



Commentary on the Book Sincere Counsel to the Students of Sacred Knowledge- Part 4¹

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

Transcribed and Translated by: Faisal Ibn Abdul Qadir Ibn Hassan Abu Sulaymaan

Text: “...The First Thing a Person Should pay attention to is knowing Allah, Most High, through His signs...”²

Commentary: That is reflecting in order to derive evidences. This is what Ibn al-Jawzi (may Allah have mercy upon him) said; however, when the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu’adh (may Allah be pleased with him) to Yemen he told him:

إِنَّكَ تَقْدُمُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ فَلْيَكُنْ أَوَّلَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى أَنْ يُوحِّدُوا اللَّهَ تَعَالَى

You are going to a nation from the people of the Scripture, so let the first thing to which you will invite them, be the Tauhid of Allah (Agreed upon)

This is what is obligatory upon a servant to have concern for. To learn the Tawheed of Allah. Likewise the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

لَقِّنُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Exhort those of you who are dying to say: "There is no god but Allah" [Muslim]

The evidences show that the first obligation and the last obligation is the Tawheed of Allah and not simply reflection and examination.

Text: “...The greatest of which is the Quran, which Allah declared to be inimitable by man...”

¹ The following is a translation and transcription of the third 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/004.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

Commentary: The greatest evidence is the Quran. It is the Book of Allah.

قُلْ لَّيْنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا

Say: "If the mankind and the jinns were together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another." (17:88)

They are not able to produce the Quran nor ten suwar like it:

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِّثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَادْعُوا مِنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Or they say, "He (Prophet Muhammad) forged it (the Quran)." Say: "Bring you then ten forged Surah (chapters) like unto it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!" (11:13)

Nor even a single surah like it: Allah says:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Quran) to Our slave (Muhammad Peace be upon him), then produce a Surah (chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful (2:23)

As for those who claim that they are capable to do so, even though they were challenged, they were not able to bring even a small surah. Not even a verse:

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ

Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise (Allah) (41:42)

A verse of truth. Even one verse which is truth. Truth is not like a lie. Their inability to bring one surah is a consensus. Their inability to bring one verse is not a consensus, however, the People of Knowledge have mentioned that they are not able to do so. Not in terms of eloquence, but in terms of a miracle. The Quran is truth and what they bring is falsehood.

Text: "...Once he is certain of the Creator's existence and the truthfulness of the Messenger, he has to submit to the Sacred Law because not submitting to the Sacred Law is indicative of corrupt belief..."

Commentary: When they did not respond to this Quran, along with their inability to bring a surah like it or a verse, then that indicates what they have with them of corrupt belief. This is the affair of those who are stubborn. Allah says about the stubborn ones:

وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ - لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكَّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ مَسْحُورُونَ

And even if We opened to them a gate from the heaven and they were to continue ascending thereto. They would surely say: "Our eyes have been (as if) dazzled. Nay, we are a people bewitched." (15:14-15)

And Allah says:

وَلَوْ أَنَّا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

And even if We had sent down unto them angels, and the dead had spoken unto them, and We had gathered together all things before their very eyes, they would not have believed, unless Allah willed (6:111)

There is no means to satisfy/convince the stubborn one.

Text: "...After this he must know the obligatory things related to wudu (ablution), Salah (prayer), Zakah (obligatory alms)- if he has wealth-, Hajj (pilgrimage)..."

Commentary: It is obligatory upon the legally responsible one to pay attention to the affairs of his religion. Prayer, Zakat- if he has wealth, Hajj (pilgrimage) etc. Likewise, knowledge about good treatment [of others], the rights of the neighbor, and other than that from the general affairs of the Muslim. This goes for all those who are legally responsible. If it is easy for him and he understands this [affair], which falls under the Hadith:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ

Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim [Saheeh Targheeb no. 72]

And he is granted success [by Allah] to increase upon this bounty and progress, then this is good for him. [As comes in the Hadith]:

من يرد الله به خيراً يفقه في الدين

When Allah wishes good for someone, He bestows upon him the understanding of Deen [Bukhari and Muslim]

Allah said:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge (58:11)

As for only knowing the general knowledge regarding the obligations, then it is not allowed for both men and women. It is obligatory that they understand them. Allah created the creation for worship:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

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

Text: "...A man of high ambition and strong determination should proceed and advance to the level of virtuous voluntary actions. He ought to busy himself with memorising the Quran..."

Commentary: It is an advice to his son that the one who knows the general matters through which he can worship Allah and the elementary knowledge which it is not allowed for a Muslim to be ignorant regarding, then it is obligatory for a specific group from the people, whom Allah has granted success, to learn the [voluntary knowledge] in order to become a reference for the people. The Ummah will be sinning if they do not prepare someone who will be a reference for them for fatawa (verdicts) and the [different] sciences of Islam. This is a communal obligation.

The remaining people, aside from those who are establishing the communal obligation, should have concern for the Quran, if Allah grants them success to be able to do so. The Prophet (ﷺ), at a water source named khumm, encouraged the people to have concern with the Quran [Saheeh Muslim no. 2408]. A person should have concern for the Quran in terms of its memorization, in terms of perfecting the recitation, what they call Tajweed, as Allah says:

وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا

And recite the Quran (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style [73:4]

He has concern for the Quran in terms of its knowledge, that is, understanding its verses and its meanings. He has concern with the Quran in terms of acting upon it and pondering over it. In this is an advice to exert effort in regards to the Quran. There is no one who puts more concern in the other than the Quran and falls short in the Quran, except that he also falls short even more in other than that it. The origin of the sciences is the Quran.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

Verily, this Quran guides to that which is most just and right (17:9)

Text: "...and studying its explanation along with the Hadith of the Messenger..."

Commentary: Likewise the Hadith of the Messenger (ﷺ). Even if he has a speciality in geography or a speciality in other worldly sciences, he should have a concern for the Hadith of the Messenger (ﷺ). He should have concern for the Quran and love and concern for the Hadith of the Messenger (ﷺ) to the extent of what Allah has given him of understanding. From them is one who has a speciality in the knowledge of Hadith and its hidden defects until he obtains a status in Hadith, its hidden defects, the fiqh of it and its meanings. For this one it is said: congratulations. From them also is the one who does not obtain that. But he should be eager to know which Hadith is Saheeh (authentic) from them and which is Da'if (weak), what the ruling on such and such Hadith is, and whether such and such Hadith is correct evidence for something or not. So he should have concern for the knowledge of Hadith. The basis of the religion of Allah is the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger upon the understanding of the Salaf (may Allah be pleased with them). If a person is deficient in his/her concern for the Quran, then their religion will also be deficient in accordance to his deficiency towards the Quran. Likewise if he deficient regarding the Sunnah by claiming he is a Qurani, then this one is a *Zindeeq* (an apostate). Likewise if he is partially deficient regarding the Sunnah by saying: I love the Sunnah, but I lack concern for it nor do I ask about what is authentic from it, then he will fall into innovation.

Text: "...He should also learn about his life, the life of his companions and the Scholars who came after them..."

Commentary: This is also beautiful [speech]. He advises the student to read the biographies, especially the biography of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The advice to the beginner to read the biography of the Prophet (ﷺ) is an important affair. He learns the biography of the Prophet (ﷺ) and that his name is Muhammad, Ahmad, Maahi, ‘Aqib, al-Muqafi, likewise the other names of the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned during the explanation for the fundamental knowledge. Likewise to learn that the Prophet (ﷺ) is from Quraish, that he is best of creation, that the best tribe is his tribe, the best kinsfolk is his kinsfolk, that the Prophet (ﷺ) is the seal of the Prophets and that whoever claims of prophethood after him has disbelieved, likewise the lineage of the Prophet (ﷺ) is to ‘Adnan and whatever is after that is a difference of opinion. But his lineage until ‘Adnan is agreed upon. What is mentioned of his lineage beyond ‘Adnan until Adam is a difference of opinion, despite that some of the People of Knowledge mention it. He should also know how many children the Prophet (ﷺ) had, how many wives, and about his Companions and the Ansaar, and which of his Companions is the best, and who are the rightly Guided Caliphs. He should know the fundamentals of the Seerah. Then he can learn about the battles of the Prophet (ﷺ) and something of his biography, his generosity, his character, his description. A beginner is taught that.

Text: “...He must also know enough Arabic grammar and commonly used language to speak properly...”

Commentary: A student of knowledge needs something of the sciences, and specializing in one science does not mean he neglects other sciences. He needs something of the knowledge of Arabic grammar to rectify his speech. Such as knowing what makes something that is in the accusative case change into the nominative case, what makes something that is in the nominative case change to the accusative case and the genitive case. [If he does not know this] he will be criticized for it and embarrassed.

النحو يصلح من لسان الألف ... والمرء تعظمه إذا لم يلحن
فإذا طلبت من العلوم أجلها ... فأجلها منها مقيم الألسن

Arabic grammar corrects the tongue from the difficulty of pronunciation
And a person is considered great if he does not make grammatical mistakes

If you are seeking the most honorable of the sciences

Then the most honorable of them is that which establishes the tongues³

Take from Arabic grammar what which will rectify your speech and will help you to speak well. And take from the science of Hadith a portion so you may know what is authentic from what is weak and until you have some standing in it. Seek knowledge: of the obligations, the Aqeedah, knowledge of Fiqh until you have combine between pure Ahaadith, sound Fiqh, sound creed, Arabic grammar, which allows you to speak properly. Likewise you should have a portion in terms of worship. Build action upon knowledge. [Combine] between this and that.

Text: "...Jurisprudence is the basis of all sciences, but reminding of the afterlife is the sweetest ..."

Commentary: The origin of knowledge is jurisprudence, understanding the religion of Allah. The greatest Fiqh is the understanding of Tawheed, Fiqh of the correct Aqeedah, the Fiqh of the Quran and the Sunnah, Fiqh of Hadith. All of them are called Fiqh. Some people specialize in Fiqh and its books according to the definition of the Jurists: the varying levels and books of the Hanafis, the books of Hanbali, the books of the Shafi'ee, also what is related to the statements of Ahlul Hadith and the narrations of the Salaf. This is a type of Fiqh. If it is connected to worship, it is a type of Fiqh. If a person understands the correct Aqeedah, then that is the greatest type of Fiqh. Likewise what is connected to the language, it is called Fiqh of the language. Fiqh likewise of the meaning of the Hadith. Fiqh is detailed, piecing understanding according to language.

Text: "...Praise be to Allah, for by His grace I have been able to compose some books in these fields that spare you the need of looking into books of the past scholars or any other books for that matter ..."

Commentary: That is that he (Ibn al-Jawzi may Allah have mercy upon him) had concern and authored [books] in many sciences. However, the books of Ibn al-Jawzi, such as the Book *al-'Ill* of Ibn al-Jawzi and *al-Mawdoo'aat*; however, despite his status in Hadith there are weak [narrations] inside his books. He would gather from here and there and he did not search for what was authentic. This is one affair. The second, his position in Fiqh was not like the status of those before him such that he can say the abovementioned statement. Thirdly, he fell into some errors in

³ **Translator's Note:** These lines of poetry can be found in Ibn Qutaybah's book '*Uyoon al-Akbbaar* (2/172-173)

Aqeedah⁴ even though he was from the Hanabilah, who had concern for the Sunnah. You find he would fluctuate regarding some Attributes of Allah. Him advising his son to read his books is something of a start; however, saying that reading his books will suffice reading other books, then this is not correct. Like the books of Shaikhul-Islam [Ibn Taymiyyah] (may Allah have mercy upon him), the books of Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him), like the books of Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy upon him), like the books of Imam ash-Shafi'ee (may Allah have mercy upon him), and those before and from those who have a more correct Aqeedah and stronger Fiqh. A person benefits from them. A person should advise his son and other than his son to benefit, even from those who are other than him.

***** End of Fourth tape *****

⁴ **Translator's Note:** Shaikhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "Abul-Faraj (Ibn al-Jawzi) himself was contradictory in this chapter (i.e. Attributes of Allah). He was not firmly established in denial [of the Attributes of Allah] nor firmly in affirming [the Attributes of Allah]" [Majmoo' al-Fatawa (4/102)]

Shaikh Salih al-Fawzan (may Allah preserve him) said: "Imam Ibn al-Jawzi (may Allah have mercy upon him) had mistakes, no doubt. *Sayd al-Khaatir* has in it many mistakes in Aqeedah. In the chapter of the Attributes of Allah he was influenced by the school of thought of those who falsely interpret the Attributes. No doubt he was a honorable Imam, Muhaddith, Faqih, Mufassir, an ocean of sciences. However, he had mistakes in his books. From them is *Sayd al-Khatir*. He has in this book statements which are not good regarding the Attributes and interpreting them. However, he is not considered from the Jahmiyyah. We hope Allah will forgive him and pardon him. We avoid these mistakes and we do not accept them even if they are from Ibn al-Jawzi or other than him" [Ajwibah al-Mufeedah 'an Asilatul-Aqeedah (pg. 121)]