

Knowledge

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Achieve Noble Character

Knowledge

ShaykhPod Books

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We pray that Allah, the Exalted, completes His favour on us and accepts each letter of this book in His august court and allows it to testify on our behalf on the Last Day.

All praise to Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds and endless blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on his blessed Household and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Compiler's Notes

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com.

Introduction

The following short book discusses an Aspect of Noble Character: Knowledge.

Implementing the lessons discussed will aid a Muslim to Achieve Noble Character. According to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that the heaviest thing in the Scales of Judgment Day will be Noble Character. It is one of qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which Allah, the Exalted, complimented in Chapter 68 Al Qalam, Verse 4 of the Holy Quran:

“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”

Therefore, it is a duty on all Muslims to gain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to Achieve Noble Character.

KNOWLEDGE

First Point

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6853, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever follows a path seeking knowledge Allah, the Exalted, will make the path to Paradise easy for them.

This indicates both a physical path someone takes seeking knowledge, such as attending lectures and classes, and a path whereby someone seeks knowledge without a physical journey. It encompasses all forms of knowledge, such as listening, reading, studying and writing about knowledge. The path to Paradise has many obstacles preventing a muslim from reaching it. Only the one who possesses knowledge of them and how to overcome them will reach Paradise safely. In addition, it is easily understood that a person cannot reach a city in this world without knowledge of its location and the route which leads to it. Similarly, Paradise cannot be obtained without knowing these things about it, such as the path leading to it.

But the important thing to note is that a muslim's intention to seek and act on knowledge must be to please Allah, the Exalted. Whoever seeks

religious knowledge for a worldly reason, such as showing off, will end up in Hell if they fail to sincerely repent. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 253.

In addition, a muslim must strive to act on their knowledge as knowledge without action is of no value or benefit. This is like the one who possesses knowledge of a path to safety but does not take it and instead remains in an area full of dangers. This is why knowledge can be split into two categories. The first is when one acts on their knowledge, which leads to piety and an increase in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. The second is when one fails to act on their knowledge. This type will not increase one's obedience to Allah, the Exalted, in fact, it will only increase them in arrogance believing they are superior to others even though they are like donkeys which carry books that do not benefit it. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

“...and then did not take it on (did not act on their knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]...”

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion are the blessings obtained by a group of muslims who study and recite the Holy Quran in a Mosque. Namely, tranquillity and mercy will descend upon them, the Angels will surround them and Allah, the Exalted, will mention them to the Heavenly Angels.

This indicates the virtue of learning and studying the Holy Quran. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has declared in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5027, that the best person is the one who learns the Holy Quran and teaches it to others. It is important to note, this includes acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran. This group of people are so special that Allah, the Exalted, will even forgive the person who unintentionally joins them. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6408. It is hoped that those who perform this deed regularly will be granted the gifts mentioned earlier namely, tranquillity and the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, throughout their day. Whoever receives these blessings will find peace and ease in all aspects of their life and when they encounter a difficulty these gifts will safely guide them through it. It is hoped that whoever receives the company of the Angels in this world will be granted their company at the time of their death and in the hereafter. Chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 31:

“We [angels] were your allies in worldly life and [are so] in the Hereafter...”

The next reward coincides with a reality which is mentioned throughout Islamic teachings. What a person gives is what they shall receive. As they remember Allah, the Exalted, with the people on Earth. Allah, the Exalted, remembers them with the Angels in the Heavens. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 152:

“So remember Me; I will remember you...”

The muslim who adopts the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, through their speech and actions, by sincerely fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, will be granted a light which guides them through every difficulty until they reach the hereafter and the proximity of Allah, the Exalted, successfully.

Knowledge

Second Point

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2645, that when Allah, the Exalted, desires to give someone good He provides them with Islamic knowledge.

There is no doubt that every muslim irrespective of the strength of their faith desires good in both worlds. Even though many muslims incorrectly believe that this good which they desire lies in fame, wealth, authority, companionship and their career this Hadith makes it crystal clear that true lasting good lies in gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. It is important to note a branch of religious knowledge is useful worldly knowledge whereby one earns lawful provision in order to fulfil their necessities and the necessities of their dependents. Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has pointed out where good lies yet it is a shame how many muslims do not place much value in this. They in most cases only strive to obtain the bare minimum of Islamic knowledge in order to fulfil their obligatory duties and fail to acquire and act on more such as the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Instead they dedicate their efforts on worldly things believing true good is found there. Many muslims fail to appreciate that the righteous predecessors had to journey for weeks on end just to learn a single verse or Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and

blessings be upon him, whereas today one can study Islamic teachings without leaving their home. Yet, many fail to make use of this blessing given to the modern day muslims. Out of His infinite mercy Allah, the Exalted, through his Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has not only pointed out where true good lies but He has also placed this good at one's finger tips. Allah, the Exalted, has informed mankind of where an eternal buried treasure is located which can solve all the problems they may encounter in both worlds. But muslims will only obtain this good once they struggle to acquire and act on it.

Knowledge

Third Point

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 3257, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against asking too many questions as this led to the destruction of the past nations. Muslims should instead do what they have been commanded according to their capacity and refrain from what they have been prohibited from.

Muslims should not adopt this mentality as people who have a habit of asking too many questions often fail in fulfilling their duties and acquiring beneficial knowledge as they are too busy asking and researching about less important and sometimes irrelevant information. This mentality can inspire a person to argue and debate over these types of issues also. Unfortunately, this attitude is quite widespread amongst Muslims today as they often argue about non obligatory and less important issues instead of concentrating on fulfilling their obligatory duties and the established traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, correctly meaning, fulfilling them with their full etiquettes and conditions.

A muslim should instead research and query about topics which are relevant and important to understand for both worldly and religious matters otherwise they will follow in the footsteps of the people mentioned in this Hadith and only make their own lives more difficult.

Knowledge

Fourth Point

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 253, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the one who obtains religious knowledge in order to show off to scholars, argue with others or attract attention to themselves will go to Hell.

Even though, the foundation of all good in both worldly and religious matters is knowledge Muslims must understand that knowledge will only benefit them when they firstly correct their intention. Meaning, they strive to obtain and act on knowledge in order to please Allah, the Exalted. All other reasons will only lead to a loss of reward and even punishment if a Muslim fails to sincerely repent.

In reality, knowledge is like rain water which falls on different types of trees. Some trees grow by this water in order to benefit others such as a fruit tree. Whereas, other trees grow by this water and become a nuisance to others such as a thorny tree. Even though, the rain water is the same in both cases but the outcome is very different. Similarly, religious knowledge is the same for people but if one adopts the incorrect intention then it will

become a means of their destruction. Conversely, if one adopts the correct intention it will become a means of their salvation.

Muslims should therefore correct their intention in all matters as they will be judged on this. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1. And they should remember that one of the first people to enter Hell will be a scholar who only obtained knowledge in order to show off to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 4923.

To conclude, only obtaining and acting on useful knowledge with the correct intention is true beneficial knowledge.

Whoever conceals knowledge without a valid reason will be bridled with fire on Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2649. Therefore, muslims must share the useful knowledge their gain with others. It is simply foolish not to as this is one of the righteous deeds which will benefit a muslim even after they die. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 241. Those who hoarded knowledge were forgotten by history but those who shared it with others became known as the scholars and teachers of mankind.

Knowledge

Fifth Point

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 219, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that learning one verse of the Holy Quran is better than offering 100 cycles of voluntary prayer. And learning a topic of Islamic knowledge even if one does not act on it is better than offering 1000 cycles of voluntary prayer.

Learning a verse includes studying and more importantly practically implementing its teachings in one's life. And it is important to note, a muslim will only gain this reward when they sincerely strive to act on the topic of knowledge they have learned and practically implement it when the opportunity presents itself. Only when one does not gain the opportunity to act on their topic of Islamic knowledge will they gain the reward of offering 1000 cycles of prayer even if they do not actually act on it. This is because Allah, the Exalted, judges and rewards people based on their intention and will therefore grant reward to those who would sincerely act when given the opportunity. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1.

Finally, as indicated by the main Hadith under discussion gaining and acting on knowledge is far superior to voluntary worship. This is because the majority do not understand the Arabic language and are therefore less likely to change their behavior and obedience to Allah, the Exalted, in a positive way as they do not understand the language they use to worship Allah, the Exalted. Whereas, learning and acting on knowledge is much more likely to inspire one to change for the better. This is the reason why some muslims spend decades performing voluntary worship yet, do not improve their behavior towards Allah, the Exalted, or people in the slightest. This by far is not the best course of action.

Knowledge

Sixth Point

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, Awareness and Apprehension, number 2520, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised the characteristics of a fortunate person.

The first characteristic is that they act on their useful knowledge. Knowledge is only beneficial when one acts on it otherwise it is something which will testify against them on Judgment Day. Not acting on one's knowledge and expecting to obtain success is as foolish as the one who possesses a map to their desired destination yet does not use it and still hopes to reach their destination safely. It is vital for muslims to fulfill both aspects of knowledge. The first is gaining it from a reliable source and the second is to sincerely act on it for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. A muslim must find the path to Paradise and journey down it in order to reach it.

Knowledge

Seventh Point

In a Hadith found in Imam Munzari's, *Awareness and Apprehension*, number 2556, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings to the one who possesses the following characteristics.

The final thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that the fortunate person is the one who acts according to their knowledge. This is important to do as ignoring one's knowledge and acting contrary to it is a sign of great ignorance. This type of knowledge is not beneficial at all. In fact, it will only testify against a person on Judgment Day. Knowledge is only useful when it is correctly acted on just like a map only leads to the desired destination when it is used. Failing to act on knowledge will not take one down the path to Paradise it will only leave them in darkness, confused and lost.

Knowledge

Eighth Point

I had a thought which I wanted to share. The elders of a family, especially parents, often use a statement which they believe indicates their right guidance namely, elders know best. To be honest this statement was true in the day of the righteous predecessors as the elders at that time used to strive in gaining and acting on beneficial knowledge. They put aside their own opinions and thinking and instead adopted the advice of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Because of their sincere efforts they were granted right guidance by Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways...”

Therefore, this statement applied to them and the youngsters in those days benefited if they acted on the advice of these elders. But unfortunately times have changed. In this day and age the majority of elders do not seek nor act on beneficial knowledge instead the vast majority act on their cultural practices which in most cases do not have a foundation in Islamic teachings. They flee from beneficial knowledge and are very content with these teachings based on made up cultural practices. Because of this ignorance elders are now sometimes right and

sometimes wrong. Therefore, the statement elders know best no longer applies.

It is important to note this does not mean a muslim should ignore or disrespect their elders as this completely contradicts the teachings of Islam. They should instead strive to gain correct beneficial knowledge, hear the advice of others, including their elders, and then make a choice which is indicated by Islam in all their matters even if it contradicts the opinions of others. A muslim should not blindly follow their elders as this in most cases will lead them away from the teachings of Islam. Chapter 6 Al An'am, verse 116:

“And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah. They follow not except assumption, and they are not but misjudging.”

This is possible to do while maintaining respect for others especially one's elders. If muslims do this then perhaps a day will come when this statement will once again be true.

Knowledge

Ninth Point

I had a thought which I wanted to share. Muslims often complain about feeling disconnected from Allah, the Exalted, even though they attend religious gatherings and listen to religious lectures. One of the main reasons this occurs is because they have adopted the incorrect attitude which contradicts the attitude of the righteous predecessors. They take part in these activities looking for lawful entertainment. They do not intend to seek and act upon beneficial knowledge in order to increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience, which leads to the closeness of Allah, the Exalted. This was the attitude of the righteous predecessors who only intended the closeness of Allah, the Exalted, in all their activities. A good way to determine whether one is acting with the right attitude is by assessing themselves after taking part in the activity. If they gained useful knowledge or were reminded of useful knowledge which inspires them to increase their obedience to Allah, the Exalted, then it is useful. If this does not occur then either the religious gathering or lecture has a fault in it or the listener has a fault in their intention. Either way they have not fulfilled the main purpose of religious gatherings or lectures. A muslim should avoid gatherings and lectures which concentrate more on entertainment such as telling stories which may fascinate the crowd but have no beneficial lessons in them. Only through attending the correct gatherings with the correct intention will a muslim achieve the closeness of Allah, the Exalted. Otherwise they are merely taking part in gatherings of entertainment which will not improve their character nor will they increase them in the obedience and closeness of Allah, the Exalted.

Knowledge

Tenth Point

I had a thought which I wanted to share. It is important for muslims to understand that their worldly knowledge irrespective of how much they possess is not enough to gain success in their religious life. Even though, gaining useful worldly knowledge is praiseworthy according to the teachings of Islam as it is an excellent means for one to obtain lawful provision for themselves and their dependents yet, it is not enough to safely guide them through their religious life. For example, in most cases, worldly knowledge will not teach someone how to safely journey through a difficulty or a test in a way which pleases Allah, the Exalted, so that they gain reward in both worlds. The obligatory duties and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, cannot be acted on by a muslim who only possesses worldly knowledge. In fact, religious knowledge has the power to guide one to success in both worlds whereas worldly knowledge will only aid someone in this world. The one who possesses religious knowledge will adhere to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, which will result in such blessings and grace that they will find success in both worlds. Whereas, worldly knowledge will inspire one to deduce their own path in religion instead of acting according to the teachings of the rightly guided namely, the righteous predecessors. Religion is not about creating one's own path it is simply to adhere to Islamic teachings.

Unfortunately, many muslims who possess worldly knowledge do not realise this important point which only reduces their chances of achieving success in both worlds. Therefore, muslims should strive to

obtain and act on both religious and useful worldly knowledge if they desire success in both worlds. This is why gaining useful knowledge is a duty on all muslims according to a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

Knowledge

Eleventh Point

I had a thought which I wanted to share. Even though the amount of Islamic scholars, lecturers and Islamic educational material has increased over time yet, the strength of muslims has only decreased. There are many factors for this. One of the main reasons is that many scholars have not adopted the correct intention when teaching others. Instead of following in the footsteps of the righteous predecessors by teaching only for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, they taught for other reasons such as to gain popularity and worldly things. For example, they often strive to be in the spotlight of gatherings and events and are not pleased with a seat which is to one side they instead desire a central seat. When their intention became like this Allah, the Exalted, removed the positive effect of their speeches and therefore they have little positive influence over their listeners.

Another factor is that the intention of the listeners is not correct. They attend lectures not for sake of Allah, the Exalted, and changing for the better instead many only attend lectures searching for a spiritual high just like a music concert. They seek entertainment not reformation. They please themselves by claiming they are working hard in order to act on Islamic teachings by attending many events and gatherings yet, because of their attitude they do not change for the better by acting on the lessons they have heard. They believe merely listening is good enough to please Allah, the Exalted, and to succeed. It is why some attend lectures for decades yet do not change at all for the better.

Finally, many of the scholars failed to act on what they preach. For example, they teach others to unite yet they are disconnected from other scholars and fail to aid other scholars and institutions in good as they fear they will be forgotten if they do so. They advise others to turn away from the material world yet, they are the most engrossed in it. Even though, they claim to be detached in their hearts, which in most cases is not true, they still have deviated from the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who was the most detached from this world both outwardly and inwardly. They should have shown a practical example instead of saying one thing and doing another. This caused their teachings to become ineffective.

Knowledge

Twelfth Point

I read a news article a while ago which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on how some people achieve success only after becoming experts in their field. It is important to note, Islam teaches muslims that they do not need to become scholars in order to achieve real success in both worlds. All they require is to strive to learn and act on the simple teachings of Islam according to their ability and potential. This is easily achievable by a non-scholar. For example, a muslim can begin by understanding and acting on three verses of the Holy Quran which will guide them towards eternal success. The first is chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 2:

“...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out.”

According to this verse a muslim has been guaranteed right guidance and success in all aspects of their life as long as they fulfil the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refrain from His prohibitions and face destiny with patience.

The next verse is found in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

This verse helps a muslim to overcome all difficulties they could possibly face during their life. A muslim must understand each situation has many beneficial wisdoms behind it which are not immediately apparent. One can find many examples within their own life when they believed something was good but it ended up being bad and vice versa. Therefore, they should patiently endure each difficulty knowing it is best for them even if they do not observe the wisdoms behind them.

The final verse is found in chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...”

This verse reminds muslims that no difficulty or obligation they must fulfil is beyond their strength to endure or fulfil. This understanding removes impatience and removes despair when facing difficulties and inspires one with the strength to overcome laziness and fulfil their duties both towards Allah, the Exalted, and the creation.

Islam teaches simple yet far reaching lessons which muslims should study and act on. But they do not require one to become a scholar in order to achieve a successful outcome, unlike many worldly things which require a person to become an expert before they can obtain success.

Knowledge

Thirteenth Point

I read a news article a while ago which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on how the exchanging of information and knowledge has increased over the years especially, over social media.

Even though, the number of preachers has increased over time and accessing information has become easier yet the strength of muslims has only weakened. One of the reasons is that many muslims have adopted a mentality which has hindered them from learning and acting on Islamic knowledge namely, they believe merely listening to Islamic knowledge is good enough to succeed. This is a trap of the Devil and completely contradicts the attitude of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the righteous predecessors. They not only listened to religious knowledge but they fully intended and fulfilled this intention by acting on the knowledge they heard. Failing to act in this way has caused the faith of muslims to weaken. It is the reason why some muslims have spent decades attending religious gatherings and talks yet have not changed for the better at all. The danger of this attitude is that eventually people will fall lower by believing that they can simply declare Islam with their tongues without the need to listen or act on religious teachings. Muslims will be left with ignorance as their guide which will only lead them to destruction.

Knowledge

Fourteenth Point

I read a news article a while ago which I wanted to briefly discuss. It mentioned how the marriage rates in a certain country were decreasing over time. The people claimed that they did not desire to take on the responsibilities of marriage.

If a person accepted a job offer without knowing the information linked to it, such as the responsibilities of the job, their salary and any insurance offered, this person would be labelled absolutely crazy by others. An intelligent person would never accept a job offer without knowing these important details. Yet, many people are desperate to take on certain duties without possessing knowledge on the responsibilities attached to them. For example, these people are desperate to get married yet they possess little or no knowledge on the responsibilities and duties of a husband or a wife and what the rights of each spouse are. This is a major reason why the divorce rates amongst muslims has skyrocketed over recent years. Similarly, these types of people are desperate to have children yet possess little or no knowledge on the responsibilities of raising a child, such as the rights of parents and children. Again, this is a major cause why the number of muslim youth in prisons has greatly increased in recent years. Couples have children but fail to raise them in the correct way. How could they when they do not possess the knowledge to do so?

It is vital for muslims to first learn and understand the responsibilities of the things they desire to do before they step into the situation. As without this knowledge they will cause nothing but trouble for themselves and others. The same way they do not accept a job offer without knowing its responsibilities they should never take on other duties which are harder than a worldly job, such as marriage, without knowing the responsibilities involved.

Knowledge

Fifteenth Point

I read a news article a while ago which I wanted to briefly discuss. It reported on some people who travelled to a foreign country and broke a law which they were unaware of during their trip. It is important to understand that the famous statement ignorance is bliss is not true especially, in respect to religious affairs and the hereafter. Unfortunately, some muslims believe just because they do not know an Islamic rule they are exempt from obeying it and Allah, the Exalted, will not hold them accountable for it. This is one of the worse types of ignorance as Allah, the Exalted, has made it clear that there are no excuses and muslims must learn and act on the teachings of Islam. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, declared this to be a duty on all muslims in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224. It is a trap of the Devil to believe ignorance is an acceptable excuse and one does not need to gain knowledge about Islam. If a government does not accept this excuse how can one expect Allah, the Exalted, to? Just like a person who takes on a responsibility is expected to know the rules attached to it, such as being a licensed driver, the one who accepts Islam as their religion is responsible for learning the rules linked to it. Therefore, muslims must avoid ignorance as it will not benefit them in this world and it will certainly not aid them in the hereafter.

Knowledge

Sixteenth Point

A great distraction which prevents one from submitting to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, is ignorance. It can be argued that it is the origin of every sin as the one who truly knows the consequences of sins would never commit them. This refers to true beneficial knowledge which is knowledge that is acted upon. In reality, all knowledge which is not acted on is not beneficial knowledge. The example of the one who behaves in this manner is described in the Holy Quran as a donkey which carries books of knowledge which do not benefit it. Chapter 62 Al Jumu'ah, verse 5:

“...and then did not take it on (did not act upon knowledge) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]...”

A person who acts on their knowledge rarely slips up and commits sins intentionally. In fact, when this occurs it is only caused by a moment of ignorance where a person forgets to act on their knowledge which results in them sinning.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once highlighted the seriousness of ignorance in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2322. He declared that everything in the material world is cursed except for the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, whatever is connected to this remembrance, the scholar and the student of knowledge. This means that all the blessings in the material world will become a curse for the one who is ignorant as they will misuse them thereby committing sins.

In fact, ignorance can be considered a person's worse enemy as it prevents them from protecting themselves from harm and gaining benefit all of which can only be achieved through acting on knowledge. The ignorant commits sins without being aware of them. How can one avoid a sin if they do not know what is considered a sin? Ignorance causes one to neglect their obligatory duties. How can one fulfil their duties if they are unaware of what their duties are?

It is therefore a duty on all Muslims to gain enough knowledge to fulfil all their obligatory duties and avoid sins. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 224.

Knowledge

Seventeenth Point

Listening correctly to Islamic knowledge is the only way one can correctly adhere to its teachings. It is important to understand the difference between hearing and listening. Hearing is simply acknowledging a sound with one's mind even if they fail to make sense of the noise. For example, a person may hear someone shouting at them from a great distance but they will not be able to understand what they are saying. Whereas, listening involves hearing a sound and understanding it so that one's behaviour changes. For example, a person giving a specific verbal instruction to another who responds appropriately after hearing and understanding the instructions.

Muslims need to hear Islamic knowledge and strive to understand it so that it affects their behaviour in a positive way. Unfortunately, many Muslims have failed to live up to this in respect to the Holy Quran as they are good at hearing the recitation of the Holy Quran but fail to correctly listen to it which involves understanding and acting on its teachings.

To conclude, simply hearing the word of Allah, the Exalted, is not good enough to obtain success one must strive to instead truly listen to it.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds and may peace and blessings be upon His final Messenger, Muhammad, his noble Family and Companions.

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