

SPEECH NO.10

TOPIC: THE EXCELLENCE OF SEEKING RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTION:

All praise is due to Allah –The Almighty, The All Gracious. We praise Him, we seek His Guidance and ask for His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own souls and bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can lead him astray and whoever Allah leaves astray, no one can guide him to the straight path besides Allah. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone without any associates and I bear witness that Muhammad is the slave and messenger of Allah. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and all his family members and companions. Amen.

O you who have believed! Fear Allah as he should be feared and do not die except as Muslims (in the state of full submission to Him). (Chapter 3 verse 102).

Part 1 of the Sermon:

Dear Believers! Dear Muslims!

The worship of Allah (The All Glorious and The Almighty) alone is the underlining wisdom behind the creation of the universe and all the creatures in this vast universe. For this great and noble purpose, Allah- the Most Wise sent messengers, prophets and books (revelation). Different forms of worship have been instituted by the grace of Allah-The Most Compassionate, so that people can enjoy and taste different forms of worship and compete with each other in different ways to get closer to their creator and attain higher ranks in nearness to Him.

There is one type of worship in Islam which is indeed great and takes priority over all other forms of worship as it rectifies all forms of worship. He who acquires it is indeed successful and he who neglects it will definitely regret it. Allah-The Almighty has praised and elevated the status of those people who possess it as it guides the servant of Allah on the straight path that leads to Allah and in all their activities in this life. The perfection of the human being and his success in this life

and the next is dependent on it. *This type of worship is seeking religious knowledge which is derived from the Holy Qurán and the Sunnah (Authentic traditions of the prophet Muhammad).* Religious knowledge is essential to know Allah (The Almighty), His names and attributes and how to worship Him properly, praise Him and glorify Him. With religious knowledge a Muslim person can distinguish the rights of the creator (Allah) and the rights of His creation and distinguish between what is permitted and what is forbidden in Islam.

Religious knowledge gives comfort and solace to the person in their private seclusions, reminds them when they are in a state of being heedless. Seeking religious knowledge is an act of worship and teaching it to others is an act which brings one closer to Allah. The reformation of the Muslim society, its elevation and the purification of the hearts of the people and their remaining steadfast on the straight path of Islam is all dependent on the spread of religious knowledge among the people. The guidance of mankind and its happiness, the immunization of the young Muslim generations from all evil ideas and false forms of worship and their continued safety from all its evil influences depends on having religious knowledge deeply ingrained in their hearts and minds.

The need for religious knowledge is above all other needs and without it the whole world will be corrupted and destroyed. *This is the worship of seeking religious knowledge, acting upon it and teaching it to others.*

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: “People are more in need of religious knowledge than their need for food and drink because food and drink is required twice a day whereas religious knowledge is needed all the time”.

Dear Muslims! O believers!

Our nation is a nation of knowledge seekers because the first verse that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was meant to encourage Muslims to seek knowledge. “Read in the name of your Lord who created.” (Holy Qurán: Chapter 96 verse 1-5).

Allah –The Almighty has described himself as the All-Knowing and that He is Knowledgeable. The religious knowledge is the wisdom that Allah-The Most beneficent bestows upon whom He chooses among His slaves.

“He gives wisdom to whom He wills and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those endowed with understanding.” (Holy Qurán: Chapter 2 verse 269).

Allah-The Almighty and All Glorious, favoured Adam (peace be upon him) and showed his favour and blessings upon him in front of His Angels due to the knowledge that Allah had bestowed upon Adam (peace be upon him). This incident is mentioned in the holy Qur’an in Chapter 2 verse 31: “And He(Allah) taught Adam the names – all of them. Then He(Allah) showed them to the Angels and said, “Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful.”

Dear Believers! Allah –The All glorious has favoured His prophets and messengers and others above other people by bestowing upon them religious knowledge.

Allah –The Almighty says regarding prophet Joseph (Yusuf) (peace be upon him):

“And when he (Joseph) reached maturity, We gave him judgement and knowledge. And thus We reward the doers of good.” (Holy Qurán: Chapter 12 verse 22). Prophet Joseph spoke about Allah’s great favour upon him by saying:

“Indeed I will be a knowing guardian.” (Holy Qurán: Chapter 12 verse 55).

Prophet Moses (Musa) peace be upon him was also blessed with this favour. “And when he attained his full strength and was mentally mature, We bestowed upon him judgement and knowledge. And thus do We reward the doors of good.” (Holy Qurán: Chapter 28 verse 14).

Allah-The Almighty also mentioned about prophets David and Solomon regarding this special favour bestowed upon them in the Qurán. “And We gave understanding of it (i.e. The case) to Solomon and to each (of them) We gave judgement and knowledge.” (Chapter 21 verse 79).

Allah (SWT) reminded Jesus (pbuh) about His favors upon him and his mother saying: “(The Day) when Allah will say, “O Jesus, Son of Mary, remember My favor upon you and upon your mother when I supported you with the Pure Spirit (i.e. the Angel Gabriel) and you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity and (remember) when I taught you writing and wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel; ... (Surah Al Maidah, Verse 110).

Al Khidr, someone whom Allah (SWT) blessed and favored with special knowledge that no other creature possessed. Moses, a high-ranking prophet and among the most resolute messengers of Allah (SWT), had to go and learn from him. Allah (SWT) mentions this incident in the Holy Quran: “And they found a servant from among our servants (i.e. Al Khidr) to whom We had given mercy from Us and had taught him from Us a (certain) knowledge.” (Surah Al Kahf, Verse 65).

And from amongst the soldiers of Prophet Solomon, a knowledgeable and powerful being said, from his knowledge of the Scripture, “I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you.” And when (Solomon) saw it placed before him he said: “This is from the favors of my Lord to test me whether I will be grateful or ungrateful.”

Allah, The All Glorious and All Merciful, recounted His blessings upon His last Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad, and among the best favors was that of knowledge. Allah (SWT) mentions in the Holy Quran: “And Allah has revealed to you the Book and Wisdom and has taught you that which you did not know. And ever has the favors of Allah upon you been great.” (Surah Al Nisaa, Verse 113).

Allah (SWT) did not command His Prophet to seek increase in anything except in knowledge. “And say, ‘My Lord, increase me in knowledge.’” (Surah Taha, Verse 114).

Dear Muslims, Dear Believers!

Knowledge is the inheritance of the Prophets and those who inherit this knowledge are the best of creation and closest to them in rank. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: “The Scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets. The Prophets did not leave behind money (dirhams or dinars) but what they left for us was religious knowledge. Whoever partakes of this knowledge will indeed be successful (truly blessed). (Related by Imam Al-Tirmidhi).

With religious knowledge, Allah (SWT) is feared and obeyed. Allah (SWT) has mentioned in the Holy Quran: “The people who are endowed with religious knowledge are the ones who really fear Allah.”

Imam Al Zuhri said: “Allah has never been worshipped in a better way than by seeking religious knowledge.”

Obtaining this knowledge is a way of goodness and leads to success in this life and next.

In a famous tradition of the Prophet (pbuh), it is reported that he said: “Whomsoever Allah intends goodness, He endows upon him understanding of religious knowledge.” (Agreed upon).

The best of the people are the most knowledgeable of them. The Prophet (pbuh) said: “The best of them in times of ignorance are the best of them in the period of Islam, if they attain religious knowledge”.

Dear Muslims, Dear Believers!

As long as religious knowledge is available for the people on Earth then people will be guided. And whosoever worships Allah without proper knowledge, he will cause corruption more than goodness. Indeed, the association of others with worship of Allah and innovation in religious matters occur because of the lack of religious knowledge and being away from the people of knowledge. Ignorance leads to misguidance or straying away from the path of Allah (SWT).

Allah (SWT) commanded us to seek refuge with Him from the ways of the people of misguidance in each unit of our ritual prayer: “The path of those who have earned (Your) anger or of those who are astray” (Surah Al Fatiha, Verse 7).

Allah has clearly mentioned in the Quran that people of knowledge are not equal in status with people who are ignorant. Similarly, those who are alive are not equal to those who are dead, nor are the blind equal to those who can see.

Allah (SWT) has mentioned in the Holy Quran: “Say, ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’ Only they will remember (who are) people of understanding.” (Surah Al Zumar, Verse 9).

With knowledge comes the true life and light of guidance for the people (servants of Allah). Allah (SWT) says: “And is the one who was dead and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people like one who is in darkness, never to emerge therefrom?” (Surah Al Anaam, Verse 122).

Allah (SWT) has specially praised the people of knowledge as being the ones who truly understand the parables or similitudes of the Quran and their meanings.

“And these examples We present to the people, but none will understand them except those of knowledge.” (Surah Al Ankabut, Verse 43).

The Mercy of Allah envelopes those in gatherings seeking knowledge and tranquility descends upon them, the Angels cover them with their wings as a sign of being pleased with their actions. Imam Al Tirmidhi related that the Prophet (pbuh) said: “The Angels lower their wings in humility and as sign of being pleased with the seekers of religious knowledge.”

Imam Ibn Qayyim Al Jawzi (may Allah show him mercy), said: “If seeking religious knowledge had no benefit other than to get closer to the Lord of the Worlds and attain the company of the Angels, the company of the righteous Prophets, Messengers of Allah, martyrs and righteous servants of Allah in the Heavens above, it would have been sufficient as a great reward and honor and blessing. But what if attaining high status in this life and the next is dependent on it also and conditional upon obtaining it?

The people who have knowledge of Allah (His commands and His prohibitions) are the best examples for the Muslim nation to follow as role models. They benefit others as well as themselves, due to this religious knowledge. For this reason, all the creation praise them and pray for them.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: “Allah and His Angels, and the creatures of the Heavens and Earth, even the ant in its dwelling, and the whale in the ocean, ask Allah to bestow His blessings and mercy upon the person who is teaching people religious knowledge (goodness).” (Related by Imam Al Tirmidhi).

Part 2 of the Sermon:

Dear Muslims, O Believers!

Seeking knowledge is considered to be a form of striving for the sake of Allah. Abu Darda said: “Whoever thinks seeking knowledge in the morning and evening as not striving in the way of Allah, has indeed suffered a reduction in his intelligence and opinion.”

It is highly recommended to compete in seeking religious knowledge. There is no envy except in two things: a person who teaches useful religious knowledge to the people and acts upon it and the wealthy person who spends his wealth in the way of charity and for good causes for the sake of Allah. Whatever else besides those two, none should be envious about.”

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: “There should be no envy except for two things: a person who Allah (SWT) has blessed with wealth and he spends it in the way of truth and righteousness and a person whom Allah has blessed with wisdom (religious knowledge) and he acts upon it and teaches it to others.” (Agreed upon).

Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) has also said: “Whoever trods a path seeking religious knowledge, Allah will make his path to Paradise easier.” (Related by Imam Muslim).

Dear Muslims!

Islamic Sharia knowledge is a fortress of protection of the Ummah from trials and tribulations.

Imam Malik bin Anas (RA) said: “Some Muslim people sought to become great worshippers and neglected seeking religious knowledge so they rebelled against the Muslim nation and raised their swords against the Muslims (i.e. fought the Muslims). If they had sought religious knowledge, it would have prevented them from such behavior.”

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) commanded us to convey religious knowledge even though it is little in quantity. He said: “Convey about me even if you knew only one verse of the Holy Quran.” (Related by Imam Al Bukhari).

Allah (SWT) has ordered Muslims to ask the scholars on religious matters which are not clear to them. He said in the Holy Quran: “So ask the people of the message (i.e. former Scriptures) if you do not know.” (Surah Al Nahl, Verse 43).

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also prayed for the people of knowledge that Allah should bless them with beautiful faces, shining countenance, happiness and expanded hearts (tranquility and inner peace).

Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) said: “May Allah brighten and beautify the face of someone who hears and learns from me something of the religious knowledge and transmits it to others just as he heard it from me. Perhaps the listener or receiver is more knowledgeable than the conveyor of the information.” (Related by Al Tirmidhi).

Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) also prayed for someone whom he loved dearly, (Abdullah ibn Abbas, his nephew), that Allah bless him with knowledge and religious understanding. He, the Prophet, said: “O Allah, teach him religious knowledge.” (Related by Imam Al Bukhari).

Religious knowledge enables a person’s position or status to be raised high in this world and in the hereafter. It is said in The Holy Quran: “Allah (SWT) will raise those who have believed among you and those who are given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is aware of what you do.” (Surah Al Mujadalah, Verse 11).

Imam Ibn Qayyim (may Allah show him mercy) said: “Whoever learns useful religious knowledge, acts upon it and then teaches it to others, he is called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

The benefits of teaching religious knowledge continue even after the death of the religious scholar.

Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) said: “if a person dies, all his deeds stop being recorded except three: continuous charity; beneficial knowledge; or a righteous son who prays for him.” (Related by Imam Muslim).

The best and most praiseworthy knowledge is that of the Quran and the Sunnah (the authentic traditions) of the Prophet (pbuh). The most noble of this is the knowledge of Allah’s most beautiful names and attributes, which explain the objectives and purpose of creation. Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Quran: “it is Allah Who has created the Seven Heavens and the Earth, the like of them. (His) command descends among them so you may know that Allah is over all things competent and that Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge.” (Surah Talaq, Verse 12).

It is imperative for every Muslim to seek knowledge of the basic pillars of Islam or essential knowledge such as the rules of prayers, fasting, zakat, hajj, etc. This is so that the Muslim perfects his worship and increases his knowledge of tawheed

(articles of faith and belief). He should also exert every effort and set aside time to acquire this essential knowledge by attending classes or knowledge circles. He should not be discouraged by factors such as lack of time or interest.

Students of Islamic studies should understand the importance and significance of this essential knowledge. They should ask Allah, the Most Generous, to grant them all help and guidance in their quest for a proper understanding of the faith. Their objective should be to lead pious and righteous lives, seeking only the good pleasure of Allah (SWT) and His rewards. They should not seek knowledge to argue with the scholars or to show off in front of others.

Whoever acts upon the knowledge that he has acquired, then Allah (SWT) will grant him better than he had before.

Allah –The Most Glorious has commanded you to send salutations of peace and blessings upon His prophet as mentioned in the Holy Qurán:

[“Allah and His Angels send salutations of peace on the prophet. O you who believe send salutations of peace and blessings on the prophet”](#)

O Allah! Exalt the mention of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as you exalted the mention of Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. You are the Praised and Most Glorious. O Allah! Bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as you have blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. You are Praised and Most Glorious.

Allah-The Almighty continue to bless us with the teachings of the Holy Qurán and enlighten us with its wonderful verses, knowledge, wisdom and beautiful exhortations. I say this and seek Allah's forgiveness for all of us and for all the Muslims from our sins so ask for His forgiveness for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Part 2 of the speech:

All praise is due to Allah for His generosity and All thanks is due to Allah for His guidance and countless blessings. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and all his family members and all his companions.

Dear Muslims! O Believers!

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