

AKHLAQ SYLLABUS - CLASS 3 (FALL 2016)

Lesson Topic

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LESSON 1

MANNERS OF DRESSING

People dress for a number of reasons

1. To cover themselves
2. To keep warm
3. To feel and look smart

All these reasons are fine, but some people dress to show off and to look attractive so that other people can stare at them. This is not right since you are using the clothes to make other people gaze at your body.

"If a person dresses up and prides himself over others by because of his clothes, a flame of hell overtakes him, and he will swing in it until the day of Judgement."

This means that he will be punished partly in this life (i.e. part of hell in this life). The punishment can be no friends, or no happiness, no satisfaction.

Your body is precious and private. It has been lent to you from Allah is yours to look after. You should not abuse it, and you should not use it as a show for others. You see, if something is expensive and important, it will be guarded and kept away so that people don't use it and damage it, but if something is cheap, it will be left there for everybody to see and use, and no one will care about it. What is more precious than your body? To ensure that you guard its respect you dress in such a way that it is not exposed more than necessary.

When you dress, you should make sure that the clothes you wear are not so tight that the shape of your body is seen. Also you should be careful not to wear certain clothes to certain places.

You would not wear jeans if you were invited to see the Queen, so why wear jeans when you go to the mosque, to be closer to Allah?

You can wear jeans at home or when you go out, but you should try and avoid them in places like the mosque. This is simply because there is a certain respect attached with certain clothes.

Even at home, you should make sure that you are dressed properly. It is very poor Akhlaq to walk around the home without a shirt, or to walk around wearing only your underwear or boxer shorts. It may sound funny, but many people do this.

If you start to treat your own body as cheap, then don't complain when others also treat you as if you were cheap and worthless.

LESSON 2

GENEROSITY

This means to give others from what you have, to give plenty, and not just a little bit.

There are many ways of being generous, some of them are:

1. Donating to a charity
2. Giving food to the needy
3. Spending your time to help others.

To be generous you **do not** have to have money. You can be generous by spending your **time** helping people.

Children and young people often think that to donate something you should be an adult. This is not true. If a child donates something, it means more to Allah than if an adult donated the same thing. This is because the child is not earning and does not have much, and so is giving away something which is more precious to him/her, than it is to the adult.

In Qur'an (Surah 92 Ayat 5-7) Allah says,

*".....As for him who **GIVES AWAY** and guards himself against evil and believes in the best, We will smoothen for him the path unto bliss."*



"A generous person is a friend of Allah, and a miser is an enemy of Allah."
Prophet Muhammad (S)

What do you understand by the hadith above?

LESSON 3

PRIDE, HUMILITY AND HUMBLENESS

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, Sura Al-Baqarah, Ayat 34:

"And when we said to the angels "Prostrate (do Sajdah) to Adam!" they all prostrated save Iblees. He refused and he was rude with pride, and so he became one of the unbelievers."

Iblees was a Jinn who had been taken up to the heavens because he was so good, but when Allah made Adam and told all in heaven to do Sajdah to Adam, Iblees refused. He said he was better than Adam as he had been made from fire and Adam was made from clay.

Iblees had disobeyed Allah because of his pride and because of this not only was he thrown out of Heaven but he will go to Hell and burn there for ever.

WHAT IS PRIDE?

It is something that makes a person think highly of themselves. When someone thinks highly of themselves they consider others below them. They forget their own faults and are not thankful for Allah's blessings.

To cure oneself of pride you should think of Allah and realise that He alone is the All-Powerful Creator, deserving of praise and worship.

Our Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) has said that Allah says, ***Greatness is My special right, and whoever tries to share it with Me (becomes proud) I will put him in Hell.***

If ever you feel yourself becoming proud, think of yourself at the beginning, when you were born - a little baby, unable to do anything for himself, then think of yourself at the end - in a grave.

We are nothing compared to Allah so we have no right to feel pride. Only He can.

HUMILITY/HUMBLENESS:

This means to be AWARE of one's status according to Islam. The opposite of humility is arrogance/pride. This means to think of yourself as better than others. This was Iblees's mistake and it is why he is cursed.

In Islam we are told that no one is better than another. So, humility means to know that we are no better than anyone else, and that is how we should behave. The greatest enemy of humility is our NAFS. Whenever we do anything good, it tells us that we've done something good and how great we are. This means that YOU must protect YOURSELF against getting "big headed."

Our 4th Imam (A) says in Sahifa e Kamila:

"O Lord, do not honour me even one degree among the people unless You lower me to an equal amount in my own soul.

Create for me no outward respect unless You have created for me an equal amount of HUMILIATION in my spirit."

WHAT IS A HUMBLE PERSON LIKE? DOES HE GO AROUND DOING TASBEEH ALL DAY?

NO, he does not. The sign of a humble person can be explained by the words of Imam Ali (a.s.):

"From the signs of humility is to be content with any place in an assembly, to salute when you meet, to abandon quarrels and discord even if you were on the right; and not to except (love) praise for your fear of Allah."

A person who is humble is said to have modesty. That means he does not go around telling everybody how great he is. Nor does he become proud when others praise him.

Why should we be humble?

By being humble, we are showing to the world that Allah has created all men equal, whether they are black, brown, white or yellow.

We are showing that the only person who is greater in the eyes of Allah is the person who has Taqwa (ashamed of displeasing Allah).

Our Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w) has said: **"Pride enters the heart like a black ant crawling over a black rock at night."**

This shows how easily pride can overtake us, and also shows the importance of being humble so as to protect yourself against pride.

In the Du'a after Asr prayers we say to Allah:

"My Lord , whatever talents I have got, it is but from You."

If we want to remain humble, we should always remember this sentence and say it to ourselves EVERY time we do something good, or come first or win something. That way we will stop our nafs from praising us, and make it praise Allah.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) has said: ***"Indeed, humility exalts a man's position with Allah. Thus be humble and Allah will shower you with mercy."***

LESSON 4

CONSIDERATION OF UNDER-PRIVILEGED PEOPLE

Under-privileged people are those people who are not as well off as we are.

This does not only mean wealth and clothes, it also means people who have physical and/or mental problems.

Allah has made everybody for a special reason, He has made some people big, some small, some white and some black.... all different types.

If you are lucky enough to be perfectly healthy, you should not be proud because your body was not made by YOU. It has been made by Allah and so you should thank Allah.



***"All of you are from Adam, and Adam was from dust."
Holy Prophet (S)***

This shows us that there is nothing to be proud of, we should remember that we are made only from dust.

If your body is not perfect, you should not complain because there are many other people with even more problems than you.

We should **ALWAYS HELP** those people who are not as fortunate as ourselves in whatever way we can, and **NEVER EVER** tease them.

If we do this, we are being considerate, if not then we are being very unkind and thoughtless.

The secret of being considerate is to pretend you were the other person, and try to see how life would be through his/her eyes.

At the end of the day, it is good enough just thinking about the under-privileged, we should DO something to help them.

LESSON 5

JEALOUSY / ENVY

Envy = **Covet** = *to want the same as somebody else has.*

This is a bad habit because it means that you are not satisfied with what Allah has given you.

In the Holy Qur'an (Surah 4, Ayat 32) Allah says:

"And do not covet those things which Allah has given as gifts more freely on some of you than on others; for men shall have of what they earn, and women will have of what they earn: But ask Allah for his bounty. For Allah has full knowledge over all things."

There are three kinds of people in this world:

1. The first group of people do not pay much attention to the fact that someone is doing better than them or has more than them. They just carry on with their own lives.
2. The second group of people, who when they see other people doing well, themselves try harder to achieve success like their friends.
3. The third group of people are those who do not like to see others doing well and being happy. They wish that something bad happens to others. This way of thinking is called Jealousy and is hated by Allah.

Although jealousy and envy are often used together, there is a BIG difference between the two.

Whereas envy means to crave someone else's position or property;

Jealousy (in its worst form) means not to want something that someone else has, but at the same time not wanting him to have it either.

There once was a man who had a farm. His neighbour also had a farm. One day the man saw his neighbour milking a beautiful cow. The cow was giving plenty of milk, and the milk was sweet and tasted excellent. The man did not like it and felt very angry that his neighbour should have such a good cow.

Then Shaytan came to the man and asked him what the problem was. The man pointed to the cow and said "Look what a wonderful cow my neighbour has." Shaytan replied, "Is that all, I will give you ten cows like that."

The man answered "I don't want even one cow like that, I just don't want my neighbour to have it!"

This shows how dangerous jealousy can be. It makes people lose their mind.

Imam Ali (A) has said : **"Jealousy eats up good deeds like a fire consumes wood."**

We know the way in which dry wood is burnt and consumed by a hot raging fire. That is what jealousy does to our deeds.

Jealousy hurts you most of all. It makes you unhappy, ungrateful and selfish.

The best example of how much damage jealousy can do we only have to look at what happened with the sons of Prophet Adam (a.s.), Haabil and Qaabil:

One day, Prophet Adam (a.s.) asked his sons Haabil and Qaabil to bring a gift for Allah, and whose ever gift was accepted by Allah would be the successor of Prophet Adam (a.s.).

Haabil who was a shepherd brought the best animal that he had to give to Allah. Qaabil who was a farmer brought some spoilt corn as he thought to himself that Allah does not eat, so why should he take good corn.

Qaabil did not realise that although it is true that Allah does not eat, Allah has told us that when you give a gift to anyone, give the best you can give.

Allah of course accepted Haabil's gift, who had given the best he could. This made Qaabil very jealous of Haabil.

Qaabil was so jealous that his brother was going to succeed his father that he killed his own brother.

Only after he had done such a bad thing did he stop to think and was very sorry for what he had done, but it was too late.

So you see when you are jealous you do not think and it serves no purpose. eg. By Qaabil killing his brother still did not make him the successor of Prophet Adam (a.s.)

Imam Ali (a.s.) also said: **"A jealous person can never be a leader of men."**

This means that if you have a leader who is jealous, he will always be worried about himself, and will never want anyone else to have anything good. This means that his followers will be badly treated and oppressed, so they will leave him.

LESSON 6

SELF HUMILIATION

This means to make yourself look low and useless in front of someone else, like begging.

You should never humiliate yourself in front of anybody EXCEPT Allah, because HE is the only one to whom we should beg. When you humiliate yourself, you lose your dignity, and show that you have little self respect.

Imam Husain (A) was once approached by a beggar for some money. Imam (A) told the treasurer to pay him one thousand Ashrafi (gold coins of the time). The beggar took the money, but instead of going away with it, he sat down to count and check every coin. When he was asked why he was counting, the beggar replied, "Why not, I have sold my DIGNITY in begging."

On hearing this, Imam (A) said it was true, and ordered another thousand Ashrafi to be paid to him. When the beggar had counted and taken possession of two thousand coins, Imam (A) took a further thousand Ashrafi and gave it to the beggar, and uttered these words,

"The first thousand Ashrafi is in response to your begging, the second thousand Ashrafi is in RETURN for your DIGNITY, and the third thousand Ashrafi is for your visit, and coming to see me instead of going elsewhere to ask for help."

This shows, besides the generosity of Imam (A), that even the beggar has honour and dignity, and should never be humiliated by the giver. On the contrary, the giver should be thankful, since because of the beggar, he has earned something worth much more than money, ...Thawaab.

When someone belittles (makes himself look small) himself, he is ridiculed and lacks courage.

Imam Jaffer As-Sadiq (A) has explained:

"Indeed, God has left to a believer all his dealings, except to belittle himself, for hasn't it been stated in the Qur'an, "But for God is ALL HONOUR and for HIS Apostle, and for the believers, but the hypocrites know it not."

A lot of people in the world belittle themselves because they want something from other people, eg. if the boss makes a joke about you in front of people, and you just sit there, then you are belittling yourself just so that your boss can laugh.

Allah has made all men equal. Therefore, if you humiliate yourself for someone else, you think that person is greater than you. This means that by humiliating yourself for his money, or power, you are worshipping him. As a result you are bringing him on the same level as Allah, and that is becoming MUSHRIK (believing in more than one God.)

LESSON 7

COMPLAINING WHEN IN DISTRESS

This is the opposite of Sabr. It is a bad habit, and is one which takes away mercy from Allah.

To complain when misfortune falls upon us, shows that we have little faith in Allah. This is because Allah is testing us to see whether we have patience and forbearance.

If we try to overcome the problem, and say **Alhamdulillah it was not worse**, then we will pass the test.

If we don't do anything about it and just complain to Allah, and say "Why me!" and "It's not fair!" then we have failed the test, because Allah tells us in Surah 94, ayat 6:

"Verily, with every difficulty there is relief."

This means that no matter what difficulties we have in this world, if we have patience and try our best to remove them, Allah will help us, and we will have relief.

Therefore, if we have patience, then the problem will sort itself out with the grace of Allah.

Many people have a habit of complaining. This is called winging. These are the people who when it is winter, complain that it is too cold, and when it becomes summer, they complain that it is too hot. They will always find some reason to complain or criticise.

The important thing to learn from this lesson is that if you are in a problem, you should put in the effort to get out of that problem. If you are sincere, then Allah will help you. It may take a long time, but in the long run, you will be successful if your heart and intentions are in the correct place.

NAGGING

What is nagging? Nagging means to find fault in a person or scold, or complain without stop.

It is a dreadful habit, and can lead to people being fed up with you and leaving you alone.

If you nag someone, then it means that you keep on reminding them of something every few minutes. People do not like that. If you have something to say, then say it once. People will hear and remember what you said. If you keep on pestering them and remind them over and over then you will see that they will become irritated.

If you are in difficulty, then don't complain to others, don't ask them to help you, but ask Allah for His help.

When Prophet Yusuf (A) was thrown in the well by his brothers, his father was struck with grief. He did not sit there and moan. He took his grief and his complaint directly to the only One who could help him, Allah.

*(12:84) "And he turned away from them, and said: "How great is my grief for Joseph!"
And his eyes became white with sorrow, and he fell into silent melancholy."*

(12:85) "They said: "By God! (never) will you cease to remember Joseph until you reach the last extremity of illness, or until you die!"

(12:86) "He said: "I ONLY COMPLAIN of my distraction and anguish TO GOD and I know from God that which you know not..."

This shows that you should only ask Allah when in need.

A lot of people nag their parents often. If the father or mother say that something will happen, i.e. "We will go for a picnic" then the children keep on reminding, "When are we going, are we going now !!"

They do this so often that the parents feel like saying "Sit down and keep quiet or we won't go at all."

Always remember, when you are told something by someone, then they will try their best to do it. They don't need you to remind them, they know already. If you keep nagging them, it will only cause frustration.

What examples of nagging have you observed? What does it feel to be nagged at by others?

LESSON 8

FORSAKING DUTIES.

To forsake duties means to give up doing some thing that you should do, or said that you would do.

There are three types of duties:

Duties towards

- i) Allah
- ii) Muslims
- iii) Mankind (including yourself)

An example of forsaking a duty towards Allah is not offering your prayers. This is HARAAM, and those people will not receive Allah's favour. The duties towards Allah are also duties to yourself, since everything that Allah has commanded us to do is for our own benefit.



An example of forsaking a duty towards Muslims is not burying a dead body. When a Muslim dies it is WAJIB to give the body Ghusl and make sure that it has been buried according to Islam. If this is not done, then everyone who knew about the death will get Gunah.

An example of forsaking a duty towards mankind is to cause harm to something that others need or use. Imagine you have a farm by the riverside, and you deposit fertiliser and other chemicals into it. If further downstream, people rely on that water for drinking, then it is your duty to ensure that you do not pollute the river. It does not matter whether those people are Muslims or not, friends or enemies.

Islam is a religion for the whole world, and has rights for all things. Every creature, be it plant, animal or person has rights set by Islam, and we should learn to respect and obey them.

LESSON 9

LOOKING AT FORBIDDEN (NA-MAHRAM) WOMEN AND MEN.

In Islam there is a great emphasis on virtue and piety. This is demonstrated by the importance of Hijab.



Hijab does not mean to wear black all the time, it is a form of cover which protects **BOTH** men and women from staring at each other and help to maintain their dignity.

Hijab allows men and women to talk on equal terms, since the man does not get distracted by the lady's beauty, and maintains a respectful distance from her so that he concentrates on what she says. The actual presence of the hijab causes the man to lower his glance.

HIJAB COMES IN TWO STAGES:

The first stage, which applies to both men and women is the most important. This stage is to **LOWER THE EYES**. This means that a man should not look at a woman who is Na-Mahram (forbidden) to him. This does not mean that you are not allowed to see or talk to a lady, but means that you should confine your gaze within the boundaries of modesty, ie you should not STARE at her face, you should avoid looking directly into her eyes.

The second stage applies to ladies only, and is the covering of the hair, and wearing of loose clothes which do not reveal the shape of her body.

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) has said that, the first look you take is for you, and the second look is against you.

This means that when you look at something, ie a lady without Hijab, or anything else haraam, the first look is for you to see what it is, so that you know whether it is good or bad. If it is bad and you look a second time, then it is against you, and you are committing a sin.

This shows that to stare with desire at a lady is a sin which should be avoided. You cannot just say that you are enjoying the view, because your Niyat will be corrupt (bad).

Why is it forbidden to look at Na-Mahram women? Allah has told us that to enter heaven, we must control two things,

- a) our appetite (what we eat)
- b) our desires (what our nafs wants)

We control our appetite, by refraining from haraam food. In the same way we control our soul by refraining from haraam scenes.

The way Haraam food is bad for our body, haraam scenes are bad for our soul.

The soul is like pure clean water, and that which holds it (our body), is like a vase. Whatever we see through our eyes enters the water of our soul. If we look at bad things, then we are polluting (making dirty) the water and so our soul becomes dirty and this makes us do other things even worse.

We have to keep our soul clean by only allowing those things which are clean to enter our soul.

Not only should men avoid close contact with women who are unrelated to them, but the women should also avoid such contact with men, whether it is at school, university or on the street.

Whenever two people are present together, then Shaytan quickly becomes the third person, and starts trying to plant his evil thoughts.

LESSON 10

SABR - PATIENCE

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, Sura Al-Baqarah, Ayat 153 : **"...Indeed Allah is with those who have Sabr."**

In the above Ayat we are told that if we have Sabr (patience) then Allah is there with us, and we know that if Allah is with us then we have nothing to worry about.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) has said: **Sabr is in three parts:**



1. Sabr in times of hardship - when something goes wrong for you.
2. Sabr in regards to obedience - performing all the Wajibaat correctly.
3. Sabr in regards to disobedience - not committing any Haraam acts

The perfect example of Sabr is the life of Prophet Ayyub (a.s.). He was blessed with so much (health, children, wealth, land and sheep).

Then Shaitan asked Allah for power over Prophet Ayyub's (a.s.) affairs saying that while Prophet Ayyub (a.s.) had all these blessings he would remain grateful but if they were taken away then he would turn away from Allah.

Shaitan then destroyed all of Prophet Ayyub's (a.s.) animals and property and worse of all, he killed his children as well. Then he caused Prophet Ayyub (a.s.) to get a horrible disease, and his people forced him to leave his town.

Even with all this hardship Prophet Ayyub (a.s.) remained faithful to Allah, praying and thanking Him for everything. Not only did he have Sabr but also Shukr (thankfulness).

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) has said that faith is divided into two halves, one half is patience (Sabr) and the other half is thanksgiving (Shukr).

The above hadith tells us that to have true faith in Islam not only should we be patient but also thankful. So next time when something bad happens to you not only should you be patient but also thank Allah because Allah knows best.

Once a group of people came to our 4th Imam, Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (a.s.) and said that they were his Shias.

Imam (a.s.) asked them what they did when they got something nice. They replied we say "Alhamdulillah". Imam (a.s.) asked them what they did when something nice was taken away from them. They replied that they got upset then they would come to terms with it. Imam (a.s.) asked what they did if they did not get anything. They replied that they did nothing.

Imam (a.s.) replied that these were not the actions of his Shia. These actions were the same as the actions of the dogs of Madina:

When the dogs were given something they would wag their tails in Shukr (thanks). When something was taken away from them they would bark a little (complaining) and then walk away. When they got nothing they did nothing.

Imam (a.s.) continued that Shia are those who say:

"Alhamdulillah" when they get something,

"Alhamdulillah" when something is taken away and

"Alhamdulillah" when they get nothing.

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