

The Virtues of
Islamic Knowledge

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Thought-provoking speech of weekly
sunnah-inspiring ijtima

(For Islamic Brothers)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
 أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The virtues of Islamic knowledge

وَعَلَى الْإِكِّ وَأَصْحَبِكَ يَا حَبِيبَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

وَعَلَى الْإِكِّ وَأَصْحَبِكَ يَا نُورَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ

نَوَيْتُ سُنَّتَ الْإِعْتِكَافِ

Translation: "I have made the intention of Sunnah *i'tikaf*."

Dear Islamic brothers! Whenever you enter a masjid, make the intention of *i'tikāf*, for you will then be rewarded as long as you stay in the masjid. Remember, inside a masjid there is no *shar'ī* permission to eat, drink, sleep, have *suhūr* or *iftār*, and not even to drink Zamzam water and the water on which *dam* has been made. However, if the intention of *i'tikāf* is made, all these acts will become permissible. One should not make intention to observe *i'tikāf* only to eat, drink or sleep, but rather he should do it to please Allah.

It is written in *Fatāwa Shāmi*: "If someone wants to eat, drink or sleep in a masjid, he should make intention to observe *i'tikāf* and do the dhikr of Allah for some time. Then, he may proceed as he wishes (i.e. now if he wants to eat, drink or sleep, he can do so)."

Excellence of sending *salāt* upon the Prophet ﷺ

The intercessor of the sinful, the final Prophet of Allah ﷺ said:

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ مَاءًا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَ عَيْنَيْهِ بَرَاءَةً مِّنَ النِّفَاقِ وَبَرَاءَةً مِّنَ النَّارِ وَأَسَكَنَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَعَ الشُّهَدَاءِ

Translation: Allah will write freedom from hypocrisy and freedom from Hellfire between the eyes of whoever recites *salāt* upon me one hundred times. He will also keep such a person amongst the martyrs on the Day of Judgement.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

The Prophet ﷺ has stated: *أَفْضَلُ الْعَمَلِ الصَّادِقَةُ*, “A truthful intention is the best action.”² O devotees of Allah’s Messenger! Make good intentions before every action, as this can be a means of entering Paradise. Before listening to this speech, make good intentions. For example,

- You will listen to the entire speech to gain knowledge of Islam.
- You will sit in a respectful manner.
- You will refrain from laziness during the speech.
- You will listen to the speech to reform yourself.

Whatever you hear and learn, you will try to convey it to others.

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ *Mu’jam al-Awsaṭ*: 7,235

² *Jāmi’ al-Ṣaghīr*: 1,284

A Student of Knowledge is blessed

Imam Mālik bin Anas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had a student known as the Mufti of Madinah, Yaḥyā bin Yaḥyā رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. He once said, “On the first day I went to study with Imam Mālik bin Anas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, he asked for my name and then exclaimed:

Allah! Allah! O Yaḥyā! Strive to attain the knowledge of Islam! Let me encourage you with a story.

A young man from Syria of a similar age to you, travelled to Madinah to seek Islamic knowledge. He studied with us, and he passed away during his time as a student. I have never seen a funeral like his, for every student and scholar of Madinah attended it. The great scholar of that time, Rabī'ah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ led his funeral prayer. He was then lowered into his grave by Rabī'ah, Zayd bin Aslam, Yaḥyā bin Sa'īd and Ibn Shihāb (who were leading scholars of that time) رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ.

Three days after his death, a person saw the fortunate student of knowledge in a dream. He saw a handsome man wearing white clothes and a green 'imāmah, sitting on a white horse descending from the sky. The individual who saw this dream asked in surprise, ‘O young man! How did you acquire this rank?’

‘My knowledge of Islam made me reach here’, he answered. ‘For every chapter of knowledge I learnt, Allah granted me a rank in Paradise. Through the blessings of this knowledge, my status continued to increase until I reached the rank of the scholars, even though I was a student. Allah commanded the angels, “Elevate the ranks of the inheritors of My Prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ! Indeed, I have ordained for students of knowledge and scholars to share the same rank.”’

He continued by saying, ‘I was also a student of knowledge, so Allah blessed me with an elevated status to the extent that there were only two levels between the final Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and myself. One level was that of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and all other Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, and the second was of the Companions عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ and those who believed in previous Prophets. The station after this is reserved for scholars and students of knowledge.’

He further mentioned the favours of Allah by saying, ‘When I reached the station of the level of the scholars, they welcomed me wholeheartedly. Then Allah gave us glad tidings and said, “O group of scholars! This is My Paradise which I have granted to you. This is My pleasure, and I am pleased with you. I will grant you whatever you desire, and I will accept your intercession on behalf of whomever you intercede for.”’

After writing this amazing incident, the scholar Ibn Baṭṭāl رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ said, “All these virtues are only for those who acquire knowledge of Islam for the sake of Allah and also act upon what they know.”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

O Allah! Grant us love of knowledge!

O devotees of Allah’s Messenger! Look at the immense blessings given to the fortunate individuals who leave their homes to study Islamic knowledge and sincerely devote themselves to this endeavour. May Allah allow us to emulate the pious!

Contemplate how fortunate this young man was. He left his home as well as his parents, travelled from Syria to Madinah to gain Islamic knowledge and died as a student of knowledge; what was his reward?

¹ *Sharh Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 1, pp. 134 - 135*

The greatest scholars of the time attended his funeral and the leading imams of the era lowered him into the grave. Allah elevated his status in Paradise and granted him a station amongst the scholars. **سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ!**

May Allah grant us the ability to acquire sacred knowledge!

أَمِينٌ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

The soaring rank of scholars

In the 11th verse of Surah al-Mujādalah, Allah stated:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ^ط

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: “Allah will raise the ranks of the (excellent) believers amongst you and those who have been given knowledge.”¹

The Companion of the Prophet and leading Quranic exegete, ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says regarding this verse, “The scholar will be elevated by 700 ranks in comparison to an ordinary believer, and there shall be a distance of 500 years between each rank.”²

Knowledge is the *quṭb* of faith

Dear Islamic brothers! Due to the knowledge they possess, scholars will be granted extremely elevated ranks compared to others on the Day of Judgement. The Proof of Islam, Imam Muḥammad Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ explains, “Knowledge is the basis of success and the *quṭb* of faith.”

¹ Al-Quran, 58:11

² Qūt al-Qulūb, vol. 1, p. 241

Knowledge is life, and ignorance is death

The father of Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān, the scholar Naqī ‘Ali Khān رَحْمَةُ الْمَلِئُوعَلَيْهِ said:

No virtue in this world or the hereafter can be acquired without Islamic knowledge. In fact, the absence of such knowledge results in deficient faith.

Scholars say, **الْعِلْمُ بَابُ اللَّهِ الْأَقْرَبُ** - Knowledge is the closest door which leads to the court of Allah; **وَالْجَهْلُ أَعْظَمُ حِجَابٍ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ** - Ignorance is the greatest veil between you and Allah. Knowledge is life and ignorance is death.¹

May Allah grant us all the passion to gain Islamic knowledge. Let us now listen some hadith of the final Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ which discuss the virtues of Islamic knowledge.

1. Such a Time will Come...

The Companion Ḥakīm bin Ḥizām رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ explained:

You are indeed living in a time of many scholars and few speakers (i.e. those who narrate false stories), and of many givers and few askers. Good actions are greater than knowledge in this era. A time will soon come upon people in which there shall be less scholars and more speakers, along with less givers and more askers. In that time, seeking knowledge will be greater than performing good actions.²

¹ *Faizān-i-Ilm-o-Ulama*, pp. 7 - 8

² *Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*: 3,041

2. It is Obligatory for every Muslim to Seek Religious Knowledge

The Companion Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه reports, the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم said:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَإِنَّ طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ يَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى الْحِيتَانُ فِي الْبَحْرِ

Seeking religious knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim, and indeed everything prays for the forgiveness of a student of knowledge, even fish in the sea.¹

Dear Islamic brothers! Look at the untold blessings that come with acquiring Islamic knowledge. As a student is busy in his work, increasing his knowledge, reading religious books, as well as committing Quran and hadith to memory, everything in the world—even fish in the sea—pray for his forgiveness. How fortunate is this individual! سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

Which knowledge is obligatory to learn?

O devotees of Allah's Messenger! We just heard a hadith explaining how it is obligatory for every Muslim to seek knowledge, but which type of knowledge is this referring to? The Amir of Ahl al-Sunnah, Maulana Ilyas Attar al-Qadiri دامت برکاته هو العالیة explains this for us by saying:

This hadith is not referring to the widespread worldly knowledge taught in schools and colleges. It instead refers to compulsory religious knowledge.

- It is obligatory to learn about foundational Islamic beliefs.
- After this, one must learn obligatory aspects of salah, its conditions and what renders it void (in other words, he must learn how to offer salah correctly and know what leads to it being invalid).

¹ *Jāmi' al-Ṣaḡhīr*: 5,266

- When the month of Ramadan arrives, then whoever fasting is obligatory upon must learn necessary rulings regarding it.
- Whomever zakat is obligatory upon must learn all necessary rulings regarding this also.
- The same applies for ḥajj when this becomes compulsory upon someone.
- Anyone desiring to marry must be aware of the rulings surrounding marriage.
- A businessman must learn about the rulings of trade.
- An employer and employee must learn about rules pertaining to the employment contract.

In short, it is a critically important obligation upon every sane, Islamically mature Muslim man and woman to learn about Islamic rulings in accordance with their situation.

Likewise:

- It is a must for every Muslim to learn about that which is halal and haram.
- One must also learn about compulsory rulings related to the inward self, such as humility, sincerity and reliance upon Allah.
- Every Muslim must also learn about spiritual diseases, like arrogance, showing off, jealousy, thinking ill of others and hatred. They must also learn how to treat and rid themselves of these.
- Learning about things which can bring about one's ruin is also obligatory, such as breaking promises, lying, backbiting, taletelling, accusations, looking at haram, fraud and hurting

other Muslims. It is also a must to learn about all minor sins so that one may save himself from them.

Conditions of gaining worldly knowledge

Dear Islamic brothers! In today's day and age, a lot of attention is given to worldly education. Many Muslims work extremely hard to gain worldly knowledge in order to have a better future. Without a doubt, there are benefits of acquiring this knowledge, and it cannot be said it is completely impermissible to acquire it. However, there are some conditions that must be fulfilled if one wishes to do this.

The Reviver of Islam and Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān رحمته الله عليه expands on this:

- It is haram to study sciences containing teachings of disbelief.
- In order to work a permissible job, one is permitted to study permissible sciences (that do not contain teachings which oppose Islamic beliefs and principles).
- This is permitted as long as it does not prevent someone from learning the necessities of Islam; otherwise, worldly knowledge which prevents one from seeking necessary Islamic knowledge is haram.
- Additionally, it must not affect his religious beliefs and ethics. He must remain steadfast upon the beliefs and teachings of Islam and maintain his Islamic lifestyle.

If these conditions are fulfilled, there is no harm in gaining worldly knowledge for the purpose of working a permissible job.¹

The great imam also added:

¹ *Fatāwā al-Razawiyah, vol. 23, pp. 708 - 709*

It is a critical obligation for every person to learn Islamic rulings relevant to their situation. It is impermissible to waste time learning geography and history, or any other branch of worldly knowledge, until one acquires this.¹

Anyone seeking worldly knowledge **must** acquire Islamic knowledge first. They must only study sciences that do not oppose Quran, hadith or Islamic teachings. They must also not compromise on their Islamic morals and appearance. If these conditions are met, one is permitted to study permissible worldly knowledge.

1. When Allah intends goodness for a person...

The final Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ

- If Allah wills goodness for a person, He grants him understanding of the religion.²

2. Scholars are inheritors of the Prophets

The *Tābi'ī* Kathīr bin Qays رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ once said:

I was sitting with the Companion Abū Dardā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in a masjid of Damascus, when a man came to him and said, “O Abū Dardā! I have come to you from the city of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ after hearing that you narrate a hadith of his. I have not come for any other purpose.”

“Did you not come for business?”, the Companion asked. The man replied by saying no. “Did you come for anything else besides business?”, the man was asked, to which he again

¹ *Fatāwā al-Razawīyah, vol. 23, p. 647*

² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 71*

replied to by saying no. (In other words, the man travelled such a distance only to hear a hadith of the Prophet ﷺ)

Upon this, *Sayyidunā* Abū Dardā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ began to narrate a hadith discussing the virtues of seeking knowledge; “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, ‘Whoever follows a path in pursuit of (Islamic) knowledge, Allah will make the path of Paradise easy for him. Angels indeed become happy with a student of knowledge and lower their wings for him. Certainly, all creation in the earth and skies, along with even fish in the sea, pray for the forgiveness of a seeker of knowledge.

The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper, is like the superiority of the full moon over the stars. Scholars are the heirs of the Prophets, for the Prophets did not leave behind dirham or dinār (material wealth) as inheritance. They instead left knowledge behind as inheritance. Ultimately, he who acquired (Islamic) knowledge has acquired a substantial share.”¹

Nothing is superior to Islamic knowledge

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ Dear Islamic brothers! Let us think about this for a moment. The rank of a student of knowledge is raised to the extent, that the path to Paradise is made easy for him. Angels lower their wings for him, and all of creation in the heavens and earth, including angels, trees, stones, birds and even fish, pray for his forgiveness.

The most significant virtue is that the scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام. The Proof of Islam, Imam Muḥammad Ghazālī رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ, states: “Just as there is no rank greater than prophethood,

¹ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*: 223

there is no virtue greater than the inheritance of prophethood (i.e. religious knowledge).”¹

3. Scholarly eminence

The following hadith is mentioned in *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, in which the Companion Abū Umāmah Bāhilī رضي الله عنه narrates:

Two people were mentioned before the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم, one of them a worshipper, and the other a scholar. The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم said:

فَقَضَى الْعَالِمَ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِي عَلَى أَدْنَاكُمْ

- “The excellence of the scholar over the worshipper, is like my excellence over the least of you.”²

Dear Islamic brothers! This is an unmatched virtue belonging to scholars. Now let us think over this. Contemplate how elevated and high the rank of our beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم is. He is the master of the Prophets عليهم السلام and their imam. After Allah, the sacred personality with a higher rank than anyone is none other than my and your master, the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم. He himself has declared the excellence of an Islamic scholar over a worshipper, similar to his own excellence over the lowest ranking member of his *ummah*.

Who has the lowest rank in the *ummah*, and how superior is the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم compared to him? Although we cannot truly grasp this, scholars have attempted to shed some light on this matter. They say:

¹ *Ih̄yā al-‘Ulūm*, vol. 1, p. 45

² *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*: 2,685

- The lowest ranked in this *ummah* are those who have the light of faith and belief in their hearts but spend their lives in sin.
- The rank of a righteous Muslim follows this.
- Then the rank of a martyr.
- Then a pious Muslim who refrains from sin.
- Then the rank of a *mujtahid*.
- Then the rank of the *awtād*.
- Then the *Abdāl*.
- Then the *Quṭb*.
- Then the *Quṭb al-Aqtāb*.
- Then the *Ghawth*.
- Then the *Ghawth al-A‘zam*.
- There are other ranks of sainthood which continue in this way, the absolute highest of which is the rank of being a Companion of Allah’s Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.
- One of the highest ranks from amongst the Companions, is that of the Anṣārī Companions عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ.
- The Muhājirīn are a rank above the Ansār.
- Then the highest rank from amongst the Muhājirīn is the rank of a *Ṣiddiq*.
- Then comes the ranks of the Prophets.
- Then the Messengers.
- Then the *Ūlu al-‘Azm* Prophets.

- Then the rank of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.
- Then above all mentioned is the rank of the seal of the Prophets, the mercy for all worlds, the beloved of Allah: Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ O devotees of Allah’s Messenger! This explanation was only given to offer us some sense of understanding, but in reality, the rank of the final Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ is beyond comprehension. If we look at this brief list, we start to understand the greatness of his rank in comparison to the lowest ranked member of his *ummah*.

Now, let us read this hadith one more time: “The excellence of the **scholar** over the worshipper, is like **my** excellence over the least of you.” This highlights the rank of the scholars in an amazing way!

May Allah grant us the ability to become scholars who act upon their knowledge.

أَمِينٍ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

4. The Reward of 72 *Ṣiddīqūn*

As narrated by the Companion Abū Umāmah Bāhilī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Whoever grew up seeking knowledge and engaging in worship, and remained in this state until he reached old age, Allah will grant him the reward of 72 *Ṣiddīqūn* on the Day of Judgement.”¹

¹ *Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḡhīr*: 3,004

5. Why is it Necessary to Acquire Islamic Knowledge?

The Companion Mu'ādh bin Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ relays how the final Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

Acquire knowledge, because seeking it to please Allah is to fear Him. Seeking knowledge is an act of worship and repeating it (in order to learn and memorise) is to praise Allah. Teaching those who do not have knowledge is charity, and spending it upon those worthy of it is a good deed. It allows you to differentiate between halal and haram, and it is a sign of the path taken by the people of Paradise. It is a means of comfort, a travel companion and accompaniment during loneliness.

It is a guide in times of financial difficulty and during prosperity. It is a weapon against enemies and appears as an adornment to friends. Allah grants high ranks to nations through knowledge, and it is through this they become leaders who are followed. Scholarly opinions are considered final verdicts. Angels are inclined to befriend scholars. And every dry and wet thing, including fish in the sea and animals on land, pray for their forgiveness.

Knowledge is the life of the heart and the light of one's eyes in darkness. Through it, a person reaches the stations of saints. It is the imam of practical actions, and actions are bound by it. Knowledge is poured into the hearts of the fortunate, whilst those who are unfortunate are deprived of it.¹

6. The unseen arrangement of sustenance for scholars

Our beloved master, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "When someone studies the religion, Allah saves him from having to worry

¹ *Al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb*, pp. 42 – 43, *hadith: 8*

[about anything], and provides for him through sources he cannot even imagine.”¹

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ O devotees of Allah’s Messenger! Let us be strong and fight the negligence of the *nafs* and the whispers of Satan, for they are our enemies. Let us keep our attention upon this blessed hadith of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and dedicate ourselves to learning Islamic knowledge. You may have to face difficulties and worries, and you may have to make sacrifices. Do not be disheartened by this at all. إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ You will be granted salvation from these worries and concerns by Allah, and He will grant you sustenance from places you cannot even imagine.

When a ruler apologised to students

The jurist Abu al-Ḥasan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ explains, “We used to spend time with the famous hadith expert, Ḥasan bin Sufyān رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ. He once said:

I developed a passion to seek knowledge at a young age, so a group of friends and I set off for Egypt to acquire it. After searching extensively for a teacher, we finally found a renowned hadith expert of that time. He made us write hadith every day.

All of us lived in a masjid. We were away from home and poor. Nobody was aware of our struggles, nor did we ever tell anyone of our condition. A day arrived when we eventually ran out of money, leaving us starving due to lack of food. We remained hungry for three days and three nights. The hunger made us weak and even walking became difficult for us.

The fourth day of hunger arrived, and we were at breaking point. I went to a corner of the masjid and started offering salah. After salah, I raised my hands and began making du‘ā. Before I finished, a young man entered the masjid and asked, ‘Who is

¹ *Jāmi‘ bayān al-‘ilm wa faḍlihī*, vol. 1, p. 199, hadith: 216

Ḥasan bin Sufyān?’ When I said it was me, the young man revealed, ‘Ṭūlūn, the governor of our city, has sent you food.’

I asked in surprise, ‘How does the governor know about us?’

The young man answered, ‘I am a servant. The governor called me this morning and said, “Go to such and such area, and go to this masjid. There are students of knowledge who have been hungry for three days and three nights. Give them food and money. Apologise to them on my behalf as I was unaware of their condition. I will visit them tomorrow and ask for forgiveness.”’

The young man continued, ‘I became curious after hearing his words. So, I asked, “O respected governor! What has caused you to show this kindness?” He replied, “I had a dream last night and saw someone riding a horse whilst holding a spear. He placed the spear in my side and said, ‘Get up now! Help Ḥasan bin Sufyān رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and his friends! They are travelling in order to gain knowledge and have been hungry for three days and nights. They are residing in such and such masjid of your city.”’

The governor said, “I asked the rider who he was. He replied, ‘I am an angel of Allah who was sent to inform you of the condition of the students of knowledge. Do not wait! Help them immediately!’ After saying this, the horse and rider disappeared from my view.””¹

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! Dear Islamic brothers! You heard how the student of knowledge receives help from the unseen. So do not become worried due to poverty and a lack of material wealth! Be determined and busy yourself in seeking knowledge. انْشَاءَ اللَّهُ. You will be helped by Allah.

¹ ‘Uyūn al-Ḥikāyāt, part 1, pp. 181 - 184

Dawat-e-Islami's Education Department

The fate of a nation is dependent upon the upbringing of its youth. Countless stories of progress and regression highlight how authority remained in the hands of a nation whose youth possessed noble conduct and behaviour, and the downfall of a nation occurred when its youth wasted their time in futile activities. Our condition today is similar. The amount of young people offering salah has dwindled. This is because our educational standards have fallen dramatically. The condition of our learning institutes and state of our education systems leave much to be desired.

Dawat-e-Islami established the Education Department in order to spread its message to those affiliated with schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutes. The main purpose of this department is to invite students and teachers to the religious environment of Dawat-e-Islami, and encourage them to live their lives in accordance with the sunnah.

It also makes every effort to provide religious and moral training to these future leaders by distributing the Pious Deeds booklet to educational institutes, and by initiating Madrassat al-Madinah services for adults. **الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ** Countless non-practicing students have repented from their sins, started to offer salah and adopted the sunnah.

7. Importance of Knowledge

The Companion 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Abī Bakrah **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** reports that the final Prophet of Allah **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** said, "Become a scholar or a student of knowledge. Become someone who listens to religious knowledge or someone who loves scholars. Do not become the fifth, or you will be destroyed."¹

¹ *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm wa faḍlihī*, vol. 1, p. 158, hadith: 151

8. Travelling to ask about wiping over socks

The Companion Ibn Hubaysh رضي الله عنه explains:

A Companion from the tribe of Murād, Safwān bin ‘Asāl رضي الله عنه came to the Prophetic court and said, “O Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم! I have come to you to gain knowledge of Islam.” He replied, “Welcome, student of knowledge! Angels become pleased with a student of knowledge and cover him with their wings. One angel shades him with its wings, and another places its wings above those of the first. They continue to cover each other’s wings in this manner until they reach the skies.”

After mentioning this virtue of a student of knowledge, the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم asked, “What have you come to learn?” Safwān bin ‘Asāl رضي الله عنه replied, “O Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم! I have travelled non-stop from Makkah to ask you about wiping over socks.”¹

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ - سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ - Dear Islamic brothers! This is love for Islamic knowledge! This Companion رضي الله عنه travelled a great distance to enquire about just one issue, and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم was extremely pleased by this. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم also welcomed the student of knowledge in a beautiful manner, and narrated the virtues of seeking religious knowledge.

9. Religious knowledge illuminates the grave

Sayyiduna K‘ab al-Aḥbār رضي الله عنه disclosed:

Allah sent this revelation to His Prophet Mūsā عليه السلام: “Learn of goodness and teach this to others. Indeed, I illuminate the graves

¹ *Jāmi‘ bayān al-‘ilm wa faḍlihī*, vol. 1, p. 164, *hadith*: 162

of those who seek and learn (religious) knowledge. They will face no distress in the grave.”¹

Obstacles on the path of knowledge

O devotees of Allah’s Messenger! Think about the many virtues of seeking knowledge. Unfortunately, we are negligent and our *nafs* causes us to become lazy. We run from hard work and effort. Satanic whispers make us sometimes chase after fame, and sometimes after money.

In our hearts, we experience Satanic whispers like, “If I seek religious knowledge, how will I earn a living? How will I support myself? I have such a large business to manage, so I have no time to spare for seeking knowledge. I cannot leave my shop as my job takes up all my time.” These and many other Satanic whispers cause us to be deprived of seeking knowledge.

The Devil is the Greatest Enemy of the Student of Knowledge

It is mentioned in *Malfūzāt-i-Ala Hazrat*, published by Maktabat al-Madinah:

After ‘aṣr salah, devils gather upon the ocean. Iblis (Satan) sits on a throne, and his followers tell him about their actions. One says he was the cause of such-and-such amount of alcohol being drunk. Another says he caused such-and-such acts of immorality to be carried out. Satan continues to listen to all of them. Then one of his followers says, “Today, I prevented a student of knowledge from learning.”

Satan leaps from the throne when hearing this, embraces him and says **أَنْتَ أَتَمَّ** – “You did well!” The rest of his followers become angry, as they were not commended for their actions, whilst this

¹ *Jāmi‘ bayān al-‘ilm wa faḍlihī*, vol. 1, p. 240, hadith: 324

one follower of Satan was praised so much (just for preventing a student of knowledge from attending one class). Iblis says, “You do not know; everything you did is due to this (preventing someone from gaining knowledge). If they (the people) possessed knowledge, they would not sin.”¹

Dear Islamic brothers! We come to know that the greatest goal of Satan is to deprive Muslims of gaining knowledge, because a lack of knowledge makes it difficult to refrain from sin. This is why we must learn and not be lazy in this regard. May Allah grant us all love for knowledge!

اٰمِيْنَ بِجَاةِ النَّبِيِّ الْاَمِيْنِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Dawat-e-Islami and the propagation of knowledge

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ Dawat-e-Islami is striving to spread the light of knowledge around the world. Thousands of Jamiat al-Madinahs have been established around the world, in which Islamic brothers and sisters are taught scholar courses in separate campuses. اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ This course covers around 15 sciences, such as Quranic commentary, hadith and jurisprudence, as well as respective principles for these subjects, theology, etymology, morphology, rhetoric and more.

Through the grace of Allah and the merciful gaze of His beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the educational board of Dawat-e-Islami, Kanz al-Madāris, has also been formed. Jamiat al-Madinah exams are held through this board, which results in a formal MA Islamic studies qualification (in Pakistan).

Admissions are now open, so kindly join Jamiat al-Madina yourself, and encourage your children and relatives to do the same. In this way, you

¹ *Malfūzāt-i-Ala Hazrat, p. 356*

can seek knowledge and spend your time serving Islam. May Allah make us practicing scholars and grant us the ability to teach others.

أَمِينٌ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Madani Muzakarah

O devotees of Allah's Messenger! A simple way of gaining knowledge is the Madani Muzakarah. **الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ** The Amir of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlana Ilyas Attar al-Qadiri **دَاعَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَةِ** conducts a Madani Muzakarah every Saturday after 'ishā prayer, live on Madani Channel. During this session, in a hugely informative and wisdom-filled manner, he answers questions posed to him from all over the world.

Watching the Madani Muzakarah is also one of Dawat-e-Islami's 12 Islamic activities. To gain the best of this world and the hereafter, to attain the blessings of the awliyā, to increase love for the Prophet in your heart, to acquire the light of knowledge and become pious, ensure to watch this Madani Muzakarah. Let us now listen to an amazing story related to this.

Children began to perform salah

An Islamic brother from Chakwal (Punjab, Pakistan) mentions:

I was previously a wayward member of my community and addicted to cigarettes, drugs and alcohol. When Ramadan arrived one year, I was fortunate to observe its fasts and watch the Madani Muzakara on Madani Channel every night. The pearls of wisdom given to us by Mawlana Ilyas Attar al-Qadiri **دَاعَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَةِ** touched my heart and transformed my life. **الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ** I repented from my sins, grew my beard, and started to offer all five salah in the masjid with congregation. My 12-year-old son and 10-year-old daughter saw this and started praying too. My

son also comes with me to the masjid to offer salah in congregation.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers! Bringing the speech to an end, let us have the honour of discussing the sunnah and some life skills we can all implement. In a hadith, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, مَنْ أَحَبَّ – “Whoever loved my sunnah loved me, and whoever loved me will be with me in Paradise.”²

Madani Pearls for the seeker of knowledge

Dear Islamic brothers! We will now have the privilege of listening to some Madani pearls regarding the seeker of knowledge. Let us first mention two beautiful hadith of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

1. “Whoever treads a path in search of knowledge, Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for him.”³
2. “Angels become happy with whoever leaves his home in search of knowledge and lower their wings for him.”⁴
 - Travelling to gain knowledge is a sunnah of pious elders.⁵
 - Asking questions to acquire knowledge is a source of blessings, but one must adhere to the etiquettes of asking questions.⁶
 - Knowledge is a treasure, and asking questions is its key.⁷

¹ Faizan-i-Madani Muzakarah, p. 72

² Mishkāt, vol. 1, p. 55, hadith: 175

³ Şahīḥ Muslim, hadith 6,853

⁴ Ṭabarani Kabīr, vol. 8, p. 55, hadith: 7,350

⁵ 40 Farāmīn-i-Mustafa, p. 23

⁶ Faizān-i-Dāta Ali Hujwari, p. 13

⁷ Al-Firdaws bi-māthūr al-khiṭāb, vol. 2, p. 80, hadith: 4,011

- In order to gain knowledge, do not feel shy or ashamed of asking questions.¹
- Flattery is not from the character of a believer, but one can utilise it in order to seek knowledge.²

Announcement

The remaining Madani pearls regarding seeking knowledge will be mentioned in study circles. Do make sure to attend these to find out more!

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ *Arābī ke sawālāt aur Arabī Āqā ke jawābāt, p. 8*

² *Shu‘ab al-Īmān: 4,863*