahaadith on the intellect are all fabricated, no of it is established". al-Mawsooli said in al-Mughni (6): "Al-'Uqayli said that nothing is established in this text/subject. Abu Hatim (Ibn Hibban) said: there is not an authentic report from the Prophet regarding the intellect" [Risaalah Fi Bayaan Ma lam Yathbut fihi Hadith min al-Bab (pg. 11)]

⁶ **Translator's Note:** The Shaikh (may Allah preserve him) mentions the name of the treatise, although it was difficult to hear. He indicates that he has written one himself. He (may Allah preserve him) wrote: "We have mentioned a good amount of that in a tape that will soon be published inshallah" [Risaalah Fi Bayaan Ma lam Yathbut fihi Hadith min al-Bab (pg. 11)]

Text: "... Who has responsibilities..."

Commentary: The sound intellect does not contradict the authentic text as Shaikhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) wrote: *(درء تعارض العقل والنقل)* *The Rejection of the Conflict between Reason and Revelation*⁷. This is because some people bring evidences and say that the intellect does not accept this. So I clarified to them that the sound intellect does not contradict the sound text. Verily their intellects are not sound, but distorted. Some people their intellect is useless. Like the intellect of the Raafidah, O my brothers, Subhanallah, it is corrupted. Likewise some of the children cannot distinguish between what is sound and some women you may find their intellect is deficient. So the intellect is a blessing of Allah.

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعُلَمَاءُ

And these similitudes We put forward for mankind, but none will understand them except those who have knowledge (of Allah and His Signs, etc.) [29:43]

[And He said]

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ

Do they not then consider the Quran carefully? [4:82]

The intellect is in the heart.

⁷ **Translator's Note:** Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) said about this great book of Shaikhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have upon him):

واقراً كتاب العقل والنقل الذي - ما في الوجود له نظير ثان

And read the Book 'Aql and Naql which
There does not exist a comparative, a second [like it]

Shaikh Salih al-Fawzan (may Allah preserve him) said: "From the greatest works of Shaikhul-Islam is the book: "Aql wal-Naql which was published as *(درء تعارض العقل والنقل)* *The Rejection of the Conflict between Reason and Revelation*. The one who verified it was Doctor Muhammad Rashaad Salim (may Allah have mercy upon him). His statement: "There does not exist a comparative, a second [like it]" that is from the books which were authored" [Ta'leeq Mukhtasarah 'Ala Qaseedah an-Nooniyyah pg. 868]

[Allah said]:

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ

Have they not travelled through the land, and have they hearts wherewith to understand and ears wherewith to hear? Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind [22:46]

As for the statement that the intellect is the brain, then this is not correct. There is a difference between the intellect and the brain. This is a statement of other than Ahul-Sunnah. According to Ahlul-Sunnah, it is in the heart.

Text: "...And obligations..."

Commentary: Obligations, whether they be prayer, ablution, dutifulness to parents, likewise seeking knowledge and reflecting. Obligations which are required from you. He (the author) advises his son to protect the obligations of Allah that are upon him. [It comes in the Hadith]:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى فَرَضَ فَرَائِضَ فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوهَا

Verily Allah ta'ala has laid down religious obligations (fara'id), so do not neglect them [Reported by Daraqutni and others]

Allah obligated obligations on the servants. [Allah says:]

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I (Allah) created not the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone) [51:56]

He advises his son to observe the obligations. [As comes in the Hadith:]

احْفَظْ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظَكَ

Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you [Saheeh Tirmidhi no. 2516]

Whoever preserves the obligations of Allah and His rules, then Allah will protect him in his religion and worldly life.

Text: "...And the two angels are counting your every word and glance..."

Commentary: [Allah says:]

مَا يُلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it) [50:18]

And He said:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

And follow not (O man i.e., say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g. one's saying: "I have seen," while in fact he has not seen, or "I have heard," while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allah) [17:36]

Yes, the Angels count your actions:

وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا

And they will find all that they did, placed before them, and your Lord treats no one with injustice [18:49]

It has come from some of the Salaf that they said: “If we knew what the Angels were writing, then we would not speak much”.

Text: "...Every breath is a step closer to death..."

Commentary: Every breath that one breathes is a step closer to his death; a page from your book and another step on your journey [i.e. life]. So this is something a person takes notice of. That the passing of an hour takes away from his affair and the passing of a minute takes away from his affair

and a month is greater and a year is greater than that. By Allah, we realize this nowadays that a year does not pass except that a person sees that he is weaker than he was before.

Text: “...The punishment for following our base desires is calamitous...”

Commentary: [Allah says:]

وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ

And follow not your desire for it will mislead you from the Path of Allah [38:26]

The punishment for everyone who follows desires is that it will lead to evil.

إِذَا حَارَ أَمْرُكَ فِي مَعْنَيْنِ, وَلَمْ تَدْرِ فِيمَا الْخَطَا وَ الصَّوَابِ
فَخَالَفَ هَوَاكَ فَإِنَّ الْهَوَىٰ, يَقُودُ النَّفْسَ إِلَى مَا يِعَابُ

If your affair wavers between two meanings and you do not know which is mistaken and which is correct

Then oppose your desires for verily your desires lead your soul to what is criticized⁸

Allah, the Exalted said:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ

Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his ilah (god), and Allah knowing (him as such), left him astray [45:23]

Allah, the Exalted said:

فَإِنَّ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ

⁸ **Translator’s Note:** These lines of poetry were said by Sahal al-Warraaq. Hafidh Ibn Abdul-Barr (may Allah have mercy upon him) wrote: “Sahal al-Warraaq said and it was attributed to ash-Shafi’ee (may Allah have mercy upon him) but it is not authentic from him...”. Then he mentions these lines. [See: Bahjatul-Majaalis (2/262)]

But if they answer you not (i.e. do not believe in your doctrine of Islamic Monotheism, nor follow you), then know that they only follow their own lusts. And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, without guidance from Allah? [28:50]

So this is the issue. A person should be cautious of desires and not act upon desires, but rather be with the evidence and to be cultivated upon that. Upon truth, Sunnah, justice, good manners, and good speech, without following desires and Shaytan.

A person becomes wasted due to thinking that he has profited and is successful and free to follow his desires, while in reality he is in a jail.

Text: "...Where is the delight of yesterday? It has departed leaving only regret in its wake..."

Commentary: Where is the delight of yesterday? Yesterday you were in delight, it has now left. Perhaps you are now in a greater trial, so it has departed leaving only your regret. This is if the delight is not in the obedience of Allah. If the delight is in sujud, ruku', reciting the Quran, and worship to Allah, then you will leave and this delight will remain until you meet Allah. The delights of the worldly life are transitory and the delights of righteous actions will remain. [Allah says]:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

Whatever is with you, will be exhausted, and whatever with Allah (of good deeds) will remain [16:96]

[Allah says]:

الْبَقِيَّاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمْلاً

But the good righteous deeds (five compulsory prayers, deeds of Allah's obedience, good and nice talk, remembrance of Allah with glorification, praises and thanks, etc.), that last, are better with your Lord for rewards and better in respect of hope [18:46]

Text: "...People have only become wretched by giving preference to the life of this world..."

Commentary: That is: preferring the worldly life is wretchedness. Some people prefer the worldly life to the hereafter, so they become wretched. [The Prophet (ﷺ) said]:

تَعِسَ عَبْدُ الدِّينَارِ وَعَبْدُ الدِّرْهَمِ وَعَبْدُ الْخَمِيصَةِ، إِنْ أُعْطِيَ رَضِيَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطَ سَخِطَ، تَعِسَ وَانْتَكَسَ، وَإِذَا شَبَّكَ فَلَا انْتَقَشَ،

Let the slave of Dinar and Dirham and Khamisa perish as he is pleased if these things are given to him, and if not, he is displeased. Let such a person perish and relapse, and if he is pierced with a thorn, let him not find anyone to take it out for him [Bukhari no. 2887]

Text: "...Where is the delight of the kings and where is the weariness of the ascetics?..."

Commentary: Where is the delight of the kings? Where are their servants? Where are their women? Where are their palaces and houses? Take heed in the delight [and how it is lost]. Also the where is the weariness of the ascetics?

Text: "...The only thing left is the abundant reward and beautiful mention for the pious, and the malicious words and calamitous punishment for the disobedient..."

Commentary: That is the delight of these people have left and the delight of these people [i.e. the ascetics] remains. If this was in face of hardship, then:

حَفَّتِ الْجَنَّةُ بِالْمَكَارِهِ وَحَفَّتِ النَّارُ بِالشَّهَوَاتِ

The Paradise is surrounded by hardships and the Hell-Fire is surrounded by temptations [Muslim no. 2822]

As Allah, the Exalted said:

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ

Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent on before you in days past! [69:24]

That is: in the days that have past. [Allah said]:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَؤُلَاءِ مَا كَتَبْتُ بِهٖ - إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلْقٍ حِسَابِيهِ - فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ -
فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ - قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ - كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا

Then as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand will say: "Take, read my Record!
"Surely, I did believe that I shall meet my Account!" So he shall be in a life, well-pleasing. The fruits
in bunches whereof will be low and near at hand. Eat and drink [69:19-24]

Their delight remains from the days that past. [And it comes in the Hadith]:

يُوتَى بِأَنعَمِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيُصْبَغُ فِي النَّارِ صَبْغَةً ثُمَّ يُقَالُ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ خَيْرًا قَطُّ
هَلْ مَرَّ بِكَ نَعِيمٌ قَطُّ فَيَقُولُ لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ . وَيُوتَى بِأَشَدِّ النَّاسِ بُؤْسًا فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيُصْبَغُ صَبْغَةً
فِي الْجَنَّةِ فَيُقَالُ لَهُ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ بُؤْسًا قَطُّ هَلْ مَرَّ بِكَ شِدَّةٌ قَطُّ فَيَقُولُ لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ مَا مَرَّ بِي بُؤْسٌ قَطُّ
وَلَا رَأَيْتُ شِدَّةً قَطُّ

One amongst the denizens of Hell who had led a life of ease and plenty amongst the people of the
world would be made to dip in Fire only once on the Day of Resurrection and then it would be said
to him: O, son of Adam, did you find any comfort, did you happen to get any material blessing? He
would say: By Allah, no, my Lord. And then that person from amongst the persons of the world be
brought who had led the most miserable life (in the world) from amongst the inmates of Paradise.
and he would be made to dip once in Paradise and it would be said to him. O, son of Adam, did you
face, any hardship? Or had any distress fallen to your lot? And he would say: By Allah, no, my
Lord, never did I face any hardship or experience any distress [Muslim no. 2807]

***** End of Second tape *****