

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

ETIQUETTES OF A SEEKER



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SESSION 5

Etiquettes of Finding a Teacher

- These last 2 etiquettes are etiquettes which we should have with others.
- There are 2 ways to gain knowledge:
 - On your own (reading, watching videos, googling)
 - Learning through people (teachers)
- Once you have the etiquettes, you must find a teacher to teach you.
- Imam Shafi: the one who starts to learn from the pages of books and not from teachers, he will be deprived of the barakah of the deen. One of the greatest tests for a person is the fact that this person starts to make his/her sheikh a book.
- If we want to partake on the journey of knowledge, then we must learn from teachers, but our self learning should never stop.
- Which teachers should we learn from?
 - Look for manners and etiquettes in a teacher, not just the most popular person.
 - Do you want your children to be like this teacher?
 - Someone who appears to you as a righteous person
 - Someone with knowledge
 - Someone you can get in contact with and have a conversation with

- It is looked down upon to jump between teachers.
 - Choose specific teachers and learn as much as you can from them.
 - Shaytaan will try to keep you jumping between them and then you won't be able to benefit fully from one person.
- How to find a teacher
 - Mashwarah - consulting one another
 - Speak to other teachers in the area and other students of knowledge to select a teacher
 - Do istikharah

Etiquettes with Teachers

- Ali bin Abi Talib: I am a slave of someone who has even taught me one letter. If he wants he can sell me. If he wants he can free me.
- Scholars say: Noone has reached their status except through respect of their teachers.
 - Abu Hanifa would serve his teacher, Hamaad, to the point that people thought he was his servant.
- Scholars say: A person who wishes that his son becomes a scholar and an obedient servant of Allah, then he must respect the unknown and feed them, then Allah will make their children obedient to Him and make them scholars. Maybe his children won't become scholars, but Allah will make his grandchildren scholars.
- Hussain RA told his son that if you want to benefit from scholars then your silence with them should be longer than your speech with them.
- The way we sit in front of our teachers should be respectful.
 - This means keeping our phones away.
- Make dua for our teachers.

- Be grateful and appreciate your teachers,
 - Don't forget the teachers that teach you the basics.
- Imam Shafi would always refer to Imam Maalik and his other teachers even though he had his own madhab.
 - His students would always feel weird that he is mentioning them when they had another madhab.
 - Imam shafi would say that by lowering myself and raising them, Allah will raise me.
- If we have true respect for our teachers, when they mention something that we have heard before, we will sit in front of them and listen to what they are saying as if it was the first time we have heard it.
- If a person whose respect and excitement for something he is listening to is not the same when he first heard it and the 1000th time he heard it, then they are not worthy of knowledge.
- In one of his poems, Imam Shafi highlights 6 qualities that we must have in order to attain knowledge:
 - Intelligence - **ذَكَاءٌ**
 - This does not mean that if someone has a weak memory, they are not qualified to attain knowledge.
 - This means that a person is actively concerned with making themselves more intelligent and strengthening their memory.
 - We should actively stay away from things that weaken our memory and do things that will strengthen our memory.
 - Some of the strongest mechanisms to strengthen memory include:
 - Hard work - **الجِد**
 - Consistency - **مواظبة**
 - Eating less

- Praying at night
- Reciting Quran
 - There is nothing that strengthens the memory like reciting the Quran while looking at it
- Dua to recite when opening a book and studying:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ عَدَدَ كُلِّ حَرْفٍ

- Committing sins will weaken our memory
 - Imam Shafi speaks about this in a poem.
 - "Knowledge is a divine light from Allah and this divine light from Allah can never be granted to a sinner."
 - Only Allah can keep the knowledge in our hearts, so we must make an effort to stay away from displeasing Him.
 - We should make the dua:

اللهم لا تحرمنا خير ما عندك بسوء ما عندنا

Oh Allah, do not deprive us of the good that You have because of my sins.

- When Imam Shafi came to Imam Malik and began studying with him, Imam Malik was impressed with his intelligence and memory. Imam Malik told him: "I see that Allah SWT has indeed blessed your heart with divine light, so do not put it out with the darkness of sins.
- Although some are born with a good memory, it does not mean that others can not work to have a good memory.
- If someone takes advantage of their good memory, Allah can snatch it away from them.
- We should make the dua:

اللهم لا تنزع مني صالح ما أعطيتني أبدا

Oh Allah never snatch from us the blessings which you have already given us.

- Enthusiasm - **حِرْصٌ**
 - Be excited for knowledge
 - A person who is enthusiastic about something will always accomplish more.
 - It won't matter as much to you when there is difficulty.
 - Allah give us based on our level of enthusiasm
- Hard work - **إِجْتِهَادٌ**
 - Even though it is not easy, we must be consistent.
- To have enough sustenance to study and be content with that sustenance - **بُلْغَةً**
 - Have enough money to study so that you do not have to worry about that.
 - Having to work additionally will take away from the time we have to learn.
 - Live a simple life so that you don't always have to worry about making more money.
- The companionship of a teacher - **صُحْبَةُ أُسْتَاذٍ**
 - Have a teacher who can teach and guide you in times of need.
 - This literally refers to how the sahabah were companions to the Prophet SAW.
 - You have someone to take opinions from and consult with
- Giving a lengthy period of time for studying - **طُولُ زَمَانٍ**
 - Studying and learning should not be rushed.
 - Scholars would spend day and night studying.
 - Companions would spend day and night around the Prophet SAW.
 - This does not necessarily mean that we need to spend day and night learning, but it is a lifelong journey.
 - We can not spend a few years studying and think that this is enough