

MODULE 2

Class Title: ‘Ilm gotta have it – part 3, Seeker of Knowledge
(3rd part of a 3 lesson series)

Aim of Lesson: To introduce different branches of Islamic learning

Category: Personal Development

Lesson Format: Power point presentation with narration. Discussion

Hand out: *‘Ilm dua’s* (invocations for seeking knowledge) taken from the Qur’an & *Sunnah*

(Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Taooz*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du’a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slides 1 – 2:

The last two classes, we talked about knowledge. Do you all remember?

So you all understood the gist of what we were talking about? Are we all on the same page about knowledge? Yes or no?

We covered the theory of what *‘ilm* is. The closest translation of *‘ilm* in English is 'knowledge'. Today we will discuss, *inshaallah*, the idea that we are all seekers of knowledge; I include myself in this. We may be at different levels of seeking but ultimately we are all seekers of knowledge. All the members of the Perceptions team, as well as you guys. So let us talk about that *inshaallah*.

Allah (swt) says, “Are those who are knowledgeable equal to those who are not knowledgeable?” (Surah As Zumar 39: verse 9)

You tell me. Are those who are knowledgeable equal to those who are not knowledgeable? No! Of course not. This also implies that somebody who knows is automatically a rung higher than the person who does not know. Very logical and simple. Nothing complicated about it. This is true for every culture, profession and religion. Now add in the fact that Islam is a *deen* of knowledge where the seeker of knowledge or *talib-e-‘ilm* has a very high status. Allah (swt) has given the *talib-e-‘ilm* a very, very high position.

Slide 3

There is a beautiful *hadith* about this. It is a long *hadith* but it is absolutely wonderful. It is narrated by Qays ibn Kathir who said that,

“A man came from Medina to Abu Darda (ra) who was in Damascus. [Abu Darda was one of the companions of Rasool (pbuh) who opted after the demise of Rasool Allah (pbuh) to move to

Damascus, in Syria.] He said, 'What brought you here my brother?' and the man, who came from Medina, said, '[I came for] The *hadith* which I heard that you narrate from Rasool Allah (pbuh)'....”.

Amazing isn't it? The man traveled all the way from Medina to Damascus to hear one *hadith*. In those days, traveling was a tough job with none of this train or plane business. It took him a long time to travel all the way from Medina to Damascus to meet Abu Darda (ra) who was a companion of the Prophet (pbuh) just to hear that one *hadith* that he used to narrate from Rasool Allah (pbuh). Right, the *hadith* continues:

“...Then Abu Darda (ra) asked him, 'Have you come for any other reason?' and the man said, 'No, I have only come for this reason', then Abu Darda (ra) asked him, 'Have you come for trade?' He said, 'No, I have only come to seek this *hadith*, no other reason'. Abu Darda (ra) wanted to make sure that this was a genuine seeker of knowledge and once he was satisfied with that, he narrated the *hadith*.

“Abu Darda said, 'I heard Rasool Allah (pbuh) say:

“Whoever follows a path to seek knowledge, Allah will make easy for him the path to Paradise. The angels beat their wings in approval of the seeker of knowledge and those who are in the heavens and on earth pray for the forgiveness for the scholar, even the fish in the water. The superiority of the scholar over the worshiper is like the superiority of the moon over all other heavenly bodies. The scholars are the heirs of the prophets for the prophets did not leave behind dinars or dihrams (that means they did not leave behind any material wealth) rather they left behind *ilm*. So whoever has gained *ilm* has gained great good fortune.” [Tirmidhi]

Slide 4:

Rasool Allah (pbuh) also said:

“This world is cursed, as is everything in it, except for remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*) and what he likes (righteous deeds etc.), and a scholar or a student.” [Tirmidhi]

There are so many *hadiths* highlighting the importance of scholars and *talib-e-ilm* (students). Just the fact that you are out to seek knowledge is a path to Paradise! I mean that is a huge deal.

Remember what we said about the concept of *ilm*; all *ilm* is from Allah (swt) so if the purpose of your going to school to get educated is to please Allah (swt) then every morning when you go and sit in your car to go to school or college, think of yourself as getting on a road to Paradise. It is amazing; you can take this concept of walking closer to Paradise and apply it just because your intention is to please Allah (swt).

Slide 5:

Now, there are different types of seekers of knowledge. Does anybody have any idea what I am talking about? Do you have any clue? Are there different types of seekers of knowledge? What does that mean?

Okay, let me put it this way: do all of you go to school? Are you students? Do you think there are different types of students?

Student: Yes.

Teacher: Give me an example

Student: Science or Business students.

Teacher: No, no, I don't mean in terms of what they study but different mind-sets of students.

Student: The ones that work really hard.

Teacher: Yes, the ones that work really hard and the ones that don't. You had also raised your hand, sweetie?

Student: Some are good at studies and some are not.

Student: The ones that are learning for the right purpose.

Teacher: OK but what is your purpose for going to school?

Student: Popularity.

Student: Just to socialize.

Student: They just go to school because their mom kicks them in the morning and says go!

Teacher: I was like that! If my mom had never kicked me, I would probably not be sitting here. Thank you mom. Seriously, every morning was like that with me and I don't know how she got me up! Only moms can do that! How many of you go when your mom says, 'wake up!' Come on, be honest. How many go to school just because your mom kicks you out? I used to wear my socks and shoes in the car because I never used to be ready and my sister would become hysterical as our school used to punish late-comers by making them clean the lawn.

Student: That is not bad.

Teacher: It is not bad but it was one of those things. My sister used to be so peeved with me that it made the situation nightmarish. So I know what you are talking about when you say that your

mom kicks you out. Also, you are absolutely right that some people just drag themselves to school with no clue as to why they are going there.

There are three types of Seekers of knowledge:

Slide 6:

The first type is like ants, they just collect data. What do ants do? They go all over the place collecting stuff without giving any unifying structure to it. They work in groups like we do in classrooms. All of you are in a classroom situation, aren't you? You get lots of information here and you get lots of information in school as well. That information is called what? Its data! What do you do with all that 'data'?

Student: You learn it for tests.

Student: You memorize it.

Student: Use it for homework.

Teacher: True. What we generally do is use a minimum amount of effort required to just get by. That is what we generally do with all that information. Don't we say: In one ear and out the other? As soon as the test is finished, it is gone. How many of you actually remember anything after the exam?

Slides 7 - 8:

The second type is the spiders who spin out ideas in solitude. They are a very clever lot, very clever indeed! However, they are loners and don't share. They may end up getting an 'A' grade but there is no sharing.

The third type is the bees that spin ideas, not only on their own but also in group situations. Bees emphasize the community aspect of learning as they share and evaluate all the data together. Bees learn not only for themselves but for the good of others as well.

These are the three kinds of seekers. Which category should we strive for? We will see that after we find out what is required in Islam and what is better in Allah (swt)'s eyes. What kind of seeker of knowledge would be a better seeker?

Slide 9

A seeker has three different relationships going on:

- [1] one with Allah (swt),
- [2] one with his/her teachers
- [3] one with his/her classmates.

If you take away the relationship with Allah (swt) then you are just collecting information, OK? It is just information because you have just the other two aspects left. Without Allah (swt) and His pleasure, you go to school and you have to deal with the teacher; you come over here and you have to deal with the teacher, whether you like it or whether you don't like it. Yes or no? And when you are in a class situation, you are bundled together with a bunch of people, whether you like it or not. Nobody asks you whether you want to be sitting here. I am sure that when shuffling occurs, everyone moans all over the place, "Oh my God, I don't want to be in that section!" Does that happen? Most of the time, you are not given a choice and are lumped with a group of people, whether you like it or whether you don't like it! True or not?

Slide 10:

Let's look again at the three different relationships that seekers of knowledge have. If we are true seekers of *`ilm* then our relationship with Allah (swt) is of supreme importance. To maintain this relationship, you have to have purity of intention and serious humility. Do you know what humility means? Does anybody know what humility means?

Student: The word humility means modesty.

Teacher: Yes, modesty is there but humility is more about humbleness. Look at when Allah (swt) asked the angels to bow in front of Adam (as). Allah (swt) says that the angels said:

"Subhanaka la `ilma lana illa ma `allamtana innaka anta-l`aliymu-lHakiym"

"They said, 'Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what You have taught us, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.'" (Surah Baqarah 2: Verse 31)

What the angels said to Allah (swt) is that we don't know anything, we only know what you have taught us - that is humility. How do we become humble? Whether you are taking your 'O' level exams or whatever, connect with Allah (swt). Pray that "O Allah (swt), I am like zero. I don't know anything. You are the One who has given me this ability to learn and to absorb and I am very grateful." This *du'a* (prayer) is not just for knowledge of the Qur'an, it's equally valid for any knowledge, any *`ilm*.

Allah (swt) has given you an *aql* [intellect] with which to learn. Like somebody was saying, "I can remember things." Such humility, yes? Why do you remember and how do you remember? Some people are cleverer than others, Allah (swt) has given them a better brain. Some people get the highest grade in their class and some people do not. True or not? Hard work has a lot to do with it but who has given you the ability to work hard? Everybody's IQ is different, that too is from Allah (swt). So, if one person has a high IQ and another person has a lower IQ, who will do better if they both work equally hard? Who will do better? The one with the higher IQ or the one with the slightly lower IQ?

Students : Higher

Teacher: Higher IQ will do better provided that they are doing the same amount of work. True? The problem is that we are not grateful to Allah (swt) for lots of things. What I find really interesting is our reaction to compliments. For example, somebody comes up to you and says, "You have very beautiful eyes!" We smile happily and reply, "Thank you." Hello?? Who has made your eyes? Do we give credit for our looks, our talents and our capabilities to Allah (swt)? True humility is to admit that all my abilities and knowledge are from You {Allah (swt)}, that I don't know anything except for what You have given me! Humility is the stamp of a true seeker. Without humility, one is just a student who wants to pass 'O' levels or 'A' levels or get admission into college or get a good job and end of story. It is all *dunya* [material things], *dunya*, and more *dunya*.

The true seeker is extremely humble. He is always thinking that:

"Subhanaka la `ilma lana illa ma `allamtana (Surah Al-Baqarah 2: Verse 31)

Whatever You have taught me is what I know...

Student: You should say *Masha Allah* if someone compliments you.

Teacher: You should but even if you don't say it, at least think in your head that Allah (swt) has given me such pretty eyes. At least think that.

Student: you can say *Alhamdulillah*.

Teacher: Yes you can say *Alhamdulillah*. It would be an absolutely wonderful response. Say somebody comes up to you and says, "Wow! You got 5 A's!" Do you answer: "Yes, I am smart aren't I?" No, you say *Alhamdulillah* and in your heart, you should be feeling that humility. The next time you stand up for prayer in front of Allah (swt), say, " 'O' Allah (swt), make me capable of fulfilling this responsibility that you have given me. If I have these beautiful eyes, let me use them for the things that you want me to see and nothing else." This *du'a* (prayer) shows the humbleness of the seeker that I don't know anything and it is Allah (swt) who is going to teach me.

There are scholars who study certain subjects or the Quran for years and years and years. Ask them something about it and often they will say, *Wallahu Alam*. This means 'Allah knows best'. The great scholars never take credit for their knowledge and they remain seekers to the end.

Slide 11:

In another place in the Quran, in Surah Al Fatir in verse 28, Allah (swt) says,

“Amongst men and crawling creatures and cattle they are of various colors. Those who truly fear Allah (swt) among His servants are those who have knowledge.”

This is *`ilm* isn't it? What does *`ilm* take us to? Does anyone remember? Closer to Allah (swt)! It leads to a recognition of Allah (swt). A true *`alim* recognizes Allah (swt) and when you recognize Allah (swt), you fear Allah (swt). This fear is not like the fear of a snake. It is a fear that makes you do good deeds and that stops you from doing what Allah (swt) dislikes. It is that kind of fear.

We have covered that you need pure intentions and humility in order to be a true seeker. What else? A true seeker treats his teachers with utmost respect and humility.

If you are a 'smarty pants' who taunts her teacher, "Been there, done that so move on, will you?" then you will never be a seeker. You will just not be a seeker. Utmost respect for one's teacher is a prerequisite for a seeker.

Let me share something every interesting with you. You don't have to like the teacher to be able to learn from her/him. The learning process is up to the seeker not the teacher. The likability of the teacher has nothing to do with your learning. If you like the teacher, *Alhamdulillah*, it's a bonus point.

Take this class, for example. Half of you probably don't even want to come! However, if you still come and with the right intention then you may hate me for all I know but you will still learn. You may say, There she goes again. When is she going to stop?? Who cares about all this stuff? And so on. But, that has nothing to do with the fact that you can still get benefit from what you hear. You guys frequently crib about the teachers in school, don't you? Mrs so-and-so or Mr You-know-who did this. Some of you call them names or make all sorts of jokes about them and whatever.

Your liking your teacher has nothing to do with your gaining *`ilm*.

There is a very, very interesting incident involving an extremely famous companion of Rasool Allah (pbuh), Salman Farsi (ra). Have you heard of Salman Farsi (ra)? He was a fire worshiper in Persia when he came across a church. In those days, many churches still followed the true teachings of 'Isa (as) and all this trinity business had not spread.

Salman (ra) recognized that Christianity was a better religion than fire worship and he sought the company of a Christian scholar-priest. Salman (ra) went to the priest and said, "I want to study with you." The priest agreed but as time passed, Salman (ra) did not like the priest at all. The character of the priest was not very upright. He was a good teacher but he would take money from the people and spend it on himself rather than on the poor. He was a corrupt man but Salman Farsi (ra) stuck with him because he wanted to learn. When Salman (ra) found a better teacher, he left. Do you understand what I am trying to say here? Even corruption is not a good

excuse for disrespecting a teacher. The teachers are also human beings who forget, have faults and err.

The mark of a true seeker of knowledge is that they do not pick on the faults of their teachers instead they forgive them. They think: “Let's forget about it!” or “I understand that he is a human being.” or “Everybody has faults.” And so-on. As a seeker of knowledge, do you have faults?

Students: yes

Teacher: So do you think it is a good idea that you should be picking on each other's faults? Particularly for your teachers or elders who are in the position of teaching you? Should you be focusing on their faults and the negative aspects of their personality? That is not the way of the seeker. That may be the way of the student but not of the seeker. Are you all with me? Do you know what I am trying to say over here?

Right, overlook the faults of teachers. This most certainly includes the teachers in your school whom we love to criticize. Oh, so-and-so was doing this and she is like that and so on. Talk like that is a bad idea. Firstly it is *gheebat* [backbiting] and secondly, if you are a true seeker of knowledge you would not do that, you just would not. She is a human being. Overlooking the faults of your teachers is a mark of a true seeker of knowledge.

The third relationship of the seeker is with her classmates or fellow seekers. Let's say that respect and humility run everywhere, alright? Obviously, when we say the respect of Allah (swt), we mean the purity of our intention in seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt) but humility is equally crucial. Thus, you should not be arrogant with your other classmates, even in school. No, “Oh I am an 'A' grade student and she, poor thing, is not too bright up here” or whatever. You may be doing better but sometimes it's the struggling one who is stronger and more valued by Allah (swt).

Which type of seeker are we going to be? Bees, bees and bees. That means we will be sharing what we learn! The bee model highlights a serious problem in our school system. How many willingly share their notes?

Student: Maybe they need their notes for exams.

Teacher: Haven't you heard people say, “Why do we need to give our notes?” It is not a good sign that people don't want to share what they learn or don't want to share their notes. So many kids choose to go to so-and-so, well-known tuition teacher thinking that, “Oh my God! The competition is so tough! I need to get an 'A' star, after all, what if everyone else also gets an 'A' star?”

There is a rat race, even in education, with most of us striving to stay a step-ahead of the pack. Don't you do the same? Aren't we all taught that this is a very competitive world and you need to be a little like a cut-throat but that is not the mark of a true seeker.

A true seeker genuinely wants the same success for his classmates that he wants for himself, just like a bee. A bee produces honey for everybody in the hive...true or not? A bee is the kind of seeker that we should be. A true seeker is not going to be insulting to his classmates. A true seeker will not steal her classmates' mobile phones or say mean and awful things about them. The relationship with your classmates should be one of respect and humility. You can have lots of fun as long as you are not vicious, mean or awful. This is something which you all know, don't you? People ganging up against other classmates? bullying? These things are not the mark of a true seeker: whether you are in school, whether you are in an Islamic class you should be a seeker of knowledge. Keep that in mind. How many of you have had things stolen from school?

Wow, all of you! What kind of stuff? Give me an example: pencils, books, wallet, money ...ipod!

Whether it is a pencil or an ipod, stealing is stealing. Stealing in school! Shouldn't a school be a place for seeking knowledge? Instead of pointing fingers at somebody else, we need to think about it: am I a seeker of knowledge? Am I actually a seeker or am I just killing time? When you guys come here, you all make a lot of effort so do you guys come here as seekers? Or do you just come because? Think about it...

Slide 12:

Rasool Allah (pbuh) said,

“Whoever fails to show honor to our elders, mercy to our children and due respect to our scholars is not one of us.” This is reported by Ahmad.

These are very harsh words, “...not one of us” if you don't show honor to your elders. Aren't teachers our elders too? If you do not show respect to the teachers, you are not one of the *ummah* of Rasool Allah (pbuh). This is a very harsh statement, extremely harsh. We should think about it very, very carefully the next time that we want to make a joke about so-and-so teacher or talk in a derogatory manner about so-and-so professor. We should really think about that.

Slides 13 – 14:

What qualities are desirable in a seeker of knowledge? The first one is patience. This is not easy. Just look at this class. Some of you are sitting here, fiddling or scribbling stuff other than notes, some are talking to each other or wanting to talk to each other, some are thinking, “Oh my God, when is this going to end!!” or “Oh God, this is serious Islamic torture”. Do any of you know the story of Musa (as) and Khizr (as) in Surah Al-Kahf?

When Musa (as) wanted to seek knowledge, Allah (swt) sent him to this person: Khizr (as). Khizr (as) was perhaps a prophet, we are not 100% sure about that. He was a very knowledgeable servant of Allah (swt). The first thing Khizr (as) asked Musa (as) is that; 'would you be able to have patience on how I teach you?' Musa (as) agreed that; 'I will try my level best!' Imagine Musa (as), a prophet and messenger of very high rank and a true servant of Allah (swt). Nevertheless, he found it very difficult to stay patient, he found it very, very hard.

So, the first thing is patience. Whether you like it or don't like it. In fact, generally you require more patience when you don't like something. Somebody in this class said, "I remember something if it is interesting!" Not everything is interesting. When you go to school, is everything interesting? No, it is not. When you come here, is everything interesting? No, it is not. Simple as that. Everything is not interesting. So, you really need to gear yourself up to deal with the uninteresting, the boring and the difficult stuff. OK? Patience, patience, patience. You need to be patient.

Slides 15 - 16:

Closely related to patience is the second quality of a seeker: listening attentively. If we have earplugs in our ears and blindfolds on our eyes then we will never learn anything, we will not be true seekers. The desirable quality of a true seeker is to listen carefully and attentively. When Rasool Allah (pbuh) used to talk, whether it was general conversation, a *khutbah* (sermon), advice or a class, his companions used to sit so still that birds used to come and perch on their heads, thinking that they were inanimate objects. But we fiddle and what is fiddling? It is a lack of patience, isn't it? You are moving around, first it is one thing, then another. You are feeling discomfort.

When you are absorbed in your work and trying your level best to pick up as much as you can then your fiddling will be at a minimum. It is a sign of impatience, to be moving around too much. A seeker of knowledge is still; they are full of quietness everywhere....inside and out. Stillness, concentration and focus; these will come only if you are quiet. If you are sitting at the back somewhere and texting [sending messages via cell phone] then that is not quiet. You may not be saying anything with your mouth but you are saying a lot with your little fingers.....tick tick tick tick tick. If you do that, no matter what class you are sitting in, then you most certainly are not a seeker.

There might be situations where you are bored to death, the topic is of no interest, but if you are a seeker you will go through it somehow. You will gear yourself up. Okay, we are, oh my God, we are going to have a class on seeker of knowledge and the teacher is going to talk for 40 minutes!! Oh No! Oh dear. What am I going to do? So, you gear yourself up, you tell yourself that okay, I am going to sit through this no matter what happens. Allah (swt), please help me. A

true seeker will ask the help of Allah (swt) to be patient and to sit through a class even though she finds it boring.

Slide 17:

A third quality of the true Seeker is 'Perseverance', what does 'perseverance' mean? It means keeping at it. How many of you have come home from school and declared, at some point in time that I am dropping out. I don't want to go anymore. I used to think that every day of my school life, actually. Don't we at times think, why am I going to school? Do you ever think like that? Sometimes we do want to leave school but we keep at it, don't we? Why? Because a lot of times we say I have to go through my 'O' levels and I have to go through the 'A' levels or whatever reason. You need perseverance in whatever you do but it is especially true for gaining knowledge. You have to stick with it. You can't just leave it: whether you like it, whether you don't like it, whether you like the teacher, whether you don't like the teacher, whether it is boring, whether it is interesting, you stick with it. Perseverance is extremely important.

Slide 18:

It was narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (ra) that the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“The believer will never have enough of listening to good things (seeking knowledge) until he reaches Paradise.” [Tirmidhi]

A seeker of knowledge is a seeker as long as Allah (swt) keeps him alive. This is the life style of the seeker of knowledge, not one day or two days or three days or 5 months or 6 months or 5 years or 20 years but as long as Allah keeps you alive....that is how long a seeker keeps at it.

Slide 19:

The fourth quality is to practice what you know and more practice. Allah (swt) says in Surah Al Jum'mah 62: verse 5:

“The likeness of those of were entrusted with the Torah but subsequently failed in those is as a likeness of a donkey which carries a huge burden of books. How bad is the example of people who deny the signs of Allah and Allah does not guide the people who are the *zulemoon*. ”

So, the example of a person who does not practice what he learns is like a donkey with lots of books on top of him. Simple as that.

Slide 20:

Remember the 4 P's:

Purpose
Patience
Practice
Perseverance

So a very good way of remembering this is to keep in mind the kind of seeker we should be. Ant or spider or bee?

Students: Bee.

Teacher: So we need to go a beep...beep...beep...beep.

4 P's + bee becomes Beep.

Keep that as a reminder in your head: I need to be a bee, I must go a beep. I need to have purpose, I need to have patience, I need to have perseverance and I need to practice.

Can you all say it? Beep, beep, beep, beep

Students: Beep beep beep beep.

Teacher: Say it a little louder!

Students: Beep beep beep beep.

Teacher: Come on let us say it really loud: BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP.

Alhumdullilah!

Slides 21 – 22:

There are two things that you need to be aware of: 'The two *meems*...'. There is a saying that there are two people that will never learn: the *mustahyoon* and the *mutakabiroon*.

'*Mustahyoon*' is an Arabic word. It means those who are shy. It is from the word *haya*. The *mustahyoon* are too shy to answer, they are too shy to ask a question or they are constantly afraid of being called stupid, or for whatever reason. Do you ever do that in class? You are confused but don't ask for whatever reason. You may feel that it won't look right so you keep quiet. Does that happen to you?

The other kind that doesn't learn is the *mutakabiroon* and these are the worst kind. These are the ones who have arrogance, who are too proud or smart alecky. Those who think that, "Oh my God, I don't really need to know this". They go through life like Miss. know-it-all.

These are the two '*meems*' that you need to keep away from and the four p's that we need to hang on to if we want to be true seekers of knowledge.

Teacher: Will you remember the 4 p's? OK, so what are the 4p's?

Students: Purpose Patience Practice Perseverance, which 'p' comes first?

Teacher: That is why I showed you as a Venn diagram. They are all interconnected. Sometimes, you need a lot of patience initially, before you can sort out your purpose. Other times you need to have the purpose before patience. The purpose is extremely important because if your purpose is a little dilly-dally and dodgy, then you will not be able to have patience or perseverance or practice. If your purpose is to please Allah (swt) (and you can add another P for the Pleasure of Allah (swt)) then it will be easier for you to have patience, perseverance and practice of the *`ilm, inshaAllah*.

Slides 23 -24:

Scholars tell us certain things which a seeker of knowledge must practice. Habits he must inculcate in himself, if he is to be a true seeker.

- Be aware that Allah is watching you
- Make the best use of time
- Focus
- Study
- Choose the right companions
- Have good manners

In addition to these tips, a very famous scholar - Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah said: There are six stages to acquiring knowledge, some of them we have already covered in detail today:

1. Asking questions in a good manner.
2. Remaining quiet and listening attentively.
3. Understanding well.
4. Memorizing.
5. Teaching.
6. Acting upon the knowledge and keeping to its limits.

To conclude, I have these cards over here. Some of you might have them at home. These are beautiful little *dua's* (prayers). I think we talked about some of them. If you already have a prayer card like this at home, pass this one on to somebody who does not have it.

It will be like a *sadaqa-e-jaariha* (on-going benefit) for you. Can somebody distribute these cards? These are little prayers, two are from the Quran and three are from the *Hadith*. Learn these prayers and read them, even if it is to gain, quote unquote, secular knowledge or for school

studies or whatever. Please do that. These are very useful and helpful *dua*'s (prayers). We can pray one of these right now: "*Rabbi zidni ilma*". Can you all say it very loudly?

This prayer means: "Oh Allah, increase me in my knowledge." Which kind of knowledge am I looking for?

Slide 25:

"Allahhuma inni asaluka 'ilman nafian wa 'ammalan mutaqabbalan wa rizqan tayyibah."

O Allah! I beg you for knowledge that is beneficial, for deeds that are accepted and for sustenance that is pure [Mishkat] (Another prayer from the handout).

I am looking for knowledge that is beneficial and I want to be a true seeker of knowledge, *Insha'Allah*.

Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati 'amma yasifun wa salamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*