



Knowledge

*Imām ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād*¹

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Released by www.marifah.net 1428 H

Know, O gathering of brothers, may Allah endow us and you with a state of well being and certainty and take us and you along the path of the righteous ones (*al-muttaqīn*) that every Muslim, male and female, must be aware of *‘ilm* (sacred knowledge). There is no excuse for any Muslim ever to abandon it. That is, the *‘ilm*, sacred knowledge, without which one’s faith and Islam are not correct. In summary, it is ‘knowledge of Allah and His Messengers and the Last Day; the knowledge of what Allah has prescribed as compulsions and the forbidden things that He has prescribed we leave’. For certainly, the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, has said, ‘seeking knowledge is a compulsion upon every Muslim’. And he, upon him be peace, has said, ‘seek knowledge even it be in China’. China is a region in one of the most distant places. Few people will ever reach it because of its distance. Therefore, if it is necessary for the Muslim to seek knowledge, even in this distant land, how can it not be a compulsion upon him or her if he is among scholars and where there is no hardship or difficulties to be found in acquiring it?

The sciences of Islam are all based upon the words of the Messenger, upon him be peace, when he was asked by the angel Gabriel, upon him be peace, when he said to him, ‘tell me about Islam.’ He, upon him be peace, replied, ‘Islam is to bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, to establish the prayer, to give the *zakāt*, to fast the month of Ramaḍān and to perform the pilgrimage to the House for whoever is able.’ He then said, ‘tell me about *al-Īmān* (faith).’ He, upon him be peace, said, ‘*al-Īmān* is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His Messengers, the Last Day and destiny, the good thereof and the bad.’ The Ḥadīth is a long one.

As for the science of *Īmān* (belief) there are summarised creeds compiled by the scholars for the general populace of Muslims. The creed of Imām al-Ghazālī is one such example. It is comprehensive and beneficial and contains some extra matters that are necessary for the believer to consolidate, strengthen and perfect his or her faith. [We will relate at the end of this text, if Allah wills ‘the simplified creed that encompasses the knowledge of *Īmān* that must be known’].

¹ Translation of *Mabḥath al-‘Ilm* from Imām ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥaddād’s *Naṣā’ih al-Dīniyya wal-Waṣāya al-Imāniyya*

The sciences of Islam are found in the writings of the scholars and jurists, may Allah be pleased with them. The necessary amount for an individual is that which he or she is not allowed to be ignorant of. For example, knowing about the compulsion of the five daily prayers, how they are performed, their conditions, their timings, the purification associated with them and such matters. It would include the knowledge of the compulsion of *zakāt* (alms purification) its amount and its timing. Likewise, knowledge of the fast of Ramaḍān, its prerequisites and the things which annul it, and knowledge of the compulsion of the pilgrimage for the one who is able and the conditions that makes one 'able'.

In summary, it is necessary for the Muslim to know the individual obligations and the forbidden acts, of which knowledge aims to prevent one from falling into, such as adultery, homosexuality, the consumption of intoxicants, the unjust treatment of people, theft, fraud, lying, backbiting, slander and so forth.

Knowledge of the specific rulings of *zakāt* is not an obligation upon the one who has no wealth. Likewise knowledge of the essential elements and conditions of the pilgrimage is not obligatory upon one who is unable to perform. It is only compulsory upon the one at the point he determines to travel or he is about to perform it. As for the knowledge of the general obligation to perform Hajj and to pay *zakāt*, this is an obligation upon every Muslim.

Regarding the knowledge of the conditions of buying and selling, general transactions and marriage, it is obligatory to know Allah's rulings regarding these things when one intends to embark upon them. He or she should know what makes them sound and what invalidates them, from the outset and throughout. He must know this, otherwise he may encounter, willingly or unwillingly, Allah's wrath. For indeed, the ignorant one, through his ignorance, exposes himself to Allah's anger and risks destruction in every state. And how could that not be the case? Perhaps, he may mistakenly believe that some of the compulsions are not compulsory or even that they are forbidden or that some of the forbidden acts are not forbidden or are actually compulsions or acts of obedience. This is the utmost danger and potential harm for the ignorant one. Perhaps he may fall into things which resemble disbelief or are actually disbelief, as anyone who ponders this state and reflects upon their words and actions will realise. Allah will not excuse him. He – Exalted be He – has obliged them to seek knowledge and facilitated the means for it and obligated the scholars to teach them. Therefore, their shortcomings are purely because of their own preoccupation with the temporal world and the following of their own desires, which only increases their distance from Allah and His abhorrence and rejection.

It is amazing to see how the ignorant one, preoccupied by self deception, is tireless in his pursuit of the world, day and night. His greed for it does not cease. He has great concern for amassing it and keeping others away from it. He finds many excuses for this behaviour, yet he is ignorant of the affairs of his religion, does not seek sacred knowledge and has never sat with a scholar to learn from him. Yet, when it is pointed out to him, he justifies himself in a way that has no value in Allah's eyes, citing lack of time and having too many preoccupations. This is despite the fact that, Allah, may He be praised, had made the pursuit of knowledge easy for him by providing scholars and that there are very few barriers to learning essential knowledge. The temporal affairs are the opposite of this. One hardly achieves any small portion of it without difficulty and great effort. This (state of finding seeking knowledge difficult while pursuing the temporal world) is purely a result of the death of the heart. A person's concern for the world and lack of celebration of the affairs of the Next world are because he only sees the immediate and apparent needs and considers his need for knowledge as extremely distant, as he does not need it and will not know its benefit until after death. He has forgotten death and what follows it as a result of being overwhelmed by ignorance and lack of knowledge.

The one possessing these attributes are among those about whom Allah says:

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ

*They know but the outer (things) in the life of this world: but of the End of things they are heedless.*²

Haşan al-Başrî, may Allah show him mercy, said that one of them were able to take a dirham on his finger tip and tell you its weight because of his deep knowledge of worldly affairs, yet if he were asked about the preconditions of purification or prayer he would not know.

In summary, ignorance is the head of all evil and tribulations in this world and the Next. If all the enemies of the ignorant one were to gather against him, they would not be able to harm him as much as he has already harmed himself, as the poet has said:

The enemies of the ignorant one will reach not

What the ignorant one himself reaches

And another has said:

In ignorance there is death before death for its possessor

Their bodies are graves before their graves.

Ignorance, that is, of the sacred knowledge that Allah has obliged one to learn, is blameworthy in all respects. Safeguard yourself, O brother, from it. Leave the darkness of ignorance for the light of knowledge. You do not have to become an expert, just know the amount you are obliged to study and that you need and cannot do without.

Just as you must learn, you must also teach your family, children and all of those who are under your responsibility. If you are unable to teach them yourself, you must order them to go to the people of knowledge, until they learn all that is obligatory upon them. Otherwise, you would have sinned and those among them who are legally responsible (*mukallaf*) would have sinned.

The amount of knowledge that is obligatory upon every Muslim is not much. Its acquisition will hardly entail any difficulty for the seeker, by the Will of Allah' as Allah assists and facilitates for the one whose intention is sound. He will receive an immense reward.

The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, said, 'one who travels a path seeking sacred knowledge, Allah will make easy for him the path to the Garden.' And he, upon him be peace, said, 'the angels lower their wings for the seeker of sacred knowledge, pleased with what he is doing.' And he, upon him be peace, said, 'attending the gatherings of sacred knowledge is greater than the performance of a thousand prayer cycles, visiting a thousand sick people, and attending a thousand funerals.' And he, upon him be peace, said, 'Allah undertakes responsibility for the sustenance of the seeker of knowledge.' This responsibility is a special responsibility beyond His general responsibility for all creatures on the earth as expressed in His words

² Rūm 30:7

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

*There is not a creature on the earth but that Allah bears its sustenance.*³

Its meaning is ‘increase in ease and removal of hardships in the seeking and acquiring provision’. And Allah knows best.

In a long Ḥadīth, the Messenger, upon him be peace, said, ‘it, that is, sacred knowledge, is inspired in the felicitous and prevented from the wretched.’

As you already know from what we have presented, there is no excuse for the ignorant one to neglect knowledge, likewise, there is no excuse for the knowledgeable one to neglect practising it.

The ignorant one that falls short in seeking the required knowledge is like a servant who has been sent a book from his master that contains injunctions and prohibitions. The servant does not even look at the book nor does he know what it contains despite his ability and capacity to become well acquainted with it. The one who has knowledge without action is like he who looks at the book of his master and has knowledge of its information but does not comply with its injunctions nor refrains from its prohibitions. So reflect, may Allah have mercy on you! Have you seen a disregard more appalling than these two servants in their failure to uphold the right of their master? Would you be able to provide an excuse or justification for them? Is there anyone more deserving of punitive and exemplary punishment (*al-i'qāb wal-nikāh*) than those two for their disobedience and lack of respect for their master? Then, beware of being one of these two unfortunate men, the ignorant one that does not learn and the knowledgeable one who does not act upon his knowledge. You will perish and lose out in this world and the next and indeed that is a clear loss.

As for the broadening of one’s beneficial religious knowledge and excelling in it and going beyond one’s actual needs, this is one of the main means towards Allah and one of the most excellent virtues with Him. But this is only if studying is sincere and is purely for seeking the Countenance of Allah and accompanied by a demand upon oneself to apply and teach the knowledge to other slaves of Allah, only hoping for the Countenance of Allah and the abode of the Hereafter.

This is the rank that comes immediately after the rank of prophethood and all the other ranks of the believers follow. The scholars that embody their knowledge are the medium between the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, and the Muslims. Allah has said in reference to the excellence of the scholars:

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ

*Allah bears witness that there is no god but Him, as do the angels and the people of knowledge, upholding justice.*⁴

Notice how they have been linked with His angels in bearing witness to His Oneness and His justice.

Allah, Exalted be He, said:

³ Hūd 11:6

⁴ al-Imrān 3:18

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*Say, are they the same – those who know and those who do not know?*⁵

They are not equal either in the temporal world nor the Hereafter, rather Allah has preferred the people of knowledge over those who do not know by many degrees, as He, Exalted be He, has said:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ⁶

*Allah will raise in rank those of you who believe and those that have been given knowledge.*⁶

What is meant here is that those who have knowledge will be raised above those who believe (but do not have knowledge).

The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, said, ‘the preference of the scholar over the worshipper (*ābid*) is like my preference over the lowest of my companions’. In another version, it has been said ‘like the moon on the night when it is full over the rest of the planets.’ If the preference of the scholar amounts to this when compared to the worshipper, who is not devoid of knowledge as he could not really be a worshipper if had no knowledge of worship, then what his preference compared to the man of ignorance?

The merits of knowledge and those that possess it are countless. They are well documented in the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Messenger, upon him be peace, and the tradition of the righteous predecessors. Many books are filled with the virtues of knowledge and of the scholars. Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, used to say, ‘knowledge is better than wealth since knowledge protects you while you protect wealth. Knowledge increases when you share it while wealth decreases. Knowledge is a judge while wealth is judged over.’

Know that the scholar who does not act upon his knowledge is stripped of this preferential status. He should not be misled by what has been mentioned by Allah and his Messenger, upon him be peace, regarding the excellence of knowledge and delude himself into thinking that he is included in that solely by knowledge without action. The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, said, ‘learn what you will, for, by Allah, it will not be accepted from you until you act upon it.’ And he, upon him be peace, said, ‘one who increases in knowledge and does not increase in guidance increases in nothing but distance from Allah.’ Knowledge only gains that high rank with Allah when it benefits the servants of Allah. When a scholar does not derive benefit from his knowledge, how can others derive benefit from it? So recognise the loss of excellence that will befall one who has knowledge but does not act upon it. The Messenger, upon him be peace, said, ‘the person most severely punished on the Day of Judgement will be the scholar whom Allah did not benefit by his knowledge.’ For that reason, the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, used to seek refuge from knowledge that does not benefit and from a heart that does not feel humility. The scholar that does not act upon his knowledge has nothing but the empty shell and mere image of knowledge devoid of its true meaning and reality. Some of the righteous predecessors may Allah’s mercy be upon them, said, ‘knowledge invites to action. Either he answers or it leaves, meaning ‘its spirit, light and blessing goes and only the outer form remains. This does not go, but rather stays as evidence against the blameworthy scholar.’

⁵ al-Zumar 39:9

⁶ al-Mujādalah 58:11

On the other hand, if this scholar teaches his knowledge to people and they derive benefit from him, then he is like a burning candle that illuminates for the people or a needle that sews the clothes of the naked. Allah, Exalted be He, has said:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ نَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

*Do you order people to devoutness and forget yourselves when you recite the Book, will you not use your intellects?*⁷

And in a Ḥadīth, it is related that ‘the scholar will be called to the Fire with his entrails pulled out and he will circumambulate among the people in the Fire as the donkey circumambulates around the millstone. The people of the Fire will surround him and ask, ‘what is your situation?’ He will reply, ‘I used to command the good and not act upon it and I would forbid the wrong but commit it myself.’

The scholar that teaches people but does not act upon it is at a loss and is in great danger. However, his state is better than the one who does not act or teach the people. He is indeed in loss in every respect and is ruined in every state since he posses no good and provides no benefit at all. It is feared that he will be among those about whom the Messenger, upon him be peace, said, ‘a group of the bearers of Qur’ān will be brought to the Fire before the idol worshippers. They will say ‘do you precede with us prior to the idol worshippers?’ It will be said to them, ‘yes, the one who knows is not the same as the one that does not know.’

This scholar, by not acting on his knowledge nor teaching others, inevitably calls to evil, opens for the common folk doors to false interpretations and license and allows them to be deceived and misled in their duties towards each other and thus to the violation of rights. He is a deviant devil, an evil doer setting himself up in animosity against Allah and His Messenger. Satan has taken him as his representative and a deputy in spreading mischief, error and misguidance. With Allah, he is amongst those that have been described as donkeys and dogs in depravity and disgrace. In fact, donkeys and dogs are better than him as they end up as soil and dust while he ends up in the Fire. Allah, Exalted be He, has said:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ إِذْ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْجِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

*The likes of those that were charged with the Torah, but then have not upheld it, is that of a donkey loaded with weighty tomes, how evil is the example of those who deny Allah’s signs. Allah does not guide the wrongdoers.*⁸

And:

وَائْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخْنَا مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَالِينَ

⁷ al-Baqara 2:44

⁸ al-Jum’ah 62:5

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَثْ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصُصْ الْقِصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent Our signs, but he passed them by: so Satan followed him up, and he went astray.

If it had been Our will, We should have elevated him with Our signs; but he inclined to the earth, and followed his own vain desires. His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls out his tongue. That is the similitude of those who reject Our signs; So relate the story; perchance they may reflect.⁹

‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, used to say, ‘the thing I fear most for you is a hypocrite with a knowledgeable tongue’. For the like of this corrupt hypocrite who has outward knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah will be greater tribulation and mischief for the Muslims. The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace, said of such people, ‘there is something I am more afraid of for you than the antichrist (*al-Dajjāl*). They asked, ‘and what is that?’ He, upon him be peace, said, ‘evil scholars’. He described a group of people who read the Qur’ān but it does not go beyond their throats (that is, they pay it mere lip service) and they leave Islam like the arrow exits the kill.¹⁰ And it has been reported in a Ḥadīth that the similitude of the hypocrite who reads the Qur’ān is that of sweet basil (*rayḥān*), its smell is sweet but its taste is bitter. Based on the above, it is not inconceivable that one who learns the outward forms of knowledge may be a hypocrite and transgressor. His sign will be that he does not derive benefit or give benefit from the knowledge, rather, he harms himself and others too.

In summary, the scholar that acts upon his knowledge and teaches it is virtuous, benevolent and included among the heirs of the prophets. The scholar who does not embody his knowledge but teaches people knowledge and righteousness, his situation is precarious but he is better than the evil scholar who neither acts upon nor teaches the good he has learned, as a result he invites to wrongdoing by facilitating its means and opening up its doors. So distinguish between the scholars and follow the best of them, adopt his qualities, walk his path and you will be amongst those that are truly guided. Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path.

Know, may Allah have mercy on you, that the scholar who embodies his knowledge and is included amongst the scholars of the religion and the scholars of the Hereafter by Allah and His Messenger has signs and characteristics that distinguish him from the mixed up scholars described by Allah and His Messenger as the scholars of the tongue, followers of passion whose preference is for the temporal world rather than the Hereafter. Among the signs that distinguish him, is that he is humble, modest, fearful, and apprehensive through awe of Allah. He is a *zāhid*, that is, he is not attached to the temporal world and he is content with whatever little he possesses. He spends upon the righteous, gives counsel to the slaves of Allah and is compassionate and merciful towards them. He calls to good and prohibits evil. He is swift in

⁹ al-A‘rāf 7:175-176

¹⁰ There are several narrations of this Ḥadīth. Imām al-Nawawī and Ibn Ḥajar both comment that the meaning is that this type of person enters into and leaves Islam like the arrow enters and exits from the victim of the hunt, that is without gathering any of its flesh. There has been discussion of whether the meaning of the phrase ‘leaves Islam’ suggests they are out of the fold of the religion or whether the meaning of Islam is ‘obedience’ and that they are considered to be disobedient but within the fold. And Allah knows best.

performing good deeds and constant in worship. He directs towards good and invites towards guidance. His mark is of reverence, tranquillity, deliberateness, good character, generosity, soft disposition and he lowers the wing of humility to the believers. He is not arrogant, haughty, covetous of people, desirous of the world and he prefers the Hereafter. He does not gather wealth or deprive others of their rights nor are they harsh or vicious. He is not bitter or augmentative nor does he prompt disputations. Neither is he stern or of bad character. He is not miserly or of the people of flattery and deceit nor does he give priority to the rich over the poor. He does not frequent the rulers nor is not silent towards them but is, within his capacity, critical of their wrong doings. He does not desire status, wealth or position, rather he dislikes all of that and avoids involvement in any of it except where absolutely necessary and needed.

In summary, he is characterised by the praiseworthy traits and righteous acts that knowledge encourages and demands. He refrains from all the things that knowledge discourages such as blameworthy characteristics and actions. Every believer should adopt and adorn themselves with the qualities mentioned above. However, they are more important and more befitting for the scholar, in fact, they are obligatory upon him for he is a sign by which people are guided and a leader who is followed. If he goes astray and prefers the temporal world over the Hereafter then he is responsible for his sin and the sins of those that follow him. If he is upright and fearful of Allah, then he earns his reward and the reward of those who follow him.

It is necessary for the scholar to supplement the knowledge of external religious matters with inward characteristics related to the heart, the inner meanings (*asrār*) of actions and the things that can destroy it (*al-afāt*) and the knowledge of the divine threats (*wa'īd*) and promises (*wa'd*) mentioned in the Book and the Sunnah, such as the promise of reward for the righteous and punishment for the wrongdoers. By this, the scholar's benefit and his benefiting of others will be complete as the sacred sciences mentioned above are incomplete without each other. This is the knowledge of the righteous predecessors. The one who reads their biographies will know that.

Inward knowledge has no foundation without knowledge of the outward while outward knowledge is incomplete without knowledge of the inward. As for knowledge of the divine promises and threats, they contain encouragement to the commandments and virtuous acts and dissuasion from the forbidden and vile acts. It is ugly for a scholar to speak of the rulings of compulsions or supererogatory acts except with mention of what has come to us from Allah and His Messenger. The chests of the believers are opened by the word of Allah, The Exalted, and His Messenger. By them, their hearts find peace and their aspirations rise.

Reflect upon this carefully and take a good amount from these three sciences. They are the science of the outward rules regarding worship and interaction, the science of the inward regarding the characteristics and matters pertaining to the heart and the science of the divine promise and threat, that is, what is mentioned by Allah and His Messenger on the merits of obedience, the *wa'd* and the threat of punishment for the wrongdoers, the *wa'īd*.

It is appropriate and well established that the people of knowledge should exceed in spreading their knowledge through their modesty and teaching. This is in reference to common folk of benefit to every single Muslim. The scholar's speech when mixing and sitting with the common folk should concern clarification of the obligations and prohibitions, supererogatory actions and obedience, reminders of the reward and punishment for goodness and wickedness, using a clear comprehensible style so that they can be aware and understand. He should not be silent, waiting for them to ask, when he knows they are in

need or compelled to know something. For his knowledge of their need is itself a question implied by their state (*bi-lisān al-hāl*).

The common folk desire leniency in religious matters regarding knowledge and actions. The scholars should not assist them in that by silencing their teaching and guidance. If they do that, destruction will prevail and tribulations will increase. When you test one of the common folk, and most people are common folk, you will find them ignorant of the obligations and prohibitions and matters of the religion about which ignorance is not permitted. If you do not find him totally ignorant you will find him ignorant of some aspects and that if he does know something it is often from hearsay if you wished to replace it with ignorance you could do so easily with little effort due to his lack of foundation and authenticity in his learning.

The scholar should look at the student when he approaches him. If he is unoccupied and able to comprehend the sacred sciences he should instruct him to study books. If he is from the common folk and intends merely to acquire the obligatory knowledge, then he should be taught verbally in a manner he can comprehend. All the issues should be condensed and not made lengthy by the reading of books that will be difficult for him to comprehend and for which he may not have the time. He will not require more than that, as the requirements of the common folk in relation to knowledge is not much.

It is necessary for the scholars, especially those in positions of authority to admonish the Muslims when there is discord among them. He should instil fear through what has been related from Allah, the Exalted and His Messenger in terms of the limitations and the warnings regarding false allegations and testimony and oaths and corrupt transactions such as usury and so forth. They should be reminded of the Islamic legal measures in reference to these matters and the severe punishments therein. This occurs when ignorance prevails with an increase in greed and lack of concern for religion. How many of the common Muslims when they hear of the prohibitions of lying, false oaths and testimony turn away from what they had determined to do due to their ignorance and lack of knowledge?

In summary, the scholars must ensure that they gather with people for knowledge and speak to them about it and clarify it to them. The scholar's discourse should be related to the issue for which he has been approached. For example, if one approaches him regarding the contract of marriage, he should address them about the rights of women, the dowry, and payment of her expenses with kindness and about having a good relationship with her. Another example is the issue of business contracts. His discourse should concern witnesses, the sound and corrupt matters pertaining to trade and so forth.

By Allah! This kind of speech is better and worthier in social gatherings than delving into empty talk or talking about issues that they may not be interested in. The scholars should not engage himself with those that engross themselves in worldly affairs. He should not spend any of his time in matters other than establishing the religion. As we have mentioned earlier, the scholar should ensure that his gatherings and social interaction with the common Muslims is filled with teaching, exhorting and reminding them. It has become particularly important in this time where most common folk are overwhelmed by heedlessness and ignorance and turning away from knowledge. If the people of knowledge assist them in this by not teaching nor reminding people, corruption will be victorious and harm will prevail. This is the consequence of the laxity of the common folk about the affairs of the religion and the scholars not teaching or making them aware. There is no strength or power other than by Allah.

One of the most important roles of the scholar is to teach people through action before speech. He should not command them with a good action except that he himself performs it and is concerned about

it. He should not forbid them from a wrong action unless he refrains from it and is intense in his avoidance of it. He should only seek the Countenance of Allah and the Next World in his knowledge, his teaching and his action upon it and should wish for nothing else. The Messenger, upon him be peace, said, 'One who seeks knowledge that should be sort for Allah's sake so as to boast among the scholars and dispute with the foolish or to turn their attention towards him, will meet Allah and He will be angry with him'.

O Allah! Benefit us with what you have taught us, and teach us what will benefit us and increase us in knowledge. All praise is to Allah in every state. We seek refuge with Allah from the states of the people of the Fire.'

