

HIS صَلَّى اللهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
**LANGUAGE
OF INSTRUCTION**

Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ

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Author : Osman Nûri Topbaş

Translator : Dr. Mehmet Rıza Derindağ

Editor : Süleyman Derin

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Tel : (90-212) 671-0700 pbx

Fax : (90-212) 671-0748

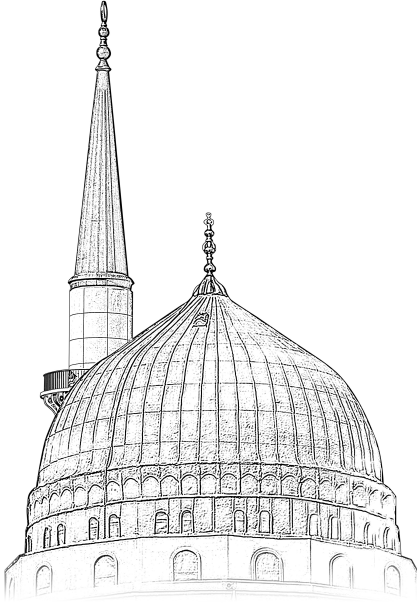
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FOREWORD

Allah, the Almighty the most Glorified the most High, bestowed the “Kalamullah” (the word of Allah) to His Last Prophet as the greatest miracle. The Holy Qur’an has challenged literary connoisseurs with its rhetoric and clarity from the time of its revelation and will carry on doing so until the Day of Judgment with even the most skilled experts of language being unable to match it.

Allah Almighty granted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the characteristics of “Jawamiu’l-qaleem”; the ability to express deep meaning with just a few words. The Prophet may Allah bless him and grant him peace educated his Companions by reciting from the Divine Speech-the Holy Quran. As well as through his eloquent conversations full of inspiration This ability is important as religion is taught and influenced by the choice of language serving as the role of an interpreter for a living heart.

Allah Almighty wants us to adopt the language of the Holy Qur’an. The language of Prophet Muhammed ﷺ, which is the most exquisite and unambiguous example of this language.



The language of the last Prophet ﷺ, as found in his Hadith is the best instructions on life. Hadiths are the most elegant, sublime and beautiful language that provides comfort to hearts.

This booklet, which you hold in your hand, is a brief overview of the educational and nurturing aspects of this magnificent language.

It is essential to remember that each one of us has a duty to learn and apply the language of instruction and the methods of how to reach out to convey the Message of God in the footsteps of our Prophet ﷺ.

I beseech Allah Almighty to make this humble effort of ours beneficial in achieving this goal.

Verily, success comes from Allah Almighty, the Most Glorious, the Most Merciful.

Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ

March 2015, Istanbul



THE TEACHING METHODS
OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

HIS ﷺ
LANGUAGE
OF INSTRUCTION



*"Let those who believe in Allah and the
Last Day speak good or remain silent!"*

(Bukhari, Adab 31,85, Riqaq 23)



HIS ﷺ LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

I. MAINTAINING ETIQUETTE IN LANGUAGE

Language is the most valuable asset in education and training. Believers learn the etiquette of language from the Qur'an, which serves as a guide in all matters, including language and teaches a Qur'anic language.

The primary quality required in speech etiquette is truthfulness. Regardless of how eloquent, pleasant, or persuasive our words may be, if they do not convey the truth, they are futile. Allah Almighty states:

“Those who turn away from vain talk.” (Al-Mu'minun, 3)

Therefore, truthfulness of speech is a general command from Allah, encompassing all believers.



“قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا / QAWL-AL SADEED”

“O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak the truth.” (Al-Ahzab, 70)

Truthfulness is the key to improvement and peace in this world and the hereafter. However, it is not the only important aspect of language; the manner and context of delivery are also crucial.

The most effective way to convey the harshest truths, serious warnings and weightiest admonitions to the heart of the listener is by using beautiful language and words. This principle is exemplified by the concept of “good word,” which means conveying the truth in a beautiful manner.

“وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا / QAWL AL-AHSAN”

“Speak to people with kindness.” (Al-Baqara, 83)

“Instruct My servants to speak in the best manner.” (Al-Isra, 53) The same directive is given in another verse:

“And invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and wise advice...” (An-Nahl, 125).

Mercy should always flow from the mouth of a believer. No prophet addressed their audience with rudeness. When conveying the message of religion, they consistently used eloquent and pleasing words. Similarly, those who follow in the footsteps of the



Prophets, such as the “Waliyullah,” also avoid using rude language.

In addition to the general principles of truthfulness and beauty in speech etiquette, the Qur’an also emphasizes specific qualities for addressing particular individuals.

One such case is to speak the truth gently in order to soften the hearts of those who are hard-hearted, vicious, or cruel. Allah instructs:

“Speak to him (Pharaoh) with gentle words. Perhaps he may be reminded or fear [Allah].” (Taha, 44)

A stream or river cannot climb a mountain; it must flow around its edges. Although this route may be longer, it allows for the achievement of the desired objective.

“قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا” / QAWL-AL LAYYEEN”

It means speaking the truth in a gentle tone that is not hurtful, encourages acceptance and avoids discord.

Allah, in His mercy, advised His Prophet:

“It was by Allah’s mercy that you ‘O Prophet’ were lenient with them. Had you been harsh or hard-hearted, they would have surely dispersed from around you. So pardon them, seek forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. In-



deed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].” (Al-Imran, 159)

This verse emphasizes the importance of avoiding rigid interactions between educators and students and highlights the significance of gentleness in fostering abundance.

In conveying the message, a soft yet effective approach is essential. In fact, those who cannot articulate their purpose tend to speak at length.

“قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا / QAWL-AL BALEEGH”

“Only Allah knows what is in their hearts. So turn away from them, caution them and give them advice that will shake their very souls.” (An-Nisa, 63)

Allah Almighty, desiring loyalty from His servants, commands them to address their parents with precious and elegant words.

“قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا / QAWL-AL QAREEM”

“For your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And honor your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them ‘ugh,’ nor yell at them. Rather, address them respectfully!” (Al-Isra, 23)

In the continuation of the verse, it is implied that parents should discipline their children with compassion. From this, we understand that:



Parents should raise their children with warm and affectionate language and children should also communicate with them using valuable and respectful words. This cultivates grace, courtesy and kindness within the family unit.

Allah, the Exalted, commands believers to address those in need and with sensitive hearts in the same loving manner as they address their parents.

“قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا / QAWL-AL MAYSUR”

“But if you must turn them down (because you lack the means to give)—while hoping to receive your Lord’s bounty—then, at least, give them a kind word.” (Al-Isra, 28)

Our Prophet ﷺ was also a teacher to these needy Muslims, to whom he was instructed to speak kind words. This verse conveys a message to educators. Educators should be attentive to the material and spiritual needs of their students, showing genuine concern and never turning away from them, even when faced with challenges.

Furthermore, there is another important aspect of linguistic etiquette, which involves using appropriate, customary and beautiful words.

“قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا / QAWL AL-MA'RUF”

Our Lord commands us to speak with kindness and compassion. In the Qur'an, it is stated,

‘Speak nice words to them!’ (An-Nisa, 5).



Furthermore, we are advised to lower our voices, as the ugliest of all voices is compared to the braying of donkeys:

“...And lower your voice, for the ugliest of all voices is certainly the braying of donkeys.” (Lokman, 19).

As believers, it is essential to learn the language of the Qur’an and understand how to convey our words in an appropriate manner. Hadrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه offered valuable advice on this matter, emphasizing the significance of being mindful of what we say, to whom we say it and when we say it.

“Remember what you said, to whom you said it, when you said it.”

It is crucial to recognize that every word we utter is recorded by the divine camera and will be witnessed by us on the Day of Judgment. The Qur’an states, **‘Not a word does a person utter without having a vigilant observer ready to write it down’** (Kāf, 18). Therefore, our Prophet ﷺ warns us that as believers, we should speak good or remain silent (Bukhari, Adab, 31, 85, Rikāk, 23). He further advised us to avoid uttering words that would later require apologies (Ibn-i Majah, Zuhd, 15).

When words are spoken from the heart, they reach the heart. However, if words are merely uttered from the tongue, they fail to pass through the ears and linger there without touching the heart.

In a conversation between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Muâdh bin Jabal رضي الله عنه, the Prophet



gave instructions and Muadh sought further guidance. The Prophet, pointing to his blessed lips, said, 'Always speak the truth and if unable to, remain silent.' Muadh رضي الله عنه asked if we would be held accountable for our words, to which the Messenger of Allah struck him on the knee and replied:

"Allah bless you Muadh! What is it that drags people face down to hell, other than what their tongues say?"

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should either speak good or keep silent and not use harmful words!

You win (hearts) by saying good words; You will find comfort and peace by not saying hurtful words."

(Hakim, Müstedrek, IV, 319/7774)

The following Hadith is of great significance in emphasizing the importance of paying attention to our words:

"A servant says something pleasing to Allah the Almighty, but he does not think that he will gain Allah's contentment by means of it; whereas because of that word Allah the Almighty becomes content with that servant until the judgement day when they will meet.

Again another servant says something attracting the wrath of Allah; but he does not think that he will get punished because of that word, whereas Allah becomes angry with that servant until the judgement day when they will meet" (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 12; Ibn Majah, Fitan, 12)



In conclusion, it is essential for our teachers to learn and internalize the language of the Qur'an, along with the etiquettes and manners that Allah Almighty expects from us. They should strive to impart this knowledge to their students, ensuring that they understand the importance of using words wisely and kindly.”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was sent to exemplify good morals, placed great emphasis on the moral upbringing of his Companions. Hadrat Aisha, our respected mother, recounts an incident that highlights his sensitivity:

“There was nothing more detestable and repugnant to the Messenger of Allah than falsehood. If he discovered that any of his companions had lied, even about a trivial matter, he would distance himself from that companion until he learned of their repentance. He would not engage in prolonged conversation with them.” (Ibn-i Sa'd, I, 378)

Nufay bin Haris narrates:

On one occasion, the Prophet ﷺ said three times,

“Shall I not inform you of the gravest of sins?”

We replied, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.” He said,

“Associating partners with Allah and being undutiful to one's parents.”

After sitting up from his reclined position, the Prophet added,



“And I caution you against making false statements and bearing false witness.”

The Prophet repeated this warning repeatedly, causing us to worry about his fatigue. (Bukhari, Shaha-dat, 10, Adab, 6, Isti’zan, 35, Istitab, 1; Muslim, Iman, 143)

Furthermore, the Messenger of Allah once stated:

“Allah has decreed the (Hell) Fire and prohibited Paradise for those who wrongfully usurp the rights of a believer by making false oaths.” A man asked,

“O Messenger of Allah, even if it is for something insignificant?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied,

“Even if it is as small as a stick from the Arak tree,” and he repeated this statement three times. (Muslim, Iman, 218; Muvatta’, Akdiye, 11)

These noble sayings illustrate the importance of honesty for a believer and emphasize the prohibition of infringing upon the rights of others. Lying leads one into sin and continuous falsehood may brand a person as a habitual liar in the eyes of Allah. (Bukhari, Adab, 69; Muslim, Birr, 103-105)

In addition to these teachings, it is crucial for individuals to be mindful of consuming halal (lawful) sustenance. The food that enters one’s mouth has a profound impact: halal sustenance has a positive effect, while haram (prohibited) sustenance has a negative impact. The renowned Sufi Havari eloquently



expressed this concept, proclaiming, “When you allow an unwarranted morsel to enter your mouth, an unnecessary word escapes it.” (Ferîdüddin Attâr, Tezkiretü’l-Evliyâ, I, 341)

One of the primary objectives of education is to cultivate honesty and discourage deceit. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to distance themselves from all forms of falsehood. A lie, which is incompatible with faith, cannot coexist with religious education. Any form of education that embraces falsehood cannot be rightfully called education anymore.

AVOIDING CONFLICT

Throughout his prophetic life spanning twenty-three years, our Prophet exemplified the teachings of the Qur’an. His life was devoid of conflicts or quarrels. In fact, the Quranic verse, **“The servants of the Most Compassionate are those who walk on the earth humbly and when the ignorant address them, they reply with words of peace”** (Al-Furqan, 63), emphasizes that one of the distinguishing traits of these devoted servants is their refusal to engage in arguments or quarrels with anyone.

As Rumi eloquently stated:

“It is essential to remain as silent as a book in the presence of ignorant.”

Yahya bin Abi Kathir reports that Suleiman عليه السلام offered the following advice to his son:



“Cease arguing, for it is futile and only stirs up enmity among brethren.” (Darimi, Mukaddime, 29/309)

A believer’s conduct should be kind, their words pleasant and their silence soothing. Making sound judgments becomes difficult in the heat of anger, often leading to erroneous decisions.

Muslim bin Yasar رضي الله عنه expresses this truth as follows:

“Beware of quarrels! These are the times when scholars become ignorant. Satan uses this opportunity to mislead the scholar.” (Darimi, Mukaddime, 35/402)

Another narration from Shahr bin Hawshab رضي الله عنه goes as follows:

“I was told that Luqman the Wise used to advise his son in the following manner:

“My son! Do not seek knowledge to boast among scholars, argue with the ignorant, or display it in gatherings!” (Darimi, Mukaddime, 34/383)

In particular, Luqman the Wise’s counsel sheds light on the trap set by the devil for those on the journey of knowledge and education. Those who acquire knowledge merely to engage in contentious debates cannot derive its true benefits.

Educators should also communicate with their students respectfully and gracefully, ensuring unnecessary arguments and quarrels do not take place.



REFRAIN FROM INSULTS

Languages and tongues should serve as sources of wisdom, exhibiting the unique and spiritual beauty of divine truths. Attraction lies in wisdom, as rude language breaks hearts and creates distance between individuals. Allah Almighty says:

“...And lower your voice, for indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the braying of donkeys.”

(Luqman, 19)

This verse instructs us not to resemble the braying of a donkey with our voices. People prefer to listen to a melodious nightingale rather than the screeching of a donkey. Hence, human voices should possess grace and elegance, reflecting the subtlety of their spirit.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ visited Umm As-Sā'ib (or Umm al-Musayyab) and asked her:

“What ails you, O Umm As-Sā'ib (or Umm al-Mūsayyab) ﷺ? You are shivering!” She replied:

“It is the fever, may Allah not bless it!” He said to her:

“Do not curse the fever, for it removes the sins of the children of Adam the same way the bellows remove the impurities of iron.”” (Muslim, Birr, 53)

A believer does not taint their tongue with foul language. They avoid causing harm to others and refrain from being hurt by others. In other words, the heart must attain this harmony.



Furthermore, when confronted with rudeness from others, responding with rudeness is not the solution, as advised by Hadrat Ali رضي الله عنه:

“Resist the urge to respond to mean-spirited words, as those who utter such words often possess a multitude of other similarly unpleasant expressions.”

Instead, let education be conveyed through words as precious as diamonds, ensuring that impolite language and attitudes find no entrance within the walls of educational institutions.”

TEACHING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS WITH HAYA

Bashfulness, referred to as “haya,” is a cherished attribute that serves as a protective shield, guarding individuals against various forms of harm. Nevertheless, this innate sense of bashfulness should not impede a Muslim from actively seeking obligatory knowledge. In essence, a person of faith should embrace the pursuit of essential knowledge and be unhesitant in both acquiring it themselves and imparting it to others, without allowing their shyness to hold them back.

In the verse,

“...Allah does not hesitate to speak the truth (does not shame)...” (Al-Ahzab, 53),

The Prophet ﷺ would recite this verse when discussing topics that might be considered sensi-



tive. Similarly, when the Companions had inquiries about matters requiring (Ghusl) ritual purification, they would recite this verse before approaching our beloved Messenger of Allah to ask their questions.

Hadrat Aisha ﷺ spoke highly of the Ansar women, saying,

“How virtuous are the women of the Ansar! Their modesty did not hinder them from learning religious matters in depth.” (Muslim, Hayz, 61)

When an educator aims to discuss sensitive topics that touch upon private matters, it is advisable to adopt a similar approach to that of the Companions. Beginning with a concise introduction, the educator should emphasize the significance of the subject matter. Subsequently, they should proceed to provide a clear and comprehensive explanation of the private matters at hand, taking care to ensure that everyone in the audience fully understands the information being presented.

For instance, our Prophet once stated,

“It is true that I am like a father to you. I will guide and purify you and teach you the necessary knowledge...” (Abu Dawud, Taharet, 4).

Following this concise introduction, he explained the etiquettes of personal hygiene in the toilet in great detail to his companions.

When it comes to teaching private matters, it can be helpful for educators to use allegoric language as long as the topic is clearly understood by the stu-



dents. It is more appropriate for men to discuss men's issues and women to discuss women's issues.

In fact, women sometimes faced challenges in openly asking the Prophet about their sensitive matters. Consequently, female Companions would seek the help of the Prophet's wives, who served as intermediaries in resolving many of their private concerns.

When the Messenger of Allah would respond to certain questions with indirect answers due to his deep humility, the people would then ask the mothers of the believers for a detailed explanation. (Bukhari, Hayz, 13, 14; Muslim, Hayz, 60; Abu Dawud, Taharet, 107; Darimi, Wudu, 75; Nesa'i, Gusl, 21; Muwatta', Taharet, 105)

Another related issue is the necessity of answering questions without directly referencing the person who asked. For example, it is more appropriate to use sentences like "One of you... People should do this..."

Once, while the Messenger of Allah was sitting with his companions, someone in the congregation broke wind loudly, but it was not clear who it was. After consuming a meal that included camel meat, it was time for prayer. To prevent embarrassment for the person who broke wind and to keep their identity hidden, the Messenger of Allah commanded,

"Whoever eats camel meat should perform ab-lution!" (See Ibn-i Asâkir, Târîhu Dimask, LXII, 373 [12878]).

By doing so, he ensured that the person remained anonymous.



Even if the Messenger of Allah knew the identity of the mistaken person in a group, he would make it ambiguous in order to avoid offending them and he would address the entire community about the issue. Sometimes he would ask, “What is the matter with me that I see you like this?” to make the interlocutors realize that the Prophet ﷺ was not pleased with such behaviour. (See Bukhari, Menakib, 25; Muslim, Salat, 119). He would attribute the fault to himself, “galat-ı ru’yet” (mistaken observation).

Similarly, when the Messenger of Allah heard negative words spoken by someone, he wouldn’t say, “Why did he say that?” Instead, he would ask, “What is wrong with the people that they say something like this?” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 5/4788).

II. METHODS OF EXPRESSION

RECOUNTING STORIES AND INCIDENTS ABOUT PREVIOUS PEOPLE

During the difficult period in Mecca, while inviting people to Islam, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ employed this method. He would gather people in assemblies, call them to Allah, recite the Qur’an to them and warn them about the consequences faced by previous nations. (Ibn Hisham, I, 381)

Exemplifying the issues with stories and events not only enhances narration but also fosters understanding. These examples effectively introduce and enliven the subject matter, leaving a lasting impres-



sion on people's minds and hearts. By providing a smooth flow in storytelling and writing, they facilitate listening and reading experiences. Esteemed figures such as Hadrat Mawlana (Rumi), Sheikh Sadi and their contemporaries extensively utilized this method in presenting their works.

In this manner, they skilfully conveyed their intended messages to readers through the power of parables, effectively educating their audience without causing boredom. The use of stories and anecdotes in communication is particularly appealing to the emotions and senses, as it does not impose commands or prohibitions on the listeners. Consequently, it arouses enthusiasm and passion within individuals.

When individuals believe that they are not directly impacted by a narrative, they may unexpectedly find themselves immersed in the depicted events. Studies on this topic have also revealed the persuasive power of the subconscious on indirect expressions.

In line with this, The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: The first defect that permeated Banu Isra'il was that a man (of them) met another man and said: O so-and-so, fear Allah and abandon what you are doing, for it is not lawful for you. He then met him the next day and that did not prevent him from eating with him, drinking with him and sitting with him. When they did so. Allah mingled their hearts with each other.” (See Abu Dâvûd, Melâhim, 17/4336; Tirmidhi,



Tafsir, 5/6,) The Messenger of Allah then recited the following verses:

“The disbelievers among the Children of Israel were condemned in the revelations of David and Jesus, son of Mary. That was for their disobedience and violations. They did not forbid one another from doing evil. Evil indeed was what they did! You see many of them taking the disbelievers as allies. Truly wicked are their misdeeds, which have earned them Allah’s wrath. And they will be in everlasting torment. Had they believed in Allah, the Prophet and what has been revealed to him, they would have never taken those ‘pagans’ as allies. But most of them are rebellious..” (Al-Maida, 78-81)

At another time, the Messenger of Allah shared with his Companions the story of a person from the Children of Israel named Şem’un-i Gazi. This remarkable individual had dedicated himself to fighting in the way of Allah for a thousand months, equipped with weapons and spent his nights in devout worship. The Muslims were awestruck and filled with admiration, desiring to attain a similar status.

In response to their yearning, Allah revealed Surah al-Qadr, a chapter of the Quran, to convey His boundless grace and mercy to the Ummah of Muhammad. This divine revelation highlighted that they too could reach the elevated status of past nations by diligently seeking and reviving the Night of Power. Allah almighty said:



“Indeed, it is We, Who sent this Quran down on the Night of Glory. And what will make you realize what the Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months. That night the angels and the ‘holy’ spirit descend, by the permission of their Lord, for every ‘decreed’ matter. It is all peace until the break of dawn.” (al-Kadr, 1-5) (See. Vahidi, p. 486)

TEACHING WITH HUMOUR

Education doesn’t always have to be a solemn affair; it can be livened up with humour. Every now and then, between the teacher and the student, there arises a need for jokes that stem from joy, love and intelligence.

Even the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recognized the value of humour and would engage in light-hearted banter with his Companions. However, he always ensured that his jokes and humour were uplifting, never diminishing the dignity of others or belittling anyone. Furthermore, even in his jests, he never strayed from the path of truth.

Here are a few examples of the Prophet’s witty and truth-based anecdotes:

A gullible man came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and asked for a camel from him as a ride. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Okay, what do you say if I give you a female baby camel?” The man replied amazedly:



“O Messenger of Allah! What am I going to do with a baby camel? How can it carry me?” Allah’s Apostle ﷺ replied:

“Are not all camels the babies of a mother camel?”. (Tirmidhi, Birr, 57)

The example illustrates that a joke should always be based on truth. It should strictly avoid any falsehoods, as dishonesty is never appropriate for a believer.

In another incident, an elderly lady from the Ansar community approached the Prophet and expressed her request:

“Please supplicate for me, so that I may enter Paradise.” The Prophet responded, saying,

“Have you not heard? Elderly women do not enter Paradise.”

Upon hearing this, the old lady felt a deep sadness. However, the Prophet, with a gentle smile, continued,

“Have you not read the verse: ‘We have created their companions of special creation and made them virgin-pure and beloved, equal in age’ (Al-Waqia, 56; 35-37)?”

He then proceeded to explain to the old lady, in a comforting manner, that in Paradise, women would be rejuvenated and would enter as young girls. This explanation brought joy and solace to her heart. (Haythami, X, 419; Tirmidhi, Shamail, p. 91-2)



Pleasant jokes have the power to provide solace and alleviate the weight of intensity. Moreover, when a person wears a smile, they tend to absorb information more effortlessly compared to when they carry a sombre expression. Being serious constantly can exhaust the mind and hinder its progress. Therefore, incorporating pleasant and relevant humour from time to time rejuvenates individuals and helps maintain focus.

Given these benefits, educators should be mindful of using humour appropriately in their lessons. It is important to strike a balance that keeps young minds engaged without crossing the line into disrespect and indiscipline..

EXPLAINING THINGS ONE BY ONE

The human mind tends to learn more effectively when information is organized into categories. This approach was skilfully utilized by our Prophet ﷺ to enhance the memorization and understanding of the message he intended to convey to his listeners.

For example, The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

“Take advantage of five before five:

- *your youth before your old age,*
- *your health before your illness,*
- *your riches before your poverty,*
- *your free time before your work,*



• *and your life before your death.*” (Hakim, Müstedrek, IV,341/7846)

If a believer does not take any action according to the content of this hadith, the Consequences are explained in another hadith:

“A man shall be asked concerning five things on the day of resurrection: concerning his life,

- *how he spent it; concerning his youth,*
- *how he grew old;*
- *concerning his wealth, whence he acquired it and in what way he spent it;*
- *and what was it that he did with the knowledge that he had.*” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 1)

It will be a very fruitful method for an educator to use this method while giving lessons to his students.

EXPLAINING CONCISELY THEN GOING INTO DETAILS

Our Prophet ﷺ possessed a remarkable skill of conveying profound meanings through concise expressions known as “Javâmiu’l-kelim.” These concise words, requiring a deep level of understanding, often aroused curiosity and raised questions in the minds of his students. However, this curiosity served as an opportunity to guide them towards the intended message.



By employing this method, the Prophet ensured that the subject matter would be firmly established in the memories of his listeners or even memorized. The initial concise statement captured their attention and prepared them to receive further details.

An excellent illustration of this approach is found in an instance where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a warning to his community:

“There is no one who dies who does not feel regret.” His Companions asked:

“What shall they regret, O Messenger of Allah?”
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“A good-doer will regret that they did not do more and a wrongdoer will regret that they did not give up evil and reform their ways..” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 59/2403)

Once, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ declared the virtue of the people of dhikr;

“-The mufarridun have surpassed all.” They asked,

“Who are the mufarridun, oh Messenger of Allah?” He replied,

“Those men and women who remember Allah abundantly.. They will come on the Day of Judgment lightened, as the dhikr has taken the burden of sins off from their backs.” (Tirmidhi, Deavât, 128/3596)

Educators can also captivate students’ attention using the same method. Cultivating a sense of curiosity and enthusiasm for questioning among students is a crucial step in fostering their active en-



gement in the lesson. Employing this approach can also stimulate the minds and intellectual capacities of young learners.

THE MUTUAL CONVERSATION USING THE QUESTION AND ANSWER METHOD

One of the most significant training methods employed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was engaging in mutual conversation and utilizing the question and answer method. This approach was employed to captivate the attention of the audience, encourage focused responses from the interlocutors and ensure lasting retention of the information.

A notable illustration of this methodology is found in the renowned hadith of Jibril.

The famous hadith of Jibril is a good example of this.

Sayyiduna ‘Umar ibnul Khattab رضي الله عنه reports, *“One day we were sitting by Rasulullah ﷺ when suddenly a man dressed in pure white clothes appeared before us. His hair was pitch black and there were no signs of travel apparent on him. None of us recognised him. He sat by Nabi ﷺ, aligned his knees with Nabi’s ﷺ knees, placed his palms on his thighs and said,*

‘O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam?’ Nabi ﷺ said,

‘Islam is that you testify that there is no Deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, you establish Salah, distribute Zakah, fast in



the month of Ramadan and perform Hajj if you are able to do so.'

He [the questioner] said, 'You have spoken the truth.'

Sayyiduna 'Umar رضي الله عنه says,

'We were surprised that he asked the question and he also attested to it being true.'

He (the questioner) then said,

'Inform me about Iman.' Nabi ﷺ replied,

'That you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, The final day [Qiyamah] and you believe in the divine decree [taqdir], the good and the evil thereof.'

He [the questioner] said, 'You have spoken the truth.'

He then asked,

'Inform me about ihsan'. Rasulullah ﷺ replied,

'That you worship Allah as if you are seeing him and even though you do not see Him, [you know] He sees you.'

He then said,

'Inform me [when is] Qiyamah'. Nabi ﷺ said,

'The one who is being questioned does not know any more than the questioner.' [i.e. we both don't know when it is Qiyamah].

He said, 'Then inform me about its signs?' Rasulullah ﷺ replied,



‘The slave girl shall give birth to her master and you will see barefoot naked poor shepherds/Bedouins envying one another in the construction of buildings.

Then he went away.

Sayyiduna ‘Umar ﷺ says, ‘I waited for a while.’ Nabi ﷺ then asked me,

‘O ‘Umar! Do you know who the questioner was?’ I replied,

‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’ Rasulallah ﷺ said,

‘It was Jibril. He came to teach you your religion.’ (Muslim, Iman, 1, 5; Bukhari, Iman 37; Tirmidhi, Iman, 4; Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 16)

The Hadith of Jibril encompasses crucial principles that should be considered in the domains of training, education and purification. These principles can be summarized as follows:

1. The educator should approach individuals who pose questions with compassion, fostering a sense of closeness. By adopting such an approach, people will feel at ease to inquire without fear or boredom.

2. Questions should be posed in a gentle, polite and respectful manner, demonstrating a high degree of decorum.

3. If an individual attending a scholar’s gathering recognizes a question that is relevant to the audience but remains unasked, they should take the ini-



tiative to ask it. This allows for the dissemination of knowledge that benefits everyone present.

4. Through the act of questioning and receiving answers, subjects are attentively listened to and better understood.

For instance, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ posed the following question to his Companions, intending to capture their attention:

“-Do you know who is bankrupt?” They said,

*“The one without money or goods is bankrupt.”
The Prophet said,*

“Verily, the bankrupt of my ummah are those who come on the Day of Resurrection with prayers, fasting and charity, but also with insults, slander, consuming wealth, shedding blood and beating others. The oppressed will each be given from his good deeds. If his good deeds run out before justice is fulfilled, then their sins will be cast upon him and he will be thrown into the Hellfire. (Muslim, Birr, 59. See also Tirmidhi, Doomsday, 2) Rasûlullah ﷺ employed a similar approach in elucidating the cleansing nature of prayer in purifying individuals from impurities.:

“If there was a river at the door of any of you and he took a bath in it five times a day would you notice any dirt on him?” They said, “Not a trace of dirt would be left.” The Prophet ﷺ added, “That is the example of the five prayers with which Allah cleans out (annuls) evil deeds.” (Bukhari, Mevâkîf, 6; Muslim, Mesâcid, 283)



Once again, with the intention of adorning the hearts of his Companions, the noble Messenger ﷺ posed the following question to them:

“Why can’t you be like Abu Damdam?’ The companions asked,

‘Who is Abu Damdam O Rasulullah?’ He replied,

‘Abu Damdam recites the following du’a every morning,

‘Allahumma inni qad wahabtu nafsi wa ‘irdi laka.’

He would not retaliate or swear at those who swore at him, oppressed him or abused him.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 36/4887)

DISCUSSION AND DEBATE: ALLOWING STUDENTS TO ASK QUESTIONS

After a teacher presents a lesson, they divide the class into two groups and select three students from each group to engage in a question-and-answer session. This interactive activity promotes critical thinking and active participation among the students. Following this initial exchange, the teacher then selects three additional students to lead a broader debate, involving the entire class. This approach not only helps students enhance their cognitive skills through questioning but also maintains an engaging classroom environment.

This method is also significant in the context of teacher training, as it provides an opportunity for



the teacher to foster the development of future educators while instructing their students.

ENCOURAGING GOOF WORK THROUGH QUESTIONING

In the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, there is an example of using questions to encourage good actions:

For instance, Abdurrahman bin Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه recounts:

After the morning prayer, the Messenger of Allah returned to his companions and inquired:

“Is anyone among you fasting today?”

“Has anyone visited a patient today?”

“Is there anyone among you who has fed the poor today?” he asked. (Haysemi, III, 163-164. See also Abu Dâvûd, Zakat, 36/1670)

Similarly, educators can adopt the practice of asking questions to motivate their students. They can create an atmosphere of positive competition within the classroom by asking stimulating questions that align with the learning objectives. Competition within educational institutions can also be assessed within this context.

A person’s knowledge is often concealed within them, waiting to be revealed. Evaluating someone’s understanding of both external and internal knowledge can be accomplished by examining the nature



of their responses to questions posed. In the case of Mu'adh bin Jabal رضي الله عنه, who was being sent to Yemen, our Prophet ﷺ assessed his knowledge by engaging him in a series of questions. This method allowed for a comprehensive measurement of Mu'adh bin Jabal's comprehension.

One day, after leading the morning prayer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to the congregation and said;

“O Muhajir and Ansar! Which one of you will go to Yemen?” he asked. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه;

“I will go, O Messenger of Allah!” said. The Prophet remained silent and did not answer him.

“O Muhajir and Ansar! Which one of you will go to Yemen?” he asked again. This time sayyiduna Umar رضي الله عنه got up and said;

“I will go, O Messenger of Allah!”. Our Prophet ﷺ was silent again and did not answer him either. Then;

“O Muhajir and Ansar! Which one of you will go to Yemen?” When he asked for the third time, this time Mu'adh bin Jabal رضي الله عنه got up and said;

“I will go, O Messenger of Allah!”. Allah's Messenger ﷺ, O Mu'adh, this duty is yours!” responded.

Then he turned to Bilal;

“—O Bilal! Bring me my turban.” he commanded.

When the turban was brought, he wrapped it around Mu'adh's head and The Messenger of Allah, ﷺ said, “How will you judge?” Mu'adh رضي الله عنه said, “I



will judge according to the Book of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “What if it is not in the Book of Allah?” Mu’adh رضي الله عنه said, “Then, with the Sunnah of the messenger of Allah.” The Prophet said, “What if it is not in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah?” Mu’adh رضي الله عنه said, “Then, I will strive

to form an opinion.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “All praise is due to Allah, who has made suitable the messenger of the Messenger of Allah. (Ahmed, V, 230; Ibn-i Sa’d, III, 584; Diyarbekri, II, 142)

Recognizing and appreciating a student’s positive qualities serves as a powerful catalyst, igniting their enthusiasm and driving their efforts. Educators must consistently remember the significance of this truth:

Ubay bin Ka’b رضي الله عنه narrates:

One day the Messenger of Allah said to me;

“-O Abu’l-Mundhir! Which verse in your memory from the book of Allah is greater?” he asked.

“Allah and His Messenger know better.” I said. Prophet ﷺ again;

“-O Abu’l-Mundhir! Do you know which verse you memorize is greater in the book of Allah?” When I say that;

“Allah is He, there is no god but Him. Neither slumber nor sleep keeps Him. He is Hayy (the One who is everlasting and undying, the One from whom all life arises), who is Qayyûm (The Self-Subsisting; He is completely free of any depen-



dence on anything else, while the whole creation depends entirely on Him)...” (al-Baqara, 255) *verse (that is, Ayetü'l-Kursi). Thereupon, the Messenger of Allah touched my chest with his hand;*

“Blessed be your knowledge, O Abu'l-Mundhir!” he said. (Muslim, Musafirin, 258)

ASKING QUESTIONS TO ENHANCE ONE'S INTELLIGENCE AND EVALUATE THEIR LEVEL OF COMPREHENSION

Our Prophet ﷺ employed the method of asking questions to stimulate thinking, assess individuals' level of knowledge and gauge their intellectual capacity. Through this approach, he aimed to ascertain their comprehension and discernment. As an illustration, in the case where someone was praised in his absence, he would inquire,

“What is the state of their intellect and judgment?” (Ibn Hajar, Al-Matalib al-'Aliyah, XII, 117).

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه narrates: *We were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ*

“Tell me, which tree resembles a Muslim. That tree is green, it never sheds its leaves, it is such and such.” He enumerated the beautiful qualities of that tree. And then;

He recited the verse “It always gives its fruit by the permission of its Lord” (Ibrâhim, 25).

It occurred to me that that tree is a date palm. However, I saw that Hadrat Abu Bakr and Omar



were not talking and I did not find it appropriate to talk. When people could not give an (accurate) answer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ;

“–It is a date palm,” he commanded. When we left there, I told my father Hadrat Umar; “Daddy, I swear that tree came to my mind.” I said.

“So why didn’t you tell him?” He asked.

“–When you didn’t speak, I didn’t find it appropriate to say anything either!” I said. My father said:

“–If you had said that, it would have been more valuable to me than this or that.” (Bukhari, Tafsir, 14/1)

There is a good example from Rabia that demonstrates her inquiry into understanding a person’s spiritual level. Seeing a person with a bandage on his head, Rabiātu’l-Adawiyya asked,

“Why have you tied a bandage around your head?” The person replied,

“I have a headache, that’s why.” Curious, Rabiātu’l-Adawiyya asked, “How old are you?”

“I’m thirty,” the person responded.

Rabiātu’l-Adawiyya inquired further:

“And during these thirty years, was your body mostly in good health or plagued by sickness?”

The person replied: “It was mostly in good health and well-being,”

Pondering on this, Rabiātu’l-Adawiyya questioned,



“Have you ever worn a bandage of gratitude during those years? Why is it that when you have a headache, you immediately wrap a complaint bandage around your head?” (Ferîdüddin Attar, Tezkiretü'l-Evliyâ, I, 104)

A person who is dedicated to the task of educating others must consider the diverse talents of their students. When teaching a class, if there are individuals who differ in their interests, one may find the lecture engaging while another may become bored.

METHODS OF ANSWERING

ALLOWING A STUDENT TO RESPOND TO A QUESTION

The Prophet ﷺ employed various methods to enhance the knowledge of his Companions. One such method was to guide them towards the answer when they posed a question. Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates:

“A man came to Allah’s Messenger ﷺ and said,

“I saw in a dream, a cloud having shade. Butter and honey were dropping from it and I saw the people gathering it in their hands, some gathering much and some a little. And behold, there was a rope extending from the earth to the sky and I saw that you (the Prophet) held it and went up and then another man held it and went up and (after that) another (third) held it and went up then after another (fourth) man held it, but it broke but then got connected again.”



Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said, “O Allah’s Messenger ﷺ! Let my father be sacrificed for you! Allow me to interpret this dream.”

The Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Interpret it.”

Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said, “The cloud with shade symbolizes Islam and the butter and honey dripping from it, symbolizes the Qur’an, its sweetness dropping and some people learning much of the Qur’an and some a little. The rope which is extended from the sky to the earth is the Truth which you (the Prophet) are following. You follow it and Allah will raise you high with it and then another man will follow it and will rise up with it and another person will follow it and then another man will follow it but it will break and then it will be connected for him and he will rise up with it. O Allah’s Messenger ﷺ! Let my father be sacrificed for you! Am I right or wrong?”

The Prophet replied, “You are right in some of it and wrong in some.” (Bukhari, Ta’bir, 11, 47; Muslim, Rü’ya, 17; Tirmidhi, Rü’ya, 10/2294; Abu Dâvûd, Sunnah, 9/4632; İbn-i Mâce, Rü’ya, 10)

Again, Ukbe bin Amir رضي الله عنه narrates:

Two people came and presented their case to the Prophet. The Prophet then asked me;

“–Get up, O Uqba! Judge between the two!” he commanded.

“O Messenger of Allah! You deserve this more than I do.” I said. Allah’s Messenger replied ;



“Even so, you decide between the two. When you make the right decision with all your effort, there are ten rewards and when you make a decision with all your effort and make a mistake, there is one reward.”

(Ahmed, IV, 205)

It would be more effective if an educator refrains from immediately answering a question posed to them and instead asks if any of the students would like to answer. By giving the opportunity to students who know the answer to respond, it not only makes the lesson more engaging but also fosters a sense of active learning. This approach can also be considered as a form of teacher training.

RESPONDING TO A QUESTION WITH A CONCISE YET COMPREHENSIVE ANSWER

When it comes to responding to questions, the Prophet ﷺ would often provide concise and straightforward answers. By doing so, he ensured that the needs of the questioner were met promptly, avoiding unnecessary diversions. This can be exemplified through the narration of Nawas bin Sam’an:

I stayed with the Messenger of Allah in Medina for a year (as guest)... When I asked the Prophet once what goodness and sin were, he said:

“Goodness is moral beauty. Sin is something you don’t feel comfortable with and you don’t want people to know.” (Muslim, Birr, 14-15)

Providing a concise and targeted answer to a question has a significant impact on the person



seeking the information. Concise responses enhance understanding, while lengthy answers may not have the same effect as a straightforward, one-sentence response.

ANSWER ACCORDING TO THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF THE QUESTIONER

In the context of education, it is important for educators to tailor their approach to each student's individual needs and understanding. This can be exemplified by the practices of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who would address individuals according to their level of knowledge and cater to their specific requirements.

For instance, if someone asked the Prophet ﷺ, "What is the best deed for me?" he would assess the person's circumstances and guide them accordingly. If the individual was affluent but lacked knowledge on how to utilize their wealth, the Prophet ﷺ would advise them on the proper way to spend their resources.

Some people were living in poverty and the Prophet ﷺ would advise them to have patience during those difficult times.

There were individuals who would easily become angry and the Prophet ﷺ would counsel them, saying, "You should not let anger overcome you!" He provided this guidance because he knew that his benevolence and good deeds would be diminished by his own wrath and anger. Teaching was



not merely a profession for him; it was a divine mission bestowed upon him and it is a mission that has been passed down to us from the Prophet.

Educators should also recognize the true purpose behind a question and respond accordingly, taking into account the needs of the person asking. Specifically, teachers should provide wise answers that help the questioner arrive at their own understanding, rather than simply providing a predetermined response.

PROVIDING THE ANSWER THAT THE ADDRESSEE NEEDS, NOT WHAT S/HE EXPECTS

Sometimes the Companions would approach the Prophet with their questions, seeking guidance on certain matters. However, instead of providing a direct response that aligned with their expectations, the Prophet would often redirect their attention towards alternative perspectives for various reasons and wisdoms. He would address different aspects of the subject that would prove more beneficial to the questioner. Essentially, he would offer an answer that went beyond the initial expectations and demands of the addressee. Hence providing insights that were more suitable and useful for their intended purpose. In the realm of rhetoric, this approach is referred to as “us-lûb-i Hakim,” which translates to the “wise style.” An exemplary incident illustrating this can be seen in the following account:



Once companions asked the Messenger:

“O Messenger of Allah, we see the crescent moon, it is born thin as a rope, then it grows larger, becomes rounder, then starts to decrease again and becomes as thin as when it first started. Why doesn’t he just stand still?” they had asked.

Allah Almighty replied with the following verse:

“They ask you about the crescents. Say:

They are the time scales for the people and for the pilgrimage .” (Al-Baqara, 189) (Vahidi, p. 56)

While the Companions were inquiring about the physical aspects of the crescent, the verse sheds light on its significance in human existence. It emphasizes that individuals should not occupy themselves with trivial matters that do not concern them but rather direct their attention towards meaningful pursuits.

In a particular instance, a person approached the Messenger of Allah and inquired,

“O Messenger of Allah! When will the Day of Judgment arrive?” Our Prophet responded,

“What have you prepared for it?” The Companion replied,

“I have not been able to engage in extensive prayer, fasting and charity for the Day of Judgment, but I hold immense love for Allah and His Messenger.”



In response, the Messenger of Allah conveyed, “You shall be in the company of those you love!” (Bukhari, Ashâbu’n-Nabi, 6)

The Messenger of Allah, through this interaction, redirected the attention of the Companion who asked about the timing of the Day of Judgment. Rather than searching for the uncertainty of its arrival, the focus was shifted to preparing good deeds for the hereafter. This would prove significantly beneficial for the individual.

Simultaneously, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cautioned his ummah against befriending those of ill repute. As individuals will be united with those they hold affection for, associating with wicked individuals would lead one to be aligned with them. Therefore, those desiring a favorable outcome in the hereafter should refrain from developing affection for individuals of immoral character and should avoid their company.

A Bedouin approached the Messenger of Allah and inquired,

“What do you say about a person who engages in combat seeking honor, praise, material gains, or to display his prowess?”

Another individual raised a similar question, asking,

“O Messenger of Allah! What constitutes fighting in the way of Allah? Some fight out of anger, while others fight out of patriotism.”

The Master of the Universe responded, saying,



“-Whoever fights solely to elevate the word of Allah, he is indeed fighting in the way of Allah!”

(Bukhari, Science, 45; Muslim, Imare, 149-150)

The Qur’an provides a remarkable example of the wise approach. When questioned about how much they should contribute, the Prophet replied in a manner that made them realize the significance lies not in the amount they give, but rather in where they direct their contributions.

“They ask you, [O Muḥammad], what they should spend. Say, “Whatever you spend of good is [to be] for parents and relatives and orphans and the needy and the traveler. And whatever you do of good - indeed, Allah Knows it...” (Al-Baqara, 215)

Thus, a response to an ordinary question in jurisprudence was provided to evoke compassion.

Within the answer, there is a sense of urging responsibility, as it implies, “Given your awareness of the multitude of people in need, it is up to you to decide where and how to allocate your resources.”

The instructor, well-versed in the subject matter, employs this method to effectively and efficiently train their students. By doing so, they avoid unnecessary distractions and fatigue, ultimately facilitating the achievement of their educational objectives.

REPEATING THE ANSWER

Repetition holds significant value in the realm of education. Although the human mind may com-



prehend a concept upon initial exposure, true mastery requires repetition at regular intervals to etch it deeply into memory.

The Quran employs the technique of repetition in numerous verses. For instance, in Surah Mursalat, the verse “On that day, woe to those liars!” is reiterated ten times.

In Surah Rahman, the verse “Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?” is repeated thirty-one times. Similarly, the refusal of Iblis to prostrate to Prophet Adam is highlighted repeatedly throughout the Quran.

Through emphasizing different aspects and assigning varying interpretations, the same event is conveyed with coherence and relevance.

In addition to this, during the conversation, considering its importance, it is necessary to resort to repetition in order to focus attention, for everyone to hear it again and to engrave it in memory.

REPEATING THE WORDS THREE OR MORE TIMES

Continuing to reinforce through repetition, like water persistently flowing into the same spot and eventually breaking through a hard stone, strengthens knowledge and subject matter in the mind and heart.”

Annas رضي الله عنه explains: we were with the Prophet at the time of his death,



“Fear Allah about salah!” He said to us three times and continued his words as follows: “Fear Allah about the people under your command!

Fear Allah about the two weaklings: they are widows and orphans.

Fear Allah about salah (prayer)!”

Then the Messenger of Allah started to repeat, “Prayer, prayer...”. (Even when he could not speak with his blessed tongue) he kept repeating this inwardly until his spirit rose to Refik-i A’la. (Beyhaki, Şuab, VII, 477)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “Be cautious! The actions that lead to Paradise are as arduous as a steep and rugged path. (Our beloved Prophet repeated this statement three times.) On the other hand, the actions that lead to Hell are as easy as a flat and smooth road.” (Ahmed, I, 327)

Provided that it is not tedious, repetition is an important method in education. Repetition should be done if it is necessary due to the student’s needs and the importance of the subject matter. Otherwise, it will lead to the boredom especially for the capable students.

An aimless, disorganized teacher, lacking a proper plan or system, neglecting other subjects while incessantly focusing on the one they feel most comfortable with, does not exhibit a repetition method, but rather demonstrates laziness.



USING METAPHORS AND PARABLES

The human mind grasps matters better with examples and Allah Almighty has enhanced the meaning by employing metaphors in certain passages of the Qur'an. One such instance is when describing the qualities of believers.

“... their likeness is as a plantation that brings out its shoot; then it upholds it; then it grows stout; then it matures level upon its stalks, wonderful to the diligent planters, that through them He may enrage the steadfast disbelievers....” (Al-Fatih, 29).

The Messenger of Allah skillfully elucidated abstract concepts by illustrating them through tangible examples, allowing for a deeper understanding and retention. Here are a few instances that exemplify this approach:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “My example and the example of the people is that of a man who made a fire and when it lit what was around it, Moths and other insects started falling into the fire. The man tried (his best) to prevent them (from falling in the fire) but they overpowered him and rushed into the fire. The Prophet ﷺ added:

Now, similarly, I take hold of the knots at your waist (belts) to prevent you from falling into the

Fire, but you insist on falling into it!” (Bukhari, Rikāk, 26. See also Muslim, Adab, 82; Ahmed, II, 244)

In another hadith, the Prophet likened a believer to a honey bee, stating:



“A believer resembles a honey bee, for it consumes what is pure, produces what is pure, resides in pure surroundings and does not harm or damage its dwelling place.” (Ahmed, II, 199; Hakim, I, 147; Suyuti, al-Câmi, h.no: 8147)

In another metaphor the Prophet likens the masjids to gardens and says:

“When you visit the gardens of Paradise, indulge in the abundance of its fruits!” commands Rasûlullah. Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه inquires,

“What are the gardens of Paradise that you mention, O Messenger of Allah?”

Allah’s Messenger responds, “Masjids...”

Once again, Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه asks, “How is it to eat from its fruits, O Rasulullah?” Rasûlullah answers, “Repeating the words Subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, La ilaha illallah and Allahu akbar.” (Tirmidhi, Deavât, 82/3509)

The following Hadith of the Messenger of Allah is also very rich in metaphors and parables:

“... Prophet Yahya عليه السلام gathered the people in Jerusalem and they filled [the Masjid] together with its balconies. So he said:

‘Indeed Allah has commanded me with five commandments to abide by and to command you to abide by.

The first of them is that you worship Allah and not associate anything with him. The parable of the one who associates others with Allah is that of a man



who buys a servant with his own gold or silver, then he says to him: “This is my home and this is my business so take care of it and give me the profits.” So he takes care of it and gives the profits to someone other than his master. Which of you would like to have a servant like that?

And Allah commands you to perform Salat and when you perform Salat then do not turn away, for Allah is facing the face of His worshipers as long as he does not turn away.

And He commands you with fasting. For indeed the parable of fasting, is that of a man in a group with a sachet containing musk. All of them enjoy its fragrance. Indeed the breath of the fasting person is more pleasant to Allah than the scent of musk.

And He commands you to give charity. The parable of that, is a man captured by his enemies, tying his hands to his neck and they come to him to cut his neck. Then he said: “I can ransom myself from you with my money” so he ransoms himself from them.

And He commands you to remember Allah. For indeed the parable of that, is a man whose enemy quickly tracks him until he reaches an impermeable fortress in which he protects himself from them. This is how the worshiper is; he does not protect himself from Satan except by the remembrance of Allah.”

The Prophet ﷺ continued:

“(Similarly) I command you with five that Allah commanded me:



Listening and obeying, Jihad, Hijrah and the Jama'ah. For indeed whoever parts from the Jama'ah the measure of a hand-span, then he has cast off the yoke of Islam from his neck, unless he returns. And whoever follows the path of Jahiliyyah then he is from the coals of Hell." (Tirmidhi, Adab, 78/2863; Ahmed, IV, 130, 202)

All these examples demonstrate the extensive use of metaphors and parables by our Prophet, who serves as an exemplary figure. This method of education greatly facilitates human comprehension and therefore, it is imperative for today's educators to employ it abundantly. Metaphors and parables possess the inherent ability to enhance the reasoning capacity of an immature mind at a rapid pace.

In fact, the concept of good and evil becomes lucidly apparent within the heart of an individual who attentively listens to the following hadith from our Prophet:

"The predicament of a person who engages in wrongdoing and subsequently engages in righteous deeds can be likened to the following analogy:

Imagine a person enclosed in an exceedingly constricting armor that restricts his breath. With each good deed, a circle dissolves; and with each subsequent good deed, yet another circle dissolves. Eventually, the person liberates himself from the suffocating confines of the narrow armor, finding solace and tranquility." (Ahmed, IV, 145)



REINFORCING THROUGH OATHS

The use of oaths as a reinforcement method is quite prevalent, particularly in the Arabic language. Allah Almighty employs oaths to capture our attention, emphasizing certain physical and spiritual entities and preparing our minds for the significant statement that follows as a response to these oaths:

“By the Fig and the Olive and the Mount of Sinai and this city of sanctuary, Mecca, We have indeed created mankind in the finest form, but then We let him sink to the depths of degradation...”

(Surah At-Tin, 95:1-5)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ employed the technique of taking oaths to emphasize the significance of a matter and capture the attention of his audience. By utilizing this approach, he aimed to reinforce his statements and highlight the importance of the subject he was about to address.

According to what is reported from Abu Huraira, the Prophet ﷺ said,

“By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe!”

The companions asked: “Who is that, O Allah’s Messenger ﷺ?”

He said, “That person whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil.”” (Bukhari, Adab, 29; Muslim, Iman, 73; Tirmidhi, Doomsday, 60)

Rasulullah said:



“Indeed I see what you do not see and I hear what you do not hear. The Heavens wail and they have the right to wail. There is no spot, the size of four fingers in them, except that there is an angel placing his forehead in it, prostrating to Allah. By Allah! If you knew what I know, then you would laugh a little and you would cry a lot. And you would not taste the pleasures of your women in the beds and you would go out beseeching Allah. And I wish that I was but a felled tree.”

It has been related through routes other than this, that Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه who narrated the above hadith said: “I wish that I was a felled tree.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 9/2312)

However, it is crucial to remember that taking an oath carries legal implications. In our country, incessantly swearing without a genuine commitment diminishes the significance of one’s words.

TEACHING WITH DRAWINGS

Language and communication are aided by various tools and one effective approach is utilizing visual aids in teaching. Incorporating tools like whiteboards, projectors, video presentations and computers in educational settings can enhance learning experiences by appealing to both the auditory and visual senses.

This method of teaching is not a recent development; it has been employed for centuries. The Messenger of Allah himself utilized a similar approach,



as recorded by Abdullah bin Mas'ud رضي الله عنه, who reports the following:

“The Prophet ﷺ drew a square and then drew a line in the middle of it and let it extend outside the square and then drew several small lines attached to that central line and said,

“This is the human being and this, (the square) in his lease of life, encircles him from all sides (or has encircled him) and this (line), which is outside (the square), is his hope and these small lines are the calamities and troubles (which may befall him) and if one misses him, another will snap (i.e. overtake) him and if the other misses him, a third will snap (i.e. overtake) him.” (Bukhari, Rikak, 4)

Hadrat Jabir رضي الله عنه narrates:

While sitting next to the Messenger of Allah, He drew a line and; “This is the straight path of Allah.” He said.

Then he drew two more lines to the right and left of the aforementioned line and; “These are the ways of the devil,” he commanded.

Afterwards, he placed his blessed hands on the middle line and recited the following verse:

“Indeed, that is My Path—perfectly straight. So follow it and do not follow other ways, for they will lead you away from His Way. This is what He has commanded you, so perhaps you will be conscious [of Allah] (taqwa).” (al-An'am 6/153) (Ahmed, III, 397)



USING GESTURES AND FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

One of the auxiliary elements that enhance the impact of speech, strengthen expression and beautify it is the natural use of gestures and facial expressions. Our Prophet used his hands and facial expressions naturally to make his speech powerful and attract attention.

An educator, while delivering their message, should not only rely on addressing the listener's ear but also know how to address their eyes with gestures and facial expressions. Gestures and facial expressions not only demonstrate the speaker's comfort but also establish a warm connection between the speaker and the listener. The Prophet Muhammad demonstrated a remarkable example of this when he first began delivering his message.

He addressed the Hashemites as follows:

If you come to me on the Day of Judgment burdened with the weight of the world on your shoulders rather than with your good deeds, I will turn away from you. At that time, you will call to me, "O Muhammad!" and I do like this.

Allah's Messenger turned his face away from them and repeated it once more, saying, "This is how I will do it," (Ibn Ishaq, III, 128; Ya'qubi, II, 27)

Jabir رضي الله عنه describes the impactful speech of the Prophet as follows:

Whilst Rasulullah ﷺ delivers a sermon, his eyes turn red and his voice rises.



“The enemy will attack you morning and evening, so protect yourselves!”

Like a commander warning his army, his anger increases and he brings his index finger and middle finger together and says:

“I was sent as a prophet when the distance between me and the Day of Judgment was as close as these two fingers,” (Muslim, Jumua, 43; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 7)

One day, Rasulullah said, “A believer is like a building whose parts are interconnected with one another.” He then interlocked his fingers to illustrate this. (Bukhari, Mazalim, 5)

In another instance, he said the following: “The person who protects and cares for an orphan and I will be like these two in Paradise.” Then he pointed to his index and middle fingers. (Bukhari, Edeb, 24)

USING HANDS TO AID TEACHING

In the realm of education, employing hands as a teaching tool has proven to be highly effective. The incorporation of hand gestures and manipulatives can enhance student engagement, comprehension and retention of information. By utilizing hands-on activities and visual aids, educators can create an interactive learning environment that caters to different learning styles.

Hand gestures can serve as a powerful means of communication, enabling teachers to convey con-



cepts and ideas more effectively. When talking about specific matters, to demonstrate with hands.

This is a sharp style of expression that leaves no room for doubt. By doing so, one has both verbally expressed something and ensured its observation and visibility. This allows the hearts to comprehend better and the issue to be better understood. Our Prophet showed the golden ring on his finger to the congregation while conveying the prohibition of men wearing gold. He said,

“I used to wear this ring and turn its stone inward.”

After saying that, he took off the ring and threw it away, stating,

“I swear by Allah, I will never wear it again!”

(Bukhari, Eymân, 6)

Hadrat Ali رضي الله عنه said the following: The Messenger of Allah took silk in his left hand and gold in his right hand. Then he raised both of them with his hands and said, “These two are forbidden for the men of my ummah, but permissible for women.” (Ibn Majah, Libas, 19; Abu Dawud, Libas, 11)



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