THE WISE COUNSEL OF LUQMAN

By Shaikh Abdu’l – Razzaq Ibn Abdu’l-Muhsin al-Badr
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
ALLAH SAID,

“And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom”

[LUQMĀN (31): 12]
The Wise Counsel of Luqmān

by Shaykh 'Abdul-Razzāq ibn 'Abdul-Muḥsin al-Badr

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Biography of Luqman the Wise

Luqmān Ibn ‘Anqā’ Ibn Sadun was his name. Or, as stated by al-Suhayli from Ibn Jarīr and al-Qutaybī that he is Luqmān Ibn Tharān who was from among the people of Aylah.

Luqmān was a righteous and pious man who devoted himself in worship, he was blessed with wisdom. It has been said that he was a judge during the lifetime of Prophet Dawūd (‘alayhis-salām). And, Allāh, the Most High, knows best.

The Salaf [Pious Predecessors] differed over the identity of Luqmān; there are two known opinions regarding him: was he a Prophet or just a righteous servant of Allāh, without been given Prophethood.1

The majority favored the latter view, that he was a devoted and a pious servant of Allāh and not a Prophet.

Sufyān al-Thawrī said, narrating from al-Ash‘ath, from Ikrimah,

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1 His name was ‘Abd Sāliḥ, and there is no evidence in the Qur’ān or the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) that he was a Prophet. Imām al-Baghawī said in his commentary of the Qur’ān: ‘The consensus of the scholars is that he was a wise man and not a Prophet. The only exception is Ikrimah who said that he was a Prophet.’ [Ma‘ālim al-Tanzih 3/490]
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from Ibn 'Abbās (radiyAllāhu 'anhuma),

'Luqmān was an Ethiopian slave who was a carpenter.'

'Abdullāh Ibn al-Zubayr (radiyAllāhu 'anhuma) said, 'I said to Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh (radiyAllāhu 'anhuma): 'What did you know about Luqmān?''

He said: 'He was short with a flat nose, and came from Nubia.'

Yahyā Ibn Sa‘īd al-Ansārī narrated from Sa‘īd Ibn Al-Musayyib that

'Luqmān was from the black people of (southern) Egypt, and had thick lips. Allāh gave him wisdom but withheld Prophethood from him.'

Al-Awza‘ī said, 'Abdu’l-Rahmān Ibn Harmalah told me; 'A black man came to Sa‘īd Ibn Al-Musayyib to ask him a question, and Sa‘īd Ibn al-Musayyib said to him:

'Do not be upset because you are black, for among the best of people were three who were black: Bilāl (radiyAllāhu ‘anhu), Mahjā’ the freed slave of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattāb (radiyAllāhu ‘anhumā), and Luqmān the Wise, who was a black Nubian with thick lips.'

Ibn Jarīr recorded that Khālid al-Raba‘ī said:

'Luqmān was an Ethiopian slave who was a carpenter. His master said to him, 'Slaughter this sheep for us,' so he slaughtered it.

(His master) said: 'Bring the best two pieces from it,' so
he brought out the tongue and the heart. Then [some] time passed by, as much as Allah willed, and (his master) said: ‘Slaughter this sheep for us,’ so he slaughtered it. (His master) said, ‘Bring the worst two morsels from it,’ so he brought out the tongue and the heart.

His master said to him, ‘I told you to bring out the best two pieces, and you brought these, then I told you to bring out the worst two organs, and you brought same [organs as before]!’

Luqmān said, ‘There is nothing more superior than these [the tongue and the heart] if they are good, and there is nothing worse than these [two] if they are corrupted.’

Shu’bah narrated from al-Ḥakam, from Mujāhid,

‘Luqmān was a righteous servant, but he was not a Prophet.’\(^2\)

\(^2\) Edited and adapted from the *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (abridged), published by Dar-us-Salam, Riyadh, KSA, 1st ed; 2000.
Introduction

Verily all praise is due to Allāh. We beseech His help and ask His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil within ourselves and our evil deeds. Whosoever Allāh guides, none can send astray and whosoever He sends astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh alone and that He has no associates. I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger; may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, his family and all his companions and loftiest salutations to all of them. To proceed:

The instructions and counsels found in the story of the Luqmān al-Ḥakīm have greatly huge benefits. They comprise noble guidance and contain turnabouts and twists that are full of blessing. You find within it, correct and appropriate conduct in inviting people towards Allāh and nurturing of children. It speaks of proper upbringing of a generation, describes the ways to success and teaches people wholesome goodness. Therefore it is incumbent upon every mentor, father and teacher to pay particular attention to the counsel found in this story. They should contemplate on it and derive an exemplary guidance plan in the field of propagating and education. If based entirely on these wise counsels, it can facilitate in drawing hearts and enriching minds. There are also elements of fear and hope and this strongly appeals to one’s good conscience.
Indeed to put across Allāh’s message to the common man requires proper planning and strategy that is abound in this is story.

Allāh, the Most High bestowed Luqmān much wisdom, injecting it deep into his heart whereby his words, deeds and guidance were all wise. Allāh reveals:
denies [His favour and is ungrateful] - then indeed, Allāh is Rich, Beyond need and Praiseworthy.

And [remember, O Muḥammad (ﷺ)], when Luqmān said to his son while he was counselling him, ‘O my son, do not associate [anything] with Allāh. Indeed, association [with Him] is great injustice [a terrible wrong].’

And We have enjoined upon man [to care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning period was two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is your [final] destination.

But if they try to make you associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, [then] do not obey them. But [keep] company with them in [this] world correctly and courteously [showing kindness to them] and follow the Way of those who turn back to Me [in repentance]. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do.

[And Luqmān said], ‘O my son, indeed if it [i.e., a wrong] should be the weight of a mustard seed and should [it] be inside a rock or [anywhere else] in the heavens or in the earth, Allāh will bring it out. Indeed, Allāh is Subtle [in bringing out that seed] and Ac-quainted [All-Aware].

‘O my son, establish [regular] prayer, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient [with constancy] over whatever may befall you. This is certainly the most resolute course to follow.
And do not turn your cheek [in pride] from people and do not walk through the earth arrogantly. Indeed, Allah does not love anyone who is self-deluded [vain] or boastful.

And be moderate in your pace [of walking] and lower your voice; indeed, the most hateful of sounds is the voice of donkey's bray.”

[Luqmân (31): 12-19]
Benefits derived from the narrative of Luqman the Wise

Many benefits can be derived from the above verses. I counted not less than fifty of such benefits, and I hope that Allāh will make it profitable and advantageous for us and make us good recipients of these wise and blessed advices.

The First Benefit - [Divine Prerogative]

Verily wisdom is a divine prerogative [Entitlement]. It is a gift from Allāh that is bestowed upon him who He wishes from among His servants.

This is the essence of the verse:

وَلَقَدْ أَلْبَبَهُ الْقُرْنَ الْمَكْرَمَةَ

“And We had certainly given Luqmān wisdom (al-hikmah).”

[Luqmān (31): 12]

Allāh also said in another verse:
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“He gives wisdom (al-hikmah) to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom (al-hikmah) has certainly been given much good.”

[al-Baqarah (2): 269]

Whoever wants a similar endowment should seek it from Allāh for all goodness and bounty is with Allāh, the Most High. He gives to whosoever He wishes and Allāh is the owner of all bounty. None achieves goodness except through sincerity towards Allāh and a yearning to draw close to Him. One must also be steadfast in worshipping Him and constantly seek His help to gain success.

The Second Benefit - [Wisdom]

The attainment of wisdom has its fundamentals, and the one yearning for it should seek to acquire these fundamentals. If one ponders on the story of the Luqmān the Wise (al-Hakīm), he or she will realise that Luqmān led a pious life. He was very eager to carry out his Lord’s commandments thereby establishing a special connection with Him, the Most High. In mentioning his attributes, al-Ḥāfīẓ Ibīn Kathīr and other scholars said1: ‘He used to worship a great deal and was very honest. He used to speak little but reflect and ponder long periods of time. He also used to partake in goodly gatherings and urge people to benefit likewise from such congregations. He used to interact with the people of knowledge and benefit from this too. It stands to reason that all efforts put to draw closer to Allāh will inevitably result in earning

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1 See explanation in al-Bidāyah wal-Nihāyah (2/146-153).
success and goodness, leading to attaining wisdom. To this end, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الخِرْصُ عَلَّ مَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَأَشْهُعْ ِبَيْنَّا»

“Strive for that which will benefit you, and seek help from Allah.”

He (ﷺ) also said:

«إِنَّ الْأَعْلَمْ بِالْعَلْمِ وَالْحَلْمِ بِالْحَلْمِ وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ الْخَيْرَ
لَعْبَهُ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِوُ الْشَّرَّ يُؤْفِهُ»

“Verily knowledge is to be sought and discernment is through patience. And whoever strives for goodness, it is given to him and whoever toils for evil is burdened with it.”

Thus one has to strive for the means that lead to wisdom. It is not proper that a man prays: ‘O Allah! Grant me wisdom. O Allah! Verily I ask you beneficial knowledge and pious deeds.’

And then not work towards its accomplishment. Allah the Most High said:

قَاعِدًا وَتَوَسَّلِلٌ

“So worship Him and rely upon Him.”

[Hūd (11): 123]

And He said:

2 Reported by Muslim (#2664).

3 Reported by al-Khaṭīb in his al-Tārīkh (127/9) from the hadīth narrated by Abu Hurayrah (radīy Allāhu ‘anhu).

Sh. Al-Albānī considered this hadīth as hasan in his al-Sāhibah (#342).
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“It is You we worship and You we ask for help.”

[al-Fatiha (1): 5]

The Third Benefit - [Showing Gratitude]

The importance of showing gratitude for the bounties of Allāh and one’s role in sustaining those bounties; by not only making it last but increasing it inordinately. Allāh, the Almighty said:

وَلَقَدْ أَنْبَأْتُ لَمَّا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَةَ أَنْ أَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ

“And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom [and said], ‘Be grateful to Allāh.’”

[Luqman (31): 12]

If bounties are appreciated and thanked for, they will become a mainstay, but if they are ignored and taken for granted, they will be taken away. For this reason, some of the scholars called gratitude “the Preserver” and “the Procurer”, for it preserves the present bounty and attracts lost bounty. Allāh, the Most High said:

وَإِذَا نَادَىُ رَبُّكَ لَنِّي أَشْكُرُ نَارَكَةَ وَأَذَّنَكُمْ

“And (remember) when your Lord announced, ‘If you are grateful, I will certainly give you increase.’”

[Ibrahim (14): 7]

Here He said:

أَنْ أَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ

“Be grateful to Allāh.”

21
It can then be extrapolated that one who is given wisdom and is blessed with beneficial knowledge and is guided to do pious deeds should always be grateful and show his gratitude to Allah for all the favours bestowed upon him.

The Fourth Benefit - [The Heart, Tongue and Actions]

Verily the gratitude shown for favours bestowed upon a person is via the heart, tongue and action. These three components are alluded to in the verse:

أَنْ أَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ

"Be grateful to Allah."

One bestowed with wisdom, beneficial knowledge and pious deeds shows gratitude initially by acknowledging the giver, Allah, it in his heart. He then proceeds to glorify Allah and praises Him with his tongue. He then concludes by steering his body parts in doing righteous acts in submission to Allah’s will. Allah the Most High said:

أَعْمَلُوَانَا لَدَيْنَا شَكْرًا

"[We said], ‘Work, O family of Dawud, in gratitude.’"
[Sabá (34): 13]

The Fifth Benefit - [Allah is Rich, Beyond need]

Verily, neither the gratitude of the grateful nor the disbelief of the disbelievers has any impact on Allah. He, the Most Glorified said:
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"Be grateful to Allah.’ And whoever is grateful only does so for his own [benefit] good. And whoever denies [His favour and is ungrateful] - then indeed, Allah is Rich, Beyond need and Praiseworthy.”

[Luqman (31): 12]

Allah does in no way benefit from the righteous deeds of the pious. He is also not harmed by the evil of the disobedient. Ponder on this aspect while reading the following hadith qudsi. On the authority of Abū Dharr (radiyAllahu anhu) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"O My servant! If the first of you and the last of you, among your mankind or among your jinn were to be the most God-fearing, it shall not pose any increase in My kingdom. O My servant! If the first of you and the last of you, among your mankind or among your jinn were to be the most insolent, it shall not pose any decrease in My kingdom.”

In fact it is the servant who faces the recompense of his own actions. Allah the Most High said:

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4 Reported by Muslim (#2577)
“Whoever is guided is only guided for [the benefit of] his soul. And whoever errs only errs against it.”

*[al-Isrā’ (17): 15]*

Allāh is the possessor of all wealth and is the most praiseworthy. He, the Most Glorious said:

“O mankind, you are poor in need of Allāh, while Allāh is the Rich Beyond Need [Free of any need], the Praiseworthy. If He wills, He can do away with you and bring forth a new creation.”

*[Fāṭir (35): 15-16]*

The Sixth Benefit - [Gratitude of the Servant]

Surely the gratitude of the servant for the blessings of Allāh, the affects and benefits of his gratitude return to the servant himself.

“And whoever is grateful only does so for his own [benefit] good.”

*[Luqmān (31): 12]*

When one is grateful to his Lord for the bounties given to him, he reaps rewards as a result in this world and in the Hereafter. His bounties become established and everlasting while creating op-
portunity for more such bounty in this world. In the Hereafter, he enjoys goodly recompense. Thus as mentioned in the earlier verse in *al-Isra',* one who is grateful to Allāh does only for his own good and he is the one who benefits from it, as Allāh said:

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من أهتدى فإنما أهدى لنفسه ومن أسأء فإن ما أسواء

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"Whoever is guided is only guided for [the benefit of] his soul. And whoever errs only errs against it."

[*al-Isra'*(17): 15]

Conversely, he who is arrogant and is ungrateful shall face evil consequences due to his actions, both in this world and Hereafter. Therefore man is in dire need of showing gratefulness to his Lord, and Allāh does not stand to gain anything from it. As for Allāh then He is Rich, free of all need, worthy of all praise.

The Seventh Benefit - [Complete Faith]

Complete faith (*imān*) entails knowing that Allāh is free from all wants and His servant is needy in all aspects. Allāh said:

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ومن كفر فإن الله غني حميد
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" And whoever denies [His favour and is ungrateful] - then indeed, Allāh is Rich, Beyond need and Praiseworthy."

[*Luqman*(31): 12]

We must believe that Allāh is free of need. *Al-Ghani* ‘الغني’ is an Attribute among the Attributes of Allāh. He is free of need of His servants and anything else of His creations. He is established above His Throne (‘*arsh*) and distinguished entirely from His crea-
tion as mentioned in His Book:

“The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established.”

[Ṭāhā (20): 5]

and also

“And He then established Himself above the Throne.”

[al-ʿArāf (7): 54]

He, the Most High is also free of need for the Throne; and for that matter, the Throne and everything else is in need of Allāh. He said:

“Innā Allāh yusīṣaf as-samawāt
wāl-ʿarḍān fīn nūlā wālīn nūlīn Allāhīn as-samāl wa.MIN ALLAH YAMMAKAMU DBD
“Indeed, Allāh holds the heavens and the earth, lest they cease. And if they should cease, no one could hold them [in place] after Him. Indeed, He is Forbearing and Forgiving.”

[Fāṭir (35): 41]

Allāh the Most High holds the heavens and the earth and the Throne. All creations exist as a result of His existence and can never remain independent of Him, the Almighty.
The Eighth Benefit - [Steadfastness]

Steadfastness (ithbāt) in Islam necessitates the praising of Allāh, the Most Glorious. Allāh said:

وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ لَهُ عَزْوٌ عَظِيمٌ

“And whoever denies [His favour and is ungrateful] - then indeed, Allāh is Rich, Beyond need and Praiseworthy.”

[Luqman (31): 12]

Al-Hamid is an Attribute among the Attributes of Allāh. He is praiseworthy and His praise is mentioned every time and instance. His Name, Attribute, Loftiness, exclusiveness and bounties are praised forever. He, the Most High said:

لِهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْأَوْلىِ وَالْآخِرِ

“To Him is (due all) praise in the first (life) and the Hereafter.”

[al-Qāṣās (28): 70]

To Him is also praise that is evident and that which is within. Since all bounties that a man receives are from Allāh, it is incumbent on him to praise his Lord and dedicate solely to Him and to Him only. For this reason, those who chant the talbiyah [on Ḥajj and Umrah] say:

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالْبَلَاغَةَ لَكَ وَالْمَلِكَ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

“Verily praise and blessing and ownership of the dominion belong to You. There is no associate unto You.”
Allāh bestows wisdom to those among His servants whom He loves. This wisdom has a high status and its benefits are unparalleled. This is evident in this story as Allāh praises Luqmān and mentions that he was given wisdom. Therefore, one ought to seek the true meaning and essence of wisdom. These are some definitions of the word al-ḥikmah:

1. It is beneficial knowledge (al-‘ilm al-nāfī) that collaborates with goodly deeds (al-‘amal al-sāliḥ).
2. It is doing an appropriate deed at the (most) appropriate time and place.
3. It is foresightedness (al-bāṣirah) comprehension (al-fāḥm), firmness (al-sādād) and good opinion (husn al-rā‘yī).
4. Other definitions have been given also.

It is quite evident that wisdom has a lofty position and it is an obligation on part of every servant of Allāh to strive to attain it, expending all effort and means to do so and exploring all legal ways to reach that objective.

The Tenth Benefit - [The Importance of Admonishment]

The importance of the method of admonishment in the field of nurturing (al-tarbiyya) and education (al-ta‘lim). Allāh the Most High said:

"And (remember) when Luqmān said to his son when
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he was counseling him.”

[Luqmān (31): 12]

An instructional method of discourse has its advantages especially if catered for the youth. The method of admonishment (aslāb al-wa‘z) as defined by scholars is the dissemination of knowledge and guidance to act upon such knowledge based on encouragement (al-targhib) and warning (al-tarhib). They should be encouraged to do good and warned to shun evil. Targhib is associated with the rewards attached to doing good while tarhib is the opposite. Such was the technique employed by Luqmān the Wise, where he coated his advice with positive encouragement thereby spurring the listener to do as advised, tempered with fine mannerism. He gets the listener to eschew sin and error by giving a clear warning against such deeds.

The Eleventh Benefit - [The Importance of Love and Concern]

The importance of showing love (and concern) to the learner has a huge impact - it is quintessential that one who advices is compassionate and uses gentle and pleasant words to win over the heart of the listener. This approach makes advice more receptive just as Luqmān’s gentleness towards his son. Luqmān addressed his son not by his name but by the call:

"O my [dear] son!"

and keeps repeating this warm phrase. There is endearment attached to this address that pulls at the listener’s heartstrings. The desired objective i.e. the listener acting upon the advice is achieved if advice overflows with compassion. However if advice is given
without compassion, it heads towards failure. For example, if one calls out “O boy!” or does what is norm among some people, i.e. addressing the child using an animal’s name, do you think the child will listen to the advice let alone act upon it? On the contrary, it promotes dissension and buffoonery!

How different are the two approaches. Such compassion as expressed by Luqmān the Wise can also be seen in the ḥadīth narrated by Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal (radiyAllahu ‘anhu). The Prophet (ﷺ) took his hand one day and said:

بَا مُعاذَ أَيُّهَا الْبَابُ…”

“O Mu‘ādh! Verily I love you.”

Mu‘ādh (radiyAllahu ‘anhu) replied: ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for you O Messenger of Allāh! I love you too.’ He (ﷺ) then said: “I advice you not to miss saying these words at the end of each prayer:

أَوْصِيَكَ بِاِنْدِرَ انْتَذَعِنَ فِي دِينِكُمُكُمْ كُلَّ صَلَاتٍ أَنْ تَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْيَنِي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحَسَنِ أَجْباَرِكَ،

“O Allāh! Help me to remember You, to be grateful to You and to worship You well.”

He started his speech with much compassion and gentleness that facilitated reception of the advice. This approach is a must for those wishing to become propagators and callers to Islām, and those who urge people to do good.

5 Reported by Ahmad (#22119), Abū Dāwūd (#1522), al-Nisā‘i in al-Kubrā” (#9937).
It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmī’ (#8969)
The Twelfth Benefit - [Prioritising Advice in Order of Importance]

Similarly, those in the field of Islamic propagation and mentors; be they parents or educators, should know how to prioritise when delivering their advice. He or she should start with the most important and then proceed to advice that is lesser in importance. The true creed (al-’itiqad al-ṣāhib) and faith (iḥān) should be instilled before going to on to coach the youth on the rituals of worship (al-’ibadah), manners (al-ādab) and good behaviour (al-akhlāq). We see this prioritised by the Prophet (ﷺ) when he dispatched Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal (rādiy Allāhu ‘anhu) to Yemen. He instructed Mu‘ādh saying:

"Verily, you are going to a nation from the People of the Book, so the first thing that you should call them to is the oneness of Allāh (yuwahidullāh), the Most Exalted." 6

This was what Luqmān the Wise did too. When addressing his son, Luqmān deferred to that which is top in priority saying:

"O My son! Join not in worship others with Allāh.”

[Luqmān (31): 13]

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6 Reported by Bukhārī (#1389, 6937) and Muslim (#19) on the authority of narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās (rādiy Allāhu ‘anhumā).
The Thirteenth Benefit - [Warning against a Terrible Wrong]

This same approach applies to warning the youth about things detrimental to them. Although Luqman warns from various matters like pride (al-kibr), deception (al-ghurur) and vanity, he starts by warning his son not to associate partners with Allah. This is because it is the most dangerous thing that can afflict man and on which Allah Himself places most emphasis on.

The Fourteenth Benefit - [Importance of Tawhid and Sincerity]

The importance of instilling oneness of Allah (al-tawhid) and sincerity (al-ikhlas) in someone while still young and being far from associating partners with Allah (al-bu'd 'an'l-shirk). This benefit is also derived from his advice:

"O My son! Join not in worship others with Allah."
[Luqman (31): 13]

If this pure creed is inculcated in the young while still at the formative stage, it will benefit them a great deal. This is the wisdom behind naming children ‘Abdu’l-Rahman or ‘Abdullah as expressed in the hadith:

"The best of names are ‘Abdullah and ‘Abdu’l-Rahman."

7 Reported by Ahmad (#17606), al-Ḥaḳim (276/4) and authenticated and agreed upon by al-Dhahabī. See al-Sahihah (#904)
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Whence the child is constantly reminded of the fact that he is a servant of Allāh and not the servant of vain desires (al-hawa), of the world, of good fortune or the servant to the devil. He is nurtured with the fundamentals of faith and creed that augurs well for his future. Islām is founded upon nothing other than tawhīd and sincerity towards Allāh, The Most High, the Most Exalted.

The Fifteenth Benefit - [The worst Injustice and Crime]

Shirk is the worst injustice and crime one can perpetrate, and it is understood from the verse:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"Verily, joining others in worship with Allāh is ḥulm of the greatest proportion indeed."

[Luqāmān (31): 13]

The definition of ḥulm is: ‘To attribute something to where it is not due.’ What is more wretched than attributing worship to where it is not due? How shameful it is to direct worship to a creation which is itself needy, weak and is incapable to present itself good or bad, and which is powerless to give life or to resurrect? Can there be anything more detestable than this? Allāh creates man and he proceeds to worship other than the One who created him! He grants man sustenance whereas he seeks it from another! Allāh cures him but he goes in search of remedy to other than Him! What injustice it is that man perpetrates!
The Sixteenth Benefit - [Consequences of One's Actions]

It is necessary that the learner or the one being guided is briefed about the consequences of his actions. It must be impressed upon him that good deeds have rewards. These rewards should be well illustrated to him. Likewise, the penalty for disobedience and sin should be clearly laid out to him. This benefit is mentioned time and again in the story of Luqmân the Wise.

The Seventeenth Benefit - [Advice in Relation to Parents]

The advice to be good (birr) and kind (ihsân) to the parents and honour (ikrām) them and to pay attention to their rights (huquq). As Allāh said:

وَوَصَّيْنَاهُ إِلَىِّ الإِنْسَانِ يَوْلِيَّةَ هُمْ وَهَنَا عَلَىٰ وَهَنَّ وَقِصَصَةُ هُمْ فِى أُمَّاَتِنَّ أَنَّ أَسْتَضْعَفْنَ لَوْلَدَيْكُمْ إِلَىَّ اللَّهِ ۖ إِلَىَّ الْمَصِيرِ

“And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years. Give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination.”

[Luqmân (31): 14]

The obligation towards one’s parents has a towering status. It is an important command from Allāh, the Most High Himself. Some commentators of the Qur’ān allude to this citation of Allāh’s saying:
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“and We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and good to his parents.”

[Al-Ahqaf (46): 15]

while Luqman is still advising his son. Therefore, it is paramount that one shows mercy, kindness and obedience to one's parents while paying special attention to their rights.

The Eighteenth Benefit - [Hardship faced by Parents]

Pondering on the past hardship undergone by the parents and the aid they rendered when one was growing up, helps him be devoted to his parents and serves as a deterrent against being undutiful to them. Reflect on the verse:

“And We have enjoined upon man [to care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning period was two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is your [final] destination.”

[Luqman (31): 14]

Meaning reflect oh child! Remember the time when your mother had to bear you, feed and nurture you. Remember how she bore you patiently though it was very tiring and arduous for her. Remember how for nine months you did not let her rest even during her sleep. Remember how she had to experience excruciating pain to deliver you into this world. Remember how you used to cry and wail and
keep her awake nights on end. These hardships your mother went through should never be forgotten and should always be at the back of your mind.

The Nineteenth Benefit - [Knowing that one will Return to Allāh]

Another factor that helps one take good care of his parents is knowing that he shall return to Allāh, the Most High and Exalted. He therefore knows that he shall be rewarded for his filial piety and so his obedience to, and love of his parents increases while he is conscious of it. He also realises that he shall face the wrath of Allāh were he to be undutiful to them.

The Twentieth Benefit - [The Rank of a Mother]

A mother has a mighty rank and her rights are numerous. She is more deserving of respect and companionship than anyone else. In a hadeeth, a man asked the Prophet (ﷺ):

"O Messenger of Allāh! Who is most deserving of my goodly companionship?" He (ﷺ) replied: "Your mother" The man asked again: 'Then who?' The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: "Your mother." He asked yet again: ‘Then who?’ He (ﷺ) replied: "Your mother." The man asked one more time: 'Then who?' He (ﷺ) replied: "Your father."\(^8\)

\(^8\) Reported by Bukhārī (#5971) and Muslim (#2548) from the narration of Abū Hurayrah (radī Allāhu ‘anhu).
The mother was mentioned three times because she is most deserving of our love and respect and goodly companionship. It is also due to the fact that no one showers a child with more kindness and goodness than the mother. Hence, scholars claim that this verse corroborates with the above hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"Your mother, then your mother, then your mother."

and concurs with his emphasis on the mother three times. There exist three stages of kindness shown by a mother to her child:

1. Motherhood - "his mother"
2. Pregnancy - "bore him"
3. Breastfeeding - "and his weaning"

These three stages undergone by a mother obviously cannot be shared by the father or any living person on earth, even if he or she were to be the most kind. Therefore, one should recompense this kindness of a mother with immense gratitude and love. It is very unfortunate that many children nowadays do not show any kindness or love to their mother.

As a result, they direct their compassion and respect to one other than her. One who did not put forth one percent of what his mother did for him. How can one forget her kindness and sacrifice and treat her badly? Does he not know that the worst sin one can do is to disrespect his mother? Is this how he requites her love and compassion?
The Twenty First Benefit - [Acknowledging one is unable to repay His Mother]

Even if a son or daughter was to give utmost respect and show boundless love to mother, he or she would not be able to requite what she has done for them. The hardship of pregnancy and labour can never be made up for. Allāh said:

وَوَصَيْنَا الْإِنسَانَ إِلَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا أَحْسَنَاهُ مِنْ كَرَاهَتِهِ وَصَعَّانَةٍ

“And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him with hardship. And she brings him forth with hardship....”

[al-Abqāf (46): 15]

The Twenty Second Benefit - [The Noble Status of the Parents]

Allāh often mentions in the Qur‘ān the rights of the parents alongside His own rights. This is proof that parents warrant a high and noble status and that fulfilling their rights comes second only to fulfilling the rights of Allāh, the Most Exalted.

The Twenty Third Benefit - [Gratitude to Parents]

How does one show his gratitude to his parents? He does this by showering them unconditional love, respect and kindness. He should also make supplications for them continually.

The Twenty Fourth Benefit - [The Major Sins]
In a ḥadīth found in both Bukhārī and Muslim, Abū Bakarah (radiyAllāhu ‘anhu) narrated that the Prophet (ṣallAllāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Shall I not inform you the greatest of the major sins?” (He said this three times). They said: ‘Indeed O Messenger of Allah.’ He said: “It is to associate partners (shirk) with Allāh, to be undutiful to one’s parents” - and then he sat up as he was reclining earlier- “surely to bear false witness.”
And he kept repeating it so much so that we wished he would stop.”

This ḥadīth illustrates the perils of being undutiful to parents and explains without a shadow of a doubt that it is among the major sins.

The Twenty Fifth Benefit - [Kindness to disbelieving Parents]

Dealing with parents who are disbelievers (al-kāfirūn) or who are sinners (al-fāsiqūn): Allāh, the Most Exalted said:

“But if they try to make you associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, [then] do not obey them. But [keep] company with them in [this] world correctly and courteously [showing kindness to them].”

[Luqman (31): 15]

Bukhārī (#2654) and Muslim (#87)
If one’s parents ask him to associate partners with Allâh (i.e. commit *shirk*) or to commit a sin, then they cannot be obeyed. However, one should still be kind and polite to them and maintain good relationship with them.

The Twenty Sixth Benefit - [Beautiful Conduct]

Islâm teaches beautiful conduct and enjoins the establishment of other’s rights. Even when one’s parents invite to make *shirk* and commit sin, Allâh instructs that we should still:

وَصَيَّتَهُمْ فِي دِينِهِ مَعْرُوفًا

“But [keep] company with them in [this] world correctly and courteously [showing kindness to them].”

[Luqâman (31): 15]

This is when the parents are disbelievers. How then when one's parents instruct only good and invite to piety and obedience to Allâh? Do they not deserve more respect and compassion?

The Twenty Seventh Benefit - [Obedience to Allâh]

There is no obedience to someone if it involves disobedience to Allâh. This ruling is extrapolated from the verse:

وَإِنِ الْجَهَّالُ الَّذِينَ نَشَرَكُونَ بِهِ مَالِيَتَهُمْ لَيْكَ بَيَاءَءَ عَلَمَ فَلاَ تَصِارِعُوا مَعَهُمْ وَصَيَّتَهُمْ فِي دِينِهِ مَعْرُوفًا

“But if they try to make you associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, [then] do not obey them. But [keep] company with them in [this] world correctly and courteously [showing kindness to them].”

[Luqâman (31): 15]
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The Twenty Eighth Benefit - [Protection from going Astray]

Verily, people who are astray (al-dalāh) and the wrong-doers (al-bāṭil) work day and night to spread their misguidance. They exhaust all means available to them to achieve this wretched objective. This is clear from His saying:

وَإِنْ يُجِرْهُمَا

“But if they try to make you.”

[Luqman (31): 15]

In comparison, it can be observed that the people who are torchbearers of truth sometimes become slack and complacent in their propagation towards Islām.

The Twenty Ninth Benefit - [Difference between Disobedience and Undutiful]

There is a difference between disobedience and being undutiful. Some people get confused and deem them similar. Allāh said:

فَلاَ تفْتَرِهِمْ

“But if they try to make you.”

[Luqman (31): 15]

He, the Most High did not say: “then be undutiful to them.”

The Thirtieth Benefit - [Follow the footsteps of the Companions]

The companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) were the best of people.
This merit can be derived from the verse:

وَاتَّبِعُ سَبِيلًا مَّنْ أَتَابَ إِلَىٰنَا

“And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience.”

[Luqman (31): 15]

Some scholars comment that this verse: “And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience” refers to Abū Bakr (raḍī Allāhu ’anhu) while some of them have explained the verse: “And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience” to mean all the Companions (raḍī Allāhu ’anhum). Therefore, it is incumbent on us to follow the footsteps of the Companions of the Prophet (ṣallī Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) and not be deceived into pursuing the ways and lifestyle of the disbelievers. Allāh, the Most Exalted said:

وَمَنْ يَتَفَقَّاهِ نَبِيٌّ لِّمَنْ مِّنْ بَعْضِ مَعْمَانِي بِالْهَدِىٰ وَيَتَبَيَّنُ عَيْنَ

سَبِيلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ تَوْلُوهُ مَا تَولَّى وَتُصَلِّي مَنْ عَيْبَةٌ وَسَآئِتُ

مصيريًا

“And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers - We will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a destination.”

[al-Nisā’ (4): 115]

The Thirty First Benefit - [Choosing Good Friends]

The story of Luqmān the Wise emphasises the gravity of choosing good acquaintances. It is not proper for a true believer to sit with whomsoever he desires. We may have heard how a person suffered due to his association with evil people. Thus, we should
choose our friends from among the God-fearing and those who are good-natured. This fact can also be inferred from the verse:

وَاتَّبِعَ سَبِيلَ مِن أَنَا مِلَّا

“And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience.”

[Luqman (31): 15]

The Thirty Second Benefit - [The Exemplar]

The act of turning to Allāh (al-inabah ilallāh) in repentance and obedience has a pivotal status. This is apparent from His saying:

وَاتَّبِعَ سَبِيلَ مِن أَنَا مِلَّا

“And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience.”

[Luqman (31): 15]

The one who does so is held in great esteem, being taken as an exemplar for other people to follow. Al-Inābah ilallāh comprises of four elements:

1. Love for Allāh.
2. Humility towards Allāh.
3. Response to Allāh (in carrying out His commands)
4. Eschewing all else other than Allāh (in worship)

Ibn Qayyim said: ‘A person cannot be considered the repentant one unless he has the above-mentioned characteristics.’

The pious predecessors define al-Munib (the repentant one) along these lines.

9 Madārij al-Salākin (1/434)
The Thirty Third Benefit - [Every Deed will be held Accountable]

All deeds are held accountable. Man will find his deeds present before him on the Day of Judgment. Allāh, The Most High and Exalted said:

وَنَذَارَةً مِّمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

"Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do."

[Luqman (31): 15]

The Thirty Fourth Benefit - [Shirk]

Associating partners with Allāh (shirk) is totally baseless and has no evidence to substantiate it. Those who associate others with Allāh do so blindly and their creed is unfounded. Allāh explains their lack of knowledge thus:

وَلَنَجْهَدَ أَنْ نُشَرَكَ بِمَا لَيْسَ لِلَّهِ عِلْمٌ

"But if they try to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge."

[Luqman (31): 15]

Allāh also said:

وَمَنْ يَدْعُ اللَّهَ إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَخْرَى لَهُ لَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُ عُمُومًا

"And whoever invokes besides Allāh another deity for which he has no proof."

[al-Mu’minun (22): 117]

So shirk, in whatever forms it might come in is deplete of verification and we must understand that this is a mainstay characteristic
of *shirk* given any time and situation.

The Thirty Fifth Benefit - [Our Return to Allâh]

A person who enjoins righteousness and forbids evil should keep reminding his listeners of our return to Allâh. He should assuage them that whatever good deeds done by them in this world will be duly rewarded. Allâh highlights this with the words:

**إلى المصير**

“to Me is the [final] destination.”

*[Luqman (31): 14]*

and

**إلى مرجعكم**

“Then to Me will be your return.”

*[Luqman (31): 15]*

This point should be repeatedly addressed such that it becomes deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of the people so that they will exert effort to prepare for the final abode.

The Thirty Sixth Benefit - [Allâh is All-Knowing]

Allâh is All-Knowing and nothing on earth and heavens remains hidden from His knowledge. Allâh said:

**بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم**

“[And Luqmân said], ‘O my son, indeed if it [i.e., a
wrong] should be the weight of a mustard seed and should [it] be inside a rock or [anywhere else] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it out. Indeed, Allah is Subtle [in bringing out that seed] and Acquainted [All-Aware].”

[Luqman (31): 16]

The Thirty Seventh Benefit - [Knowing the Perfect Names and Attributes of Allah]

Knowing the perfect Names and Attributes of Allah (al-Asma’ Allah wa Sifatihi) has a profound effect on a person’s faith (imān). It helps rectify his deeds and lets him reap more rewards from his good actions. The more he knows Allah, the more God-conscious and fearing he will become. The more he will yearn to worship Him and the further he will depart from sin. For this reason, we observe Luqmān the Wise repeatedly mentioning the perfect Names and Attributes of Allah.

The Thirty Eighth Benefit - [Advice to Parents]

Parents should instill in their children the fact that Allah is Ever-Watchful over their affairs. When you say to your son, “Don’t do that!” you are placing yourself as witness to his deeds. However if you were to say: “O my child! Pray and stay away from all things impermissible (barām), for indeed Allah watches whatever you do. You cannot hide anything from Him even if it were a minor sin done inside a large boulder or in the skies or in the deepest trench. Allah shall produce it before you on the Day of Judgment; so take heed and be warned my child!” Allah is All-Powerful and All-Knowing. This will absorb our children with the true meaning of these Attributes which will be a great cultivation.
The Thirty Ninth Benefit - [Deeds will be Weighed on the Day Judgment]

The measure used to weigh deeds on the Day of Judgment is in atoms. Allāh, the Most Exalted says:

٥٧٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠٠_
The Forty First Benefit - [al-Latif and al-Khabir]

The Names of Allāh, al-Latif (The Subtle) and al-Khabir (The Well-Aware) often are mentioned together in many verses of the Qur’an. al-Khabir in lexical terms refers to Allāh’s Knowledge of the hidden things that are very minute. It then goes without saying that he is All-Aware of the apparent things.

As for al-Latif, it has two meanings: Firstly, it has a similar meaning to al-Khabir, and secondly, it means the Allāh provides for His servants and His close allies (awliyā’) that which benefits them through His Mercy and gentleness by means that are oblivious to them.

The Forty Second Benefit - [Importance of Prayers]

The importance of performing prayers and inculcating the young with it.

Prayer is the pinnacle and the most superior of obligations enjoined by Allāh upon His servants. It is the pillar of Islām and second only to the pronouncement of faith (shahadatayn) in rank. Prayer is a connection between a servant and his Lord. It will be the first thing to be questioned on the Day of Judgement. If it is proper, then all other deeds will be in order. If it is improper, then all other deeds will in disarray. Performing the prayers distinguishes between a Muslim and a disbeliever. One who is steadfast in it can claim to have faith, while non-performance is a sure sign of disbelief and oppression. There is no merit in one being a Muslim when he fails to fulfill his prayers.
The Wise Counsel of Luqman

A person who performs his prayer, finds his heart always radiating and his face is ever glowing. It lights up his otherwise pitch-dark grave, and upon it will light his path on the Day of Resurrection. It will be a source of victory on Judgment Day and he will be assembled alongside the Prophets (al-Nabiyo), the truthful (al-Šidiqyo), the martyrs (al-Shubadá) and the pious (al-Šaliho). What good compatriots they are! Those who neglect their prayers will find no solace on the Day of Judgment. They shall be losers that day and will be assembled alongside evil men like the Pharaoh, Hāmān, Qārūn and Ubay ibn Khalaf. May Allāh protect us!

The Forty Third Benefit - [Inviting to Goodness]

The young should be inculcated upon enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. This trait is very beneficial for them and others as well. How? When a person invites people to do good, it is a shield that prevents him to invite people to do the forbidden. There is an old Arabic saying:

‘If you don’t call (people to do good),
you are called (to do evil).’

The fact that one invites people to righteous is enough to repel wretched men and he is protected from their evil. The wrongdoers recognise that he is a champion of good and will submit that their deception will not work with him. When his listeners accept his invitation and begin to do good deeds, it becomes beneficial to them. Furthermore, he will be rewarded as a result of guiding others to the path of Allāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

ولأن
بِهِدِيِ اللَّهُ يُهْدِي مَنْ كَانَ لِحَيَاتِهِ اثْنَيْنَاءِنَّ لَكَ هُدْيَةٌ مَّنْ لَكَ

“Were it that Allāh guides one man because of you is
better than for you to own red camels.”

The Forty Fourth Benefit - [Be Patient over whatever may befall You]

The story of Luqmān the Wise sheds light on the essence of patience (al-ṣabr), which is especially vital for the caller to Islām. The role they play in society demands that they have a high degree of patience. Allāh, the Most Exalted said:

وَأَصْبَرْ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَمَّا أَحْمَرْتُ

“and be patient [with constancy] over whatever may befall you. This is certainly the most resolute course to follow.”

[Luqman (31): 17]

The Forty Fifth Benefit - [Strong Will and Determination]

Verily, only the strong-willed and strong at heart are capable to carry out substantial affairs.

The Forty Sixth Benefit - [Avoid Pride and Haughtiness]

This story reminds us not to have pride (al-faqr) and haughtiness (al-khaylā'). Allāh said:

11 Reported by Bukhārī (#4210, 3701, 3009) from the hadith narrated by Sahl ibn Sa’d (radiyAllahu `anhu).
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 إنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَلْبَسُ كُلُّ مَخْتَلِفٍ فَخْوَرَ

“Indeed, Allah does not love anyone who is self-deluded [vain] or boastful.”

[Luqmn (31): 18]

Ibn Kathlr said: ‘That ‘mukhtal’ is one who has self-conceit, and ‘fakhr’ is one who is haughty (and contemptuous) over others.’

The Forty Seventh Benefit - [Be Moderate]

One should always be moderate in the things he does. Allah said:

واَقِصِّدْ فِي نَشْيُكَ

“And be moderate in your pace [of walking] and lower your voice; indeed, the most hateful of sounds is the voice of donkey’s bray.”

[Luqmn (31): 19]

The Forty Eighth Benefit - [Allah's Attribute of Love]

The verse provides evidence to Allah’s Attribute of Love (al-mahabah).

إنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَلْبَسُ كُلُّ مَخْتَلِفٍ فَخْوَرَ

“Indeed, Allah does not love anyone who is self-deluded [vain] or boastful.”

[Luqmn (31): 18]

12 Tafsir ibn Kathir (6/339)
The Forty Ninth Benefit - [Good Conduct and Noble Character]

This story reveals that Islam encourages us to adopt good conduct and noble character at all times, and to avoid every type of bad behaviour.

The Fiftieth Benefit - [Raising of the Voice]

It is important to quote appropriate (and effective) examples to illustrate a point while teaching. Allah said:

"And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most hateful of sounds is the voice of donkey's bray."

[Luqman (31): 19]

The example here lays bare that the raising of voice is repugnant. Were it not so, this feature would not be associated with an animal that is known for its depravity and stupidity.
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Conclusion

These are some of the benefits derived from the story of Luqman the Wise. These advices urge us to do what is good and eschew what has been made forbidden.

Luqman instructed his son to practice tawhid and abstain from shirk. He spoke of filial piety and laid out its prerequisites. He urged his son to be ever conscious of Allah and cautioned him of the impending meeting with his Lord, where any miniscule good or bad done in this world will be accounted for. Luqman warned his son against pride and taught him humility. He mentioned to his son the perils of haughtiness and insolence and encouraged him to exercise circumspection. He ordered his son to enjoin good and forbid evil and that he be steadfast in prayers. He advised him to be patient in all affairs that befall, for this will eventually help solve problems. It can be concluded that one who advises to such a degree is indeed blessed with prudence. A blessing from Allah, not just for Luqman but for anyone who takes him as a role-model.

I ask Allah, The Most High and Exalted in His perfect Names and lofty Attributes that He benefit us with what we have learned and make it a witness for us and not a witness against us. I ask that He bestow us with beneficial knowledge and pious righteous deeds. I ask Allah, the Most Glorified that He give Luqman excellent rewards and that He forgive us and forgive him and all the male and female believers, be they alive or dead. Verily, He is the Most Forgiving and Most Merciful. And Allah knows best.

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his Companions.
Observe, my son, the way you deal with the limits of Allāh and see how you can keep yourself within their bounds. Indeed, he who takes care of these limits is taken care of, and he who doesn’t, is left to himself. I shall now mention some of my experiences to you so that you may observe my striving and ask the Granter of success to bless me. Truly, most of the blessings I have been given have not been earned by me but rather they are conferred as a result of the planning of The Gentle One alone.

I remember myself as a child: A highly motivated six-year old sitting in class with older boys.43 The intellect I had been given

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43 Al-Ḥāfīz ibn al-Jawzi about his high motivation in different places of Said al-Khāṭir and we shall mention some of it here (238): “Never has a man been tried with anything greater than his high ambitions. This is because a person who has high ambitions will choose the highest goals and it may be that he doesn’t have enough time to achieve them or his instruments are too weak so he remains in constant suffering. I have been given this ambition in some regards and suffer because of it. I am not saying that I wish it would have not been given to me, for the sweeter the life the less the intellect; and an intelligent man does not purchase additional pleasure for deficient intellect.” He also said (239): “I looked at my high ambition and was amazed by it: I want to gain knowledge of things
superseded that of old men. I do not recall myself playing on the road with other kids or ever laughing out loud.44

When I was seven or so, I attended the gatherings in the Masjid. I would not sit in a circle of mere wordplay, but searched for a hadith scholar who would narrate about the Prophet’s (ﷺ) life. I would memorize everything he said, then go back home and write it down. I was blessed for being granted my teacher Abū al-Fadl ibn Nāṣir, may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him,45 who would take me to different scholars and let me hear the Musnad [of Imām Aḥmad] and other major works. All this time I had no idea

I’m sure I can never gain knowledge of because I would love to learn every single science in great detail. Truth is, however, that learning just a portion of that takes more than a lifetime.” He also tells how he still had these ambitions as a grownup (250, 251): “I was given an extremely high ambition. I grew up and never achieved what I hoped for. I began asking Allāh for a long life, strong body and the achievement of my goals. The customs and habits of people renounced what I was doing and said: “No custom exists in what you seek.” I replied, saying: “I only ask from One who is able to go beyond customs.”

44 For verification of this, refer to: Ibn Kathlr, al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihāyah, 13/29.

45 The Imām, Muḥaddith and Ḥāfiz, Muḥif al-‘Iraq, Abu al-Fadl Muhammād ibn Nāṣir ibn Muḥamad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Amm al-Salāmī from Baghdād (467-551). Al-Ḥāfiz ibn al-Jawzī benefitted in the field of hadith by accompanying this Imām as indicated by Dhahabī (Ṣiyar al-A’lām al-Nubulā’, 21/367) and confirmed by al-Ḥāfiz ibn al-Jawzī himself (al-Muntaqam, 10/163). Al-Dhahabī also related this from him (al-Miẓān, 20/267), saying: “He said: ‘Our shaikh was reliable, a man of good memory and precision. He was from Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah and had not faults worth mentioning. He was responsible of hearing me. I heard the Musnad of Ahmad and the major books in his reading and it was he whom I took the science of hadith from. He would remember Allāh a lot and was quick to shed tears.’ For his biography, refer to: Ṣiyar al-A’lām al-Nubulā’, 20/265, Tathkīrat al-Huffāz, 3/1289, Manāqib Aḥmad, 530, 531, Mīr’at al-Zamān, 8/138, Thāl Thabqāt al-Ḥanābila, 1/225-229, al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihāyah, 12/233.
of why I was made to do these things. My teacher recorded all I had heard, and when I reached puberty he handed me this record. I accompanied him till his death, and through him I learned the science of hadith and transmission.

The kids used to go down to Tigris River and play on the bridge, but when I was small I used to take a book and sit far from people by the shore studying Sacred Knowledge.

Then I was inspired to abandon the vanities of this world so I began constant fasting and reduced my food intake to very little. I trained myself to be patient, embarking on a continuous pursuit in order to do so and staying up at night. I didn’t feel satisfied with studying just one science so I read jurisprudence, sermon delivery

46 May Allāh have mercy on Ibn al-Jawzī for he was serious about his studies in both his childhood and after growing up. He dedicated himself to learning and would not allow anything of his time to be wasted. He says about himself (Said al-Khatir, 235): “During my pursuit of this quest for knowledge I would go through difficulties that, to me, were sweeter than honey due to what I was expecting to gain. When I was small I used to take some dry bread with me and go out to learn hadith. I would sit by the ‘Īsa river, and as I was unable to eat the bread without washing it down with water, I took a sip after every bite. My ambition only allowed me to see the delight of learning. Due to that I became known for having heard much of the hadith of Allāh’s Messenger and his conditions and ways along with the life of his companions and their followers. My dealings with the creation also elevated to a level that cannot be achieved except through knowledge. In my childhood and during the times of lust and being a stranger I could have done things that the soul desires like a thirsty man with does cold water, and only the fear of Allāh caused by knowledge stopped me from doing them.”

47 He also said about himself (Said al-Khatir, 37): “I am a man to whom knowledge was made dear since childhood, so I began studying. I was not drawn towards one particular science but all of them. When I studied one, I would not just learn some of it but wanted to learn it inside out.” He studied every single day of his
and ḥadith and followed those who practiced ḥudūd (asceticism). After that I studied linguistics.

There was not a narrating scholar or a preacher where I lived who I didn’t sit with and whenever such a person would arrive from elsewhere I would go to him. I used to choose of virtuous deeds what suited me and if I had to choose between two things I usually chose the right of al-Ḥaq (Allāh). He has planned my life and cultivated me in a beautiful fashion, guiding me towards what is best for me. He has protected me from my enemies, the jealous, and those who might plot against me. He has made everything convenient for my studies of Sacred Knowledge and sent me books from unexpected places. He gave me good understanding, the ability to memorize and write quickly and a talent for authoring books.

I lacked nothing of this world. As a matter of fact, things were quite the opposite as Allāh gave me more than enough. He put a great deal of acceptance of me into peoples’ hearts and made the impact of my words leave them not questioning the authenticity of what I had to say. Approximately 200 thimmis [i.e. people of the book who live in Muslim lands according to a truce contract] have become Muslim at my hands and over 100,000 sinners have repented in my gatherings. More than 20,000 men have announced life to such an extent that not long before his death he still read the Qur’ān with its narrations to Ibn al-Baqillānī as mentioned by al-Ḥāfīz al-Dhahabi: “He was 80 years old and read the ten readings in Wasit to Ibn al-Baqillānī along with his son Yusuf.” This upbringing during which he was inspired to worship Allāh by fasting and praying had a great effect on this Imam since he was a child. He says about himself (Ṣaid al-Khāṭir, 78): “I was inspired to follow the path of the ascetics in the very beginning of my childhood so I practiced continuous fasting and praying and staying by myself was made dear to me. I observed how my heart became good and I started to have a very deep insight into things.”
their repentance from foolish ways during my exhortations.\textsuperscript{48}

I used to go around ḥadīth-gatherings of different scholars and run till I was out of breath so no-one would precede me. I would start my day having nothing to eat and finish it having nothing to eat. Never did Allāh degrade me to take from another person, instead He provided for me in order to protect my honor. Truth is, mentioning all my experiences would take quite a while.

And here I am now and you can see what I have achieved. I will tell you the whole story in one single sentence, and that is Allāh’s saying:

\begin{center}
\textit{والآمنوا بَلُوَّا لَهُمْ وَيَعْفَؤُونَ}
\end{center}

Fear Allāh, and Allāh shall teach you.

\textit{[Sūrah al-Baqarah : 282]}

\textsuperscript{48} His grandson Abū al-Muẓfir said in (\textit{Mirāṭ al-Zamān}, 8/482): ‘I heard my uncle say: “Through the two fingers of my hands I was the greatest whip in righting wrong. 100 000 people repented in my hands and 20 000 became Muslim.”’ The number 20 had dropped from the print of \textit{Mirāṭ al-Zamān} but the checker of \textit{Siyar al-A’lām al-Nubulā}, noticed it (21/370). He also said in (\textit{al-Muntazam}, 10/237): ‘I preached in al-Halba in Ramadān and 120 people announced their repentance.’ He also said in (\textit{Sa'id al-Khatir}, 41): “All my gatherings are attended by countless people who cry and regret their sins. Most times a group of people would get up to have the hair of their youth cut (which was a habit at that time when announcing repentance). They were often as big as 50 or 100 people and some days their number exceeded 100. Most of them were youth who had grown up playing games and immersing themselves in worldly and sinful matters.’ Al-Hāfiz ibn Rajab says in (\textit{Thālib Tabaqat al-Hanabila}, 3/410): “We can conclude that his gathering of exhortation had no equal and no-one had heard of anything similar. They were very beneficial sittings where the heedless came to remember, the ignorant came to know, the sinners repented and the polytheists became Muslim.”
O Take heed, my son, for your own benefit, and regret your previous shortcomings. Work hard to attain the company of those who have achieved perfection while you still have time. Water your tree while there is still some moisture left in it, and remember the time you have wasted for that indeed is a sufficient reminder. As time has passed, the delight of laziness has vanished and the levels of virtuous deeds have been missed. Indeed, our pious predecessors loved to enact every virtue and would cry out of missing just one.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham1, may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him, said: “We once went to visit a worshiper who was sick and found him crying, looking at his feet. We asked, ‘Why are you crying?’ to

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1 The exemplary Imām, the knower and the master of ascetics, Abū Ishāq al-ʿAjli al-Khurasānī al-Bakhli, the resident of Syria (approximately 100-662). Abu Nuʿaym said: ‘I heard Sufyān say: ‘Ibrāhīm ibn Adham resembled Ibrāhīm al-Khalil. Had he been a Sahabi he would have surely been a virtuous man.’” His biography can be found in Hihyatu'I-Auliyā’ (7/367-8/58), Tabaqāt al-Auliyā’ (5/15), Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubula’ (7/387), Ibn Athir, al-Kamil (6/56), al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah (10/135-145) and Shatharat al-Thahab (1/255-256).
which he replied, ‘They did not become dirty in the path of Allāh.’ Another person cried, and they asked: ‘Why are you crying?’ He answered: ‘Due to a day that passed without me fasting it and a night that passed without me standing it.’”

Know, my son, that days consist of hours and hours are made of the breaths you take. Every breath is a treasure chest, so beware of letting a breath pass by with no benefit. You do not want to find an empty treasure chest on the Day of Judgment and regret. Indeed, a man once said to ‘Amir ibn ‘Abd Qais: “Stop, I want to talk to you”, so he said to him: “Hold the sun in your hands [i.e. stop time] so I can talk to you.”

Ma'rūf⁶, may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, said to some people sitting with him: “Do you not wish to get up? Verily, the

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⁶ Ma'rūf al-Karkhī Abū Maḥfūz al-Baghdādī, described by al-Ḥāfīz al-Dhahabī as: ‘The authority of the ascetics, the blessing of our times.’ Al-Ḥāfīz Ibn al-Jawzī has gathered his virtues in a book that has been printed. He passed away in 200 AH. Imām Ahmad said that he is a person whose du'a is answered. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal said: ‘I said to my father: ‘Did Ma'rūf have any knowledge?’ to which he replied: ‘My son, he had the basis of all knowledge and that is fear of Allāh.” (Refer to his biography: Tabaqāt al-Auliya’, 280, 285, Tabaqāt al-Ṣūfyya, 83-90, Tabaqāt al-Hanabila, 1/381, 389, Sīfāt al-Safwā, 2/79-83, Ḥiṣyatu'l-Auliya’, 8/360, 368, Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubula’, 0/339, 345.)
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angel of the sun is dragging it and does not get weary [i.e. time is passing].”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said in a hadith: “Whoever says: ‘Glory be to Allāh, the Exalted, and all praise is His,’ will have a palm tree planted for him in Paradise due to that”4 So just think about the number of palm trees you will miss by wasting time!

Our predecessors had the habit of making the most of every single second. Kahmas⁴, for example, used to recite the Qur’ān


5 Kahmas ibn al-Ḥaṣan al-Tamīmī, the Hanafite from al-Baṣra, the worshipper Abū al-Ḥaṣan, one of the major figures of the trustworthy. He was a pious worshipper who died in 149. An example of his plentiful worship is that he would pray 1000 units every day, and when he got weary he would say (to his soul): ‘Get up, you abode of all evil, for by Allāh I have never been pleased with you for Allāh.’ (Refer to his biography: Tathkirat al-Hūṣayn, 1/174, Siyar al-A’lam al-Nubalā’ 6/316, Khulasat al-Tahthib al-Kamal, 322, Tahthib al-Tahthib, 5408, Shatbarat al-Thahab, 1/225.)

A beneficial note: It has authentically reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he forbade us from completing reading the Qur’ān in less than three days. This can be found in the hadith of ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Amr: “And Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: ‘Complete reading the Qur’ān every month.’ He said: ‘I can bear more than that’ and continued saying that until he said: ‘Complete it every three days.”’ (al-Bukhārī, 1978) He also said to ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr: “Read it in seven days but not more than that.” (al-Bukhārī, 5054, Muslim, 1159, 184). As for the reports that mention how our noble predecessors used to read the Qur’ān in less than
completely three times a day.

Forty of them would pray the morning prayer with the wuḍū of ‘Ishā’. [i.e. they would stay up all night praying]⁶

Rābi’a al-‘Adawīyya⁷ used to pray the whole night, and when

three days, we can only comment on that by conveying the words of the Hāfīz and virtuous critic al-Dhahabī when he related the words of Yahya ibn Aktham in the biography of the famous Imam al-Wākī' ibn al-Jarrah (al-Ṣiyar, 9/143): “I accompanied Wākī' as a resident and a traveler and found him fasting all the time and completing the Qur’ān every day.” Al-Dhahabī said: “I say: This is very impressive worship but it is not ideal, coming from someone comparable to the Imams of Athariyya. This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) has authentically been reported to have forbidden us from continuous fasting and completing the Qur’ān in less than three days. The religion of Islām is ease and following the Sunnah come first. May Allāh be pleased with Wākī', and where in any case is someone like him?” I say: May Allāh have mercy on al-Hāfīz al-Dhahabī for he was indeed a brilliant critic and deserved to be called the Imam of fair critics. May Allāh have mercy on this Imam and gather us all with the people of ḥadīth. God knows I love him a lot for His sake.
dawn came she lay down for a bit and then got up frightened, saying to herself: “Sleep in the grave is long.”

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died in 180 AH. The narration was related by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabi by way of Ibn Abī al-Dunya: We were told by Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn, I was told by Ḥasan ibn Maymun al-ʿAttār, I was told by ʿAbdā bint Abī Shawwāl who used to serve Rābiʿa al-ʿAdawiyya: ‘Rābiʿa used to pray the whole night. When morning would come she would lay down till the sky would turn to yellow. I used to hear her say: ‘My soul, how much do you sleep and till what time do you stand up? You might sleep for just a little and never get up until the Day of Resurrection.” al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzi: al-Muthish, p. 211: ‘Rābiʿa the worshipper used to get up to pray in the beginning of the night and say:

The lover has stood up for her hope  
And her heart is about to fly away from joy

When the night was over she would say: “No! It has been taken away!” and recite:

The darkness is gone with its intimacy and concord  
If only the night and its intimacy would come again

An important note: Rābiʿa al-ʿAdawiyya is a pious woman of worship and asceticism who has been mistreated by the people. Some accused her of believing in ḥulūl, and Allah’s refuge is sought, some claimed she held the belief of Ibāḥa and others denied that she had ever existed. All of this is wrong and unjust as great Imāms like Sufyān al-Thawrī and Shuʿba have related things that render all these accusations false. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said (Ṣīyar al-Aʿlām al-Nubulāʾ, 232/243): ‘Abū Saʿīd ibn al-ʿArabī said: ‘As for Rābiʿa, people have learned much wisdom from her. Sufyān, Shuʿba and others have related things about her that render the things said about her futile. What she was accused of was derived from the following words she had said:

I have indeed put you in the heart to speak to me  
And have permitted my body to whoever wants to sit with me

Some said she believes in ḥulūl based on the first line and that she believes in
Ibāha based on the second.’ I (al-Dhahabl) say: This is exaggeration and ignorance. It may very well be that the person who said this is himself a person who believes in these things and wanted to use this poetry to support his disbelief just like they used the ḥadith: ‘I will be the hearing that he hears with.’ I say: From the shameful traits of today’s Hululite Sūfis is their attempts to support their evidently deviant beliefs by forged and contradictory poetry and made up stories attributed to her. May Allāh give us refuge and not forsake us! They have even authored a book about these things and mentioned things about her life that give goose bumps to any monotheistic Sunni Muslim. Even more ridiculous than this group of people are those who made a film about her, portraying her as a dancer in the early parts of her life and other such falsehood to drive people from their religion. May Allāh misguide and humiliate them with this despicable and shameless discipline of theirs that keeps twisting realities. As for those who say she never existed, we ask them to think a bit about the sources of her biographies. They are all related by the great Imams of this discipline such as al-Dhahabī (Ṣīyar al-‘A’lām al-Nubula‘, 8/242, al-Ṭabar, 1/278), Ibn Khalakān (Wafayāt al-A‘yān, 3/215), Ibn al-‘Imād (Shatha‘rat al-Dhahab, 1/193), Ibn Kathīr (al-Bidāyāt wa‘l-Nībāyāt, 10/186), al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādi (Tārīkh Baghdad, 2/40) and Ibn al-Jawzī (Ṣifāt al-Safwa, 4/17-19). Al-Ḥāfīz Ibn al-Jawzī even dedicated a book for her virtues as mentioned by al-Dhahabī (Ṣīyar al-‘A’lām al-Nubula‘, 8/242) and also named his oldest daughter and mother of his grandson Abū al-Muẓfir (the author of Milāt al-Zamān) Rabi‘a. You can also see how he mentions occasions from her life in most of his books on exhortation. All the appendices have been taken from the English translation of, ‘Sincere Counsel to the Seekers of Knowledge’ published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, U.K, 1st ed; 2011, under the Ibn Jawzī Series.