

# Knowledge Is Our Companion



بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Written By  
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*“And Allâh has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks (to Allâh)”*  
[al-Nahl 16:78]

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Mu`aadh ibn Jabal said:

*"Knowledge is a comforting friend in times of loneliness, it is the best companion during travels, and it is the inner friend who speaks to you in your privacy. Knowledge is the discerning proof of what is right and what is wrong, and it is the positive force that will help you surmount the trials of comfort, as well as those of hardships. Knowledge is your most powerful sword against your enemy, and finally, it is your most dignifying raiment in the company of your close companions."*

*"Through knowledge, Allah, blessed be His Name, raises some people in rank, and He makes them leaders in righteousness and models in morality. The vestige of their faith is avidly sought, their deeds are emulated perceptively, and people will seek and sanction their opinions solicitously and unequivocally. The heavenly angels seek their company and anoint them with their wings, every fresh or withered life they pass by implore Almighty Allah to forgive them their sins, even the fish in the oceans, the beasts of the lands and every bird of prey and migratory bird pray and solicit the mercy of Almighty Allah on their behalf. This is because knowledge revives the dead hearts and drives them out of darkness into light, and because knowledge is the light of the inner eyes that cures one's blindness and restores his inner sight."*

*`Ali said to Kāmil: "O Kāmil, knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge protects you while you have to protect your wealth. Knowledge is a judge, while wealth have to be judged on. Wealth decreases when it is expended, while knowledge purifies when it is given."*

Abu Khaithama reported that Ishaq Ibn Sulaimaan Ar-Raazee stated: I heard Handhala report from `Awn Ibn `Abdillaah that he said: *"I said to `Umar Bin `Abd-il-`Azeez: 'It was said (to me): If you are able to be a scholar, then be a scholar. And if you are not able to do so, then be a student of knowledge. And if you are not able to be a student of knowledge, then love them. And if you can't love them, then do not hate them.'* So `Umar said: *'SubhaanAllaah! (Glory be to Allaah!) Allaah has indeed made a way out for this person.'*"

Ibn `Abbaas said: *'Be faithful slaves to your Lord, patient and learned.'* And it is said that the good instructor is the one who starts teaching people simple matters of knowledge before more difficult ones."

Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Al-A'amash from Maalik Ibn Al-Haarith that Abu Khaalid, a shaikh from the companions of `Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] (radyAllaahu `anhu), said: *"One day we were in the masjid, when Khibaab Ibn Al-Arat came and sat down. Then he remained silent, so the people said to him: 'Indeed, your companions have gathered with you so that you may narrate hadeeth to them or command them.'* So he said: *'And what should I command them with? Perhaps I will command them with something that I do not do myself.'*"

Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: *Wakee' reported to us from Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah from 'Amr from Yayhaa Ibn Ja'dah that he said: "People would go to Salmaan and listen to his (narration of) hadeeth. And he would say: 'This is good for you and bad for me.'"*

\_ Grandpa looked at his grandson, a surprised look on his face. He said: <sup>1</sup>“*Knowledge that is not spoken of is like a treasure that is not spent.*”

Surely, grandpa, but I remind you the history:  
<sup>2</sup>“Two men entered from the gates of Kinda while Abu Mas'ood Al-Ansaaree was sitting in a gathering. One of the two men said: 'Is there any man here that can judge between us?' A man from the gathering said: 'I can.' So Abu Mas'ood grabbed a handful of pebbles and struck him with it. Then he said to him: 'Indeed, it used to be hated that one would rush to give a ruling.'”

Islam has always encouraged us to be careful with our words. Even more than that:

<sup>3</sup>“When death approached 'Ubaidah, he called for his books to be brought to him and then erased (what was in) them” He did

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<sup>1</sup> *Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Saalih Ibn Khibaab from Husayn Ibn 'Uqbah that Salmaan. (radyAllaahu 'anhu) said: [The chain of this narration is jayyid (good). It is also established in marfoo' form. Ahmad and At-Tabaraanee reported it from two paths on the authority of Abu Hurairah (radyAllaahu 'anhu). Ibn 'Abd-il-Barr also reported it from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (radyAllaahu 'anhu).]*

<sup>2</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Rajaa Al-Ansaaree from 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Bishr Al-Azraq that he said:

<sup>3</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Abu Yazeed Al-Muraadee that he said: [He is Ibn 'Amr As-Salmaanee. He was a Taabi'ee, reliable and trustworthy. The one who reports from him, Abu Zaid Al-Muraadee, is Nu'maan Ibn

not trust what people would do with the knowledge he had collected. He did not want to be judged upon what came from him alone.

Imagine, grandpa, all *Sahabas* hated to give *Fatwas*. They gave them only when they did not have any other choice.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Ubaidah even added: "Indeed I fear that a people will succeed after it (i.e. his books) and not give it its due place." I am so scared of the knowledge I have acquired, grandpa. I do not trust even myself with it. Would anybody understand that?

\_ I understand.

\_ Listen! A man one day came to see Imam Malik (may Allah bless him) with many questions. The believer came from Uzbekistan and it took him six months of hardship to reach the scholars with all the questions of the people entrusted him with. Imam Malik answered only three of them! When the man, very disappointed asked him what he would answer his people to explain that one of the greatest scholars on earth could not answer their questions, Imam Malik simply said: “Tell them that Imam Malik does not know”... Who am I to compare to him?

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Qais. Ibn Abee Haatim wrote a biography for him (4/1/446) and reported his reliability from the sayings of Ibn Ma'een and others.]

<sup>4</sup> Sufyaan Ath-Thawree reported this narration on his authority also and added to the end of it that he ('Ubaidah) said: Ad-Daarimee (1/121) reported it as well as Al-Khateeb in *Taqyeed-ul-'Ilm* (pg. 61)]

\_ I understand

See, grandpa, many *Sahabas* thought  
<sup>5</sup>"That a man spending his entire life in ignorance is better for him than to issue rulings (*fatawas*) without knowledge." If they ever thought like this, mustn't I be more than careful?

\_ You sure should be careful, as much as you can, my brother. However, you should not be paralyzed by this knowledge. The knowledge should give you wings, not make you sink like a stone.  
Do you ever regret having acquired it?

\_ No. But I did not mean to use it for others. I just wanted to understand... for myself.

\_ And now, they are in need of you. What will you decide?

\_ <sup>6</sup>"It is enough of knowledge for an individual that he fears Allaah." Don't you think so? "And it is enough of a lie for him to say: 'I seek Allaah's forgiveness and repent to Him' yet he goes back to doing it." I do not trust myself to learn from mistakes. I am a human being and I am weak sometimes. How

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<sup>5</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Al-Fadl Ibn Dukain reported to us, saying: Sufyaan informed us from Yahyaa Ibn Sa'eed that he said: I heard Al-Qaasim Ibn Muhammad say:

<sup>6</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Al-A'amash from Sulaim from Hudhaifah that he (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said:

can I advise others when I cannot keep myself from errors despite the knowledge I have?



\_ My son, you must realize that:  
<sup>7</sup>"Knowledge is achieved by studying and maturity is achieved by puberty. And whosoever strives after (learning) good, he

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<sup>7</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from 'Abd-ul-Malik Ibn 'Umair from Rajaa Ibn Haiwah on the authority of Abu Ad-Dardaa (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*), that he said:  
[Its chain is *saheeh* in *mawqoof* form. It is also reported from the path of Isma'eel Ibn Mujaalid on 'Abd-ul-Malik Ibn 'Umair in *marfoo'* form (saying of the Prophet r). And it has a supporting witness from the path of Mu'awiyah.]

will be given it and whosoever avoids evil, he will be protected from it.”

In Islam, we say that the one who seeks knowledge, as long as he is on his way there, all that exists, even the fish in the sea ask forgiveness for him. That is why you must put your trust in Allah.

\_ I fear Allaah!!

\_ Think! Isn't knowledge the guarantee of our safety? Isn't knowledge a good companion? Isn't knowledge a way to Paradise?

\_ Indeed

\_ Listen. Towards the end of time, <sup>8</sup>"Knowledge will be uplifted, ignorance will spread and *Al-Haraj* will increase.' The people said: 'What is *Al-Haraj*?' The prophet (SAAS) said: 'War.'

\_ So, you are saying that if I do not advise my brothers and sisters on the matter of religion, there will be war?

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<sup>8</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us from Yahyaa Ibn 'Umair that he said: I heard my father narrate from Abu Hurairah (*radyyAllaahu 'anhu*) that he said:

[Its chain of narration is *saheeh* in *mawqoof* form. And it is authentic in *marfoo'* form from different paths on the authority of Abu Hurairah. Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others have transmitted it.]

But if I advise them wrong, it will be war too, don't you think so?

Tell me, grandfather, is knowledge more important in Islam than worship or fear of Allaah?



\_ If it promotes peace, why should it not?

Knowledge is important and devotion is important. But peace is even more important. We greet each other by the name of “peace” and call upon Allah by its two most often pronounced names “The All-Merciful, The Most Compassionate”.

\_ So if one prays all day long or seeks knowledge all day long? Which one is the best?

\_ Knowledge. Definitely knowledge, my son.

<sup>9</sup> “[A *sahaba*] went to Safwaan Ibn ‘Assaal Al-Muraadee, so he said: ‘What did you come for?’ I said: ‘In search of knowledge.’ So he said: ‘Verily, the angels lower their wings for the seeker of knowledge, out of contentment for what he seeks.’”

<sup>10</sup> “Indeed, every creature, even the fish in the sea, asks forgiveness for the one who educates people about the good (i.e. Islam).”

It was narrated that Qays ibn Katheer said: “A man came from Madeenah to Abu’l-Darda’ in Damascus and he said, ‘What brought you here, my brother?’ He said, ‘A hadeeth which I have heard that you narrate from the Messenger of Allaah

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<sup>9</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us on the authority of 'Aasim Ibn Abee An-Najood on Zur Ibn Hubaish that he said:

[This hadeeth is found in *Sunan At-Tirmidhee* and other collections, and he (At-Tirmidhee) authenticated it.

Some of the reporters stop it as being the saying of a companion only, while others raise it to a saying of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*). It takes the ruling of *marfoo'* (raised to a saying of the Prophet) without a doubt. This is because such a statement is not being said according to ones opinion and view, as has been stated by Ibn 'Abd-il-Barr in *Jaami' Bayaan-ul-'Ilmi wa Fadlihi* (1/32-33).]

<sup>10</sup> Abu Khaithama reported to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Shimr from Sa'eed Ibn Jubair on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbaas (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*), that he said:

[This report is authentically attributed to the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*). At-Tabaraanee transmitted it in *Al-Awsat* from the hadeeth of Jaabir (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*) and At-Tirmidhee from the hadeeth of Abu Umaamah (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*) and he said it was *saheeh*.]

(peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).’ He said, ‘Have you come for any other reason?’ He said, ‘No.’ He said, ‘Have you come for trade?’ He said, ‘No. I have only come to seek this hadeeth.’ He said, ‘I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say, “Whoever follows a path to seek knowledge, Allaah will make easy for him the path to Paradise. The angels beat their wings in approval of the seeker of knowledge, and those who are in the heavens and on earth pray for forgiveness for the scholar, even the fish in the water. The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like the superiority of the moon over all other heavenly bodies. The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets, for the Prophets did not leave behind dinars or dirhams, rather they left behind knowledge, so whoever gains knowledge has gained great good fortune.”’ (narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 2606; classed as *saheeh* by al-Albaani).

\_ Worship is humility, isn’t it? And Allaah, if I recall well, is angry against the one who does not ask.

\_ Yes, my son, that’s right. What you can do is to strive to do your best and Allaah will do the rest. The purpose of *duaa* (supplication) is *tawheed* (unicity), my child, and *tawheed* is *eemaan* (faith).

When a person does recognize that he cannot have anything except by Allaah’s will, then he is doing *tawheed*. Seeking knowledge is *tawheed* because it is a form of *duaa*, of humility.

“*say: Are those who know and those who do not know equal?*”

[Quraan 39-9]

“*Only the knowledgeable [in religion] of His slaves fear Allaah*” [Quraan 35:28]

Abd 'Alem opened his dark sparkling eyes wide open. He passed his gaze once more over the words that placated the upper part of the library. He read slowly as if absorbing himself in it:

*“The superiority of the learned Muslim over the devotee is as my superiority over the least of you.”*

*It also said: ‘The superiority of a learned man over a worshipper is like my superiority over the ordinary men from among my companions.’ [At-Tirmidhi]*

*“It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh”[Faatir 35:28]*

*“Allâh will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge”[al-Mujaadilah 58:11]*

*“Say: ‘Are those who know equal to those who know not?’ It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh’s Signs and Verses)”[al-Zumar 39:9]*

*“And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it (this Qur’aan) is the truth from your Lord, so that they may believe therein, and their hearts may submit to it with humility” [al-Hajj 22:54]*

Islam calls us to seek knowledge. The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) made seeking knowledge an obligation upon every Muslim, and he explained that the superiority of the one who has knowledge over the one who merely worships is like the superiority of the moon over every

other heavenly body. He said that the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets and that the Prophets did not leave behind dinars and dirhams (i.e., money), rather their inheritance was knowledge, so whoever acquires it has gained a great share. And he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said that seeking knowledge is a way to Paradise. He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever follows a path in the pursuit of knowledge, Allaah will make a path to Paradise easy for him.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, Kitaab al-‘Ilm, 10)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “When Allaah wishes good for a person, He makes him understand the religion.” (Agreed upon. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 69)

Abd 'Alem's eyes blurred with emotion .

\_ Then, I have been losing my time. All these precious minutes I spent worrying about my own comfort and my problems, I could have made them prayers. I could have lied on my bed, opened a book of knowledge and I would have been praying. I would have been entertained while being on my way to a *jihad*. I would have learned something about myself while actually making *Dhikr*.

Imagine that "the religious scholar is greater in reward than the fighter in the way of Allaah who fasts the day and prays the night"!

O, I might never be a scholar since scholars learn the Noble Qur'aan and thousand of hadiths by heart and they study with a number of teachers, but I could have glanned the petals of their efforts, which might fill Heavens and earth with light as the Muslim woman in *Jannah*.

Subanallah. Exalted is Allaah above any limitattion. My knowledge could have been better that saying that!

But, grand'pa? Why is knowledge so superior?

Alem's grandpa put his large hand on his descendant's forelock and declared.

\_ Because it does not only benefit you, it benefits also other Muslims. As long as you are learning, others will benefit from this knowledge and you will rub on them, whether you are talking about eating or sitting, exchanging news or recalling history. There is nothing that you will pass for what you will have the like of the reward of those who follow your guidance.

*The Muslims are like the organs of the same body. When one part hurts, the whole body hurts. It is like a box of matches, when one is stroke, all the rest gets lit, one by one. There is nothing one Muslim does that does not affect the entire community, regarding its behavior, faith, commitment, etc.*



And also, the benefit and effect of the sacred knowledge will remain after you depart while all the supererogatory works will cease with your death and their recording.

I will ask you a question. Is it better, my son, to eat a seed or to plant it so that it can multiply? Would you rather do a job that ends with you or a job that provides work for the generation to come? Would you rather use your talent writing a diary or a treaty that will be enjoyed for many years to come? This is your reward: to pass on, this is what old generations have always strived for.



This is for what peasants have accumulated earth. This is for what couples have given birth together. This is the reason why artisans have formed apprentices. Old people lived for ideals. Even if their dreams were attached to a piece of land, they dreamed of this land being kept in the family for generations. I wonder what we pass on today: pollution, ways to laziness, unhealthy habits, many empty words and thousands of paperwork. We are not even able of passing on love. We do not know how to love and share with each other. How do you call parents who put their children in daycare and never see them more than a few hours a day and sometimes they spend this time before their TV? What do they offer their children? What do they teach them except that adults do not care about children or are too busy to care?

Knowledge is nothing if not passed on; knowledge needs a vision. You were raised that way, my son. You care. Few people nowadays care. That's your gift, your education.



Abd 'Alem looked around him, thoughtful, then declared, \_ Yes, grandparents used to do that. In your house, there is no pollution, you dust your library by yourself, never use chemicals and you stroll the park endlessly with the different learned people who come to visit; there is no distraction, just books, and there is no word that is lost because so many people come here to gather them. I wonder how much harm modern appliances have done to us, to my family. We would be bored without a TV and we would feel a prisoner without a car for transportation, for grocery, for school and so on. I admit, I would feel trapped in this library like a bookmark between two pages and squeezed between two volumes of handwashing and endless handiworks.

But that's a price to pay, isn't it?  
The price for knowledge.



The grandfather closed his hoary eyes and shook his head back and forth with a grave expression on his face. Then he said,  
\_ *“Whoever wants to cultivate the afterlife We shall increase for him his tillage, while whoever wants to cultivate this world, We shall give him of it, but he will have no share in the next”* [Qur’aan 42:20]  
*“verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful.”*  
*“As for man, when his Lord tries him by giving him honour and bounties, then he says (in exultation): ‘My Lord has honoured me’”*  
*“But when He tries him by straitening his means of life, he says: ‘My Lord has humiliated me!’”* [Qur’aan 89:13-16]  
Do not be ungrateful to what Allah permitted you to have. There are no bad tools, just bad apprentices... What you do

with things does not depend on what you possess but on how you decide to use them and how you are able to control yourself.

Knowledge is a trial, my son.

Like money, modernity, books, family, etc.

There is a story that illustrates how knowledge can be a benefit for one person and not another.

Two types of animals are set free in a garden; one is a bird and the other is a swine. The bird will look for clean and pure sustenance, whereas the swine will look for filth and dirt. Whatever intention they have, they will get. So the bird enters the garden and finds clean and pure sustenance and the swine/pig enters the garden and searches for filth and garbage and dirt and finds it because no garden is filth free. They both got what they wanted.

People also say: If an empty glass is put under a tap, and the mouth of the glass is facing down, then it does not matter how fast the water is coming out, the glass will never get full for obvious reasons. But if that same glass is facing the correct way and the mouth of the glass is facing up, then it does not matter if the force of the water is low, but a time will come that the glass will be full of water. If we have the intention of benefiting, then we will benefit tremendously. And if we have the intention of finding faults and mistakes, then we will find them.

*“The prophet (SAWS) used to take care of the Muslims in preaching by selecting a suitable time, so that they might not*

get bored. He abstained from pestering people with sermons and knowledge all the time.”<sup>11</sup>

He knew that there was a time for everything. He did not try to impose an Arab way of life to the many tribes consulting him. He was respectful. He just gave them the tools to please Allah. He was humorous too. He was not this ascetic that never knew a moment of laugh or could not appreciate a good joke.

The prophet said: “facilitate things to people”<sup>12</sup>

He (SAAS) tried to approach everyone in the best manner possible. And you know how to deal with people.

The knowledge is like a wild beast; if you approach it mindfully and with patience, it will be revealed to you and it will be your helper in times of need. Insha Allah.

Knowledge is enjoyable; knowledge is supposed to be pleasurable, not boring! One does not need to give up his way of life to seek for knowledge as other religions preach it. Sufis, Brahman, Bouddhists, Christians monks are all people who left their ordinary life behind to look for knowledge.

It is not the way of Islam.

There is an Arab proverb that says “Do not press too much on your friend, he might break”

You see, knowledge without wisdom is wasted.

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<sup>11</sup> [Bukhari, volume 1, book3, 68]

<sup>12</sup> [Bukhari, volume 1, book 3, 69]



There was a prophet named Musa (AS), one day he got up to deliver a speech before the children of Israel and he was asked, “Who is the most learned person among the people?”

Musa (AS) replied, “I (am the most learned)” Allaah admonished him and let him meet Al-Kidr (AS) and the latter told Musa (AS), “O Musa! I have some of Allaah’s knowledge which He has bestowed upon me but you do not know it; and you too, have some of Allaah’s knowledge which He has bestowed upon you, but I do not know.”

See, knowledge is given in small quantities and even the most learned of the scholars is not the most learned of all men; there would always be someone who is more learned in another area or is learned in another way.

Some people say that only Allaah’s Messenger and His inspired books know the rules of Allaah, for minds are always in disagreements. Some minds find certain acts good, others find them bad and another one is of two minds concerning the

same action. This is why sometimes Allaah's rulings are not understood by us and we follow them without using our reason. Musa (AS) followed Al-Khidr and lost patience trying to figure out why he did acts that looked sinful and actually were blessed by Allaah Ta'laah.

They walked along the sea coast and asked the crew of a ship to let them go on board. While on board, free of charge, Al-Khidr pulled out one of the planks of the ship with an adze. Musa (AS) exclaimed, "These people gave us a free lift, yet you have scuttled their ship so as to drown its people! Verily, you have committed an evil." [Qur'aan 18:71]

Al-Khidr (AS) answered later, "This is the parting between me and you [...] As for the ship, it belonged to poor people working in the sea. So I wished to make a defective damage in it, as there was a king behind them who seized every ship by force." {Qur'aan 18:79}



A sparrow came and sat over the edge of the ship and dipped its beak once in the sea. Al-Kidhr said to Musa (AS), "My knowledge and your knowledge, compared to Allah's knowledge is like that this sparrow has taken out of the sea."

\_ Dear Grandpa, that's exactly how I feel. Remember, someone reported that,

<sup>13</sup> "If a man sits amongst people, and they perceive him to be ignorant, while in fact he is not ignorant, then this is truly the Muslim who possesses understanding (of the Religion)." Someone else said, <sup>14</sup> "I met one hundred and twenty of the Companions of Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) from the Ansaar. There was not one from among them who would be asked about something, except that he loved that his brother replace him (in that matter) and he would not narrate a *hadeeth* except that he loved that his brother replace him."

The one who knows a lot perceives that he knows little. He understands that his own knowledge is not enough to understand the whole of Islam. He is scared of giving his opinion in case he tells a lie about Allah. I feel this way. I am not the best Muslim but this I can feel because I sense my limits.

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<sup>13</sup> 'Abdullaah narrated to us, saying: Abu Khaithama reported to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us from Yoonus from Al-Hasan (Al-Basree), that he said:

<sup>14</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from 'Ataa Ibn As-Saa'ib from 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Abee Laylaa, that he said:

Men of the old times were very wise men. They would not give an opinion lightly and even they would cross the entire world to get a single answer. They would not count on themselves to answer this question!

<sup>15</sup>"A man traveled to Egypt just for this one *hadeeth* and he did not stop his journey to settle down, until he returned back to his home. (The *hadeeth* was) 'Whosoever conceals (the faults of) his brother in this world, Allaah will conceal his faults on the Day of Judgement.'"

I wonder what they would think of us nowadays. Each one of us thinks he is a little 'Ulama and each one of us thinks he is right. How little faith do we have left... And how little fear of Allaah! We would not cross the earth to find out if we are wrong about an issue; it would not prevent us from sleeping at night or even to live our lives! For these men, it did... I wonder how exceptional these men were. I do not think we would have the patience with someone like that today. I would like one day to meet one...

The elderly looked at Abd 'Alem with watery eyes. He did not reply anything and continued the long pause that lingered between them. Finally, he declared,

<sup>16</sup>"Nothing is placed into another thing more beautiful than when gentleness is placed into knowledge." And you are this gentleness.

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<sup>15</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Hushaim reported to us, saying: Sayaar reported to us from Jareer Ibn Hayyaan that he said:

<sup>16</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us from Zayd Ibn Aslam from 'Ataa Ibn Yasaar that he said:

See, we need people like you. Each one of us, how ignorant we are, are like one grain of the hourglass that stretches the time. We add something more to the knowledge we own. We need each other.

Is it not true that,

<sup>17</sup>"The Son of Aadam will not depart from standing (before Allaah) on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about four things: On his life and in what condition he left it. On his body and in what things he put it through. On his wealth, from where did he earn it. And on his knowledge and what he did because of it"?

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<sup>17</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Abdullaah Ibn Idrees reported to us, saying: Laith reported to us from 'Adiyy Ibn 'Adiyy from As-Sanaabahee from Mu'aadh [Ibn Jabal] (*radyyAllaahu 'anhu*) that he said: [The hadeeth here is *mawqoof* and in its chain is Laith Ibn Abee Saleem who is da'eef (weak). Others have reported it from 'Adiyy Ibn 'Adiyy in *marfoo'* form. Ibn 'Asaakir (10/28/2) reported it as well as Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdaadee in *Iqtidaa-ul-'Ilm* (no. 2). It has a supporting evidence (in a hadeeth reported) on the authority of Abu Burzah in *marfoo'* form. At-Tirmidhee reported this one and authenticated it. Ad-Daarimee also reported it as well as Abu Ya'laa in his *Musnad* (2/353) with an authentic chain of narration. Also, Al-Khateeb reported this in his book *Iqtidaa-ul-'Ilm* under (no. 1).]



— Precisely, my son. Concealing knowledge is as dangerous in Islam than revealing it. Abu Hurairah said while he was being asked questions by the people:

<sup>18</sup>“If it were not for an *ayah* that was revealed in Surah Al-Baqarah, I would not have informed you of anything. If it were

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<sup>18</sup> Ibn Juraij reported: 'Ataa informed me that he heard Abu Hurairah say while he was being asked questions by the people: [Surat-ul-Baqarah: 159. I say: Its chain of narration is *saheeh* according to the standards of the two Shaikhs. Al-Bukhaaree (1/42) has transmitted it from the path of Al-A'araj on Abu Hurairah.]

not that He said: 'Verily, those who conceal what We have sent down from the clear evidences and the guidance, after We have explained it clearly to the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allaah and cursed by those who curse.' "

Think about it. The men of the old times used to say:

<sup>19</sup>“Verily, you are in a time in which there are many scholars and few speakers. And verily after you, there will come a time in which there will be many speakers, while the scholars in it will be few.”

This precious knowledge has always been memorized and kept in writings.

<sup>20</sup>“Anas (*radyaAllaahu ‘anhumaa*) used to tell his son: 'O my son! Secure knowledge by writing.'”

So if you are clever with the pen, you might prevent wars by it and people from entering the Hellfire.

<sup>21</sup>“Indeed Allaah will not take knowledge away abruptly by snatching it away from the people. But rather, he will take

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<sup>19</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from ‘Abdullaah Ibn Yazeed (As-Sahbaanee) from Kumail Ibn Ziyaad on the authority of ‘Abdullaah [Ibn Mas’aad] that he said:

[This narration in *mawqoof* form (saying of a companion only) has an authentic chain. Its narrators are all narrators of the category of the two *Saheeh* collections, except for 'Abdullaah Ibn Yazeed As-Sahbaanee. However, he is trustworthy and his biography occurs in *Al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel*.]

<sup>20</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah Al-Ansaaree reported to us, saying: My father narrated to me from Thumaamah Ibn 'Abdillaah that he said:

[Its chain of narration is *saheeh* in *mawqoof* form. And it is authentic in *marfoo'* form from different paths on the authority of Abu Hurairah. Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others have transmitted it.]

away the knowledge by causing the scholars to die, to the point that when not one scholar remains, the people will take hold of ignorant leaders. So they will be asked and they will issue rulings without any knowledge. Thus, they will be led astray and they will lead others astray."

— There is much here to ponder about that is true. However, my dear grandfather, I am not alone refusing to instruct people about the religion.

<sup>22</sup> "Whenever some people would approach Rabee' Ibn Khaitham (to ask him questions), he would say: 'I seek refuge in Allaah from your evil.'"

Another *sahaba* declared: <sup>23</sup>"I went to Ibraaheem in order to ask him about an issue, so he said: 'Was there not between me and you someone else besides me, that you may have asked him instead?'"

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<sup>21</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us from Hishaam Ibn 'Urwah from his father from 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Amr (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*), that he said: The Messenger of Allaah (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: [Its chain is *saheeh* according to the standards of the two Shaikhs and they have both reported it. One of the paths of narration reported by Muslim is the same one used by the author (Abu Khaithama) here.]

<sup>22</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan reported to us from Sufyaan from Naseer (Ibn Da'aloq) that he said:

<sup>23</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Qabeesa Ibn 'Aqbah reported to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn Sa'eed reported to us from Abu Hiseen that he said:

<sup>24</sup> "It is from truthfulness that a man acquire knowledge, then act upon it, then teach it." I am not sure I am that trustful. I am not as good as I should be, knowing all that I know. Al-Ash'ath said: "Do you not see that he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has begun with knowledge before action"!

— No scholar can say he is a perfect man. We all make mistakes and Allah likes us to make mistakes and to ask forgiveness and to humble ourselves.

People are expecting scholars to answer all their burning questions. Al-Qaasim Ibn Muhammad, a great teacher of *haadith*, said:

<sup>25</sup>"Indeed (one day) you will ask me concerning that which I have no knowledge of. So I swear by Allaah that if I do have knowledge of it, I will not conceal it nor will I allow for it to be concealed (by others)."

— All right, my son, but remember:

<sup>26</sup>"Whosoever conceals knowledge of which benefit is derived from, he will be suppressed by a bridle made of Fire." So fear the burning fire of *Jahannam*!

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<sup>24</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Mu'aadh reported to us, saying: Ash'ath reported to us from Al-Hasan that he said: The Messenger of Allaah (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

<sup>25</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Isma'eel Ibn Ibraaheem reported to us from Ayyoob that he said: I heard Al-Qaasim Ibn Muhammad say:

<sup>26</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Laith from 'Ataa that he said: Abu Hurairah (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) said: [In *mawqoof* form (saying of a companion only), this narration is *da'eef*. It is authentic in *marfoo'* form from the path of 'Ataa on Abu Hurairah

<sup>27</sup> “Shall I not inform you of the true *faqeeh* (one with understanding of the Religion)? (He is) the one who doesn’t cause the people to despair from the mercy of Allaah nor does he allow an individual to commit disobedience to Allaah nor does he leave off the Qur’aan, turning toward something other than it. Indeed, there is no good in any act of worship that has no knowledge in it. Nor is there any good in knowledge that does not have understanding to it. Nor is there any good in reciting the Qur’aan if there is no *tadabbur* (reflecting on its meaning) to go along with it.”

Abd ‘Alem trembled as he was reminded of his errors. He had doubted Allah’s mercy, and he had disobeyed the order to say what one knows. He had forgotten that the scholar, even if he says something wrong, gets the same reward. This is because of the high status of the person of knowledge in a religion where Allaah, in His Qur’an, says hundred of times: “Think!” “A believer is the one who ponders”.

He recalled slowly reciting as for himself:

*“Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allâh and cursed by the cursers.”*

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(*radyaAllaahu ‘anhu*). At-Tirmidhee, Ibn Hibbaan, Al-Haakim and Adh-Dhahabee have authenticated it. See the book *Tah-dheer-ul-Masaajid* (pg. 4)]

<sup>27</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Laith from Yahyaa that ‘Alee (*radyaAllaahu ‘anhu*) said:

*Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful” [al-Baqarah 2:159-160]*

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever calls people to right guidance will have a reward like that of those who follow him, without it detracting from their reward in the slightest, and whoever calls people to misguidance will have a burden of sin like that of those who follow him, without it detracting from their burden in the slightest.” (Narrated by Muslim, 2674)

I am not guiding people astray; I am just afraid of making mistakes despite being very careful of what I tell people. That’s not a sin!



The young man took hold of the old man's hand, shook it a few times, then declared with a new intensity:

I understand you, my brother in Islam and my kin. Ibn 'Abbaas said and I say after him:

All right, people, <sup>28</sup>“Take hold of knowledge by writing and taking notes. Who will buy knowledge from me for a *dirham*?”

Someone asked. What on earth does he mean by:

<sup>29</sup> “Who will buy knowledge from me for a *dirham*?” Abu Khaithama said: “He means by this: “Buy a piece of paper so that knowledge can be written down on it.”

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<sup>28</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us, saying: 'Ikrimah Ibn 'Amaar reported from Yahyaa Ibn Abee Katheer on the authority of Ibn 'Abbaas (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) that he said:

<sup>29</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us, saying: Al-Mundhir Ibn Tha'alaba narrated to me from 'Ilbaa 67 that he said: 'Alee (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) said:



\_ Good, my boy, very good. I will tell them you are waiting. But reminds them that:

<sup>30</sup>“Knowledge is the goal of the believer. Every time he attains some aspect from it, he embraces and takes hold of it, and (then) seeks after another goal.”

They are not done with knowledge once they will ask their questions; they have to research further.

\_ Very wise, grandpa. I will not forget to remind them. Abd 'Alem raised his hands to the level of his shoulder and murmured:

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<sup>30</sup> Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdee reported to us from 'Abd-ul-'Azeez Ibn Abee Rawwaad on the authority of 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Ubaid that he said:

**<sup>31</sup>'O Allaah, indeed I seek refuge in you from a knowledge that does not benefit, a deed that is not risen (to You; i.e. not accepted), a heart that does not fear and a statement (supplication) that is not heard.'"**



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<sup>31</sup> 'Abdullaah [Al-Baghawee] narrated to us, saying: Abu Nasr At-Tamaar 76 reported to us, saying:  
Hamaad Ibn Salamah reported to us from Qataadah on the authority of Anas (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) that he said: "The Messenger of Allaah (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) used to say:

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The Book of Knowledge, by Imam Abu Khaithama An-Nasaa'ee – with checking and notes of Imam Al-Albanee:  
<http://www.al-manhaj.com/ebooks/KnowledgeBook.pdf>

Imaam Al-Munajjid:  
<http://www.islam-qa.com/>

There is a difference between Islam, which is a teaching, and Muslims, who are people, and may follow their religion to different degrees or not at all. Islam is certainly the Religion of Wisdom and Truth [Qur'an 9:33]

The Qur'an mentions the need for knowledge in a great number of verses. (2:32, 118, 120, 145, 230, 247 6:144 18:66, 19:11, 114, 122 10:40, 90, 4 11:14, 46-47, 21:74, 79 22:3, 5, 8, 54, 71 23:84 24:15 27:15, 40,52, 66, 84 28:14, 78 29:8, 49 30:29, 56 31:6, 15, 20, 34 33:63 34:6 35:11, 28 39:49 40:7, 42, 83 41:47 42:14 43:20, 85 45:17, 24 46:4, 23 47:16 51:28 53:28, 30, 35 58:11 64:12 78:44 102:5).

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) is reported to have said:

"If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, God will cause him to travel on one of the roads to paradise."

"The superiority of the learned man over the devout man is like that of the moon on the night when it is full over the rest of the stars."

"The learned are heirs of the Prophets who leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who accepts it accepts an abundant portion."

"The search for knowledge is an obligation laid on every Muslim, but he who commits it to those who are unworthy of it is like one who puts necklaces of jewels, pearls and gold on swine."

"He who goes out in search of knowledge is in Allah's path till he returns."

"If anyone seeks knowledge, it will be an atonement for past sins."

"He who is asked about something he knows and conceals it will have a bridle of fire put on him on the day of resurrection."

"If anyone seeks knowledge to use it in vying with the learned, or disputing with the foolish, or to attract men's attention to himself, Allah will bring him into Hell."

"If death comes to anyone when he is seeking knowledge with the purpose of using it to revivify Islam, there will be only one degree between him and the Prophets in paradise."

"Good is the man learned in religion who, if people have need of him, benefits them, but who, if they ignore him, enriches himself."

"Among actions and good deeds for which a believer will continue to receive reward after death are knowledge which he teaches and spreads."

"Superiority in knowledge is better than superiority in worship, and the basis of religion is abstinence."

"Studying together for an hour during the night is better than spending the whole night in devotions... These ones are praying and supplicating Allah, who, if He wills, may answer their prayers, but if He wills, may refuse them. Those ones are learning knowledge and teaching the ignorant, so they are superior."

"If the learned were to guard learning and entrust it to those who are worthy of it, they would thereby rule their contemporaries."

"The calamity which affects knowledge is forgetfulness, and wasting it is to convey it to those who are unworthy of it."

"The worst evil consists of learned men who are evil, and the best good consists of learned men who are virtuous."

"Knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure from which nothing is expended in Allah's path."

"Knowledge is of two kinds: knowledge in the heart which is beneficial kind; and knowledge on the tongue which is Allah's allegation against human beings."

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