

The Rank of Al-Adab with Allaah¹

Adapted from Shaykhul Islaam Ibnul Qayyim's
Madaarijus Saalikeen

From among the (many) ranks of (Allaah's statement in Sooratul Faatihah)

¹ [Linguistically the word Al-Adab is derived from the verb **a-da-ba** meaning: 'He invited people to his banquet or he collected them together for the affair. It also means to give a banquet and invite people to it. It is to become characterized as being well disciplined, well educated, well bred, well mannered, polite, courteous and refined. It means excellence or elegance of mind, manners, address and speech and a good manner of taking or receiving what is given or offered or imparted, or what is to be acquired. It is good qualities and attributes of the mind or soul and the doing of generous or honorable actions or the practice of what is praiseworthy both in words and actions; or the holding, or keeping, to those things which are approved, or deemed good; or the honoring of those who are above oneself, and being gentle, courteous or civil, to those who are below oneself; or a faculty which preserves one in whom it exists from what would disgrace him.]

You (Alone) we worship and You (Alone) we ask for help (for everything) is the rank or station of Al- Adab. Allaah Ta'aalaa says [the interpretation of the meaning],

“O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones”.

Sooratut Tahreem [66:6.]

Ibn Abbaas and others said about this verse and its meaning,

[Ward off from your yourselves] and your families" means '***ad-di-boo-hum,***' which means '***give them adab***' or '***discipline them***'² and "***al-li-moo-hum***" which means: '***give them knowledge***' or '***teach them.***'

This is an expression (conveying the meaning of) announcing (to the people) to gather together (the members of their household) on these particular characteristics.

Therefore, Al-Adab is the gathering together of all good character traits in the worshiper and also from its meanings is to give a ma'dubah or banquet, which is the food that the people gather to feast upon.

² Translators Note: [The verb **ad-da-ba** (with tashdeed, doubling of the letter د) as used here by the noble companion, Abdullaah ibn Abbaas means: to chastise, correct, to punish for evil conduct. Because discipline or chastisement is a means of inviting a person a to what is properly termed Al-Adab or good discipline of the mind and good qualities and attributes of the mind or soul; or every praiseworthy discipline by which a person is trained in any excellence.

The Knowledge of Al-Adab

It is the knowledge that **rectifies the tongue and the speech, and makes it precise and to the point (so that it hits the mark) and beautifies its articulation and guards it from error and deficiency.** It also constitutes a branch of the comprehensive (meaning of the term) adab.

And Allaah knows best.

The Pathways of Al-Adab

Al-Adab has three types:

First: Adab with Allaah, (Glorified is He above all imperfections, shortcomings and anthropomorphic qualities.)

Second: Adab with His Messenger and His Islaamic canonical law.

Third: Adab with His creation.

Adab with Allaah is of three types:

1. Guarding one's behavior from becoming corrupted by shortcomings and deficiencies.
2. Guarding one's heart from turning to anything other than Him.
3. Protecting one's will or intention from becoming connected to what is detestable to Him.

Yahyaa bin Mu'aadh said:

"Whoever causes himself to have adab with Allaah will become one of the people whom Allaah Loves."

Ibnul-Mubaarak said:

"We are more in need of a little adab than we are of a lot of knowledge."

Al-Hasan Al-Basree was asked about the most beneficial adab. So he replied,

"Fiqh (understanding) in the Deen, Zuhd (abstinence) in the Dunyaa (life of this world) and knowledge of Allaah's rights over you."

Sahl said,

"It is the people seeking help by Allaah upon desire for Allaah and patience for (the sake of) Allaah upon the adab with Allaah."

Ibnul-Mubaarak said,

"When the teachers (mu'addiboon) came to us we asked them about Al-Adab."

And he – Ibnul Mubaarak - also said,

"Adab is to the one with deep knowledge and understanding like repentance is to the supplicant."

Abu Hafs said to **Al-Junaid**,

"Verily I disciplined your companions with the manners of the sultans." So he (Al-Junaid) said,

"Good adab outwardly is a sign of good adab inwardly and the adab with Allaah is good friendship with Him by the union of the outward movements (worship) of the limbs and the inward movements (worship) of the heart in accordance with what is due (to Him) of glorification, veneration and modesty. Like the state of the individual who sits in the presence of the kings and their attendants."

Sahl said,

'Whoever subdues his nafs (soul/spirit or self) with al-adab (i.e. disciplines it) then he is worshipping Allaah with sincerity.'

Abdullaah Ibnul Mubaarak said,

"Certainly the people spoke a lot about Al-Adab. We say: "Verily it is deep knowledge and understanding of the nafs (soul) and its follies and that you steer clear of these follies."

Aboo Uthmaan said,

"When love becomes correct then know for sure that the lover's love has been accompanied by adab."

After citing these sayings from some of the Imaams of the Salaf, Shaykhul Islaam Ibnul Qayyim in this treatise ***'The Rank of Al-Adab'*** said,

"Observe attentively the position of the Messengers with Allaah and their dialogue (with Him) and their petitioning (of Him). You will find all of them replete with (perfect) adab and firmly grounded in it.

The Maseeh (Eesaa ibn Maryam or Jesus the son of Mary) will say (on the Day of Resurrection) in response to Allaah's questioning him,

"Had I said such a thing, you would surely have known it"...

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:116.

He (Eesaa) will not say, *'I did not say it.'*

And there is a difference between these two answers regarding the essence of Al-Adab [with Allaah].

Then Eesaa will respectfully refer the matter over to Allaah's Knowledge – Glorified is He – of the circumstance of his (Eesaa's) nafs (inner self).

Prophet Eesaa will then say,

“You know what is in my nafs.”

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:116

Then Prophet Eesaa will absolve himself from having any knowledge about the hidden, unseen affairs of His Lord and respectfully refer all knowledge of the matter to Allaah alone, Glorified is He.

Prophet Eesaa will then say, ***“...though I do not know what is in your nafs”***.³

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:116.

Then he will give all the Praise to his Lord and describe Him with His unique quality of being the only one who is All-Knowing of all that is hidden (and unseen).

He will then deny having said to the Christians anything other than what his Lord had commanded him with, that being pure, untainted Tawheed.

Then he will say ...***“never did I say to them anything except what You (Allaah) did command me to say (which is) “Worship Allaah, my Lord and your Lord.”***

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:117

Then he will announce to the Christians that He [Allaah] was a witness over them (only) while he [Jesus] was dwelling amongst them. And certainly after he was taken up it was no longer his duty to watch over them. And Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic was the only One watching over them after he (Eesaa) was taken up. Then Eesaa will say,

“And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when you took me up, You were the watcher over them.”

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:117

After that, he will describe Allaah with His quality of being the Shaheed⁴ or Witness - Glorified is He - over every witness, the Most Prevailing. So he will say,

“And You are a Witness over all things.”

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:117

After that he will say, ***“If you punish them they are your servants.”***

Sooratul Maa'idah 5:118

These statements are from the highest degree of adab with Allaah in situations like this. Meaning, it is the Master's affair to show mercy to His servants and to extend goodness to them. (It is as though Prophet Eesaa is saying), *“They are your servants, they are not the servants of anyone other than You. So if You choose to punish them in spite of the fact that they are Your servants (then) it must be because they were evil servants from amongst the most unjust servants. Arrogant toward their Master and disobedient to Him – “or You would not punish them” because the good deeds of servitude call for the Master's goodness and mercy being shown to His servants. Therefore, why would the Most Merciful of those who are merciful, the Most Generous of those who are generous and the greatest doer of good acts punish His servants – except for their excessive arrogance, their refusing to obey Him and the completion of their entitlement to the punishment?*

*His statement mentioned before ***“Truly You, only You are the All-Knower of all that is hidden (unseen)”*** means “they are your slaves and You are the Most knowledgeable of their nafs (soul/spirit/inner self) and their outward affairs. So, if You punish them, Your punishing them will be based upon Your knowledge of what You are punishing them for. They are Your slaves and You are the Most Knowledgeable about what they have earned and about what they have gained.”*

And this, is Eesaa's recognition, acknowledgement and praise of Him, Glorified be He, by His wisdom and His justice and by the perfection of His knowledge of their condition and of them being deserving of His punishment.

Subsequently, he will say ***“and if You forgive them, verily, You only You, are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”*** Sooratul Maa'idah 5:118

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Al-Qayyim continues "And he will not (inappropriately) say, ***“The Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”*** Since this statement [of his in verse 118] is from the highest degree of adab with Allaah, the Most High. Because Eesaa will say it at a time when His Lord will be Angry with them (the Christians) and will have commanded them to the Fire. **So it will not be [an appropriate time] or situation for imploring - begging for sympathy – or for**

intercession. Rather, it will be a situation for Eesaa to disown them (and wash his hands of them so to speak)!

But if he were to say: ***“Verily, You are the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful,*** he would certainly be **indicating to his Lord that he is sympathizing with His enemies [and has some love for them], those whom Allaah’s intense anger [and hatred] will be upon. So the circumstance will [now] be a situation for (this noble prophet) Eesaa’s anger to coincide with the anger of his Lord upon those with whom He is angry with.**

He will refrain from mentioning the two descriptive names (The Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful) which asking by them are for His compassion, mercy and forgiveness; **mentioning instead (His) might and wisdom, bringing together the perfection of His power and the perfection of His knowledge.**⁵

In some of the Aathaar⁶ it is said: *“The bearers of the ‘Arsh (Throne of Allaah) two³ of them are saying:*

“How Perfect You are O Allaah our Lord we Praise You, to You belongs all praise in accordance with Your pardoning after Your power.”

Consequently, [it is essentially] joining each of these two (different) attributes [one] with the other.

Like His saying, “And Allaah is the All-Knowing, the Most Forbearing”.

And His saying, “And Allaah is the Oft-Pardoning the Most Powerful.”

Similar to this is the statement of Prophet Ibraaheem Al-Khaleel (the intimately close friend of Allaah),

“Who has created me, and it is He who guides me. And it is He who

³ According to authentic reports there are eight angels who have this mighty task of holding up the Throne. Additionally, there is a report from Jaabir ibn ‘Abdillaah from the Prophet alayhes salaatu wa salaam who said: ***“I have been given permission to speak about one of the angels of Allaah who carry the Throne. The distance between his[angel] ear-lobes and his shoulders is equivalent to a seven-hundred-year journey [with mode of transportation used in the time of the Prophet].”*** Collected by Imaam Aboo Daawood in his (Sunan in the Book of Sunnah, chapter of Al-Jahamiyyah).

feeds me and gives me drink. And when I become sick it is He who cures me.

Sooratush Shooraa 26:78.

Ibnul Qayyim said, "He did not (disrespectfully) say: ***“and when He (Allaah) made me sick”*** maintaining his adab [manners or etiquettes] with Allaah!

Likewise, the statement of Al-Khidr in the boat:

“So I wished to make a defective damage in it.” Sooratul Kahf 18:79

And he did not say, ***“so Your Lord wished to make a defective damage in it!”***

And he said concerning the two youths,

...“and Your Lord intended that they should attain age of full strength.”

[Likewise, ascribing all the good to Allaah, Glorified is He, but carefully attributing any evil only to himself].

Again is the saying of the believing Jinn,

“And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth”...

[Sooratul Jinn 72:10]

He did not say, ***“their Lord intends.”***

They then say, ***“Or whether their Lord intends for them a Right Path.”***

[Thus maintaining their adab with Allaah by **ascribing only the good to Him.**]

And the most courteous (example) of this (adab with Allaah) is the saying of (the Prophet) Moosaa,

“My Lord! Surely, I am in need of whatever good that You bestow upon me!”

[And Prophet Moosaa] did not say: ***“feed me!”*** [Sooratul Qasas 28:24]

Even though he was in need of the food!"

End of Shaykhul Islaam's comments, clarifications and explanations of correct etiquettes and manners with Allaah.

And A Not So 'Beautiful Prayer' After All

Sometimes due to the ignorance of the correct aqeedah – the Aqeedah of the Salaf - on the part of Muslims they fall into sacrilegious comments, thus violating important principles of adab with Allaah. Sometimes they are *explicit* violations similar to what the Christians have uttered like the following:

God is like Coca Cola...He's the real thing.

God is like Hallmark cards...He cared enough to send the very best.

God is like Bayer Aspirin...He works miracles.

God is like Dial soap...Aren't you glad you know Him, and don't you wish everyone did?

God is like a Ford...He's got a better idea.

God is like Tide...He gets the stains out that others leave behind.

God is like General Electric...He brings good things to life.

God is like Sears...He has everything.

God is like Alka-seltzer...Try Him, you'll like Him.

God is like Scotch tape...You can't see Him but you know He's there.

Allaah the Most High, the Exalted is far above how the pagans describe Him!

And sometimes they are not so explicit or *implicit*, blasphemous statements about Allaah the Sublime, the Most High.

In light of the above, let us now take a look at something that is circulating among

the Muslims on the Internet and make a knowledge based analysis of it.

It is called '**A Beautiful Prayer**' written by one young woman of Nauruian descent by the name of Joanne Ekamdeiya Gobure.

This poet's '*prayer*' is especially appearing on a few Christian, evangelical websites.

The following is the full text of the '*prayer*'.

*I asked God to take away my habit. God said, No.
It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up.*

*I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.
God said, No.
His spirit is whole, his body is only temporary.*

*I asked God to grant me patience. God said, No.
Patience is a byproduct of tribulations;
It isn't granted, it is learned.*

*I asked God to give me happiness.
God said, No.
I give you blessings; Happiness is up to you.*

*I asked God to spare me pain.
God said, No.
Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares
And brings you closer to me.*

*I asked God to make my spirit grow.
God said, No.
You must grow on your own!
But I will prune you to make you fruitful.*

*I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.
God said, No.
I will give you life, so that you may enjoy all things.*

*I ask God to help me love others, as much as He loves me.
God said... Ah, finally you have the idea.*

This day is yours! Don't throw it away!

*To the world you might be one person,
But to one person you just might be the world. There are quite a few*

comments that can be made about this 'beautiful prayer' but we will only make a few.

1-The Prophet Daawood (and those with him) begged Allaah to send down upon them patience and to make their feet firm, " And when they advanced to meet Jaaloot (Goliath) and his forces, they invoked,

"O Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience and make us victorious over the disbelieving people."

To say that Allaah replies with

"No. Patience is a by product of tribulations; It isn't granted, it is learned" is implying that Allaah does not desire this quality for His slave and does not want nearness for His servant to Him. Since Allaah has indicated in His noble book that He is with those who have patience and grants aid and support to those who possess it.

Therefore, why would Allaah not want to grant someone who asks for this noble virtue and essential quality of the believers?

Furthermore, in verse 251 of Sooratul Baqarah the meaning of Allaah's statement,

"So they routed them by Allaah's permission and Daawood (David) killed Jaloot (Goliath)" lets us know that He granted the patience.

As Imaam Ibnu Katheer says the meaning of this verse is "they defeated and overwhelmed them by Allaah's aid and support". Meaning, He granted them patience.

Her statement *"I asked God to make my spirit grow. God said, **No. You must grow on your own!** But I will prune you to make you fruitful.*

If we are to understand 'spirit' correctly here we would have to say it has the meaning of nafs or soul.

Hence, if someone asks Allaah to make their spirit or soul grow he is therefore asking Him to purify it.

This is something that is not attainable without His help and guidance. Thus, verse of Soorah Ash-Shams [91] ***"Indeed he succeeds who purifies it. And indeed he fails who corrupts it"***.

Shaykh Al-Uthaymeen said about the above underlined part of the verse means "causes his soul/spirit to grow by purifying it from polytheism and blemishing, disobedient acts until it remains pure, unpolluted and untainted".

The Shaykh continued "This necessitates supplicating to Allaah, the Perfect Free of all humanistic qualities, blemishes and faults and Exalted is He- that He makes the human being firm upon His guidance and upon an established word in his life and in the next.

So it is a duty upon you always to ask Allaah for firmness and beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds".

Shaykhul Islaam Ibnu Taymiyah said, "Allaah has ordered them (the believers) to request of Him all of what they are in need of regarding guidance, direction, rectification in the affairs of their worldly life and the life to come, forgiveness and mercy".

Then he mentioned that the Prophet sallallaahu alayhe wa sallam used to utter the following supplications, "*O Allaah! I ask You for guidance and piety chastity and [relative] independence*".

*O Allaah, **grant my soul piety and purify and make it grow**, for You are the best to purify it and make it grow, You are its Protector and Master."*

She (Joanne Ekamdeiya Gobure) continues, "*I ask God to help me love others, as much as He loves me. God said... Ah, finally you have the idea.*"

Here the underlying Christian theme of love everyone regardless of what they say, do or believe is highlighted. Since 'God' says "Ah, finally you have the idea."

Meaning, love the idol worshipper, the disbeliever, the warmonger, the adulterer, the religious innovator, the consumer of interest, the pedophile, the one addicted to intoxicants, the wife abuser etc.

Why? Because God loves everyone!

You should also know – may Allaah have mercy on you – that it is not proper for the Muslim to take the supplications of the disbelievers and 'Islaamicize' them.

This is something that is common among them. If it sounds good...use it.

If it feels good...use it!

Look at what the followers of the Zulu Zulu Nation did with the same 'beautiful prayer'.

<http://www.zulunation.com/zuluprayer.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Zulu_Nation

And last but certainly not least, the person who is petitioning God in this '*beautiful prayer*' is receiving an answer from the Almighty thus implying they are receiving some type of revelation.

How many times have we heard Christians – whether clergy or layman from among them – say "*The Lord said to me today*" or "*God spoke to me last night saying!*"

And we all [should] know that Prophets received revelation by one of three ways and one of those methods is that God speaks directly to them.

So if they are being responded to – like in this '*beautiful prayer*', then this implies that the receivers of these *replies* are Prophets or Messengers and not common people and therefore Prophet Muhammad is not the final Messenger and seal of the Prophets!

We ask Allaah to guide us to that which is correct and pure and protect us from blaspheming Him!

Translated and Transcribed by Yassir Ibn Ahmed

Revised and compiled by Dawud Adib for www.shurooh.com