

The Correct Methodology for Seeking Knowledge

By the Respected Shaykh Dr. Arafaath bin Hassan al-Muhammadi
(May Allah protect him)



Question:

A questioner asks: "What is the correct methodology for seeking knowledge? And what advice do you give to a beginner so they can progress step-by-step in their studies? May Allah reward you with goodness.

Answer:

As for the methodology *of seeking knowledge*, there is absolutely no doubt that a student must first and foremost focus on the **Book of Allah (The Quran)**.



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This is especially important if the student is still young and has begun their journey of seeking knowledge from childhood, and if their father has guided them toward seeking knowledge at an early age. In such a case, they must give special importance to the Book of Allah through **reading, reciting, memorizing, studying, and revising**. This is because the very foundation of seeking knowledge is the memorization of the Quran.

Similarly, knowledge must be taken from the right people (the authentic scholars). So, if you have the means to send your son to seek knowledge or if you yourself are a beginner student and have the ability to travel for the sake of learning, then you should definitely do so.



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This is because traveling is the true way of seeking knowledge. You should travel, live away from home, and seek knowledge directly from the scholars in their own lands, just as the **Salaf** (our pious predecessors) used to do.

We have already mentioned Ibn Qudamah and how he traveled to *Baghdad*, *Mosul*, and many other cities. He would spend several years in one place, then several years in another. In fact, some of the Salaf spent as many as forty years of their lives constantly moving from one journey to the next, all for the sake of seeking knowledge

Thirdly: Memorization

Just as you memorize the Quran, you must also memorize the Sunnah. By the grace of Allah,



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books are easily available, accessible, and in print today. You should start your journey with:

- **The Forty Hadith** of *Imam Nawawi*.
- Then, **Jawami' al-Akhbar** (Written by *Imam as-Sa'di*).
- After that, move on to '**Umdat al-Ahkam** (A collection of 414 Hadiths based on *Fiqh* rulings).
- Then, progress to **Bulugh al-Maram** (A collection of 1568 Hadiths based on *Fiqh* rulings).
- Then, study **Riyadh al-Salihin** (A collection of 1,896 Hadiths compiled under various topics such as *Sharia*, ethics, and character).

(Even after memorising all these) If Allah opens the doors of success for you and you have the capacity, you should then begin with the



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Saheehayn: first **Sahih al-Bukhari**, and then **Sahih Muslim**, and so on. This is truly a great blessing, especially if you are among those whom Allah has gifted with a strong memory.

Some people have a very weak and shaky memory. They struggle with memorization and do not gain much benefit from it. To such people, we say: If Allah has not opened the doors of memorization for you (specifically regarding Hadith), then stay dedicated to the Book of Allah and turn your focus toward understanding.

Reading and developing your understanding is better for you than wasting precious time trying to memorize something that keeps slipping away because of your weak memory.



However, the general rule with memorization is that the more you memorize, the stronger your memory becomes. Every time you study and revise, your memorization power increases. This is a matter of habit even in worldly matters; whatever a person gets used to, they eventually become good at it and master it. It is all about the habits a person develops or those cultivated in them by their father.

"Similarly, one must give great importance to managing their time. Many of us keep asking for a '*methodology*' or wanting to know the best way to seek knowledge, yet we waste our time. Eventually, he gets bored and frustrated, and ends up giving up their studies entirely.

What is the point of searching for a (correct) methodology for seeking knowledge if you don't



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value your time or make an effort to protect it?
and If you do not have the patience required to
qualify as a student of knowledge? (then a
methodology alone will not help you).

There must be *Sabr* - meaning you must stay
focused and firm -. This focus is needed for your
reading and for the very work you desire, which
is '*Seeking Knowledge.*' Stay firm in your
reading, stay firm in your writing, and stay firm
in your memorizing. (Do not get distracted, and
stay strong against whatever comes your way to
divert you.)

Dedicate all these hours to sitting down to seek
knowledge whether you are listening to a
recorded lesson, or reading it, or going to a
scholar sitting before him, and reading to him or
under a proficient student of knowledge.



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"But if your time is being wasted day and night—moving (aimlessly) from one place to another, jumping from channels to *social media*, spending time on the streets, or going on *outings and hangouts* with friends, and taking long trips that have no real benefit then all of this is simply wasting your time.

At the end of the day, these are years; these are limited, counted days of your life. Yes (they are slipping away from you).



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Translation – Aslam bin Hāshim



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الْمَنْهَجِيَّةُ الصَّحِيحَةُ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ

لفضيلة الشيخ عرفات بن حسن المحمدي - ﴿حفظه الله تعالى﴾

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

السُّؤال: هَذَا سَائِلٌ يَقُولُ: مَا هِيَ الْمَنْهَجِيَّةُ الصَّحِيحَةُ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ؟
وَبِمَاذَا تَنْصَحُونَ الْمُبْتَدِئَ كَيْ يَتَدَرَّجَ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ؟ وَجَزَاكُمُ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا.

الجواب: أَمَّا بِالنِّسْبَةِ لِلْمَنْهَجِيَّةِ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ؛ فَلَا شَكَّ وَلَا رَيْبَ أَنَّ
طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَعْتَنِيَ ابْتِدَاءً بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ، لَا سِيَّمَا إِذَا كَانَ فِي الصِّغَرِ
وَأَدْرَكَ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمِ مِنْ صِغَرِهِ وَوَجَّهَهُ أَبُوهُ إِلَى طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ؛ فَلْيَعْتَنِ اعْتِنَاءً
خَاصًّا بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ قِرَاءَةً، وَتِلَاوَةً، وَحِفْظًا، وَمُذَاكِرَةً، وَمُرَاجَعَةً؛ لِأَنَّ هَذَا هُوَ
الْأَصْلُ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ تَحْفَظَ الْقُرْآنَ.



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كَذَلِكَ أَيْضًا؛ الْعِلْمُ يُؤْخَذُ عَنْ أَهْلِهِ، فَإِذَا اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَدْفَعَ بِوَلَدِكَ -أَوْ
أَنْتَ يَا طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ الْمُبْتَدِئُ إِذَا اسْتَطَعْتَ- أَنْ تَرْحَلَ فَيَنْبَغِي أَنْ تَرْحَلَ؛
لَأَنَّ هَذَا هُوَ السَّبِيلُ الْحَقِيقِيُّ لَطَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ. إِرْحَلَ وَتَغَرَّبْ وَاطْلُبِ الْعِلْمَ عَنْ
أَهْلِهِ فِي بِلَادِهِ كَمَا كَانَ السَّلَفُ يَفْعَلُونَ. وَقَدْ ذَكَرْنَا ابْنَ قُدَامَةَ وَكَيْفَ أَنَّهُ
رَحَلَ إِلَى بَغْدَادَ وَإِلَى الْمَوْصِلِ، وَرَحَلَ كَذَلِكَ إِلَى أَكْثَرِ مِنْ بَلَدٍ، وَكَانَ يَبْقَى
السَّنَوَاتِ هُنَا وَهُنَا وَهُنَا، وَبَعْضُ السَّلَفِ بَقِيَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً وَهُوَ مِنْ رِحْلَةٍ إِلَى
رِحْلَةٍ.

ثَالِثًا: الْحِفْظُ. كَمَا أَنَّكَ تَحْفَظُ الْقُرْآنَ؛ احْفَظِ السُّنَّةَ، فَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْكُتُبُ
مُيسَّرَةٌ، وَمَوْجُودَةٌ، وَمَطْبُوعَةٌ. ابْدَأْ بِ:

- الْأَرْبَعِينَ النَّوَوِيَّةَ.
- ثُمَّ جَوَامِعِ الْأَخْبَارِ لِابْنِ سَعْدٍ.

• ثُمَّ تَنْتَقِلُ إِلَى عُمْدَةِ الْأَحْكَامِ.

• ثُمَّ إِلَى بُلُوغِ الْمَرَامِ.

• ثُمَّ إِلَى رِيَاضِ الصَّالِحِينَ.

فَإِذَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَاسْتَطَعْتَ؛ تَبَدُّأً بِالصَّحِيحِينَ: الْبُخَارِيُّ ثُمَّ مُسْلِمٌ،
وَهَكَذَا. فَهَذِهِ نِعْمَةٌ عَظِيمَةٌ، لَا سِيَّمَا إِذَا كُنْتَ مِمَّنْ رَزَقَكَ اللَّهُ الْحِفْظَ.

بَعْضُهُمْ مَنَ حِفْظُهُ ضَعِيفٌ وَرَكِيكٌ؛ فَهَذَا يَتَعَبُ فِي الْحِفْظِ وَلَا يَسْتَفِيدُ
كَثِيرًا، فَنَقُولُ لَهُمْ: مَا دَامَ اللَّهُ لَمْ يَفْتَحْ عَلَيْكَ فِي الْحِفْظِ (أَي: فِي حِفْظِ
الْأَحَادِيثِ)؛ ابْقَ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ مُعْتَنِيًا بِهِ، وَانْصَرِفْ إِلَى الْفَهْمِ؛ اقْرَأْ فَقَرَأْتُكَ
وَفَفَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَنْ تُضَيِّعَ الْأَوْقَاتَ فِي الْحِفْظِ وَأَنْتَ يَتَفَلَّتُ عَلَيْكَ
الْحِفْظُ لِضَعْفِهِ. وَإِنْ كَانَ الْأَصْلُ فِي الْحِفْظِ كُلَّمَا حَفِظْتَ كُلَّمَا تَقَوَّى
حِفْظُكَ، وَكُلَّمَا ذَاكَرْتَ وَرَاجَعْتَ فَإِنَّ الْحِفْظَ يَصِيرُ فِيهِ قُوَّةٌ؛ لِأَنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ

-وَهَذِهِ عَادَةٌ حَتَّى فِي أُمُورِهِ الدُّنْيَوِيَّةِ - أَيُّ شَيْءٍ يَتَعَوَّدُ عَلَيْهِ يُحْسِنُهُ وَيَتَّقِنُهُ حَتَّى فِي أُمُورِ الدُّنْيَوِيَّةِ فَهِيَ عَادَةٌ عَلَى مَا عَوَّدَهُ عَلَيْهِ أَبُوهُ .

كَذَلِكَ أَيْضًا؛ الْإِعْتِنَاءُ بِالْوَقْتِ. كَثِيرٌ مِنَّا يُرِيدُ الْمَنْهَجِيَّةَ يُرِيدُ كَيْفَ يَطْلُبُ الْعِلْمَ، لَكِنَّهُ يُضِيعُ وَقْتَهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَلَلُ وَالضَّجَرُ فَيَتْرُكُ الطَّلَبَ. فَمَا الْفَائِدَةُ إِذَا أَنْ تَبَحَثَ عَنْ مَنْهَجِيَّةٍ وَأَنْتَ أَصْلًا لَا تُحَافِظُ عَلَى وَقْتِكَ وَلَا تَحْرِصُ عَلَيْهِ؟ وَمَا عِنْدَكَ الصَّبْرُ الَّذِي يُؤْهِلُكَ لِأَنْ تَكُونَ طَالِبَ عِلْمٍ.

لَا بُدَّ مِنْ صَبْرٍ؛ وَالصَّبْرُ هُوَ فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ، وَفِي هَذَا الْعَمَلِ نَفْسِهِ الَّذِي تُرِيدُهُ وَهُوَ "الطَّلَبُ". اصْبِرْ عَلَى الْقِرَاءَةِ، اصْبِرْ عَلَى الْكِتَابَةِ، اصْبِرْ عَلَى الْحِفْظِ. اجْعَلْ هَذِهِ السَّاعَاتِ كُلَّهَا تَذَهَبُ فِي هَذَا الْجُلُوسِ لِلطَّلَبِ؛ سَوَاءً فِي دَرَسٍ تَسْمَعُهُ، أَوْ تَقْرَأُهُ، أَوْ تَذَهَبُ إِلَى عَالِمٍ وَتَجْلِسُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَقْرَأُ عَلَيْهِ أَوْ طَالِبِ عِلْمٍ مُتَمَكِّنٍ.

أَمَّا وَالْوَقْتُ لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا يُضِيعُ وَأَنْتَ مِنْ مَكَانٍ إِلَى مَكَانٍ، وَمِنْ قَنَوَاتٍ إِلَى
وَسَائِلٍ تَوَاصُلٍ، وَإِلَى الشَّارِعِ وَإِلَى الْخُرْجَاتِ وَالطَّلَعَاتِ مَعَ أَصْحَابِكَ
وَالسَّفَرِيَّاتِ الَّتِي تَأْخُذُ وَقْتًا طَوِيلًا لَا فَايِدَةَ مِنْهَا؛ فَكُلُّ هَذَا يُضِيعُ الْوَقْتَ.
هِيَ سَنَوَاتٌ، هِيَ أَيَّامٌ مَعْدُودَةٌ مِنْ حَيَاتِكَ، نَعَمْ».



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