



الإرشادات والتوجيهات نصيحة
الإمام مالك ليحيى بن يحيى

THE ADVICES

MALIK'S ADVICES TO YAHYĀ BIN YAHYĀ

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*Rendered into English
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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ وَصَلِّ اللّٰهُمَّ عَلٰی سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

المقدمة

الحمد لله الذي اختار من يشاء من عباده ليعرفه بإذنه، ثم أقامه في عبادته برفده، والصلاة والسلام على سيد المختار الذي يهتدي به إلى الواحد القهار. صلى ربي عليه وعلى آله ما دامت تتخلف الليل والنهار

وبعد

تشرفت بتقديم سطور تاريخية ذهبية تتضمن ما نصح به عالم الأمة وإمام دار الهجرة، مالك بن أنس، لتلميذه يحيى بن يحيى. الليثي. وإن كان حجمها صغيراً فإن فائدتها كبيرة لمن فتح الله له الإدراك والعمل

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صهيب ويب الأزهري
لندن
شهر المولد المعظم

All praises to Allah, who imparts wisdom to His chosen ones and guides them in devotion. Blessings be upon our esteemed guide, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, who directs us toward the One and the Unyielding. Continuous blessings for him as long as days transition to nights.

It's a privilege to convey the counsel of the renowned scholar of Medina, Malik bin Anas, to his pupil, Yahya bin Yahya al-Laithi. While succinct, the depth of its wisdom holds immense value for those Allah blesses with enlightenment and devotion. I prepared the advices from a collection assembled by the respected scholar, Muhammad Ziyad al-Tuklah, who delved into the ocean of Islamic heritage to present this particular account and by his grace, granted me ijaza in this work.

I present this as a tribute to those who love knowledge, generally, and to the English-speaking Malikis, specifically. I acknowledge that my success is by Allah's grace; in him I trust and to him I continually turn.

Suhaib Webb,
London,
Rabi al-Awwal, 1445 AH.

PART ONE

IMAM MALIK'S ADVICE TO YAHYA BIN YAHYA DURING THEIR FIRST MEETING

Ibn Battal writes, "There are many narrations regarding the virtue of seeking religious knowledge, and among the most eminent is what Yunus bin Abdullah conveyed to me. He said, Abu Issa Yahya bin Abdullah told us, and he mentioned a chain of narrators, leading to Yahya bin Yahya, that Yahya stated,

"The first time I first approached Malik bin Anas, inspired by Allah to study under him, he asked, 'What is your name?' I replied, 'Yahya. May Allah honor you.' Among all the students, I was the youngest.

Mālik then advised,

'O Yahya, dedicate yourself fervently to this matter! I will share with you a narration that will ignite your passion for learning and detach you from its distractions:

'A young man from the Levant, similar in age to you, arrived in Medina. He was among us, dedicatedly seeking knowledge, until death befell him. At his funeral, I witnessed something unparalleled for anyone in our land, neither a student nor a scholar. All the scholars crowded around his bier. Witnessing this, the Imām refrained from leading the funeral prayer and said, 'Bring forth among you those whom you consider virtuous.'"

The scholars brought forth Rabia, then rose with him to the youth's grave. Rabia stepped in his grave, followed by Zaid bin Aslam, Yahya bin Saeed, Ibn Shihab, Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir, Safwan bin Sulaym, Abu Hazim, and other respected scholars. Rabia began to place blocks in the young man's grave and was assisted by the others; each would pass a brick to the other until Rabia placed it.

Malik stated that on the third day after the youth's burial, a virtuous man from their land saw the deceased in a dream. The young man appeared as a radiant youth dressed in white, donned with a green turban, and beneath him a golden horse descending from the sky.

‘The deceased approached the man and greeted him, saying, “Knowledge has brought me to this.” The man inquired, “What knowledge brought you to this?” The youth replied, “For every aspect of knowledge I learned, Allāh granted me a rank in Paradise. However, I did not reach the rank of the learned until Allāh decreed:

‘Increase the heirs of my prophets.’ For one who dies possessing knowledge of my Sunnah or the Sunnah of my prophets, or seeks it, they will be gathered in a singular rank.’

My Lord granted me this until I reached the rank of the learned. There are only two ranks between me and the Messenger of Allah; peace be upon him. One where he sits surrounded by all prophets, another with all his companions and the companions of the other prophets. And after them, a rank where all scholars and seekers are gathered. I was placed amidst them, and they greeted me warmly. However, there’s more I hold with Allāh.’

The man questioned, ‘What more do you possess with Allah?’ The youth conveyed: ‘He promised me that he would assemble all prophets as I’ve seen, in one group. He will then proclaim: ‘O assembly of scholars, this is My Paradise which I have granted unto you. I am pleased with you, so I have approved of you. Do not enter Paradise until you express your wishes and intercede. I will grant you what you desire, and I will approve your intercession on behalf of those for whom you intercede, so that My servants may witness the honor I bestow upon you and the status you hold with Me.’

When the man awoke, he informed the scholars, and the news of his vision spread throughout Medina.

Malik stated,

‘There were individuals in Medina who had briefly pursued knowledge alongside us, but then abandoned its pursuit. However, upon hearing the dream of the young man, they returned to their quest with renewed vigor and commitment.

Today, they are among the scholars of our land. Take heed, O Yahya: Dedicate yourself fervently to this matter!”

PART TWO

TRANSLATION OF THE FINAL WORDS OF MALIK TO YAHYA BIN YAHYA

“Yahya bin Yahyā recounted, “The scholars of Medina and the surrounding areas, who were with us in pursuit of this knowledge, congregated at Mālik’s home during the illness that eventually took his life, and I was among them. A group of us, numbering 130, entered. Each of us approached Mālik, offered greetings, stood by his side, introduced ourselves, and inquired about his well-being.

After we had finished, he turned to us and said,

‘All praise is to Allah, who causes laughter and tears, and all praise be to Allah, who bestows life and decrees death. The decree of Allah is at hand, and an encounter with him is certain.’ We inquired, ‘O Abu ‘Abdullāh, how do you feel?’ He responded, ‘I am filled with hope to join the company of Allah’s allies – the scholars. Beyond His prophets, none are dearer to Allah than them. I am optimistic about my pursuit of this knowledge, for every act decreed by Allah and prescribed by His Messenger’s Sunnah comes with glad tidings of its rewards.

For example, he صلى الله عليه وسلم taught that whoever remains steadfast in their prayers and safeguards them, they will be granted specific rewards by Allah, and anyone who embarks on the Hajj to Allah’s House and has it accepted will also earn specific rewards from Allah. And for those who strive in Allah’s path, seeking His blessings, they too have distinct rewards reserved with Allah.’ All of this is clear to those whom Allah has blessed with such insight: The seekers of this knowledge and its educators stand apart; even the most erudite can’t fully grasp the esteem and reward that awaits a seeker of this wisdom with Allah.

I swear by Allah, I’ll share a tale that Rābi’a relayed to me, one I’ve kept from you until this moment.

He said, 'By Allah, the one true God, some falter in their prayers, unsure of its proper execution. They approach me for guidance, and I instruct them with knowledge, setting them on the right path. This act of guiding them holds more value to me than owning the entire world, only to lose it in the afterlife.'

Malik continued, I also have another narration. One that I've yet to inform you.

By Allah, the sole deity, I don't claim expertise in every aspect of knowledge. Yet, occasionally, when I learn from a scholar, certain aspects might remain elusive. I ruminate on it, wondering if he might've expressed it differently. This contemplation occupies my nights, and come dawn, I seek out the scholar for clarity. My drive to grasp it is worth more to me than a hundred accepted pilgrimages!

I recall hearing Ibn Shihab remark on several occasions,

'By Allah, the only true deity, when individuals approach me for a religious ruling, I don't respond impulsively. I first seek the ruling for my own understanding and then align it with the Sunnah. This reflective approach is more valuable to me than engaging in a hundred battles for Allah's sake.'

Malik added, 'Upon hearing these accounts, I pose a question to you all:

While this applies to you (to take the affair of religious teaching seriously), what about the seekers of knowledge (they are not accomplished, yet they answer questions)?'

Their unanimous reply was, 'Such knowledge and understanding seems beyond reach now; the essence of knowledge seems lost! We pray to Allah for guidance for both us and you.'

Yahya then added, "That was the last narrative I received from Malik. May Allah shower His mercy upon him.' It was subsequently affirmed, 'The account is trustworthy, and all gratitude belongs to Allah.'"



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