

# Wisdom of Luqman عليه السلام – Part 1

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The story of Luqman عليه السلام is mentioned in Sura Luqman (31:12-19).

*Luqman Ibn 'Anqa' Ibn Sadun* or, as stated by As-Suhaili from Ibn Jarir and Al-Qutaibi, *Luqman Ibn Tharan*, was from among the people of Aylah (Jerusalem). He was a zahid who exerted himself in worship and who was blessed with wisdom. Sufyan Ath- Thawri (R) narrated from Al-Ash'ath after 'Ikrimah رضي الله عنه on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنه that he was an Ethiopian slave who worked as a carpenter. Qatadah narrated from Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubair رضي الله عنه that Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah رضي الله عنه when asked about Luqman, said: "He was from Nubia."

Allah ﷻ mentioned Luqman عليه السلام in the Qur'an as we have seen and mentioned some specific things about his advice to his son. We will look at each of these

إن شاء الله

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ  
اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ  
وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي  
وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا  
مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِنْ ثِقَالٍ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي  
الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ  
عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ  
وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ

**Luqman 31: 12.** And indeed We bestowed upon Luqman Al-Hikmah (wisdom and religious understanding, etc.) saying: "Give thanks to Allah," and whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for (the good of) his ownself. And whoever is unthankful, then verily, Allah is All-Rich (Free of all wants), Worthy of all praise. **13.** And (remember) when Luqman said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allah. Verily! Joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed. **14.** 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. **15.** But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do. **16.** "O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily, Allah is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place). **17.** "O my son! Aqim-is-Salat (perform As-Salat), enjoin (people) for Al-Ma'ruf (Islamic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief in the Oneness of Allah, polytheism of all kinds and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befall you. Verily! These are some of the important commandments ordered by Allah with no exemption. **18.** "And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not each arrogant boaster. **19.** "And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the ass."

The points mentioned are as follows:

1. Shukr
2. Tawheed – No Shirk
3. Duty to parents but obedience only in good
4. Accountability – Nothing is hidden from Allahﷻ
5. Establish Salah, Amr bil Ma’aruf wa Nahi An-il Munkar and bear with patience whatever befalls you (tawasaw bil Haq wa tawasaw bis Sabr)
6. Good manners – No arrogance and soft spoken

Let us look at each of them individually and see how we can inculcate this wisdom in ourselves and pass it on to our children. If you consider these points of advice that Allahﷻ mentioned in the Qur’an, you can see how they are essential for creating a beautiful life in this world and earn Jannah in the next. Each is a pearl of great price and bears reflection. So please consider each one carefully; look at your own life and see how to inculcate it. We can only give our children what we have. Luqmanﷺ gave his son advice from the wisdom he had. So let us get wise and learn from what Allahﷻ told us about this advice. And remember that children listen with their eyes. They don’t care what you say, until they see what you do. The purpose of these Khutab as indeed of all Khutab is to help us to examine ourselves and see what changes we need to make in our lives to ensure that we win in this world and the next.

Please reflect on why Allahﷻ chose to mention these words of advice of Luqmanﷺ to his son. Luqmanﷺ said this to his son but Allahﷻ liked it so much that He gave the benefit of this advice to all of mankind until the last day. We like to think of ourselves as being very connected and networked. But what we don’t realize is the actual extent to which we are really connected. We are not connected simply in this world by mean of social networks but we are connected with the next world by means of our actions. What we do in this world actually

affects the outcomes that we will face in the next world.

My brothers and sisters, a day will come when we will meet Allahﷻ. We have until then to make whatever changes we wish to make. We know that day will come but we don't know when. It makes great sense therefore to ensure that we make the changes while we can and not delay until we reach the point of no return. There is not a single one of us who hasn't seen sudden death; who hasn't heard of someone who was apparently hale and hearty and then suddenly he got up and died. Yet we live as if this can't happen to us. This life is the greatest of Allahﷻ' s blessings because while we have it, we have control. Death is not the cessation of life. It is the cessation of control; of choice. It is like coming to a toll gate on the highway. Once you are at the toll gate you can't go back. But until you get to the toll gate, you have the chance to make a U-turn. Let us exercise our choice and make that U-turn, called Tawba so that we get on to the right road, leading to a beautiful life in this world and the next.

I remind you and myself that Islam is not a bunch of rituals related to worship without any guidance about the rest of our lives. Islam is a comprehensive system that touches every aspect of our lives; belief, worship, dealings, society, manners, social, political, temporal and spiritual. In each of these Islam guides us to what is best for us. Islam doesn't demand that you give up all the pleasures of this life in order to get the benefit of the Aakhirah. Islam doesn't ask you to give up any pleasure at all. Because Islam has made everything that is intrinsically beneficial, Halaal. And what Islam made Haraam is intrinsically harmful. But if you do what Islam tells you to do, for the sake of pleasing Allahﷻ, you can not only have a beautiful life in this world but an even more beautiful life in the Hereafter. Now, what's so bad about that?

### **Shukr**

This is the first of the points of advice that Luqmanﷺ gave to his son. To be thankful to Allahﷻ. Allahﷻ began His Kalaam also with this advice to us to be thankful to Him.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ  
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Allah ﷻ ordered us to be thankful to Him and warned the thankless about his punishment for ingratitude. He said:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

**Ibrahim 14: 7** And [remember the time] when your Rabb made [this promise] known: 'If you are grateful [to Me], I shall most certainly give you more and more; but if you are ungrateful, verily, My punishment will be severe indeed!

The key issue is not only to be thankful but to express thanks. It is about us. Not about whether Allah ﷻ knows or not – which of course He does. Expressing thanks is about Uboodiya; about being a slave of Allah ﷻ. It is about expressing our thankfulness. It is about showing our gratitude through obedience and worship of Allah ﷻ because Allah ﷻ gave us without asking. It is about following the Sunnah of Rasoolullah ﷺ because we are grateful to Allah ﷻ for sending Rasoolullah ﷺ and for making us among the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ doesn't need our thanks. We thank Allah ﷻ because we need the blessings that thanks brings. Allah ﷻ doesn't need our worship. But we worship Allah ﷻ because we need to demonstrate our Uboodiyat.

I just finished reading Col. Chris Hadfield's brilliant book, An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth. I recommend this to you as required reading. Please get it right away and read it. Among the many wonderful things that he talks about in this book is the size of the visible universe which is a very small piece of the whole thing. Obviously calling it a 'very small piece' is essentially incorrect as

unless you know how big the whole thing is, you can't say if this is a small piece or not. Please notice, I am not talking about our solar system – the bunch of planets going around our star, the sun. I am talking about the entire Milky Way galaxy. He says that present knowledge shows us that in the visible universe, there are hundreds of billions of galaxies the size of our galaxy, the Milky Way. So this entire planet of ours is one dot – if I can even call it that – not even one pixel maybe, in the Milky Way, which is itself, merely one of hundreds of billions of galaxies in this part of the universe.

Now ask yourself, why is Allahﷻ, who is the Creator of all of this and all of what we don't even know, concerned about us? Why did He send His Messenger ﷺ to us? Why did He reveal His Book to us? Why did He allow us to worship Him, connect with Him, talk to Him, tell Him our story? I am not one who wastes time asking questions about why, which can't be answered. All that I know is that He did and so let us take advantage of this. Let us show our gratitude at this honor by making sure that we never miss an opportunity to answer the call of Allahﷻ when the Muezzin calls us to His worship. That is the reason Luqmanؑ mentioned Shukr as the first and foremost obligation that we have to Allahﷻ. That is why Allahﷻ mentioned Shukr and warned us against being ungrateful. How evil it is to be awarded the honor of talking to the Creator of the entire Universe but to express disdain for it? Allahﷻ calls us to Him but our response is, 'I am busy. Can't do it now.' How disrespectful that is?

How do we thank Allahﷻ? We do it by ensuring three things:

1. That we think of and mention His blessings and thank Him for them
2. That we live a life in complete obedience to His orders and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ which is a demonstration of His orders
3. That we never use His blessings in His disobedience in doing anything that is likely to anger Him.

These are the requirements of being grateful to Allahﷻ for His blessings.

Please reflect and you will agree that we use the same parameters when we deal with anyone who is under our care. If we give someone something for something we expect them to use that for the purpose for which we gave it. Even if we give someone something without any conditions, we expect them to use that positively and constructively. You certainly won't accept that your gift was used for something negative and destructive. If the person did that you perhaps would never give them another gift. So let us see what we do with the gifts that Allahﷻ has given us.

Let us do an exercise. When you go home today, take a sheet of paper and draw this table on it. Then fill reflect on your life and fill it in.

<u>Blessing</u>	<u>How I use it</u>	<u>What I need to do now</u>

Whenever I have tried to do such a thing, what strikes me is the sheer magnitude and number of blessings that Allahﷻ has given me. I am sure you will all feel the same. So let us to do this exercise. And then use this as a basis to bring about a measurable change in our lifestyle. As I have said earlier, what we learn and don't use, becomes proof against ourselves when we meet Allahﷻ. I request you to please do this exercise today before you go to bed.

I ask Allahﷻ to be pleased with you and to help you to do what is pleasing to Him.