

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING MANNERS IN ISLAAM

Islaam was sent to the people by Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) as a mercy and a way of life for all of mankind. As Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) says, **"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."** (5:3). Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) has conveyed to us how we should live each and every aspect of our lives with the Quraan. Not only has Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) told us how to live within this dunya (life), but He as well has shown us how to achieve the eternal happiness and life of the hereafter. As Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) says in the Quraan: **"And of them there are some who say: 'Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!'"** (2:201) Thus if every aspect of ones' life is addressed in the Quraan, it is a surety that the manners that one must obtain to have a successful life have also been mentioned in the Sunnah (whatever the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) said, did, or consented to)). Yet this essential part of the Muslims' life (manners and morals) has been neglected by the majority of Muslims today.

In regards to the Kuffar (non-Muslims), there is no set criterion from which they derive their manners. The majority of them live a life focused on fulfilling their desires, a life devoid of concern with what their actions will bring forth. They live a life in which they think there's ALWAYS a tomorrow. The main purpose for most is obtaining the highest degree of material wealth, lusts, and vanities-without limitation or restraint, and this greed leads them to lack vision for the akhiraah (hereafter). Either there's forgetfulness of the hereafter, or it is denied. Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) Has spoken about this type of people in the Quraan: **"But of Mankind is he who says: "Our Lord! Give unto us in the world," and he has no portion in the hereafter."** (2:200)

As opposed to these people, we as Muslims, acknowledge our purpose in life which is to worship none other than Allaah. As Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) says in the Quraan: **"And I (Allaah) created not the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)."** (51:56) The believer's main goal should be seeking the pleasure of Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) the way He commanded and the lasting eternal life of paradise. The believer should not neglect this worldly life but, at the same time he does not make it his main objective. He should enjoy it within the limitations set by his creator, thereby attaining both the good of this life and the Hereafter. Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) says in the Quraan **"Of them (also) is he who says: "Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter, that which is good, and guard us from the doom of fire."**(2:200)

The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) was sent by Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) to teach all of humanity the noblest morals (makarim al-akhlaq). His each and every act was in accordance to the Quraan. Many ahadith stress the significance of morals and manners within Islam.

"The most perfect believer in faith is the one who is best in moral character. The best of you are those who are the best to their spouses in manners." [at-Tirmidhi 1082]

Ayesha -may Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) be pleased with her said, **"I heard the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) say, 'Indeed the believer by his good morals reaches the ranks of those who spend the whole night in prayer and the whole day in fasting.'"**[Musnad Ahmad, 23219]

Abu al-Darda' reports that, **"I heard the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) say, 'There is nothing in the Balance heavier than the good morals. Indeed the person of good morals will reach by them the rank of the person of fasts and prayers.'"** [at- Tirmidhi 1926]

Having good manners is not only a good form of dawah which attracts others to Islaam, but it as well allows the Muslims to perform acts which bring them closer to Allah. When we observe good morals and manners, it is not something done for the pleasure of the people around us but rather we do it in obedience to Allaah and the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa salam). Good morals and manners strengthen and reinforce our faith. Before listening to the message we are commanded to convey to mankind, society will look at our behavior, and this fact is something forgotten by many Muslims today. Thus to spread Islaam we must try to acquire good manners so that people do not turn away but instead lay heed to our call. The only way we can attain good manners is by turning to the Quraan and the Prophet Muhammad's (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) example.

We can understand that indeed manners are of great importance. As Muslims we should strive to perfect ourselves knowing that Allaah (subhana wa ta ala) sees our efforts and will reward us if our intentions are correct. Perfecting our manners is a means for us to get closer to Allaah and acquire a richer Islaamic personality. Our actions and etiquettes reflect our beliefs, and the stronger our Imaan, the better our manners should be. We all know that even though the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) was hated by the mushrikeen, they came to him with their affairs, and never could they attack his manners or personality. One of the problems with the Muslims today is that we call for the deen of Allaah, or we claim we are good Muslims but our manners and etiquettes show otherwise, leading us open to attack by those who oppose Islaam.

All in all, manners and Imaan go hand in hand. If we truly believe in Allaah and his Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) we should turn back to them, and try to become the people they ask of us to become. Moreover, a person with manners has a greater chance of effecting a person rather than one who is ill-mannered. An example of such is that of the Jew who was a neighbor of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa salam). The Jew used throw garbage at him everyday. One next day he found no rubbish, so he asked about the Jew, only to find that the Jew was sick. He visited the sick Jew and tried to make them feel better. As a result, the Jew became Muslim. SubhanAllaah! We can see from this example how having good manners can go very far. We as Muslims should struggle everyday to better ourselves. One way we can truly do this is if we work to perfect our manners according to the way the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) prescribed. Allah is the One whom we ask to help us become better Muslims and give us the strength to emulate the manners of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) as best we can.

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The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa salam) said, **"Verily, I was sent for no other reason, except to perfect the noble traits of character"** [Muwatta Imam Malik]

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