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An account of Luqman and his words of wisdom

The Lord of the worlds has made a mention of Luqman in the Holy Qur'an,

And certainly we gave wisdom to Luqman, sayings: Be grateful to Allah. And whoever is grateful, he is only grateful for his own soul and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, Praised. And when Luqman said to his son while he admonished him: O my son! Do not associate ought with Allah; most surely polytheism is a grievous inequity –O my son! Surely if it is the very weight of the grain of a mustard –seed, even though it is in (the heart of) rock, or (high above) in the heaven or (deep down) in the earth, Allah will bring it (to light); surely Allah is Knower of subtleties, Aware. O my son! Keep up prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require courage: And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster: And pursue the right course in your going about and lower your voice; surely the most hateful of voice is braying of the asses. (31: 12, 13, 16–19)

Shaykh Tabarsi says there is difference of opinion about Luqman. Some say he knew Divine Wisdom but was not a Prophet. Some say that he was a Prophet. Other commentators have said that Luqman was son of Bao'or and belonged to the Az tribe and that he was the son of the sister of the aunt of Ayyub; that he lived up to the time of Dawud and learned knowledge from him.

It is recorded in reliable sources that Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq said, "I swear by Allah and say that Allah did not give wisdom owing to his lineage, wealth, family or physique but only because he was steadfast in obeying Allah and refraining from His disobedience. He was a silent gentleman who never talked without wisdom. He possessed a peaceful heart and a thoughtful mind. His eyes were ever ready to pick up admonition and did not required others' advice. He did not sleep in daytime. Nobody ever saw him bathing or answering nature's calls openly like others of that time because he carried out all such affairs secretly. He had a sharp eye but he never liked to be aware of others' secrets. He never laughed on any occasion fearing his sins nor did he frown upon anybody for his own sake. He never ridiculed anyone. He neither became overjoyed by getting any worldly gift nor became sorrowful due to losing anything. He married many women and begot many children. Many of his children died but he never wept at their loss

nor counted their number to be proud (of their number). He never went away from two quarrelling persons until he made peace between them and they gave up fighting. He never got pleased with anyone's good word unless he obtained its meaning and explanation. He also asked from whom the other person heard it. Most of the time he sat with the wise, the intelligent and jurists. He used to go to the judges and the kings and the rulers only to get lesson from their conditions. While seeing the judges he used to be kind looking to their difficult duties. He was also kind toward the kings thinking that being ignorant they were running away from Allah and were loving the material world. He took lessons from their (kings) events. He also used to remember some of their undesirable things whereby he controlled his desires. He was fought his desires and kept away from conspiracies of Satan. He was treating the diseases of his soul through contemplation and by obtaining lessons from worldly people. He never moved from his place unless he had a hope of any gain by doing anything. Because of all these qualities Allah had bestowed upon him His wisdom and had made him sinless. In the middle part of a day when the rest of the people were taking rest Allah sent some of His angels to Luqman. The angels called Luqman but in such a way that he could only hear their voice without seeing them.

The angels asked him, "O Luqman! Do you wish that Allah may make you His caliph so that you may solve people affairs (disputes etc)?" Luqman replied, "If the Lord of the worlds commands me to do so I will obey Him because, if I accept it by His order, He will help me, will also teach me the necessary things for that office and he will then also protect me from making mistakes. But if He has given me an option about accepting that post I would prefer safety (I want to be excused)." The angels asked, "Why so?" Luqman replied, "Though settling people's disputes carries much value in the sight of Allah and it has much weight in the religion of Allah, its tests and criterions are also very hard. If Allah does not help someone and leaves him on his own then oppression and darkness encircles him from all sides. Such a man is discarded. He will either make correct judgment and be saved or will make mistake and will become deviated. The one who becomes dishonorable in the world will be better off in the Hereafter because the one who orders becomes big in the eyes of the people and the one who purchases this world at the cost of the Hereafter suffers loss in both the places because this world slips away from him very soon and he had no share in the Hereafter."

Hearing this, the angels were astonished at his wisdom and intelligence and the Lord liked their dialogue. When night fell and Luqman went to bed Allah rained the radiance of wisdom on him and made him full of light. He was asleep and Allah covered him with the cloth of wisdom. When he arose he was the wisest man of his time. He came out before the people when words of wisdom were coming out of his mouth and he was describing the Divine wisdom and intelligence and justice to all. And when he did not accept Prophethood, Allah asked the angels to invite Dawud to it. Dawud accepted and did not put forth the conditions that Luqman had submitted. So Allah made him His caliph in the world on earth. Allah, often tested those (Prophets) and on some occasions they missed the preferable (*Tark al-Awla*) and Allah pardoned them for it. Luqman used to meet Dawud often and give him words of wisdom and admonition. Dawud used to tell him: Congratulations! For you have been given wisdom, and tests have been lifted up from you and caliphate has been given to Dawud and he has been put to test. Luqman

gave so many admonitions to his son that he became embodiment of the enlightening wisdom of Luqman.”

Some of the admonitions given by Luqman to his son are:

O My son! From the very day you have arrived in the world you have turned your back to the world and verily turned your face toward the Hereafter (you have started your journey toward the Hereafter from the very moment you were born), and you are passing various stages of that journey. Hence the house towards which you have turned your face is coming nearer and nearer to you and the house in which you are now is getting more and more away from you every day. O my son! Be a companion of the wise and sit with them and do not argue with them that they may prevent their knowledge from you. Take from this world only that which is essential and enough for you. Also do not give up earning in this world that you may become needy (and others may have to care for you). Also do not get involved so much in this world that you may lose your Hereafter. Fast to an extent your passions are controlled. Do not fast so much that you may not have strength enough even for performing your prayer because Allah loves prayers more than fasting. This world is a deep ocean. Innumerable people have drowned in it and destroyed due to it. So it is essential for you to make faith your ship for saving yourself from the dangers of this world. You should make ‘Reliance on only one Allah’ the sail of your ship. Your provision in the ship should be avoidance of the illegal and the undesirable. Thereafter if you are saved it is due to Allah’s Mercy and if you get destroyed it is because of your sins. According to another narration, “O Son! Make the fear of Allah your ship and that the capital you should put in it should be faith in Allah, His Prophets and their Words. The sail of your ship should be reliance on Allah; the captain must be intelligence which should direct its course; its guide ought to be knowledge and its anchor should be refraining from the prohibited and patience for bearing the hardships in obeying Allah.

O Son! If you learn discipline in childhood you will benefit from it after you grow up. One who knows the grace of good behavior tries to achieve it and who cares to achieve it also tolerates the hardships of that path and the one who achieves virtues like this also makes great efforts in maintaining them and when he obtains those virtues he adorns himself with them and when he becomes the embodiment of those virtues he gets their benefits in both this life and in the Hereafter. So be habituated with good habits so that you may prove to be the heir of the virtuous and benefit those who come after you, that they may follow your footsteps and your friends may hope for good from you and your enemies remain afraid of you. Never remain slack in the matter of attaining virtue nor pay any attention to anything except good behavior and habits. If people defeat you and snatch away the world (material things) from you, do not worry. Rather try to assure that you may not be defeated in the otherworldly (spiritual) matters; that no one may be able to snatch away the Hereafter from you that is, you may not obtain knowledge from where it should be obtained. You must set aside some hours in the day and night for achieving knowledge because there is nothing which can destroy man’s knowledge. The example is that of giving up learning. It means, giving up learning is the results of your losing whatever knowledge you have learned. (So be after it and continue learning). Do not quarrel with the quarrelsome nor argue with any wise and learned person. Do not make the rich your enemy and do not keep company of the oppressors

and do not cultivate brotherhood with a sinner nor sit with a disgraced and notorious person and keep your knowledge hidden just as you hide your wealth.

My precious son! Fear Allah, as He deserves to be feared. Be afraid of Him even if you have at your credit all the virtues and good deeds done by all men and jinn if you have to stand before Him for giving account of your deeds. You should always be afraid of His chastisement. Similarly also remain hopeful of His Mercy even if you have sinned totaling the sins of all men and jinn and be hopeful that He will forgive you. Hearing this, the son said, My respected father! From where can I get enough strength to entertain both hope and fear together when I have only one heart in my chest? Luqman said, My son! If a faithful heart is cut open two rays will come out of it. One light of the fear of Allah and the other light of hope from Allah. If both the lights are weighted neither will weigh either more or less even by the weight of an atom. So one who believes in Allah, also testifies to His Words and the one who testifies His Words also acts according to His commands and if someone does not act according to the word of Allah then surely he did not understand (believe) the words of Allah because some of the virtues give witness of some other virtues. So the one who has truly and sincerely believed in Allah will surely act honestly for Allah with a hope for good. One who acts in this way really believes in Allah and the one who believes in Allah also fears Him and the one who fears Him loves Him and the one who loves Him also obeys Him and the one who obeys Him makes himself eligible for His pleasure and Paradise and the one who does not want Allah's pleasure makes His punishment swift upon him and I seek Allah's protection from His punishment.

O my dear son! Do not have a wish for the world and do not engage yourself in it because no creation of Allah is more worthless than the world in the sight of Allah. Do you not see that Allah has not made the worldly bounties the reward of His obedient nor has He made the worldly hardships the punishment of His disobedient and the sinners?

According to another reliable tradition, Imam as-Sadiq said that Luqman said (as a will) to his son: O my son! You must keep a weapon ready by which you can fell (defeat) your enemy and that weapon (tactic) is that you should shake hands with him and show pleasure to him without separating from him, without showing enmity to him so that he may reveal to you what is hidden in his heart about harming you.

My son! I have lifted iron and stone and all heavy things and have been able to bear their weight but have not found anything heavier than an evil neighbor. I have tasted bitter things but have not found anything more bitterly than restlessness and need for others.

It is mentioned in another hadith that Luqman said, O my son! Make a thousand friends because even a thousand friends are less but do not make even one enemy because even one enemy is sufficient.

It is recorded from same Imam in another hadith that 'Ali said, "One of the admonitions of Luqman to his son is:

The one whose faith in Allah's attribute of being the Provider is less, must take a lesson of advice and the one who is weak in asking provision from the Almighty must take a lesson of advice because it is

only Allah who brought him from non-existence into existence and gave him provision in three states and there was no source of getting provision whatsoever in any of the said three states. So he much have rest assured that He will provide him maintenance in the fourth state of his life also. One of the above mentioned three states is when he was in the womb of his mother. It was only Allah who provided him sustenance and sheltered him in a restful place where he suffered neither heat nor cold. In another state he was brought out of his mother's womb by Allah and he provided his provision of milk from his mother's breast. It was a pure and clean and enough for him in that state. Allah nourished and raised him in that state wherein there was no other source of nourishment and training, no strength for earning and no power of warding off harms.

The third state was when his milk supply ended. Then he was provided maintenance through his parent's earnings that spent on him with maximum love and pleasure and compassion, so much so that sometimes they gave him preference over themselves. This continued until he grew up and got enough strength and intelligence to earn his provision himself. Then he himself made things difficult for him by entertaining undesirable thoughts about his Lord and did not spend for fulfilling and observing the rights of Allah and began to give less to his family members fearing loss of wealth thereby losing faith in Allah. This was despite the fact that Allah always rewards him for spending in His path both in this world and in Hereafter. So bad indeed is such a slave.”

My son! Everything has a sign by which it is recognized. That sign gives witness for that thing. So religion too has three signs: Faith (Iman), Knowledge (Ilm) and Deeds (A'mal). Faith has three signs: Testifying of Allah's Books. Knowledge also has three signs: Knowing his Lord, ascertaining what his Lord likes and what He dislikes. Again there are three signs of the one who acts according to his Knowledge: Daily prayers, fasts and Zakat poor tax. Also there are three signs of a man who closes the door of knowledge for himself and does not become learned: He quarrels with one who is wiser than him, mentions things which are higher than his level of intelligence though he acts against it, oppresses the weak and assists the oppressors. And there are three signs of the hypocrites: His tongue does not corroborate his heart, his heart does not corroborate his character and his outward appearance is different from his inner self.

There are three signs of a sinner: He embezzles people's wealth, tells lies and acts contrary to his words. There are three signs of ostentation: He is slack in his worship while he is alone but makes a show of full attentiveness in worship while in public and he does it so that people may praise him. The envious has also three signs: He backbites people and flatters them on the face, feels happy when people are in trouble. There are three signs of extravagant: He eats things which are beyond his capacity and so also he wears likewise, and he feeds others crossing his limits of capacity. There are three signs of an indolent: He is slack in doing good deeds and he postpones good deeds until and unless he is threatened and he becomes so lazy that the job is spoiled and thus he becomes a defaulter. There are three signs of a negligent man: He is doubtful in his worship, becomes careless in matter of remembering his Lord and he forgets good deeds.

O my son! Do not ask for things which are not within your power and for which you do not have sources and leave aside things which you can achieve and for which you have resources so that your opinion may not falter and your wisdom may not go waste.

My son! Confront your enemy by giving up the prohibited, help yourself by achieving grace in your religion through magnanimity. Keep your soul clean of Allah's disobedience. Keep your secrets hidden and your inner self, pure. When you will do so you will due to Allah's secret, (will) have no fear of your enemy becoming aware of your weakness and defect. Do not become fearless (careless) of the enemy's conspiracies, lest he finds you unaware and overpowers you and then there will be no excuse. You should always show him your happiness.

My son! Hard work for attaining a useful thing should be considered light and less effort in achieving a harmful thing should be considered heavy.

O my son! Do not go against the prevalent practice of company while with people and do not expect from them things which are difficult for them otherwise your companions will abhor you forever and others will also part company with you and you will become lonely. There will be no companion to sympathize with you and no friend to help you. When you will become alone, you also will be disrespected and valueless. Do not offer excuse before a person who may not accept your apology and who may not recognize any of your rights. Do not seek anybody's help for serving your purpose except the one who may charge something for that service, because, in that case he will do your job just as he does something for himself. In this way, after fulfilling that need, he will be benefited both in this passing world as well as get some reward in the Hereafter and hence he will make a good effort to do that job. You should also select compassionate, wealthy, wise and respected persons for making friends or for seeking help in your affairs so that if you give them any benefit, they may thank you and if you part with them they may remember you.

O my son! If the learned persons whom you have befriended are loyal to you then you must think of improving yourself. If they turn away from you then keep distance from them because their enmity will be more harmful to you than the enmity of others, because, people will believe whatever they will say about you as they know you.

O my son! If you dislike something in your friends do not get impatient and do not get nostalgic or misbehave with them because friendship cannot be maintained in this way. Make it a point to act with restraint and without haste. Do not rush to do anything without properly thinking over its consequences. Be tolerant if you get any pain from your brothers and friends and try to make your character the noblest of all.

O my son! If you do not have enough wealth to help your kith and kin or to spend over your brothers-in-faith then do not be stingy in keeping your face smiling and your tongue sweet while meeting and behaving with them because people befriend persons having good character and evil persons keep

away from them. Be content on what Allah has fixed for you so that you may always remain happy. If you want all honors and respects of the world then drive away your desires for those things that are in possession of others because no Prophet or Truthful has ever attained that honorable status without being careless about the possessions of others.

O my son! If you need a king's help in any matter, ask with much respect and earnestness and humility. Do not ask for anything unless the time is appropriate. That time is when he is pleased with you and when he is carefree. Do not despair if you fail in getting any needed thing because its fulfillment is in the control of Allah and it will be fulfilled only at an appointed time. When that time comes the work is done. Always remember Allah and ask only from Him and keep your fingers moving with total humility while praying to Allah.

O my son! The world is small and your age is short. Do not care much for achieving anything from a limited world in a short lifetime. O My son! Never be envious. Consider it against your status to be envious. Never behave badly with others. Do not make it your wish to do so. These two evils can harm none but you. When you harm yourself you carried out the business of your enemy yourself because your enmity with yourself is more harmful than the enmity of others.

O my son! Do good to the person who deserves it and your purpose behind it must be to please Allah and not any worldly interest. Be moderate in spending for others. Do not be so miserly that you may not give even though you can and also do not give away so much that you may become needy of others.

O my son! The best behavior is wisdom, acquiring of which is very essential. It is the religion of Allah and it is similar to a grown up tree. Its water is belief in Allah, which keeps it alive and standing. Its root is prayer, which keeps it straight and steadfast. Its trunk is Zakat poor tax and its branches are the efforts for maintenance of brotherly relations with one's brothers-in-faith merely for the pleasure of Allah. Its leaves are good morals. Its fruits are abandoning disobedience of Allah. No tree is complete unless its fruit is not nice and similarly a man's religion is not complete until one gives up all the things prohibited by Allah.

O my son! The worst restlessness is disruption of intellect. The greatest sin is a sin against religion and the greatest calamity is the danger to faith and the most profitable wealth is the wealth of heart. So enrich your heart with knowledge, faith, good morality and rest content on whatever you get in this world. Remain pleased and happy on what Allah has fixed for you, because, whoever pilfers people's property does not get legal and permissible provision as Allah stops it from him, as fixed by Him and such persons earn only sins. A man who is patient, gets halal (permissible) provision and he is protected from the chastisement of both this world and of the Hereafter.

O My son! Make your obedience pure and let it not be contaminated by any act of sin and adorn your obedience by following the truthful because following the truthful follow Allah. Beautify it with knowledge and wisdom. Protect your knowledge through tolerance which should not be senseless. Collect your

knowledge through humility, which must not have folly in it. And strengthen its gate through farsightedness, which should not have meekness and mix your farsightedness with kindness, which must not have harshness and rigidity in it.

O My son! Do not engage an ignorant person for conveying any message anywhere. If you do not find a wise man then convey your message yourself. My Son! Keep away from evil so that it may itself remain away from you.

Amir al-Mu'minin said, "People asked Luqman who was the best of the people. He replied, 'A rich faithful.' They asked, 'You mean richness of money?' He said, 'No, of knowledge, so that when need be people may benefit from his knowledge. If people do not require his knowledge then he can pull on with his own knowledge.' People asked, 'Who is the worst among us?' He replied, 'The one who does not care if people see him sinning.'" Luqman told his son: O My Son! Whenever you travel with a group of people take their advice very often regarding your problems and so also about their affairs. Do not smile much in front of them and be generous in your expense.

Go to them whenever they call you and give them assistance whenever they call for it and be ahead of them in three matters viz. in silence, in prayers and in generosity of wealth and in manliness. Whenever they ask for your witness to someone's right then be their witness and whenever they seek your advice make utmost efforts for their benefit, and good. Do not make haste in giving your opinion in their favor until you think over it deeply and do not give your reply in that consultation until you get up from there, move, sleep, offer prayers and spend all your intelligence in their consultation because, if a man does not make his well-wishing pure, Allah snatches away his intelligence and removes honesty from him. (My son!) when you see your companions traveling on foot you too should walk with them. When they are busy, you also should participate in their work.

Also accompany them when they testify something or give loan to someone. Listen to the one who is elder than you in age and do not refuse if they ask you to do something or ask something from you because refusal is an illness of soul and a sign of incompetence. Stop traveling when you lose your path and make mutual consultation. If you meet a lone person and ask him the way do not trust his reply because a lonely person puts people in doubt in a forest. Sometimes it so happens that a person is a spy of thieves or is a Satan (devil) who wants you to misguide you and to put you to trouble. Also avoid if they are two unless you find signs of truthfulness in them, which I cannot describe. So rely on them because when an eye observes something it finds out the truth of it and the one who is present and observes knows what an absent person cannot know and see.

My son! When the time for prayer comes do not postpone it because of your engagement in some other work. First finish the prayers satisfactorily because prayer is the base of religion and do not miss a congregational prayer even under a sword and do not sleep on the animal's back as it can hurt and is not a wise act. Of course you may sleep in a pannier if you like but keep your body joints straight and when the destination is near, get down from the animal and walk on foot. After reaching there first feed

the animals. When you intend to camp, select a land which is good in color, softer and has more grass and when you are about to camp, first offer two Rak'ahs (units) of prayer. When you have to answer call of nature go to a far from the people. When you leave the place salute (say 'salaam') to the residents of that place because there are angels on every piece of land and, if possible, do not eat before giving anything as alms. It is necessary to recite the Book of Allah so long as you are riding and keep remembering and praising (hallowing) Allah in every work. It is also necessary to pray on conclusion of every job and never start your journey in the first part of the night. You should travel from midnight until dawn and must not raise your voice in the way.

It is recorded in reliable sources that Imam al-Baqir said, "People asked Luqman: what among your problems and your wise actions is such on which you have utmost faith and which you never leave?" He said, "I do not take up any issue for which Allah Himself has already become a guarantor on my behalf and I do not spoil a work which He has left to me."

According to the same source Luqman told his son: My son! Be friendly with a hundred persons but do not make even a single one your enemy. My Son! Nothing except your morals and good behavior will benefit you. Your character between you and your God is your religion. Your behavior between you and your people is your contact (with them). Therefore, Do not create enmity with others but always show a pleasing behavior. O My Son! Become a slave of good people but never prepare to be the son of the evil persons. My Son! If anybody gives you anything as a trust return it as it is so that your world and the Hereafter may be protected. Be honest so that you may remain rich and needless.

It is mentioned in a reliable tradition that Imam al-Ka'im said, Luqman told his son: O My Son! How is it that people do not fear the divine chastisement which has been promised to them even though they are becoming weaker and lower day by day? How they do not remain ready for Allah's promise of the hour of death though their age is speedily approaching end. My Son! Do not acquire knowledge to show pride over the learned and the wise nor to quarrel with the fools and the unwise nor to make a show of yourself in gatherings. But also do not give up learning because they caution.

O My Son! Attend meetings and gatherings and look around with an eye ready to get lessons and if you see a group busy in remembering Allah then sit with them because, if you are learned your knowledge will benefit you and your knowledge will increase and if you lack knowledge you will gain knowledge from them. Maybe Allah's Mercy descends on them and it may envelop you too.

It is mentioned in a reliable tradition from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir that one of the admonitions given by Luqman to his son is that, "My Son! If you have at all any doubt about your impending death then remove sleep from you. You cannot do it. And if you have any doubt about rising up again after death then avoid awaking after your sleep. You cannot ever do it. So if you ponder over these two things you will realize that your life is in the hand of someone else; that sleep is like death and awakening is like rising up after death.

My Son! Do not develop more than necessary relations with people so that they may cause separation

and create enmity. Nor remain far away from others otherwise you will become disrespected and dishonored. Every living thing loves its category but man does not love man. Do not be extra kind to anyone but who desires it. Just as a sheep cannot be friendly with a wolf so a good man cannot be friendly with a bad person. Whoever nears the evil also develops some of that evil in him. Similarly a man who keeps company with a bad character also learns some of the latter's evils. The one who likes to quarrel with others gets abused and the one who enters the gathering of bad people gets allegation. A man who mixes up with evildoers remains safe from their evils. The one who does not control his tongue feels ashamed. My Son! Always be honest and trustworthy because Allah does not love the dishonest. My Son! Pose yourself before others as if your heart is sinful and that you are terrified by Allah's anger."

According to another narration Luqman said, "The man who says that evil can be removed by evil and corruption by corruption is not correct. If he thinks that he is correct then he should ignite a fire and see whether fire extinguishes fire. (Never). But patience, tolerance and good behavior stems evil and corruption just as water extinguishes fire. O My Son! Sell your world for the Hereafter so that you may be benefited in both this world and in the other. Do not sell the Hereafter for this world otherwise you will suffer loss at both the places."

It is said that Luqman lived alone most of the time. Once a man went to him and said, "Sir, you remain mostly in solitude. If you mix up with others it will increase affection." He replied, "Loneliness gives more scope for thinking and thinking leads towards paradise."

It is reported reliably from Imam as-Sadiq that Luqman, in his will asked his son: My Son: People before you gathered wealth for their family members. Then neither they lived nor their wealth lasted nor those for whom it was gathered. You are a laborer who has been ordered to do some jobs on fixed remuneration. So carry out your duties, take your remuneration and not to live in this world like a sheep which goes to a field and grazes so much that it becomes fat and then it is slaughtered because of its obesity. But you should pass through this world like crossing a bridge that is built over a river. After crossing it you never return to it. Do not develop your worldly habitation because you are not commanded to do so and remember that when you will be made to stand before your Lord on the Day of Judgment you will be questioned about four things: About your youth as to how you spent it, about your age (life) as to how you finished it, about your wealth as to from where you earned it and for that you used it. So be ready to answer these queries and never be sorry for the loss of worldly wealth because little wealth does not last long and one should not be carefree of the big troubles. So always be away from the evils of this world and be busy with the deeds for the Hereafter. Remove the blindfold from your eyes and admit yourself in the happiness of your Lord through good deeds. Always repent in your heart and make efforts for achieving virtues until you have time and before they (angels) target you and Allah's will turns toward you and these things become a barrier between you and your desires.

It is said in another narration that Luqman said, "O My Son! If the wise and the learned people hit you and harm you it is better for you compared to the (compared to) situation in which the ignorant anoint

you with oil and perfumes.”

It is said that someone asked Luqman, “Were you not a slave of such and such family?” He replied, “Yes, I was.” They asked, “What made you reach this (high) status?” He replied, “Because I always remained truthful, never breached a trust, avoided every word and deed which would not benefit me, I closed my eyes from seeing the things prohibited by my Lord, I stopped my tongue from uttering nonsense and ate only lawful provision. These things led me to this stage. So now the one who will act more than me on these lines will overtake me, the one who will act less than me will remain behind me and the one who will act just like me will be like me.”

And Luqman said, “My Son! Never delay repentance because death arrives all of a sudden without warning. Do not criticize anybody about his death because death will come to you also. Do not ridicule a man who falls in trouble and never stop doing good to others. My Son! Be honest so that you may remain needless of others’ wealth. My Son! Consider piety as a business which will give you profit without investing any capital. If you commit a sin send a donation in advance (spend to help the needy or do a good deed) which may remove that sin. My son! Admonition seldom impresses a fool just as it is difficult for an old person to climb a height. My Son! If be you not be kind to the one whom you are oppressing, be kind to yourself because you are harming yourself through that oppression. When your position of power invites you to oppress somebody then remember the Power of Allah. My Son! Learn from the learned what you do not know and teach others what you know.”

It is mentioned in another tradition that when Luqman left his city he (first) camped in a village called Maas in Moosal. When he found no follower and nobody agreed with him he became disheartened. He closed the door of his house and cornered himself with his son. Advising him he gave him several admonitions. Some of them are:

O My Son! Talk less and remember Allah at all places because He has warned you of His chastisement and has made you a wise observer.

O Son! Take admonition from other people so that they may take advice from you. Be cautioned by little trouble before a big calamity comes down on you and then you may not be able to avoid it.

O My son! Keep control on yourself when angry so that you may not be ditched in Hell. O Son! Distress is better than the wealth earned through oppression and becoming an oppressor. My Son! peoples’ lives are mortgaged for their character. So woe unto them due to the earnings of their hands and hearts. O My Son! The people of the past were caught in the net of the world. So how those who came after them can remain protected? My Son! Regard this world as a prison for you so that you may enter Paradise in the Hereafter. My Son! Do not approach the kings otherwise they will kill you. Do not do as they say otherwise you will become a disbeliever. O My Son! Sit with needy people and poor Muslims and behave like a kind father with the orphans and like a sympathetic husband with widows. My Son! Allah does not pardon the one who says ‘pardon me’ but He pardons the sins of the one who obeys Him. My son! First make companions and then start traveling. My son! Living alone is better than having a bad

companion, and a good company is better than solitude. My Son! Do good to one who does good to you and leave the one on his evil who does evil to you., because, he is doing a worse thing to himself than what you would do to him (by revenge).

My Son! Who is he who obeyed Allah and Allah did not help him and who is he who searched for Allah and yet he did not find Him and who is he who remembered his Lord and the Lord did not remember him and who is he who relied on Allah and yet Allah left him to others and who is he who wept before Allah and Allah did not pity him?

My Son! Consult the elders and be ashamed of consulting the younger. My son! Never be in the company of sinners because they are like dogs who, if they find anything with you will eat it up otherwise will condemn and disgrace you and their love is but for a split second. My Son! Enmity of the virtuous is better than friendship with the sinners because, if you oppress a virtuous Mu'min (faithful) he will not oppress you and if you think badly of him, he will wish good for you and remain pleased with you and how will the sinner give you your rights when he does not give his rights to himself?

My Son! Make more and more friends and do not be fearless about enemies because enmity remains hidden in their hearts just as water remains hidden in the soil. My Son! Whomsoever you meet, first salute him (say Salaam) then shake hands with him and thereafter talk with him. My Son! Do not harm others otherwise they will become your enemies and do not take blames from them otherwise they will disrespect you. Do not become so much sweet that they may devour you nor so sour that they may throw you away.

My Son! Fear Allah as is His right to be feared of and never lose hope in Him and His mercy. Have hope in Him but not such a hope that you may become fearless of His anger and chastisement. My son! Restrain your heart from desires because the desires are killers. My son! Never be proud and haughty and egotist otherwise your neighbor in the Hell will be the devil. You must beware that your last place is the grave. My son! Woe unto the one who is proud. How can he consider himself big when he is made from earth and he is to return to dust. He does not know whether he will go to Heaven and be successful or to Hell and be a loser. How can anybody be proud when he has come out of the passage of urine twice.

My son! How the son of Adam fall asleep when death is in search of him. How can he ignore death when death does not ignore him. My Son! When the Prophets of Allah and His friends and all the great men could not escape death that can live in this world forever?

My son! Do not reveal your secret to your wife and do not make the door of your house your assembly hall. My Son! Woman is made up of a crooked bone. If you will try to make it straight (forcibly) it will break, if you leave it as it is it will remain crooked. Do not give them (extra) freedom so they may leave the house. So when they do a good thing accept it and if they do anything bad, be patient because there is no other way out. My Son! There are four kinds of women. Two are well disciplined and two cursed.

Among the disciplined one kind is that which is respected by her people and also well-behaved yet remains humble for her husband. If the husband is kind and nice to her she becomes happy and if she falls in hardship she remains patient. Less money is sufficient for her.

Another kind of a good woman is that who bears many children and who loves her husband and wishes well for him. She behaves with love like a mother, also with the relatives and children of the husband and gives respect to the elders. She is kind toward children and loves those children of her husband who were born of another wife of her husband. She reforms herself and her house and household and children. If her husband is present she helps him in his jobs and if he is absent takes care of him in every respect. Such a woman is as rare as red earth. Fortunate is the man who gets such a wife. And among those two cursed types of woman is one who thinks very high of herself but she has no respect in her community. If the husband gives her something she becomes angry and if he does not she becomes furious.

Hence the husband always remains ashamed and in distress and her neighbors restless due to her behavior. Thus she is like a tigress. If you live with it will eat you up and if you run away it will kill you. And another kind of the cursed ones is that who is very quick in becoming angry and who starts weeping instantaneously. She gives no benefit to her husband if he is present and she maligns and disgraces him if he is absent. Such woman is like a salty land. If you water it, it will become salty and bear nothing and if you do not water it will remain thirsty. If such woman bears a child you will get no benefit from it.

My Son! Never marry a slave girl, lest she bears a son and sell him in exchange of you. My Son! If it was possible to taste and eat women like other eatables nobody would marry a bad woman.

My Son! Do good to a man who harms you and do not earn the world (wealth) too much because you have to (one day) get out of it. Just see where have you to go from there. My Son! Never devour the wealth and property of orphans otherwise you will be disgraced on the Day of Judgment and you will be forced to return that property on that Day. But you will not have kept it there (will not have it there to return). My Son! The Hellfire will envelop every body on the Day of the Resurrection Day and no one will get salvation except the one upon whom Allah sheds His Mercy. My Son! You do not like a man whose tongue is harsh and with whose tongue people fear. On the Day of Judgment the heart and tongue of such people will be sealed and his limbs and organs will give witness to what he had done in the worldly life.

My Son! Do not abuse people because it is like abusing your own parents. My Son! Every day that dawn is a new day and it witnesses about your deeds before the Lord of the worlds. My Son! Remember that people will wrap you in a shroud and put you in a grave where you will see all that you had done during life. My Son! Just think how you can live in the premises of the one whom you have angered by disobedience. My Son! Never give anyone authority over yourself and never leave your wealth for your enemies. 1

My Son! Do accept the admonition of your kind father and make haste in doing good deeds before death overtakes you and before mountains fall off on the Day of Judgment and the sun and the moon mix up and stop moving and skies fold up and rows of frightened angels come down on earth and you may be asked to cross the Bridge. Then you will see your deeds and balance will be fixed for weighing the deeds and the accounts of the deeds of all the creations will be opened.

My Son! I have given you four thousand words of wisdom. If you remember even four of them it will suffice you provided you act upon them. They are: (1) make your ship strong as the sea is very deep, (2) lighten your burden because the voyage which you have to undertake is very difficult, (3) keep ample provision as the journey is very long and (4) make your deeds pure because the one who is to accept them is very wise and Omniscient. According to another narration it was, by the order of Luqman, inscribed on the door of his latrine that sitting for a long time in latrine can cause piles.

1. As wealthy people have usually more enemies. It is also seen often that even the progeny (children) of a wealthy man also wish an early death to their father so that they may get his wealth as inheritance. When this wish is fulfilled, obviously, the inheritors engage in luxuries and forget their late father whose wealth gave them ease and thus, they never think of doing something good for him.

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