

[Home](#) > [Mizan al-Hikmah \(Scale of Wisdom\)](#) > [Knowledge](#) > Exclusive Confinement of True Knowledge to the Household of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt)

Knowledge

Knowledge العلم

The Virtue of Knowledge

فَضْلُ الْعِلْمِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): ذَنْبُ الْعَالِمِ وَاحِدٌ ، وَذَنْبُ الْجَاهِلِ ذَنْبَانِ1

1— The Prophet (S) said, ‘When committing a sin, the knowledgeable man is guilty of the one sin whereas the ignorant man is guilty of two [i.e. the sin itself and the sin of ignorance].’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28784]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْعِلْمُ رَأْسُ الْخَيْرِ كُلِّهِ ، وَالْجَهْلُ رَأْسُ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ2

2— The Prophet (S) said, ‘Knowledge is the root of all good whereas ignorance is the root of all evil.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 77, p. 175, no. 9]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ... بِهِ يُطَاعُ الرَّبُّ وَيُعْبَدُ ، وَبِهِ تُوصَلُ الأَرْحَامُ ، وَيُعْرَفُ الْحَلَالُ مِنَ الْحَرَامِ ، الْعِلْمُ إِمَامُ الْعَمَلِ وَالْعَمَلُ تَابِعُهُ ، يُلْهِمُ بِهِ السَّعَادَةَ ، وَيُحَرِّمُهُ الْأَسْقِيَاءُ3

3— The Prophet (S) said, ‘The quest for knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim... by virtue of it the Lord is obeyed and worshipped, consanguinal relations are maintained, and the lawful is distinguished from the prohibited. Knowledge leads to action and action follows it. The fortunate ones are inspired by it whereas the wretched ones are deprived of it.’[Amali al-Tusi, p. 488, no. 1069]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ قِيَمَةً أَكْثَرُهُمْ عِلْمًا ، وَأَقَلُّ النَّاسِ قِيَمَةً أَقَلُّهُمْ عِلْمًا4

4— The Prophet (S) said, ‘The worthiest of people are those who have the most knowledge, and the least of them in worth are those with the least knowledge.’[Amali al-Saduq, p. 27, no. 4]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَقْرَبُ النَّاسِ مِنْ دَرَجَةِ النَّبُوَّةِ أَهْلُ الْجِهَادِ وَأَهْلُ الْعِلْمِ5

5— The Prophet (S) said, ‘The people who are closest to the rank of prophethood are the people of knowledge and striving.’[al-Mahajjat al-Baydha, v. 1, p. 14]

- رسول الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): يُوزَنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِدَادُ الْعُلَمَاءِ وَدِمَاءُ الشُّهَدَاءِ فَيَرْجَحُ مِدَادُ الْعُلَمَاءِ عَلَى دِمَاءِ الشُّهَدَاءِ.

6— The Prophet (S) said, ‘On the Day of Resurrection, the ink of the scholars will be weighed up against the blood of the martyrs, and the ink of the scholars will preponderate over the blood of the martyrs.’[Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthur, v. 3, no. 423]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): رَأْسُ الْفَضَائِلِ الْعِلْمُ ، غَايَةُ الْفَضَائِلِ الْعِلْمُ7

7— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The fountainhead of all virtues is knowledge and the peak of all virtues is knowledge.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 5234]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْعِلْمُ قَائِدٌ ، وَالْعَمَلُ سَائِقٌ ، وَالنَّفْسُ حَرُونُ8

8— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge commands, action drives, and the carnal soul is the obstinate mount.’[Tuhaf al-Uqul, no. 208]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْعِلْمُ مِصْبَاحُ الْعَقْلِ9

9— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is the lamp of the intellect.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 536]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْعِلْمُ نِعَمَ الدَّلِيلِ10

10— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is indeed a good guide.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 837]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): العِلْمُ أَشْرَفُ الْأَحْسَابِ 11

11– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is the noblest source of repute.’[Kanz al–Fawa’ id li al–Karajiki, v. 1, p. 319]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): العِلْمُ ضَالَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ 12

12– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is the lost property of the believer.’[Uyun Akhbar ar–Ridha, v. 2, p. 66, no. 295]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): كَفَى بِالْعِلْمِ شَرَفًا أَنْ يَدَّعِيَهُ مَنْ لَا يُحْسِنُهُ ، وَيَفْرَحَ بِهِ إِذَا نُسِبَ إِلَيْهِ ، وَكَفَى بِالْجَهْلِ ذِمًّا 13 . يَبْرَأُ مِنْهُ مَنْ هُوَ فِيهِ .

13– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is such a dignified thing that he who is not proficient at it claims to be so, and one is pleased for it to be attributed to him. And ignorance is such a rebuked thing that even the one who possesses it claims to be free of it.’[Munyat al–Murid, p. 110]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): لَا كَنْزَ أَنْفَعُ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ 14

14– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘There is no treasure more profitable than knowledge.’[al–Kafi, v. 8, p. 19, no. 4]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): لَا شَرَفَ كَالْعِلْمِ 15

15– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘There is no source of dignity like knowledge.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 113]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): كُلُّ وَعَاءٍ يَضِيقُ بِمَا جُعِلَ فِيهِ إِلَّا وَعَاءَ الْعِلْمِ ؛ فَإِنَّهُ يَتَسَّعُ بِهِ 16

16– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Every container becomes cramped by what is placed therein, except the container that holds knowledge, for verily it expands because of it.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 205]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا حَظَرَ عَلَيْهِ الْعِلْمَ 17

17– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘When Allah wishes to repudiate someone, he deprives him of knowledge.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 288]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): العِلْمُ حَيَاةٌ 18

18– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is life.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 185]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): إِنَّ العِلْمَ حَيَاةُ القُلُوبِ ، ونورُ الأبصارِ مِنَ العَمى ، وقُوَّةُ الأبدانِ مِنَ الضَّعْفِ 19

19– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Verily knowledge is the life of the hearts, the light of the eyes from blindness and the strength of the bodies against weakness.’[Amali al-Saduq, p. 493, no. 1]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ) - لِكُمَيْلٍ لَمَّا أَخَذَ بِيَدِهِ وَأَخْرَجَهُ إِلَى الجَبَانِ فَلَمَّا أَصْحَرَ تَنَفَّسَ الصُّعْدَاءَ وَقَالَ -: يَا كُمَيْلُ ، العِلْمُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ المَالِ ، العِلْمُ يَحْرُسُكَ وَأَنْتَ تَحْرُسُ المَالَ ، وَالمَالُ تَنْقُصُهُ النِّفَقَةُ ، وَالعِلْمُ يَزْكُو عَلَى الإِتِّفَاقِ ، وَصَنِيعُ المَالِ يَزُولُ بِزَوَالِهِ .

20– Imam Ali (a.s.) once took Kumayl out to the desert, and when they reached the desert, he let out a deep sigh and said, ‘O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth for wealth is reduced by spending whereas knowledge causes your spendings to flourish, and any good product of wealth ceases when it ceases to exist.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 147]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): هَلَكَ خُزَانُ الأَمْوَالِ وَهُمْ أَحْيَاءُ ، وَالعُلَمَاءُ بَاقُونَ مَا بَقِيَ الدَّهْرُ ، أَعْيَانُهُمْ مَفْقُودَةٌ ، وَأَمْثَالُهُمْ فِي القُلُوبِ مَوْجُودَةٌ .

21– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The treasurers of wealth perish during their own lifetimes, whereas the knowledgeable ones remain alive for all time, their individual selves may pass away, but the likes of them continue to remain in the hearts.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 113]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): العَالِمُ حَيٌّ وَإِنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا ، الجَاهِلُ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنْ كَانَ حَيًّا 22

22– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The scholar is alive even when he is dead, whereas the ignorant man is dead even though he may be alive.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1124–1125]

- الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عليه السَّلامُ): إِنَّ العُلَمَاءَ وَرَثَةُ الأنبياءِ 24

23– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Verily the scholars are the heirs of the prophets.’[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 32, no. 2]

The Superiority of Knowledge to Acts of Worship

فَضْلُ الْعِلْمِ عَلَى الْعِبَادَةِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): قَلِيلُ الْعِلْمِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ كَثِيرِ الْعِبَادَةِ 24

24– The Prophet (S) said, ‘A little knowledge is better than a lot of worship.’[al-Mahajjat al-Baydha, v. 1, p. 22]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): نَوْمٌ مَعَ عِلْمٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَلَاةٍ عَلَى جَهْلٍ 25

25– The Prophet (S) said, ‘To sleep having knowledge is better than to pray in ignorance.’[Munyat al-Murid, p. 104]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): إِنَّ فَضْلَ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الشَّمْسِ عَلَى الْكَوَاكِبِ ، وَفَضْلُ الْعَابِدِ عَلَى غَيْرِ الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ عَلَى الْكَوَاكِبِ .

26– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Verily the knowledgeable man is superior to the [mere] worshipper as the sun is to the stars, and the worshipper is superior to the one who does not worship as the superiority of the moon to the stars.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 19, no. 49]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): سَاعَةٌ مِنْ عَالِمٍ يَتَكَيُّ عَلَى فِرَاشِهِ يَنْظُرُ فِي عَمَلِهِ ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ الْعَابِدِ 27 سَبْعِينَ عَامًا .

27– The Prophet (S) said, ‘An hour spent by a knowledgeable man lying on his bed thinking about his deeds is better than seventy years spent by the worshipper performing acts of worship.’[Rawdhat al-Wa’aizin, no. 16]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): فَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ بِسَبْعِينَ دَرَجَةً ، بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ حُضْرُ الْفَرَسِ 28 سَبْعِينَ عَامًا ؛ وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَضَعُ الْبِدْعَةَ لِلنَّاسِ فَيُبْصِرُهَا الْعَالِمُ فَيَنْهَى عَنْهَا ، وَالْعَابِدُ مُقْبِلٌ عَلَى عِبَادَتِهِ لَا يَتَوَجَّهُ لَهَا وَلَا يَعْرِفُهَا .

28– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The knowledgeable man is superior to the [mere] worshipper by seventy degrees, the distance between two degrees spanning the gallop of a horse for seventy years; and this is because Satan plants an innovation amongst people which the knowledgeable man notices and

prohibits, whilst the worshipper attends to his worship neither taking any notice of it nor recognising it.' [Rawdhat al-Wa'aizin, no. 17]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ ! لَعَالِمٌ وَاحِدٌ أَشَدُّ عَلَى إِبْلِيسَ مِنْ أَلْفٍ عَابِدٍ ؛ لِأَنَّ 29
العابِدَ لِنَفْسِهِ وَالْعَالِمَ لِغَيْرِهِ.

29– The Prophet (S) said, 'By the One Who holds Muhammad's soul in His Grasp! Verily one knowledgeable man is more difficult for Satan to bear than seventy worshippers, for the worshipper serves himself whilst the knowledgeable man serves others.' [Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 28908]

.. الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): تَذَاكُرُ الْعِلْمِ سَاعَةً خَيْرٌ مِنْ قِيَامٍ لَيْلَةٍ 30

30– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, 'Revising knowledge for an hour is better than staying up the whole night in worship.' [al-Ikhtisas, p. 245]

.. الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): عَالِمٌ يُنْتَفَعُ بِعِلْمِهِ ، أَفْضَلُ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ أَلْفٍ عَابِدٍ 31

31– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, 'The knowledgeable man who is beneficial [to others] as a result of his knowledge is better than seventy thousand worshippers.' [al-Da'aawat, p. 62, no. 153]

The Death of a Scholar

مَوْتُ الْعَالِمِ

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَوْتُ الْعَالِمِ مُصِيبَةٌ لَا تُجِيرُ وَثْلَمَةٌ لَا تُسَدُّ ، وَهُوَ نَجْمٌ طُمِسَ ، وَمَوْتُ قَبِيلَةٍ 32
. أَيْسَرُ مِنْ مَوْتِ عَالِمٍ

32– The Prophet (S) said, 'The death of a scholar is an affliction that cannot be compensated and a void that cannot be filled, for he is a star that has been obliterated. The death of a whole tribe is easier to bear than the death of a scholar.' [Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 28858]

النَّظَرُ إِلَى وَجْهِ الْعَالِمِ عِبَادَةٌ

Looking at the Face of a Scholar is an Act of Worship

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): النَّظَرُ فِي وَجْهِ الْعَالِمِ حُبًّا لَهُ عِبَادَةٌ 33

33– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Looking at the face of a scholar out of love for him is an act of worship.’[Nawadir al-Rawandi, p. 11]

.. الإمام الصادق (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - لَمَّا سُئِلَ عَنْ قَوْلِ النَّبِيِّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): النَّظَرُ فِي وَجْهِ الْعُلَمَاءِ عِبَادَةٌ - 34: هُوَ الْعَالِمُ الَّذِي إِذَا نَظَرْتَ إِلَيْهِ ذَكَرَكَ الْآخِرَةَ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ خِلَافَ ذَلِكَ فَالنَّظَرُ إِلَيْهِ فِتْنَةٌ.

34– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) was once asked regarding the Prophet (S)’s saying, ‘Looking at the faces of scholars is an act of worship’, to which he replied, ‘It refers to the scholar whom looking at reminds you of the Hereafter, and whoever is not thus, then looking at him is a trial.’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 1, p. 84]

Enjoinment of Seeking Knowledge

الْحَثُّ عَلَى طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أُطْلُبُوا الْعِلْمَ وَلَوْ بِالصِّينِ؛ فَإِنَّ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ 35

35– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Seek knowledge even in China, for verily to seek knowledge is an obligation on every Muslim.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28697]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ ، أَلَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ بُغَاةَ الْعِلْمِ 36

36– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Seeking knowledge is an obligation on every Muslim. Indeed how Allah loves those who strive in their quest for knowledge.’[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 30, no. 1]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ لَمْ يَصْبِرْ عَلَى ذُلِّ التَّعَلُّمِ سَاعَةً بَقِيَ فِي ذُلِّ الْجَهْلِ أَبَدًا 37

37– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who cannot endure the submissiveness entailed in learning for an hour will remain submissive to ignorance forever.’[‘Aawali al-La’ ali, v. 1, p. 285, no. 135]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مِنْهُمَا مَنْ لَا يَشْبَعُ طَالِبُهُمَا: طَالِبُ الْعِلْمِ وَطَالِبُ الدُّنْيَا 38

38– The Prophet (S) said, ‘There are two insatiable types of people who are never satisfied by their quest the seeker of knowledge and the seeker after this world.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28726]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): لَوْ عَلِمَ النَّاسُ مَا فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ لَطَلَّبُوهُ وَلَوْ بِسَفْكِ الْمُهْجِ وَخَوْضِ اللَّجَجِ 39

39– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘If people knew [the benefits] of seeking knowledge, they would seek it in spite of having to shed blood or dive into the deepest seas.’[al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib, v. 1, p. 97, no. 16]

The Seeker of Knowledge

طالِبُ الْعِلْمِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): طَالِبُ الْعِلْمِ بَيْنَ الْجُهَالِ كَالْحَيِّ بَيْنَ الْأَمْوَاتِ 40

40– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The seeker of knowledge among ignorant people is as the living one among the dead.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28726]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): إِذَا جَاءَ الْمَوْتُ لِطَالِبِ الْعِلْمِ وَهُوَ عَلَى هَذِهِ الْحَالَةِ مَاتَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ 41

41– The Prophet (S) said, ‘When death comes to the seeker of knowledge whilst he is in that state [of seeking knowledge], he dies as a martyr.’[al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib, v. 1, p. 97, no. 16]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ 42

42– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who goes out to seek knowledge is indeed on the path of Allah until he returns.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28702]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ فَهُوَ كَالصَّائِمِ نَهَارَهُ ، الْقَائِمِ لَيْلَهُ ، وَإِنْ بَاباً مِنَ الْعِلْمِ يَتَعَلَّمُهُ 43
الرَّجُلُ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَبُو قُبَيْسٍ ذَهَباً فَأَنْفَقَهُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

43– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who seeks knowledge is as one who spends his day fasting and his night praying. Verily a chapter of knowledge that a man learns is better for him than for him to have as much gold as a mountain and give it all away in the way of Allah.’[Munyat al-Murid, p. 100]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ تَكَفَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِرِزْقِهِ 44

44– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who goes out to seek knowledge, Allah guarantees his sustenance for him.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28701]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): طَالِبُ الْعِلْمِ طَالِبُ الرَّحْمَةِ ، طَالِبُ الْعِلْمِ رُكْنُ الْإِسْلَامِ ، وَيُعْطَى أَجْرُهُ مَعَ 45
النَّبِيِّينَ.

45– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The seeker of knowledge is the seeker of mercy; the seeker of knowledge is the pillar of Islam and is given his recompense with the prophets.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28729]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): إِنَّ طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ تَبَسُّطُ لَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَجْنَحَتَهَا وَتَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ 46

46– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Verily the angels spread their wings over the seeker of knowledge and seek forgiveness on his behalf.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28745]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقاً يَطْلُبُ فِيهِ عِلْماً، سَلَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ طَرِيقاً إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ 47

47– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who traverses a path in order to gain knowledge thereupon, Allah makes him traverse the path to Paradise.’[Amali al-Saduq, p. 58, no. 9]

. . رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ كَانَ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ كَانَتْ الْجَنَّةُ فِي طَلَبِهِ 48

48– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who goes out to seek knowledge is himself sought after by Paradise.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28842]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): إِنَّ طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ لَيَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ ؛ حَتَّى حَيْتَانُ الْبَحْرِ ، وَهَوَامُّ الْأَرْضِ ، 49
وَسِبَاعُ الْبَرِّ وَأَنْعَامُهُ.

49– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Verily everything seeks forgiveness for the seeker of knowledge, including the fishes in the sea, the reptiles on the land, and the predators and livestock of the earth.’[Amali al-Mufid, p. 29, no. 1]

.. الإمامُ عَلِيُّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَنْ جَاءَتْهُ مَنِيَّتُهُ وَهُوَ يَطْلُبُ الْعِلْمَ فَبَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ دَرَجَةٌ 50

50– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who is overtaken by death whilst he is seeking knowledge, there remains but a difference of one level between him and the Prophets.’[Majma’a al-Bayan, v. 9, p. 380]

Teaching

التَّعْلِيمُ

.. عيسى (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَنْ عَلِمَ ، وَعَمِلَ ، وَعَلَّمَ ، عُذُّ فِي الْمَلَكُوتِ الْأَعْظَمِ عَظِيمًا 51

51– Prophet Jesus (a.s.) said, ‘He who has knowledge, acts upon what he knows and teaches it to others is regarded as great in the greatest Kingdom [of the heavens].’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 1, p. 82]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَفْضَلُ الصَّدَقَةِ أَنْ يَعْلَمَ الْمَرْءُ عِلْمًا ثُمَّ يُعَلِّمَهُ أَخَاهُ 52

52– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The best form of charity is for a man to gain knowledge and then teach it to his fellow brother.’[Munyat al-Murid, p. 105]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ عِلْمًا فَكَتَمَهُ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُهُ ، لَقِيَ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ 53
مُلْجَمًا بِلِجَامٍ مِنْ نَارٍ.

53– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Any man who has been granted knowledge by Allah but who suppresses it, in spite of knowing it, will meet Allah, Mighty and Exalted, on the Day of Resurrection bridled with a rein of fire.’[Amali al-Tusi, p. 377, no. 808]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَا أَخَذَ اللَّهُ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْجَهْلِ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُوا حَتَّى أَخَذَ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ يُعَلِّمُوا 54

54– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Allah does not obligate the ignorant to learn until He has obligated the knowledgeable to teach.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 478]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): كُلُّ شَيْءٍ يَنْقُصُ عَلَى الْإِنْفَاقِ إِلَّا الْعِلْمُ 55

55– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Everything decreases with giving away except knowledge.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6888]

.. الإمامُ الباقر (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَنْ عَلَّمَ بَابَ هُدًى فَلَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهِ ، وَلَا يُنْقُصُ أُولَئِكَ مِنْ أَجُورِهِمْ شَيْئًا 56

56– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘He who teaches someone a matter of guidance receives the same

reward as he who practices it, without any decrease in the latter's reward thereof.' [Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 297]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): إِنَّ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ زَكَاةً ، وَزَكَاةُ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ يُعَلِّمَهُ أَهْلُهُ 57

57– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'Verily upon everything is its zakat, and the zakat of knowledge is to teach it to those who are worthy of it.' [Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 364]

The Virtue of the Teacher

فَضْلُ الْمُعَلِّمِ

- أَوْحَى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَى مُوسَى: يَا مُوسَى ، تَعَلَّمِ الْخَيْرَ وَعَلِّمَهُ النَّاسَ ؛ فَإِنِّي مُنَوِّرٌ لِمُعَلِّمِي الْخَيْرِ وَمُتَعَلِّمِيهِ قُبُورَهُمْ 58: حَتَّى لَا يَسْتَوْحِشُوا بِمَكَانِهِمْ .

58– It is narrated in Tanbih al-Khawatir Allah, most High, revealed to Prophet Moses (a.s.) saying, 'O Moses, learn good and teach it to people, for verily I enlighten the graves of the teachers and the learners of good, so that they never feel afraid in their resting place.' [Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 212]

- رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ عَنِ الْأَجُودِ الْأَجُودِ ؟ اللَّهُ الْأَجُودُ الْأَجُودُ ، وَأَنَا أَجُودُ وَلَدِ آدَمَ ، وَأَجُودُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِي رَجُلٌ عُلِّمَ عِلْمًا فَنَشَرَ عِلْمَهُ ، يُبْعَثُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً ، وَرَجُلٌ جَادَ بِنَفْسِهِ لِلَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ حَتَّى يُقْتَلَ .

59– The Prophet (S) said, 'Shall I inform you who the absolutely most generous one is Allah is the Absolutely Most Generous One, and I am the most generous of Adam's offspring, and the most generous from amongst you all after me is the man who has been taught knowledge and subsequently spreads his knowledge to others. He will be raised on the Day of Resurrection as a community in himself, and after him is the man who is generous in giving up his life for Allah, Mighty and Exalted, and is killed for Him.' [al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhiib, v. 1, p. 119, no. 5]

- الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): مُعَلِّمُ الْخَيْرِ يَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ دَوَابُّ الْأَرْضِ ، وَحَيْثَانُ الْبُحُورِ ، وَكُلُّ صَغِيرَةٍ وَكَبِيرَةٍ فِي أَرْضِ اللَّهِ وَسَمَائِهِ 60

60– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, 'For the teacher of good, all the animals on the land and the fish in the sea seek forgiveness on his behalf, as do all creatures great and small in Allah's earth and sky.' [Thawab al-A'mal, p. 159, no. 1]

Gaining Knowledge for Allah and for Other than Allah

التَّعَلُّمُ لِلَّهِ وَلِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ لِلَّهِ لَمْ يُصِْبْ مِنْهُ بَابٌ إِلَّا أَزَادَ بِهِ فِي نَفْسِهِ ذُلًّا ، وَفِي النَّاسِ 61 تَوَاضُعًا ، وَلَهُ خَوْفٌ ، وَفِي الدِّينِ اجْتِهَادًا ، وَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَنْتَفِعُ بِالْعِلْمِ فَلْيَتَعَلَّمْهُ ، وَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ لِلدُّنْيَا وَالْمَنْزِلَةِ عِنْدَ النَّاسِ وَالْحَظْوَةِ عِنْدَ السُّلْطَانِ لَمْ يُصِْبْ مِنْهُ بَابٌ إِلَّا أَزَادَ فِي نَفْسِهِ عَظَمَةً ، وَعَلَى النَّاسِ اسْتِطَالَةً ، وَبِاللَّهِ اغْتِرَارًا ، وَمِنَ الدِّينِ جَفَاءً ، فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي لَا يَنْتَفِعُ بِالْعِلْمِ ، فَلْيَكُفْ وَلْيُمْسِكْ عَنِ الْحُجَّةِ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ ، وَالنَّدَامَةِ وَالْخِزْيِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ .

61– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who seeks knowledge for Allah, no sooner does he learn even a chapter of it than it increases him in humility within himself, in humbleness in front of people, it increases his fear of Allah and his striving in religion, and that is the one who benefits from the knowledge that he gains. And he who seeks knowledge for this world and for status amongst people and for a favoured position with the ruler, no sooner does he learn even a chapter of it than it only increases his arrogance within himself, his presumptuousness with people, his self-delusion about Allah and his estrangement from religion. That is the one who does not benefit from his knowledge, and must subsequently refrain from it and stop furnishing proof for the case against himself in order not to feel regret and shame on the Day of Resurrection.’[Rawzat al-Wa’aiuin, p. 16]

-- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ ابْتَغَى الْعِلْمَ لِيَخْدَعَ بِهِ النَّاسَ لَمْ يَجِدْ رِيحَ الْجَنَّةِ 62

62– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who desires knowledge in order that he may beguile people will never even smell the fragrance of Paradise.’[Makarim al-Akhlaq, v. 2, p. 364, no. 2661]

-- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْعِلْمَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ نَارٍ 63

63– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Whoever gains knowledge for the sake of anything other than Allah, most High, should take himself a seat in the Fire.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 29035]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): خُذُوا مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا بَدَا لَكُمْ ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ تَطْلُبُوهُ لِخِصَالٍ أَرْبَعٍ: لِيُبَاهُوا بِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ، أَوْ 64 تُمَارَوْا بِهِ السُّفَهَاءُ ، أَوْ تُرَاقِبُوا بِهِ فِي الْمَجَالِسِ ، أَوْ تُصَرِّفُوا وُجُوهَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكُمْ لِلتَّرُؤُسِ .

64– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Take of knowledge whatever seems good to you, but beware of seeking knowledge for four reasons in order that you may contend with the scholars, or in order to wrangle with foolish people, or that you may show off with it in gatherings, or in order that people may look up to you

to lead them.’[al-Irshad, v. 1, p. 230]

65- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ لِلَّهِ وَعَمِلَ لِلَّهِ وَعَلَّمَ لِلَّهِ دُعِيَ فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ عَظِيمًا ، فَقِيلَ: تَعَلَّمَ لِلَّهِ! اللَّهُ ، وَعَمِلَ لِلَّهِ ، وَعَلَّمَ لِلَّهِ

65– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘He who gains knowledge for the sake of Allah, acts upon it for the sake of Allah and teaches it for the sake of Allah is called great in the kingdom of the heavens, and it is exclaimed about him ‘Indeed he gains knowledge for Allah, acts for Allah and teaches for Allah!’[Amali al-Tusi, p. 167, no. 280]

Choosing a Teacher

اخْتِيَارُ الْمُعَلِّمِ

.. عيسى (عليه السلام): خُذُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَاطِلِ ، وَلَا تَأْخُذُوا الْبَاطِلَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْحَقِّ ، كُونُوا نُقَادَ الْكَلَامِ 66

66– Prophet Jesus (a.s.) said, ‘Take the truth even if it be from wrongdoers, but do not take falsehood even if it be from the righteous – be critics of speech.’[al-Mahasin, v. 1, p. 359, no. 769]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْعِلْمُ دِينٌ ، الصَّلَاةُ دِينٌ ، فَانظُرُوا عَمَّنْ تَأْخُذُونَ هَذَا الْعِلْمَ 67

67– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Knowledge is a part of religion [just as] prayer is a part of religion, so be careful who you take this knowledge from.’[Kan z al-Ummal, no. 28666]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): خُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ مِمَّنْ أَتَاكَ بِهَا ، وَانظُرْ إِلَى مَا قَالَ ، وَلَا تَنْظُرْ إِلَى مَنْ قَالَ 68

68– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Take wisdom from whoever brings it to you, and look at that which is being said and do not look at who is saying it.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 5048]

.. الإمام الكاظم (عليه السلام): لَا عِلْمَ إِلَّا مِنْ عَالِمٍ رَبَّانِيٍّ ، وَمَعْرِفَةُ الْعَالِمِ بِالْعَقْلِ 69

69– Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge can only be gained from a divine scholar, and recognition of that scholar is through the intellect.’[Mustadrak al-Wasa’il, v. 11, p. 258, no. 12926]

The Rights of the Student to be Observed by the Teacher

حُقوقُ الْمُتَعَلِّمِ عَلَى الْمُعَلِّمِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): لِيُنُوا لِمَنْ تُعَلِّمُونَ ، وَلِمَنْ تَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُ70

70– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Be gentle towards those whom you teach as well to those whom you learn from.’[Munyat al–Murid, p. 193]

- الإمامُ زينُ العابدين (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): أَمَّا حَقُّ رَعِيَّتِكَ بِالْعِلْمِ: فَأَنْ تَعْلَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ إِنَّمَا جَعَلَكَ قَيِّمًا لَهُمْ فِيمَا 71
آتَاكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ، وَفَتَحَ لَكَ مِنْ خَزَائِنِهِ ، فَإِذَا أَحْسَنْتَ فِي تَعْلِيمِ النَّاسِ وَلَمْ تَخْرُقْ بِهِمْ وَلَمْ تَضْجُرْ عَلَيْهِمْ زَادَكَ اللَّهُ مِنْ
فَضْلِهِ ، وَإِنْ أَنْتَ مَنَعْتَ النَّاسَ عِلْمَكَ أَوْ خَرَقْتَ بِهِمْ عِنْدَ طَلِبِهِمُ الْعِلْمَ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ أَنْ يَسْلُبَكَ الْعِلْمَ
وَبِهَاءَهُ ، وَيُسْقِطَ مِنْ الْقُلُوبِ مَحَلَّكَ .

71– Imam Zayn al–Abidin (a.s.) said, ‘The right of your subjects through the knowledge you possess is to know that Allah has made you a custodian over them on account of the knowledge He has bestowed on you and the storehouses [of wisdom] which He has opened up for you. If you teach people well, and do not mistreat them, nor treat them harshly, then Allah will increase His grace upon you. But if you withhold your knowledge from people or treat them harshly when they seek knowledge from you, then it will be Allah’s right to deprive you of knowledge and its magnificence, and to make you fall from your place in the people’s hearts.’[‘Aawali al–La’ ‘Ali, v. 4, p. 74, no. 54]

. - الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: «وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ» :- لِيَكُنِ النَّاسُ عِنْدَكَ فِي الْعِلْمِ سَوَاءً72

72– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) with regards to Allah’s verse in the Qur’an “**Do not turn your cheek disdainfully from the people**”, said, ‘That people should be equal in your eyes when it comes to [sharing] knowledge.’[Munyat al–Murid, p. 185]

The Rights of the Teacher to be observed by the Student

حُقوقُ الْمُعَلِّمِ عَلَى الْمُتَعَلِّمِ

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يَسْتَحِفُّ بِحَقِّهِمْ إِلَّا مُنَافِقٌ: ذُو شَيْبَةٍ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ ، وَإِمَامٌ مُقْسِطٌ ، وَمُعَلِّمٌ73
الْخَيْرِ .

73— The Prophet (S) said, ‘There are three types of people whose right none will deem lightly apart from the hypocrite who manifests his hypocrisy the old person in Islam, the just leader, and the teacher of good.’ [Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 43811]

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): مِنْ حَقِّ الْعَالَمِ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ تُسَلِّمَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ عَامَّةً وَتَخُصَّهُ دُونَهُمْ بِالتَّحِيَّةِ ، وَأَنْ تَجْلِسَ أَمَامَهُ ، وَلَا تُشِيرَنَّ عِنْدَهُ بِيَدِكَ ، وَلَا تَغْمِزَنَّ بِعَيْنَيْكَ ، وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ: «قَالَ فُلَانٌ» خِلَافًا لِقَوْلِهِ ، وَلَا تَغْتَابَنَّ عِنْدَهُ أَحَدًا ، وَلَا تُسَارَّ فِي مَجْلِسِهِ ، وَلَا تَأْخُذْ بِثَوْبِهِ ، وَلَا تَلِجْ عَلَيْهِ إِذَا مَلَ ، وَلَا تُعْرِضَ مِنْ طَوْلِ صُحْبَتِهِ ، فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ بِمَنْزِلَةِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَارُّ فِي مَجْلِسِهِ ، تَنْتَظِرُ مَتَى يَسْقُطُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْهَا شَيْءٌ .

74— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘It is a scholar’s right upon you that you greet people in general as a whole but single him out with your greeting, that you sit in front of him, that you do not point to him with your hand, nor make hints against him with your eyes, nor say, ‘but x said’ in opposition to his statements, nor backbite anyone in his presence, nor whisper secrets to others in his gathering, nor pull on his robe, nor insist for him to continue if he is tired, nor show disinclination at the length of his speech, for verily it [i.e. his speech] is as a palm tree from which you [should] anxiously wait for something to fall from it for you.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 29363]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): لَيْسَ مِنْ أَخْلَاقِ الْمُؤْمِنِ التَّمَلُّقُ وَلَا الْحَسَدُ إِلَّا فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ 75

75— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘It is not part of the moral virtues of a believer that he should flatter or be jealous except in the quest for knowledge.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 29364]

- الإمام زين العابدين (عليه السلام): حَقُّ سَائِسِكَ بِالْعِلْمِ: التَّعْظِيمُ لَهُ ، وَالتَّوْقِيرُ لِمَجْلِسِهِ ، وَحُسْنُ الاسْتِمَاعِ إِلَيْهِ ، وَالْإِقْبَالُ عَلَيْهِ ، وَأَنْ لَا تَرْفَعَ عَلَيْهِ صَوْتَكَ ، وَأَنْ لَا تُجِيبَ أَحَدًا يَسْأَلُهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى يَكُونَ هُوَ الَّذِي يُجِيبُ ، وَلَا تُحَدِّثَ فِي مَجْلِسِهِ أَحَدًا ، وَلَا تَغْتَابَ عِنْدَهُ أَحَدًا ، وَأَنْ تَدْفَعَ عَنْهُ إِذَا ذُكِرَ عِنْدَكَ بِسُوءٍ ، وَأَنْ تَسْتَرَّ عُيُوبَهُ ، وَتُظْهِرَ مَنَاقِبَهُ ، وَلَا تُجَالِسَ لَهُ عَدُوًّا ، وَلَا تُعَادِيَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا ، فَإِذَا فَعَلْتَ ذَلِكَ شَهِدَ لَكَ مَلَائِكَةُ اللَّهِ بِأَنَّكَ قَصَدْتَهُ وَتَعَلَّمْتَ عِلْمَهُ لِلَّهِ جَلَّ اسْمُهُ لَا لِلنَّاسِ .

76— Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said, ‘The right of the one who trains you in knowledge is to magnify him, to frequent his sessions, to listen to him attentively, and to attend to him with devotion. You should not raise your voice to him, nor answer a question that someone has asked him about something, so that he may be the one to answer. You should not address anyone else in his session, nor backbite anyone in his presence. You must defend him if anyone ever speaks ill of him in your presence, conceal his faults and publicise his virtues. You should not sit in the company of his enemy, nor be hostile towards his friend. If you fulfil this right, Allah’s angels bear witness that you frequented him and learned from his knowledge for the sake of Allah, exalted be His Name, and not for the sake of people.’[al-Khisal, p. 567, no. 1]

Honouring the Scholar

تَكْرِيمُ الْعَالِمِ

- رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ اسْتَقْبَلَ الْعُلَمَاءَ فَقَدْ اسْتَقْبَلََنِي ، وَمَنْ زَارَ الْعُلَمَاءَ فَقَدْ زَارَنِي ، وَمَنْ جَالَسَ 77
الْعُلَمَاءَ فَقَدْ جَالَسَنِي ، وَمَنْ جَالَسَنِي فَكَأَنَّمَا جَالَسَ رَبِّي.

77— The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who goes forth to meet the scholars has indeed come forth to meet me, and he who visits the scholars has indeed visited me, and he who sits in the company of the scholars has indeed sat in my company, and whoever sits in my company is as if he has sat in the company of my Lord.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28883]

.. الْإِمَامُ عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): إِذَا رَأَيْتَ عَالِمًا فَكُنْ لَهُ خَادِمًا 78

78— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘When you see a scholar, be a servant to him.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 4044]

.. الْإِمَامُ عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَنْ وَقَّرَ عَالِمًا فَقَدْ وَقَّرَ رَبَّهُ 79

79— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who shows reverence to a scholar has revered his Lord.’ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 8704]

Duties Incumbent on the Student

مَا يَنْبَغِي عَلَى الْمُتَعَلِّمِ

.. الْخِزْرُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - لِمُوسَى (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) -: يَا مُوسَى ، تَفَرَّغْ لِلْعِلْمِ إِنْ كُنْتَ تُرِيدُهُ، فَإِنَّ الْعِلْمَ لِمَنْ تَفَرَّغَ 80

80— al-Khizr (a.s.) said to Prophet Moses (a.s.), ‘O Moses, devote yourself exclusively to knowledge if you want it, for verily knowledge is for the one who devotes himself exclusively to it.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 44176]

- رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): لَا يَتِمُّ عَقْلُ الْمَرْءِ حَتَّى يَتِمَّ فِيهِ عَشْرُ خِلَالٍ ... لَا يَسْأَمُ مِنَ طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ طُولَ 81
عُمُرِهِ.

81– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Man’s intellect is incomplete until ten qualities come together in him ... that he must never tire of seeking knowledge his whole life.’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 112]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): عَلَى الْمُتَعَلِّمِ أَنْ يُدَيِّبَ نَفْسَهُ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ ، وَلَا يَمَلَّ مِنْ تَعَلُّمِهِ ، وَلَا يَسْتَكْثِرَ مَا عِلِمَ 82

82– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The student must discipline himself in his quest for knowledge, and not become bored of learning, nor overestimate what he already knows.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6197]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): لَا يُحَرِّزُ الْعِلْمَ إِلَّا مَنْ يُطِيلُ دَرَسَهُ 83

83– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Only he who lengthens his study attains knowledge.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 758]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): مَنْ أَكْثَرَ الْفِكْرَ فِيمَا تَعَلَّمَ أَتَقَنَّ عِلْمَهُ ، وَفَهُمَ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ يَفْهَمُ 84

84– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who gives a great deal of thought to what he learns masters his knowledge, and comes to understand that which he could not understand before.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 8917]

The Virtue of the Scholars

فَضْلُ الْعُلَمَاءِ

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْعُلَمَاءُ أَمْنَاءُ اللَّهِ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ 85

85– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The scholars are Allah’s trustees over His creation.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28675]

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): فَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ كَفَضْلِ النَّبِيِّ عَلَى أُمَّتِهِ 86

86– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The superiority of the scholar over others is as the superiority of the prophet over his community.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28798]

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ قَالَ: أَنَا عَالِمٌ فَهُوَ جَاهِلٌ 87

87– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Whoever says ‘I am a knowledgeable man’ is indeed ignorant.’[Munyat al-Murid, no. 137]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): العلماء حُكَّامٌ عَلَى النَّاسِ 88

88– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The scholars are the governors over people.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 507]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): العالمُ مَنْ لَا يَشْبَعُ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ، وَلَا يَتَشَبَعُ بِهِ 89

89– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The scholar is the one who is never satiated with knowledge, and never becomes full of it.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1740]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): العالمُ الَّذِي لَا يَمَلُّ مِنَ تَعَلُّمِ الْعِلْمِ 90

90– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The scholar is the one who never gets bored of gaining knowledge.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1303]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): علماءُ شيعتنا مُرَابِطُونَ فِي النَّغْرِ الَّذِي يَلِي إبليسَ وَعَفَارِيئَهُ ، يَمْنَعُونَهُمْ عَنِ الْخُرُوجِ عَلَى ضُعَفَاءِ شيعتنا ، وَعَنْ أَنْ يَتَسَلَّطَ عَلَيْهِمْ إبليسُ وشيعتهُ

91– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘The scholars from among our shi’aa are stationed at the opening next to where Satan and his demons are, preventing them from coming out to the weak shi’aa and from letting Satan and his followers gain mastery over them.’[al-Ihtijaj, v. 1, p. 13, no. 7]

The Fruit of Knowledge

ثَمَرَةُ الْعِلْمِ

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): ثَمَرَةُ الْعِلْمِ الْعَمَلُ بِهِ 92

92– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The fruit of knowledge is action in accordance with it.’ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 4624]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): ثَمَرَةُ الْعِلْمِ الْعِبَادَةُ 93

93– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The fruit of knowledge is worship.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 4600]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): ثَمَرَةُ الْعِلْمِ إِخْلَاصُ الْعَمَلِ 94

94– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The fruit of knowledge is sincerity of action.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 4642]

- مصباح الشريعة - فيما نسبته إلى الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) :- الْخَشْيَةُ مِيرَاثُ الْعِلْمِ ، وَالْعِلْمُ شُعَاعُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ 95
وَقَلْبُ الْإِيمَانِ ، وَمَنْ حُرِمَ الْخَشْيَةُ لَا يَكُونُ عَالِمًا وَإِنْ شَقَّ الشَّعْرَ بِمُتَشَابِهَاتِ الْعِلْمِ ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى : «إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى
اللَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ»

95– It is narrated in Misbah al-Shari’aa (The Lantern of the Path) that Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Fear [of Allah] is the legacy of knowledge, and knowledge is the ray of inner understanding and the heart of faith. So he who is devoid of fear cannot be knowledgeable, even if he is able to split hairs with obscure sciences.’ Allah, most High, has said, “Only those of Allah’s servants having knowledge fear Him.”[Misbah al-Shari’aa, p. 365]

The Duties Incumbent upon a Knowledgeable Man

مَا يَنْبَغِي عَلَى الْعَالِمِ

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ عَمِلَ عَلَى غَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَانَ مَا يُفْسِدُ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا يُصْلِحُ 96

96– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who acts contrary to what he knows, his immoral acts supercede his righteous acts.’ [al-Mahasin, v. 1, p. 314, no. 621]

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْمُتَعَبِّدُ بِغَيْرِ فِقْهِ كَالْجِمَارِ فِي الطَّاحُونِ 97

97– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The one who worships without any knowledge [of his actions] is as a donkey in a windmill.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28709]

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): مَنْ نَصَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا فَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَبْدَأَ بِتَعْلِيمِ نَفْسِهِ قَبْلَ تَعْلِيمِ غَيْرِهِ ، وَلَيْكُنْ تَأْدِيبُهُ 98
بِسِيرَتِهِ قَبْلَ تَأْدِيبِهِ بِلِسَانِهِ ، وَمُعَلِّمُ نَفْسِهِ وَمُؤَدِّبُهَا أَحَقُّ بِالْإِجْلَالِ مِنْ مُعَلِّمِ النَّاسِ وَمُؤَدِّبِهِمْ .

98– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who appoints himself a leader of people must begin by teaching himself before teaching others. And his discipline of them must be through his own example rather than through

his words. The one who teaches and disciplines himself is more worthy of esteem than the one who teaches and disciplines people.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 56, no. 33]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): عَلَى الْعَالِمِ أَنْ يَعْمَلَ بِمَا عَلِمَ ، ثُمَّ يَطْلُبَ تَعْلَمَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ 99

99– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘It is incumbent upon the knowledgeable man to act upon what he knows, and then to seek to learn that which he does not know.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6196]

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): الْعِلْمُ مَقْرُونٌ بِالْعَمَلِ ، فَمَنْ عَلِمَ عَمِلَ ، وَالْعِلْمُ يَهْتَفُ بِالْعَمَلِ ، فَإِنْ أَجَابَهُ وَإِلَّا ارْتَحَلَ عَنْهُ 100

100– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is linked to action, so he who knows acts. And knowledge calls for action, so if one answers [the call] it remains, and if not it departs from him.’ [Nahj a-Balagha, Saying 366]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): عَلَى الْعَالِمِ إِذَا عَلَّمَ أَنْ لَا يَعْتَفَ ، وَإِذَا عَلَّمَ أَنْ لَا يَأْتَفَ 101

101– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘The knowledgeable man must not be harsh when he teaches, and must not be disdainful when he learns.’ [Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 1, p. 85]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): الْعَامِلُ عَلَى غَيْرِ بَصِيرَةٍ كَالسَّائِرِ عَلَى غَيْرِ الطَّرِيقِ ، وَلَا يَزِيدُهُ سُرْعَةُ السَّيْرِ مِنْ 102
الطَّرِيقِ إِلَّا بُعْدًا

102– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘The man who acts without any insight is as the one who travels off the path, whom walking faster only avails to take him further away from the path.’ [Amali al-Saduq, p. 343, no. 18]

Enjoinment of Acting upon One's Knowledge

الْحَثُّ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ بِالْعِلْمِ

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): تَنَاصَحُوا فِي الْعِلْمِ ؛ فَإِنَّ خِيَانَةَ أَحَدِكُمْ فِي عِلْمِهِ أَشَدُّ مِنْ خِيَانَتِهِ فِي مَالِهِ ، 103
وإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَائِلُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

103– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Advise each other with knowledge, for verily your betrayal of someone in

their knowledge is worse than your betraying him in their wealth, and very Allah will question you on the Day of Resurrection.’ [Amali al-Tusi, p. 126, no. 198]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): هِمَّةُ الْعُلَمَاءِ الْوَعَايَةُ ، وَهِمَّةُ السُّفَهَاءِ الرِّوَايَةُ 104

104– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The ambition of knowledgeable people is greater awareness, whereas the ambition of fools is telling stories.’ [Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 29337]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): يَطْلُعُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ عَلَى قَوْمٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيَقُولُونَ: مَا أَدْخَلَكُمُ النَّارَ 105
وَقَدْ دَخَلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ لِفَضْلِ تَأْدِيبِكُمْ وَتَعْلِيمِكُمْ؟! فَيَقُولُونَ: إِنَّا كُنَّا نَأْمُرُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَلَا نَفْعَلُهُ

105– The Prophet (S) said, ‘A group from among the dwellers of Paradise will look down upon a group from among the inmates of Hell, saying, ‘What brought you into the Fire when we ourselves entered Paradise by virtue of your education and instruction!’ upon which they will reply, ‘Verily we used to enjoin good but did not act upon it.’ [Makarim al-Akhlaq, v. 2, p. 364, no. 2661]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): إِنَّمَا زَهَّدَ النَّاسَ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ كَثْرَةُ مَا يَرَوْنَ مِنْ قِلَّةٍ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا عَلِمَ 106

106– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Verily people abstain from gaining knowledge because of the numerous instances they witness of the people’s lack of action in accordance with what they know.’ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3895]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الدُّنْيَا كُلُّهَا جَهْلٌ إِلَّا مَوَاضِعَ الْعِلْمِ ، وَالْعِلْمُ كُلُّهُ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا مَا عُمِلَ بِهِ 107

107– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The whole world is ignorance apart from the areas of knowledge, and all of knowledge will be held punishable apart from that which is acted upon.’ [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 29, no. 9]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْعِلْمُ بِلَا عَمَلٍ وَبِالْإِثْمِ ، الْعَمَلُ بِلَا عِلْمٍ ضَلَالٌ 108

108– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge without action is a curse, and action without knowledge is straying in error.’ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1587]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): قَصَمَ ظَهْرِي عَالِمٌ مُتَهَنِّكٌ ، وَجَاهِلٌ مُتَنَسِّكٌ ، فَالْجَاهِلُ يُغْشَى النَّاسَ بِتَنَسُّكِهِ ، وَالْعَالِمُ 109
يُنْفِرُهُمْ بِتَهَنُّكِهِ .

109— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, '[To see] An impudent yet knowledgeable man and a religious but ignorant man is a mortal blow to me, for the ignorant man dupes people with his religiosity whilst the knowledgeable man drives them away through his impudence.' [Munyat al-Murid, p. 181]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): اعقلُوا الخَبَرَ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُوهُ عَقْلَ رِعَايَةٍ لَا عَقْلَ رِوَايَةٍ ؛ فَإِنَّ رُؤَاةَ الْعِلْمِ كَثِيرٌ وَرُعَاتُهُ قَلِيلٌ .

110— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'When you hear a report, scrutinize it with the reasoning of careful attention and not the reasoning of the report itself, for verily the reporters of knowledge are many but those who attend to it are few.' [Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 98]

The Severity of the Chastisement of the Knowledgeable Man

تَشْدِيدُ الْعُقُوبَةِ عَلَى الْعَالِمِ

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): إِنَّ أَهْلَ النَّارِ لَيَتَأَذُّونَ مِنْ رِيحِ الْعَالِمِ النَّارِكِ لِعِلْمِهِ 111

111— The Prophet (S) said, 'Verily the inmates of the Fire will be tormented by the stench of the knowledgeable man who had abandoned his knowledge.' [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 34, no. 30]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): لَا يَسْتَوِي عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فِي الْعُقُوبَةِ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ، نَفَعَنَا اللَّهُ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا 112
عَلِمْنَا ، وَجَعَلَهُ لَوَجْهِهِ خَالِصًا ، إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ مُجِيبٌ .

112— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Those who know and those who do not know are not equal in the sight of Allah with regards to their chastisement. Allah has caused us and you to benefit from the knowledge we have and has made it to be reserved solely for His pleasure; verily He is all-hearing, responsive.' [al-Irshad, v. 1, p. 230]

.. - الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): زَلَّةُ الْعَالِمِ كَانْكَسَارِ السَّفِينَةِ تَغْرَقُ، وَتُغْرَقُ 113

113— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'A knowledgeable man's blunder is as the destruction of a boat which itself sinks and drowns [those aboard it].' [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 58, no. 39]

.. - الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عليه السَّلامُ): إِنَّهُ يُغْفَرُ لِلْجَاهِلِ سَبْعُونَ ذَنْبًا قَبْلَ أَنْ يُغْفَرَ لِلْعَالِمِ ذَنْبٌ وَاحِدٌ 114

114– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Verily the ignorant man is forgiven seventy sins before the knowledgeable man is forgiven a single one.’ [Tafsir al-Qummi, v. 2, p. 146]

.. - الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَاباً عَالِمٌ لَا يُنْتَفَعُ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ بِشَيْءٍ 115

115– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘The one amongst people to be the most severely punished will be the knowledgeable man who has not benefited from his knowledge one bit.’ [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 37, no. 53]

- أَوْحَى اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى إِلَى دَاوُودَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): إِنَّ أَهْوَنَ مَا أَنَا صَانِعٌ بِعَالِمٍ غَيْرِ عَامِلٍ بِعِلْمِهِ أَشَدُّ مِنْ 116
. سَبْعِينَ عُقُوبَةً ؛ أَنْ أُخْرِجَ مِنْ قَلْبِهِ حَلَاوَةَ ذِكْرِي .

116– It is narrated in Misbah al-Shari’aa (The Lantern of the Path) Allah revealed to Prophet David (a.s.) saying, ‘Verily the least of what I will do to a knowledgeable man who does not act upon his knowledge, which is worse than seventy internal punishments, is that I remove the sweetness of My remembrance from his heart.’ [Misbah al-Shari’aa, p. 345]

The Scholars of Evil

عُلَمَاءُ السُّوءِ

- عيسى (عليه السلام): كَيْفَ يَكُونُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ مَنْ دُنْيَاهُ عِنْدَهُ أَثَرٌ مِنْ آخِرَتِهِ وَهُوَ مُقْبِلٌ عَلَى دُنْيَاهُ ، وَمَا يَضُرُّهُ 117
!أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا يَنْفَعُهُ؟

117– Prophet Jesus (a.s.) said, ‘How can one whose worldly life is dearer to him than his Hereafter be considered among the people of knowledge, whilst he pursues his worldly life and considers that which harms him more beloved than that which benefits him!’ [Munyat al-Murid, p. 141]

- عيسى (عليه السلام): الدِّينَارُ دَاءُ الدِّينِ ، وَالْعَالِمُ طَبِيبُ الدِّينِ ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الطَّبِيبَ يَجُرُّ الدَّاءَ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ فَاتَّهِمُوهُ، 118
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ نَاصِحٍ لِغَيْرِهِ .

118– Prophet Jesus (a.s.) said, ‘The dinar [i.e. wealth] is religion’s affliction, and the knowledgeable man is religion’s doctor. So when you see the doctor drawing the affliction upon himself, be suspicious of him and know that he does not advise others well.’ [al-Khisal, p. 113, no. 91]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَلَا إِنَّ شَرَّ الشَّرِّ شَرَارُ الْعُلَمَاءِ ، وَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْخَيْرِ خِيَارُ الْعُلَمَاءِ 119

119– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Verily the worst of all evil are the evil scholars, and verily the best of all good are the good scholars.’ [Munyat al–Murid, p. 137]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ أَزْدَادَ عِلْمًا وَلَمْ يَزِدْهُ هُدًى ، لَمْ يَزِدْهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بُعْدًا 120

120– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who does not increase in guidance in spite of an increase in his knowledge only gets further away from Allah.’ [Tanbih al–Khawatir, v. 2, p. 21]

.. الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَلْعُونٌ مَلْعُونٌ عَالِمٌ يَوْمُ سُلْطَانًا جَائِرًا ، مُعِينًا لَهُ عَلَى جَوْرِهِ 121

121– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Cursed, cursed indeed is the knowledgeable man who frequents an unjust ruler, aiding him in his injustice.’ [Bihar al–Anwar, v. 75, p. 381, no. 45]

- الإمامُ العسْكَرِيُّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - فِي صِفَةِ عُلَمَاءِ السُّوءِ -: وَهُمْ أَضَرُّ عَلَى ضُعْفَاءِ شِيعَتِنَا مِنْ جَيْشِ يَزِيدَ عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ وَأَصْحَابِهِ ، فَإِنَّهُمْ يَسْلُبُونَهُمُ الْأَرْوَاحَ وَالْأَمْوَالَ ، وَهَؤُلَاءِ عُلَمَاءُ السُّوءِ ... يُدْخِلُونَ الشَّكَّ وَالشُّبْهَةَ عَلَى ضُعْفَاءِ شِيعَتِنَا فَيُضِلُّونَهُمْ .

122– Imam al–Aaskari (a.s.), in his description of evil scholars, said, ‘They cause more harm to the weak ones from among our shi’aa than the army of Yazid did to Husayn b. Ali (a.s.) and his companions, for they snatched away their lives and their property, whereas these evil scholars ... enter doubt and obscurity into the weak ones from among our shi’aa and lead them astray.’ [al–Ihtijaj, v. 2, p. 512, no. 337]

The True Meaning of Knowledge

تَفْسِيرُ الْعِلْمِ

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ ثَلَاثَةٌ: آيَةٌ مُحْكَمَةٌ أَوْ فَرِيضَةٌ عَادِلَةٌ، أَوْ سُنَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ ، وَمَا خِلَاهُنَّ 123 . فَهُوَ فَضْلٌ .

123– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Verily knowledge is but three things a decisive verse [of the Qur’ an], an upright obligatory act, or an established recommended act, and anything else apart from these is a virtue.’ [al–Kafi, v. 1, p. 32, no. 1]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): لَيْسَ الْعِلْمُ بِالتَّعَلُّمِ ، إِنَّمَا هُوَ نُورٌ يَقَعُ فِي قَلْبٍ مَنْ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ ، فَإِنْ أَرَدْتَ الْعِلْمَ فَاطْلُبْ أَوَّلًا فِي نَفْسِكَ حَقِيقَةَ الْعُبُودِيَّةِ ، وَاطْلُبِ الْعِلْمَ بِاسْتِعْمَالِهِ ، وَاسْتَفْهِمِ اللَّهَ يُفْهِمَكَ .

124— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is not acquired through learning. Rather it is a light that illuminates in the heart of one who wants Allah, Blessed and most High, to guide him. So if you want knowledge, first seek out within yourself true servitude [to Allah], and seek knowledge according to its use, and ask Allah to make you understand, and He will make you understand.’ [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 1, p. 225, no. 17]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، مَا الْعِلْمُ ؟ قَالَ: الْإِنْصَاتُ ، قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ ؟ قَالَ: الْاسْتِمَاعُ ، قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ ؟ قَالَ: الْحِفْظُ ، قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ ؟ قَالَ: الْعَمَلُ بِهِ ، قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ ؟ . يَارَسُولَ اللَّهِ ؟ قَالَ: نَشْرُهُ .

125— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) narrated, ‘A man once came to the Prophet (S) asking, ‘O Prophet of Allah, what is knowledge’ to which he replied, ‘Paying attention.’ The man asked, ‘Then what’ He replied, ‘Listening.’ He asked, ‘Then what’ The Prophet replied, ‘Learning.’ The man asked, ‘Then what’ He replied, ‘Acting upon it.’ He asked, ‘Then what O Prophet of Allah’, to which he replied, ‘Spreading it.’ [al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 48, no. 4]

The Reprehensibility of Knowledge That is of No Use

لَمْ لَا يَنْفَعُ

- رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) - كَانَ يَقُولُ -: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ ، وَمِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ ، وَمِنْ رَسُولٍ لَمْ لَا يَنْفَعُ .

126— The Prophet (S) used to say, ‘O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowledge that does not benefit, from a heart that is not fearful, from a supplication that is unheard, and from a soul that is never sated.’ [Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 3609]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام): وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ نَهْ لَا خَيْرَ فِي عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ ، وَلَا يُنْتَفَعُ بِعِلْمٍ لَا يَحَقُّ تَعَلُّمُهُ 127

127— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘And know that there is no good in knowledge that is of no use, and that one cannot benefit from knowledge that is not worthy of being learnt.’ [Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 31]

- الإمامُ الكاظمُ (عليه السلام): دَخَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) الْمَسْجِدَ فَإِذَا جَمَاعَةٌ قَدْ أَطَافُوا بِرَجُلٍ 128،

فَقَالَ: مَا هَذَا ؟ فَقِيلَ: عَلَامَةٌ ، قَالَ: وَمَا الْعَلَامَةُ ؟ قَالُوا: أَعْلَمُ النَّاسِ بِأَنْسَابِ الْعَرَبِ وَوَقَائِعِهَا ، وَأَيَّامِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ ،
وَبِالشُّعَارِ وَالْعَرَبِيَّةِ ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): ذَاكَ عِلْمٌ لَا يَضُرُّ مَنْ جَهِلَهُ ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ مَنْ عِلِمَهُ .

128– Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) narrated, ‘The Prophet (S) once entered the mosque to find a large group of people gathered around a man, so he asked, ‘Who is this’ to which they replied, ‘A most learned scholar (‘allama).’ He then asked, ‘And what is a most learned scholar’ to which they replied, ‘[He is] the most knowledgeable of all people about Arab ancestry and events, and pre-Islamic history, and Arab poetry.’ So the Prophet said, ‘That is knowledge which neither harms one who remains ignorant of it nor avails one who knows it.’ [Amali al-Saduq, p. 220, no. 13]

The Various Types of Knowledge

أنواع العلوم

. - رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْعِلْمُ عِلْمَانِ: عِلْمُ الْأَدْيَانِ ، وَعِلْمُ الْأَبْدَانِ 129

129– The Prophet (S) said, ‘There are two types of knowledge the knowledge of ideologies, and the knowledge of physical bodies.’ [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 1, p. 220, no. 52]

. - رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْعِلْمُ أَكْثَرُ مِنْ أَنْ يُحْصَى ، فَخُذْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ أَحْسَنَهُ 130

130– The Prophet (S) saying, ‘Knowledge is too great to be encompassed, so take the best from each thing.’ [Kanz al-Fawa'id, v. 2, p. 31]

. - رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): خَيْرُ الْعِلْمِ مَا نَفَعَ 131

131– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The best type of knowledge is that which benefits.’ [Amali al-Saduq, p. 394, no. 1]

- الإمام علي (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْعُلُومُ أَرْبَعَةٌ: الْفِقْهُ لِلْأَدْيَانِ ، وَالطِّبُّ لِلْأَبْدَانِ ، وَالنَّحْوُ لِللِّسَانِ ، وَالنُّجُومُ لِمَعْرِفَةِ الْأَزْمَانِ . 132

132– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘There are four categories of sciences juristic science for religions, medicine for physical bodies, grammar for language, and astronomy for knowledge of the ages.’ [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 1, p. 218, no. 42]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): خَيْرُ الْعُلُومِ مَا أَصْلَحَكَ 133

133– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The best type of knowledge is that which improves you.’ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 4962]

.. الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): إَعْلَمُ أَنْهُ لَا عِلْمَ كَطَلَبِ السَّلَامَةِ ، وَلَا سَلَامَةَ كَسَلَامَةِ الْقَلْبِ 134

134– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘Know that there is no knowledge like the quest for integrity, and there is no integrity better than the integrity of the heart [i.e. the soul].’ [Tuhaf al-’Uqul, no. 286]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): لَيْتَ السَّيَاطَ عَلَى رُؤُوسِ أَصْحَابِي حَتَّى يَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ 135

135– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘If only there were whips over my companions’ heads that they may gain an understanding of the difference between the lawful and the unlawful.’ [al-Mahasin, v. 1, p. 358, no. 765]

Mystic Knowledge

الْعِلْمُ الدُّنْيَا

- رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): عِلْمُ الْبَاطِنِ سِرٌّ مِنْ أَسْرَارِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ ، وَحُكْمٌ مِنْ حُكْمِ اللَّهِ ، يَقْذِفُهُ فِي 136 قُلُوبِ مَنْ شَاءَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ.

136– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The knowledge of the hidden is one of the secrets of Allah, Mighty and Exalted, and one of Allah’s commands which He divulges into the hearts of whom He wills from among His servants.’ [Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 28820]

.. رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): لَوْ خِفْتُمْ اللَّهَ حَقَّ خِيفَتِهِ لَعُلِّمْتُمْ الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي لَا جَهْلَ مَعَهُ 137

137– The Prophet (S) said, ‘If you feared Allah with the fear that He is worthy of, you would be taught the knowledge after which no ignorance ever remains.’ [Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 5881]

.. الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا يَعْلَمُ عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ مَا لَا يَعْلَمُ 138

138– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘He who acts upon what he knows is taught by Allah that which he does

not know.’ [A’alam al-Din, p. 301]

The Most Knowledgeable of People

أَعْلَمُ النَّاسِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): أَعْلَمُ النَّاسِ مَنْ جَمَعَ عِلْمَ النَّاسِ إِلَى عِلْمِهِ 139

139— The Prophet (S) said, ‘The most knowledgeable of people is he who adds other people’s knowledge to his own.’ [Amali al-Saduq, p. 27, no. 4]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) - لَمَّا قِيلَ لَهُ: أُحِبُّ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَعْلَمَ النَّاسِ -: اتَّقِ اللَّهَ تَكُنْ أَعْلَمَ النَّاسِ 140

140— The Prophet (S) was once asked, ‘I would love to be the most knowledgeable of all people’, to which he replied, ‘Be wary of your duty to Allah and you will be the most knowledgeable of people.’ [Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 44154]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): أَعْلَمُ النَّاسِ الْمُسْتَهِتَرُ بِالْعِلْمِ 141

141— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The most knowledgeable of people is he who is infatuated with knowledge.’ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3079]

Exclusive Confinement of True Knowledge to the Household of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt)

(انْحِصَارُ الْعِلْمِ الصَّحِيحِ بِأَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ)

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): لَوْ اقْتَبَسْتُمُ الْعِلْمَ مِنْ مَعْدِنِهِ ، وَشَرِبْتُمُ الْمَاءَ بِعُذُوبَتِهِ ، وَادَّخَرْتُمُ الْخَيْرَ مِنْ مَوْضِعِهِ ، وَأَخَذْتُمُ الطَّرِيقَ مِنْ وَاضِحِهِ ، وَسَلَكْتُمُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ نَهْجَهُ ، لَنَهَجَتْ بِكُمْ السُّبُلُ ، وَبَدَتْ لَكُمْ الْأَعْلَامُ 142.

142— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘If you were to acquire knowledge from its source, and drink water at its freshest, and amass good at its origin, and adopt a path at its clearest point, and adopt the path of truth at its most proper, the paths would open themselves to you indeed and the signs would become manifest to you.’ [al-Kafi, v. 8, p. 32, no. 5]

- الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام) - لسلمة بن كهيل والحكم ابن عتيبة -: شَرِّقَا وَغَرِّبَا لَنْ تَجِدَا عِلْماً صَاحِياً إِلَّا شَيْئاً 143
يَخْرُجُ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ.

143— Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said to Salama b. Kuhayl and al-Hakam b. 'Autayba, 'Go to the east and go to the west but you will never find true knowledge except for what comes from us, the household of the Prophet.' [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 92, no. 20]

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