

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ كَمَا هُوَ اَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلٰوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِ وُلْدِ اٰدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضٰى بِاَنْ يُصَلِّىَ عَلَيْهِ

Allah Almighty, in Whose Name we begin, The Most Compassionate,

The Most Merciful

All Praise is due to Allah Almighty, Countless Peace and Blessings be upon
His Beloved Messenger – *may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him* – his family & his
companions – *may Allah be pleased with them all*

A Lesson from an Ant

Yahya ibn Waaqid bin Mohammed bin Adi bin Juzaim Ta'i Nahwi Bahdadi whose appellation was "Abu Saleh" was a very famous scholar. Abu Na'eem says that, "He was certainly considered as an Imam in classical Arabic in the field of Arabic syntax and grammar." He was also the student of Haythim ibn Abi Zaahidah and Ibn Aleeyah. Yaqut says that he also acquired knowledge from Asma'i. He was born in 165 ah. (Baghi yatul Wa'at)

However, at the beginning, he was a mere boatman. He possessed no knowledge at all. However when his passengers discussed various issues, he listened very attentively and in this manner, a great urge was built in him to acquire knowledge. When this urge grew greater, he said to himself, "My age has passed the forty year mark and besides being a boatman, I have no other attribute or qualification. How can I be able to even acquire such knowledge when I have no connection with these people of knowledge?"

He was busy thinking about this when his eyes fell on an ant. The little ant had a large seed in its mouth and was trying to carry it over a wall. However, he noticed that on the first attempt, it fell off the wall. In spite of this, it again took hold of the seed and tried again. This continued many times after this till finally, the little ant was able to cross over the wall. When he was looking at the steadfastness and effort of this ant, he said to himself, "This is such a small and delicate creature but through its great effort and steadfastness, it is able to reach its destination. Therefore, I cannot remain behind if a small creature like this can succeed".

After making up his mind, (remember at past the age of forty), he entered a Darul Ulum. He started to study Arabic grammar, Arabic syntax and logic. He studied so earnestly that he actually became one of the most noted scholars of his era. He also became famous all over the country. He has also authored many treatises in this field. Every student of knowledge should indeed take a lesson from this example. The two main factors of success is steadfastness and effort.

We have seen many examples of people who have come from poor backgrounds, but by merely adopting these two noble traits, they have been able achieve magnificent results. Here, we have an example of a mere boatman. He had the sincere intention of becoming something in life and when he saw a little creature, his mind opened.

Such is the manner of creation that from simple creatures mighty lessons are derived and learnt. When we look at an ant, we might not think very much of it, but the Allah Almighty has created powerful messages for mankind in these simple creatures.

We have already learned about the ant in the story of Nabi Sulayman - *peace be upon him* - and we have now learnt about an ant in this story. This is the wisdom behind one of the smallest creatures on earth! If people are able to look at creation and learn from creation, they will be able to gain mighty lessons from this. This is the reason that Allah Almighty has clearly declared that, "nothing has been created in vain."