

رَفَعَ الْعَالَمِينَ

THE DISAPPEARANCE
of KNOWLEDGE



by The Noble Scholar Muhammad bin Abdullāh Al-Imām

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The Disappearance of Knowledge

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مُقَدِّمَةٌ

Author's Introduction

All praise belongs to Allah. I bear witness openly that there is no deity that has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, without any partners. Likewise I testify that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger (ﷺ).

To Proceed:

Without doubt the Prophet (ﷺ) has clarified in a multitude of prophetic narrations that the condition of the Islāmic Ummah will change from good to evil, and from evil to even more wicked. Likewise the Prophet (ﷺ) informed that the state of this Ummah will change from might to humiliation, from happiness to wretchedness, from strength to weakness, from brotherhood (for the sake of) the religion to animosity against the religion, from cooperating with one another upon piety to working together upon sin and transgression, from mercy to revenge, from safety to fear, from unity to division, and (that the state of the Ummah will change) from combating the enemies of Allah, to aiding and assisting them.

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The narrations which mention the disappearance of knowledge clarify that the origin of all these changes within the Muslims is only due to the removal of knowledge and its fading away. (Unfortunately), this is a cause that many Muslims do not even pay attention to. So there are those who try to remedy the sicknesses that exist amongst the Muslims, without turning to the legislative Islāmic knowledge, which is the foundation for all rectification.

Many reoccurring narrations have been reported mentioning that there will never cease to be a group from the Islāmic Ummah who are firm and established upon the truth, not harmed by those who oppose and betray them, until the Hour is established. And it is certainly known that the saved and victorious group are the People of The Prophetic Traditions, the People of Sunnah and those who unite upon the truth, because they are the ones described (as those who) establish the truth and tread upon the Prophetic Methodology; they are the strangers amongst the Islāmic Ummah.

The basis for the starting point of the People of The Prophetic Tradition is their concern for seeking beneficial knowledge. Thus their great emphasis (on) legislative knowledge coupled with their allegiance to it has made them in no need of manmade laws, tribal

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customs, innovative ideas, satanic politics, and philosophical desires.

So when I saw that this (which I have previously mentioned) is what has befallen the Muslims due to the disappearance and fading away of knowledge, I knew with certainty that the greatest thing which the Islāmic Ummah was in dire need of is a call to embark upon seeking prophetic knowledge. I saw it appropriate for us to touch upon the issue of the **“Disappearance of Knowledge”** and to clarify its harms and dangers upon the Muslims, (which will befall them) sooner or later, both in terms of (their) religious as well as their worldly affairs. (Also) I wanted to participate with this blessed group, The People of the Prophetic Tradition & the Unified Body, in strengthening their foundation and intensifying their base by embarking upon knowledge. So magnifying the issue of the disappearance of knowledge, will increase in their vitality, strengthen their invigoration, honor their concern for knowledge, and thus increase those who seek knowledge amongst them. This blessed group has the greatest right to be concerned with this knowledge, (and are the most obligated to) give it severe importance, making it a great goal and means to every virtue, as well as a foundation for every good. In addition, I was very keen on making the chapter titles of this treatise supported by proofs, including statements of the pious predecessors, while at the same time being

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ardent to make sure they are authentically reported the majority of the time. Also, I gave concern to transmitting the statements of the prominent, extraordinary, and great critical scholars.

So that in which I have agreed with the truth, then it is due to the bounty, success, aide, and generosity of Allah alone, without any partners; and that in which I have erred, then it is from me and from the devil. We seek refuge in Allah from humiliation and deprivation; and we ask Him to protect us from the Hell-Fire.

And I cannot forget to supplicate to My Lord, for my brothers who cooperated with me in preparing this treatise. So it is Allah alone that I ask to bless them in their knowledge and time, to rectify their offspring, and that He makes all of us keys to good, and those who close off (every avenue to) evil.

This treatise was finished Sunday, the 15th of Al-Muharram of the year 1430, after the Migration of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

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The 1st Section

The Lofty Status of Islāmic
Knowledge

The Status of Knowledge with the Scholars

Many proofs have come within the Noble Qur'an and the authentic prophetic tradition which clarify the status of knowledge and its virtues.

From these proofs is the statement of Allah, the Most High:

﴿ شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ ۗ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾ (١٨)

“Allah bears witness that None has the right to be worshipped but He, and the Angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. None has the right to be worshipped but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” [Ali Imrān: 18]

Al-Hāfith Ibn Rajab said in his concise treatise entitled “The Inheritors of the Prophets” which is included in the Collection of Works of Ibn Rajab (I/50): “The term scholar may be mentioned generally, and the Prophets of Allah (عليهم السلام) are included amongst them, as it is found in the statement of Allah, the Most High:

﴿ شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَرِيضُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾

“Allah bears witness that None has the right to be worshipped but He, and the Angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. None has the right to be worshipped but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” [Ali Imrān: 18]

Allah did not mention (the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ) separately, but rather He included them within the term ‘Scholars.’ This is certainly sufficient for the scholars as an honor that they are referred to by a name in which they along with the Prophets (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ) are gathered within that same name!! From this point of view, there are those who mentioned that the scholars who act upon their knowledge are the (true) Awliyā¹ of Allah, as was mentioned by Abū Hanīfah and Ash-Shāfai’. They said, “If the Scholars and Fuqahā are not the Awliyā of Allah, then Allah does

¹ Translator’s Note: “Indeed the Awliyā of Allah, no fear shall be upon them, nor shall they grieve. Those who believed, and used to fear Allah much. For them are glad tidings in the life of this world, as well as in the Hereafter. No change can there be in the Words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme success.” [Yunus: 62-63]

not have a walī (i.e. a pious believing slave, who is a close friend of Allah).”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: The Prophets (عليهم السلام) are the first of the people to be (and included) within this verse.

And Allah, the Most High says:

﴿ أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَنِيتٌ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوا رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ ۗ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ۗ ﴾

“Is one who is obedient to Allah, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember.” [Az-Zumar: 9]

And how is it possible for these two (types of people) to be equal, when Allah compared the scholar to the one who sees clearly, while the ignorant one’s example is that of the blind man?!

Allah, the Most High, says:

﴿ أَفَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰ إِنَّمَا يَنْذُرُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩﴾

“Shall he then who knows that what has been revealed unto you (O Muhammad ﷺ) from your Lord is the truth be like him who is blind? But it is only the men of understanding that pay heed.”

[Ar-Ra’d:19]

Likewise, in other verses within the Qur’ān Allah has described the people of ignorance as being deaf and dumb². So by negating the similarity between the scholars and the ignorant ones, this is consequently affirming the uppermost honor for the scholars, and likewise it is establishing the greatest form of culpability for the ignorant. (In the Qur’ān) Allah has also mentioned the chest, memory, and understanding of the scholars. He says:

﴿ بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ

بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

“Nay, but they, the clear Ayāt are preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge. And none but the

² Translator’s Note: “The likeness of the two parties is as the blind and the dead and the seer and the hearer. Are they equal when compared? Will you not then take heed?” [Hud:24]

Thālimūn (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) deny Our Ayāt.”

[Al-Ankabūt: 49]

And it is known that the Rabbāniyūn (i.e. those scholars who cultivate the people upon the small affairs of knowledge before the larger affairs) from amongst the scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets (عليهم السلام); they are the successors of the Messengers in their nations, and amongst their people. However, the understanding of the Scholars and callers varies based on (each person's) level of legislative knowledge. And it has become clear to me that the greatest understanding is the understanding of the Pious Predecessors: the Companions and those that follow them.

Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb said to the Companions: **“Wish for something. Some of them said: I desire that this abode would be filled with gold so I can spend it in the way of Allah and give charity. Another man said: I desire that this abode be filled with gems and rubies so I can spend it in the way of Allah and give charity. Then Umar said: wish (for something else)! They said: We don't know oh Leader of the Believers. So Umar said: I wish that this abode be filled with men like Abū Ubayda bin Al-Jarāh,**

Mua'dh bin Jabal, Sālim the servant of Abi Hudhayfah, and Hudhayfah bin Al-Yamān.”³

(From this narration we see that) Umar gave precedence to the need for knowledge over the need for wealth. (So likewise we say that) the need for the people of knowledge takes precedence over the need for the rich and wealthy.

The wise man of the Arab, Al-Ahnaf bin Qays, said: **“All power that is not supported by knowledge, will eventually become humiliation.”⁴**

By Allah it is unfortunate the large amounts of people who possess power and wealth, and are keen upon remaining ignorant.

³ Narrated by Ibn Sa'd in At-Tabaqāt (3/413), likewise Al-Ḥākim in Al-Mustadrak (3/226), and to him belongs the wording of this narration. It is good narration.

⁴ Collected by Ad-Dinawarī in the book Al-Mujālasah (5/97), also Ibn Asākar in his work The History of Damascus (24/331). The men of the chain of narration are reliable narrators, all except the father of Al-Asmae'. He is a relative of Ibn Abdul Mālik, and was mentioned by Ibn Abī Hātim in his work Praise and Disparagement (7/149) and did not mention him with praise or criticism. Likewise Ibn Abdul Barr mentioned him in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (I/256) number (309) without a chain.

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And there are so many people that enlist to combat beneficial knowledge, all because the devil has painted the picture that (seeking knowledge) will cause one's power and dominion to fade away!!

Ad-Dhahabī mentioned in his work Biographies of the Noble Scholars (6/90): It has been authentically reported from Ar-Rabi'a that he said: **"Knowledge is a means to every virtue."**

And Amir Al-Mu'minīn Ibn Shihāb said: **"The scholars who came before us used to say: Holding firm to the Prophetic Sunnah is safety, and knowledge dies quickly, so the bier of knowledge is stability of the religion and the worldly affairs, and with the disappearance of knowledge, is the disappearance of all of that."**⁵

And also it has come from the statement of Ibn Shihāb himself, with a good chain (that he said), **"Where are those individuals who believe that seeking Islāmic knowledge will be a cause**

⁵ Collected by Ad-Dārimī number (97), as well as Al-Lālākāī in his work The Explanation of the Creed of the People of the Sunnah & The Unified Group number (136-137). Likewise Abū Nuaym collected this narration in Al-Hilya (3/369) as well as 'Abdullah bin Al-Mubārak in his work Az-Zuhd (817) and it is authentic.

leading to a default from these upright understandings? Will they not have shyness, and free themselves from this foolishness.”

And Al-Hāfith Sufyān bin Uyaanah said: “Do you know the similitude of knowledge? The similitude of knowledge is that of the land of disbelief and the land of Islām. So if the Muslims leave off Fighting in the way of Allah, the people of disbelief will come and take Al-Islām, and if the people leave off beneficial knowledge, the people will become from amongst the ignorant.”⁶

Ash-Shāfi‘ee said: “Whoever learns the Qur’ān his value will magnify, and whoever studies fiqh his status well become noble, and whoever studies ḥadīth, his proof will be strengthened.”⁷

Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim mentioned in his work The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/368-370), as he clarifies that the only cure for the diseases of the heart is knowledge, he said, “And this sickness is composed of the disease of doubts and desires. For indeed it is a must that it includes corrupt imagination and false wants, such as pride, arrogance, self amazement, and conceit,

⁶ Collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya (7/281) and its chain is good.

⁷ Collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya (9/123) as well as Al-Khaṭīb in The Nobility of the People of the Prophetic Tradition Number (139); and the wording of this narration is found in this work. This narration is also collected by Al-Bahayqī in The Entrance (511) and also in the work The Merits of Ash-Shāfi‘ee (I/281). This narration is authentic.

which consist of imagining oneself to be great and honorable, and also seeking for oneself the praise and admiration of the creation. So (this person's) sickness is either due to doubts, desires, or both... The sicknesses of the heart are graver than the sicknesses of the body, because the most that can result from a physical sickness is death. As for the sicknesses of the heart, it can lead a person to eternal misery; and there is no cure to these diseases except knowledge."

Islāmic Legislative knowledge is not merely a cure for the sicknesses of the hearts, but rather it impacts the hearts to such an extent that it takes them captive.

Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim (رحمه الله) mentioned in The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/244-245):

"Rather the power of knowledge is greater than the power of strength. For this reason, people submit to proofs in ways that they do not submit to authority. For indeed the hearts submit to proofs, as for authority it is only the body that submits to it. Proofs take the heart captive, directing it, demeaning the opposition. Even if he shows stubbornness, and arrogance, his heart is submissive to the proof, obedient, and is under its control. Rather the power of status, if it is not coupled with knowledge that manages with it, then this power is like that of the wild animals, lions, and things similar to them: Ability

without knowledge or mercy. This is different from the power of proof and evidence, because indeed (the power of proofs and evidence) is authority coupled with knowledge and wisdom. And whoever does not have authority with his knowledge, it is either due to the weakness of his proofs and power, or due to the dominance of the authority of the hand and sword over him. Otherwise knowledge is victorious in it of itself, clear and dominate over falsehood.”

So if knowledge has this aforementioned impact on the hearts, then it is proof that nothing can take its place in rectifying the hearts; and it is well known that the foundation for all good is in correcting the hearts⁸. Regardless, the scholar and caller to Allah should look toward how the Salaf regarded the lofty status of knowledge, and see if their awareness of the status of legislative knowledge is in agreement with the awareness of the Salaf, along with those who followed them. (They should look to see) whether they are (truly) aware of the nobility of this knowledge. If (their awareness) is in line with the awareness of the Salaf, (they) should praise Allah, the One who has strengthened the

⁸ “...Indeed in the body there is a morsel of flesh. If it correct and upright, the whole entire body will, likewise, be correct and upright, and if it is corrupt and wicked, the whole entire body will likewise be corrupt and wicked. Certainly it is the heart.” [Al-Bukhārī 52 & Muslim 1599]

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caller's awareness of this knowledge and His religion. And if (the scholars and the callers) recognition of this knowledge is different from that of the Salaf, then take the recognition of the Salaf, and (let him) embark upon the path of seeking knowledge, calling to it, and defending it, just as the Salaf traversed this path (along with) those who followed them in righteousness. There is no greater salvation for the Muslims in these times than gaining understanding of the religion, but (in reality) Allah favors whom He wills, from amongst His servants, with this knowledge.



A Comparative Analysis between Knowledge & Worshipping Allah alone without any partners

Previously we have mentioned that each and every one of us has been created to have knowledge of Allah as He has created us to worship Him alone, without any partners. So knowledge of Allah is itself a goal, similar to how worshipping Allah alone is a goal. But knowledge is more virtuous than worship due to a number of affairs:

I.) Knowledge precedes worship, as Allah says:

﴿ فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرَ لِذُنُوبِكُمْ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلِّبِكُمْ وَمَثَوٰتِكُمْ ۖ ﴿١٩﴾

“So know (O Muhammad ﷺ) that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women. And Allah knows well your moving about, and your place of rest (in your homes).” [Muhammad:19]

2.) Knowledge is the foundation of worship and for the purpose of this foundation Man was created upon the natural inclination to know Allah, and the universal signs were made manifest to point to Allah. (Likewise) the

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Messengers were sent and the books were revealed so that you can get to know Allah, His rights, and the rights of His servants. So based on this, worship is from the prerequisites, benefits, and fruits of knowledge.

- 3.) Knowledge is the heart and soul of worship; when knowledge is removed from worship, this worship becomes like a body without a soul. The evidence for this is the narrations in which it mentions that the first thing that will be removed is humility, honesty, and other than that. The meaning of the disappearance of humility and honesty is the (actual) knowledge of them. And likewise, we say the same thing about the removal of truthfulness, sincerity, and other than them; (it is the removal of the knowledge of them).



A Comparative Analysis between Knowledge & Performing the Night Prayer and other Voluntary prayers

On the authority of Abi Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“The Superiority of a scholar over a worshipper is like the superiority of me over the lowest of you.”**⁹

On the authority of Abi Dardā (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“The Superiority of a scholar over a worshipper is like the superiority of the Full Moon over the other solar bodies.”**¹⁰

On the authority of Ma'mar who reported, on the authority of Az-Zuhrī who said: **“Allah is not worshipped with anything more superior than fiqh”**¹¹

⁹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhī (2685) and graded authentic by Al-Albānī in Sahīh Al-Jāmi' As-Saghīr (7662).

¹⁰ Narrated by Al-Imām Ahmad (5/196), Abū Dawud (3641). The wording belongs to him. Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī graded this narration to be authentic.

¹¹ Narrated by Ibn Abdul Barr in his work A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (I/II9) number (II0). It was also narrated by Abdur Razzāq (II/20479), and by Al-Khaṭīb in Al-Fiqh

Ibn Wahab mentioned: "I was in the presence of Mālik bin Anas, then the time for the midday or the afternoon prayer had arrived while I was reading to him and seeking knowledge in front of him. So I gathered my books and stood in order to go pray. At which point Mālik said to me: "What are you doing? I said: I'm going to offer the prayer. He said: Indeed this is very amazing!! That which you have stood for is not more superior than that which you were in the midst of doing if your intention is correct."¹²

Sufyān Ath-Thawrī said: "There is no action better than seeking knowledge if the intention is correct"¹³

& Al-Mutafaqqih (I/II9) number (81). This narration was also reported by Ibn Abdūl Barr and Abū Nuaym (3/365) with the following wording: "Allah is not worshipped with anything more superior than knowledge."

¹² Narrated by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (I/I22) number (II6) with an authentic chain.

¹³ Narrated by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (I/I23-124) number (II9) with a good chain.

Ar-Rabee' bin Sulaymān said: I heard Ash-Shāfi'ee say: **“Seeking knowledge is better than the supererogatory prayers.”**¹⁴

On the authority of Ishāq bin Mansūr, he said: **“I asked Ahmad bin Hanbal about his statement: “Reviewing knowledge part of the night is more beloved to me than standing up the entire night,” so I asked him which knowledge he intended? He said: “It is the knowledge from which the people benefit in the affairs of their religion” So I said: such as ablution, prayer, fasting, Hajj, divorce, and things such as this? He said: yes.”**¹⁵

Important Note: The superiority of knowledge over the supererogatory prayers is not (a means of) belittling the importance of establishing and safeguarding the voluntary prayers, but rather as a person benefits more from his knowledge, he will

¹⁴ Narrated by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (1/I23) number (118), Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya (9/119), and Ibn Abi Hātim in The Mannerisms and Merits of Ash-Shāfi'ee page (97). This narration is also reported by Al-Bayhaqī in the work The Merits of Ash-Shāfi'ee (2/I38) and its chain is authentic.

¹⁵ Narrated by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (1/I18) number (108) and its chain is authentic.

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be from the first (of the people to perform these prayers) and (even) more diligent in safeguarding the voluntary prayers, especially the night prayer.



A Comparative Analysis between Knowledge & Fighting in the Way of Allah

The Superiority of Knowledge over Jihād (is apparent) from a number of angels:

- 1.) Knowledge is sought for itself *and* to obtain other than it. It is a means as well as a goal. Whereas Jihād is sought to reach other than it; it is a means to a goal. There is no doubt that a thing which itself is a goal is more noble than something that is sought to obtain other than it.
- 2.) Jihād follows knowledge. So without knowledge, Jihād would not (even) be established. (But when there is) knowledge, the religion of Al-Islām is established. And from the (important components) of Al-Islām is Jihād. But if knowledge is not established, it is feared that Islām will vanish.
- 3.) Allah mentioned the lofty level of the scholars before that of the martyrs, as it comes in His statement, the Most High:

﴿ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ

أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾ ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى

بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

“And whosoever obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqūn (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are! Such is the Bounty from Allah, and Allah is Sufficient as All Knower” [An-Nisaa: 69-70]

- 4.) Knowledge repels the doubts of the enemies, that which cannot be repelled by the sword. (Take a look for example) at the enemies (of Al-Islām) who attack the Muslims in these times with their ideologies, reaching the very core of the (Muslim) home. And here you have the Muslims, except those who Allah has mercy on, who follow the Jews and the Christians. (They) slip away from Al-Islām piece by piece. There is no way to repel these ideologies (of) misguidance, except with legislative knowledge.
- 5.) Fighting in the Name of Allah is according to the (benefits and interests) behind carrying it out. So in

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some instances the benefits necessitate that that Jihād be declared, while in other instances (the interests) do not require Jihād. As for knowledge, the interest requires it at all times: before the Jihād, after the Jihād, and while the Jihād is taking place.

- 6.) The difficulty of knowledge is broader than that of Jihād. That is because the one seeking knowledge must sacrifice his life, his time, and his wealth, according to the need, to obtain knowledge. As for Jihād, then if it takes place, it demands specific time from a person's life according to the need.

Here I will mention some of the statements of the Scholars about the superiority of knowledge over Jihād:

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), he said: **“That I teach one chapter of knowledge pertaining to commands or prohibitions is more beloved to me than seventy expeditions in the way of Allah.”**¹⁶

On the authority of Al-Hasan Al-Bastī, he said: **“For me to learn a chapter of knowledge and teach it to a Muslim is**

¹⁶ Collected by Al-Khatīb in the book Al-Faqīh & Al-Mutafaqqih (I/I02) number (52) and the men of the chain are reliable, all but Abū ‘Abdullah Al-Azdi; he is not known to me.

more beloved to me than having the entire world in its totality and spending it (to fight) in the way of Allah.”¹⁷

Ash-Shāfai’ said: “There is nothing, after carrying out the obligatory affairs, more superior than seeking knowledge! It was said to him: (Not even) fighting in the way of Allah?! He said: (No), not even fighting in the way of Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic.”¹⁸

Ibn Battal said in his explanation of Al-Bukhārī (5/7-8), about the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

“The Best of the people is the believer who fights in the way of Allah”:

This should not be understood in an absolute sense. The Prophet (ﷺ) does not intend that the one who fights for the sake of Allah is the best of *all* people. That is because the people who have been given the level of the Siddiqūn (i.e. those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abū Bakr As-Siddiq) are even more

¹⁷ Collected by Al-Khatīb in Al-Faqīh & Al-Mutafaqih (I/102) Number (53); its chain is good.

¹⁸ The Entrance to As-Sunan Al-Kubra number (475) and its chain is authentic.

superior than the (martyrs), as well as those who have connected the people to the legislations of Allah and the Sunan of his Prophet (ﷺ), those who directed them to good, and was a cause for them to benefit in their religious and worldly affairs. But that which the Prophet (ﷺ) intended, and Allah knows best, is the best situation for the general people. That is because there may be an exclusive group from amongst them who are superior to them: the people of religion, knowledge, virtue, and precision with the prophetic traditions.”

Al-Qurafī said in his work entitled Al-Furūq (2/375) while explaining the following phrase: “If the ink of the scholars were weighed along with the blood of the martyr, it would outweigh it,” because of the obedience of the scholars to Allah, by preserving His legislation, honoring His Religious Symbols, which from amongst them is Fighting for His sake, guiding creation to the truth, and teaching the religion until the Day of Judgment. And if it were not for their striving in that, by the favor of Allah, Jihād would cease along with other than it.

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) mentioned as it is found in Majmū’ Al-Fatāwā (30/204): “As for teaching the Qur’ān and other knowledge, without seeking a monetary fee, it is from the greatest and most beloved of all actions to Allah. This is

known by necessity from the religion of Al-Islām. This (reality) is not hidden from anyone who has grown up in the Muslim Lands.”

Ibn Muflih mentioned in his work Legislative Mannerisms (2/142): “It is obligatory upon the Muslim Ruler to take care of the teacher as well as the student, providing for them from the Bayt Al-Maal (i.e. the treasury), because in that is the correctness of the religion, and it takes precedence over Jihād, because perhaps a child may become cultivated upon a false methodology, and it may be difficult to remove it from his heart (unless he is taught correct knowledge).”

Al-Hāfith Ibn Rajab said in his treatise entitled: The Inheritors of the Anbiya in Explaining the Prophetic Narration of Abū Darda (page 37), after citing statements of the Salaf about the superiority of knowledge over Jihād: “From that which points to the superiority of knowledge over all supererogatory deeds, is that (seeking) knowledge gathers between all other virtuous deeds. For indeed knowledge is a type of invocation...and it is also the greatest form of Jihād.”

Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim mentioned in his work entitled Jalaa Al-Afhām (492-493): “Dispatching (the Prophet’s) Sunnah (ﷺ) to the Ummah is better than dispatching an arrow at the necks of the enemies, because that type of dispatching is done by many

people, as for dispatching the prophetic traditions, this is not carried out by anyone except the inheritors of the Prophets (عليهم السلام) and the successors amongst their Nations, May Allah the Most High make us from amongst them, by His blessing, and Generosity.”

Some scholars have even reported a consensus amongst the Ulamah about the superiority of knowledge over the Jihād which is done for the sake of Allah. But that which is the correct position is the (position) which is held by most of the Scholars (rather than a consensus amongst them). That is because there are those scholars who said that knowledge and Jihād are equal. While others say knowledge at the time of learning is better, while Jihād at the time of combat is better. This last (detailed) position is inclusive and most beneficial. And Allah knows best.

Important Note: It should not be understood from (us mentioning) the superiority of knowledge over Jihād, a belittling of the (status) of Jihād. For indeed (Jihād) is the “**Apex and peak of Al-Islām.**”¹⁹ Al-Islām is not maintained except with it. Sheikh Al-Islām surely was correct when he stated in Majmū’ Al-Fatāwā

¹⁹ Collected by Al-Imām Ahmad (5/237), and declared authentic by Al-Albānī (رحمه الله) in Sahīh Al-Jāmi’ (5136).

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(28/232): "The Religion is maintained with an Upright Book
and a Victorious sword."



A Comparative Analysis between Knowledge & Spending in the Way of Allah

Al-Hasan Al-Basrī said: “(For me) to learn a chapter of knowledge and teach it to a Muslim, is more beloved to me than having the world in its entirety, and spending it in the way of Allah.”²⁰

Even with the expansive good found in teaching and learning, the majority of the Muslims turn away from (Islamic education), thinking that acquiring money is easier and more beneficial. This sudden occurrence made it easy for them to desire money, and rush toward it with such intensity. This is only (a result of) them (seeking to) satisfy their desires. If only they were to have sought counsel from their intellects, they would have been guided towards righteousness. Do they not (even realize) that many of them do not have any wealth?! Will they not look at the many harms of having wealth?! Shall they not submit (to the fact) that money calls to transgression?!



²⁰ Collected by Al-Khatīb in his work Al-Faqīh and Al-Mutafaqih (I/I02) number (53) and its chain is authentic.

A Comparative Analysis between the Authority of Knowledge & the Power of Leadership

A summary of this comparison is that which was mentioned by Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim (رحمه الله) in his work entitled: The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/244-245): “Rather the power of knowledge is greater than the power of strength. For this reason, people submit to proofs in ways that they do not submit to authority. For indeed the hearts submit to proofs, as for authority it is only the body that submits to it. Proofs take the heart captive, directing it, demeaning the opposition. Even if (a person) shows stubbornness, and arrogance, (the) heart is submissive to the proof, obedient, and is under its control. Rather the power of status, if it is not coupled with knowledge that manages with it, then this power is like that of the wild animals, lions, and things similar to them: ability without knowledge or mercy. This is different from the power of proof and evidence, because indeed (the power of proof and evidence) is authority coupled with knowledge and wisdom.”

(Oh gentle reader), look at the difference between the two types of power. Do you not desire that your power be knowledge and action?



A Comparative Analysis between Knowledge & Wealth

Al-Allaamah Ibn Qayyim wrote in great detail surrounding this topic in his treatise entitled, The Key to the Abode of Happiness: (I/418-435). He mentioned the following: “**The Superiority of Knowledge over wealth is known from a number of angles.**” He listed forty angles; from them I will mention five.

“**The First:** Knowledge is the inheritance of the Prophets (عليهم السلام), while money is the inheritance of kings and the wealthy.

Second: Knowledge protects you, while you protect money.

Third: Both the believer and the disbeliever, the righteous and the wicked acquire wealth.²¹ As for beneficial knowledge, it is only obtained by the believer.

Fourth: The scholars are needed by the kings and those less than them. While the wealthy are only needed by the poor and needy.

Fifth: As for the rich person, his wealth departs him when he dies, while knowledge enters with you in the grave.”

²¹ **Translator’s Note:** See Ibn Kathīr’s Tafsīr of Surah Al-Fajr verse I5 and I6 for extra benefit about this point.

He explained these points in detail along with other than them. May Allah bestow mercy on him. Ibn Qayyim concluded by saying: "The requirements for this journey (to paradise) are knowledge and action. While the requirements for residency (in this world) is wealth and savings. And whoever wants something he prepares the supplies that he needs for it. Allah says:

﴿ وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ لَأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً وَلَكِنَّ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ
أَنْبِعَاتِهِمْ فَشَبَّطَهُمْ وَقِيلَ اقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ﴾

"And if they had intended to march out, certainly, they would have made some preparation for it, but Allāh was averse to their being sent forth, so He made them lag behind, and it was said (to them), "Sit you among those who sit (at home)." [At-Tawba: 46]

(So although) we are aware of the benefits of wealth, we decisively say that knowledge is more superior. Thus I advise that you read the different angles in which Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim mentioned the superiority of knowledge over wealth. And it is a must that I quote the statement of the poet:

We are pleased with the allotment Al-Jabbār (the Compeller) has
given us

For we have knowledge while they possess riches
The grandeur of wealth quickly fades away,

while the magnificence of knowledge remains continuously”

Comment: If he would have said: “We are pleased with what Ar-Razzāq (The Provider) has given us” it would have been more correct.



A Comparative Analysis between Knowledge & All other pleasures

On the authority of Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“There are two types of greed that will not be completely satisfied: the hunger for knowledge will never be satisfied, and the greed for wealth will never be satisfied.”²²

The seekers of the worldly life are the ones who seek after the temporary desires. (They) take pleasure in them, until the point when they cannot easily leave these (desires) off. (It is important to note that) the enjoyment of these pleasures varies from person to person. From amongst the people are those whose pleasure is in women, others find pleasure in alcohol, dancing, music, sleeping, gathering wealth, power, and leadership. (While) some people (take) pleasure in (learning) harmful knowledge such as magic, astrology, corruption, misguidance and atheism. (On the other hand) there are some people who seek enjoyment in the permissible fields of study, such as medicine, math, science,

²² Collected by Al-Hākim (I/91). Also, our Sheikh Al-Wadi'ee mentioned it in As-Sahīh Al-Musnad (I/63) number (51). It was also declared authentic by Al-Albānī in his comments on Al-Mishkāt number (260).

construction, civilization, art, drawing, and other than that. (But) none of these desires and pleasures are equal to the enjoyment of Islāmic Knowledge.

Al-Allāmah Muhammad bin Abdur Rahmān Al-Wasābi said in his work entitled Nashr tay' At-Ta'reef about the virtues of those who Carry the Honorable Knowledge.

“Oh my dear son, no enjoyment of the people of this worldly life in its entirety, nor the enjoyment of the kings, musicians, and singers, is at all equal to (the pleasure I obtain) by seeking knowledge. So knowledge is truthfully that which I rely upon and it is that which I seek to achieve.”

Another poet mentioned:

“The slap of a scholar in my face is sweeter than drinking from Ar-Rahīq (i.e. Nectar).”

Al-Allāmah Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said in his work entitled The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/447): “The pleasure of knowledge is intellectual as well as spiritual, similar to the bliss of the Angels. While the pleasure (found in) eating, drinking, and intimacy are desires that are animalistic; the human (participates in) these pleasures, as well as animals. As for the pleasure (some people find in) evil, oppression, corruption, domination in the lands, (this) is the pleasure of the devil, where the one who does

these acts shares these pleasures along with Iblis and his troops. All enjoyments become void once the soul departs from the body, except for the pleasure of knowledge and true faith. (As for knowledge and Al-Imān) they become even more complete after the soul departs from the body. That is because the body, and the things that busied it, caused the knowledge and Imān to lessen, decrease, and be covered. So once the soul departs (your) body, you enjoy a complete satisfaction, due to that which you have attained from beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds. So whoever seeks the greatest pleasure, and prefers the eternal bliss, then it can only be attained by way of knowledge and true faith, which complete happiness is attained by. Also, all other pleasures are quick to fade away. When they end, they are followed by grief, stress, sadness, nervousness, and pain, where the person needs to cure himself with that which is equal to the pleasure, to fight off the pain, and perhaps him returning to (the so-called pleasurable thing) is painful and hated to him, but he is motivated to do it in order to fight off the grief and sadness.²³ So how can

²³ **Translator's Note:** Allahul Must'ān! This, which the Sheikh describes, is similar to what doctors call "withdrawal syndrome" or "dope sickness," where the so-called solution to the sickness caused by the heroin (or even 'pills and juice') is in using more heroin, which in reality only increases the sickness. But the devil whispers to this addict, making him think that he has no options, although Islam offers him the

this be compared to the pleasure of knowledge, the enjoyment of having true faith in Allah, loving Him, turning toward Him, and taking pleasure in His remembrance? Therefore this is the real happiness.”

This is not the place to mention in great detail the many different ways in which the pleasure of knowledge is superior to that of all other enjoyments. That which we mentioned in these quick words is sufficient for the one who is convinced by a little. The summary of this discussion of the superiority of Islāmic Knowledge over, all acts of worship, deeds, and other enjoyments, is to say: knowledge is sought for every act of worship: before it, while doing it, and after it. Knowledge is the spirit and adornment of worship. The same thing is said pertaining to righteous deeds. So (oh gentle reader) will you not then increase in knowledge? Will you not have disdain for ignorance and destruction!?



solution to all of his problems. However, one must sincerely repent to Allah, seek knowledge, perform righteous deeds, and be aware of the devil's plots, while leaving off evil companionship.

With knowledge the enemies of Allah are defeated

Allāh has made the debate with disbelievers, using knowledge, a major Jihād. (As Allah mentions):

﴿ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَبَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ نَذِيرًا ﴿٥١﴾ فَلَا تَطِيعُ

الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾

“And had We willed, We would have raised a warner in every town. So obey not the disbelievers, but strive against them (by preaching) with the utmost endeavor, with it (the Qur’ān).” [Al-Furqān 51-52]

Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim mentioned in his work entitled Zād Al-Mā’d (3/5): “This surah is Mekkiyah (i.e. it was revealed before the prophetic hijrah to Al-Madinah) in it Allah orders with combating the disbelievers using proofs, evidences, and preaching the Qur’ān. Likewise in combating the Hypocrites, it is only by conveying the proof and evidence, although they are beneath the dominance of the people of Al-Islām.”

He also mentioned in the same work (3/6): “Combating the external enemies of Allah is an extension of the (believer’s) fight against his own self for the sake of Allah, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The Mujāhid is the one who fights against himself to be obedient to Allah, while the Muhājir is the one who leaves off errors and sins.”²⁴

Thus fighting against oneself takes precedence over fighting an external enemy, rather it is the starting point (of the fight against an external enemy). For indeed the one who does not strive against (his own soul) first and foremost for the sake of Allah, in order that it will do what it has been commanded with, leaving off what it has been prohibited from, it will not be possible for him to fight his external enemy. And how would it at all be possible for him to fight an external enemy, and be victorious over him, while the (internal) enemy, inside his body, who is dominate and in control over him, has yet to be fought against for Allah sake. Rather it is not even possible for him to go out and fight his external enemy until he fights against his own self to actually go out and fight. So these two enemies (i.e. the disbelievers and the hypocrites), a slave may be tested with fighting against them both, all the while there is a third enemy who has to be fought in order to even fight against the two enemies (mentioned previously). So fighting against this third

²⁴ Collected by Al-Imām Ahmad (6/21) from the ḥadīth of Fadāla bin A'bīd. It has been graded authentic by Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī in Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations (549)

enemy is the origin for fighting against the other two enemies.
(This third enemy) is the Shayṭān. Allah the Most High said:

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ
أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ﴾

“Surely, Shayṭān (Satan) is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire.” [Faatir: 6]

The command to take him as an enemy draws attention to the fact that one must exert intense effort in combating him, as if he is an enemy that does not become weary, and does not slacken in attacking the servant even with the large number of them.”

(Ibn Al-Qayyim) also mentioned in his work Benefits page (97):
“By Allah no enemy has attacked you except after you have turned away from Al-Wāli. So do not think that the Shayṭān has defeated you, but rather (Allah) the true Protector has turned away from you.”

Combating the enemies with knowledge is the greatest weapon against them. And how not, when it eradicates their falsehood, exposes their doubts, repels their plots, and unveils their private counsels and conspiracies. (Oh gentle reader) how would (knowledge) not be a deadly weapon (against them), while they

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know that beneficial knowledge is the foundation for the establishment of al-Jihād; there is no Jihād except with knowledge. (Knowledge) secures those who embark upon military expeditions from the catastrophes and desires of their inner selves. Knowledge protects the (soldiers) from being controlled by the devils, those amongst Jin and men. Knowledge accompanies the Jihād, so that it will not be a Jihād of deceit and deception, and neither a Jihād of innovation or other than that. Likewise knowledge is a weapon even after the military expedition (has come to an end) in order to preserve its fruits (and successful results) such as the distribution of Islām knowledge, conveying beneficial knowledge, and refuting the doubts of the enemies.



If knowledge is mentioned in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah it refers to Islāmic Knowledge & If the word scholar is mentioned, it refers to the Scholars of Al-Islām, the defenders of the Sunnah of the Best of creation (ﷺ)

There are many types of knowledge, and the scholars of each science have certain terminology which is unique to them. With the people of the Muslim Ummah, if knowledge is mentioned in the language of the Pure Islāmic Legislation, then it refers to religious understanding.

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim mentioned in the work I'lām Al-Muwaqieen (4/131) as he explained Allah's statement:

﴿يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا

تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾

“Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.” [Al-Mujādilah:II]

The definite article “al” in the word al-ilm (the knowledge) is not to indicate inclusion and immersion, but rather it is only to indicate a specific type of knowledge, referring to the knowledge with which Allah sent His Prophet (ﷺ). So if they have been

given this type of knowledge, then it is obligatory to follow them.”



The Status of Scholars and the World's Need for them

Allah has made the level of the People of Knowledge right after that of the Prophets (عليهم السلام). Allah says:

﴿وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا﴾

“And whosoever obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), then they will be in the company of those on whom Allāh has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqūn (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abū Bakr As-Siddiq), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!” [An-Nisā: 69]

The Great Scholar Sufyān bin Uyanah said: “Those who have the loftiest level with Allah, are those that are between Allah and His slaves, and they are the Prophets (عليهم السلام) and the Scholars.”²⁵

Ishāq bin ‘Abdullah said: “Those closest to the Prophets

²⁵ Reporting from the book The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/390)

(عليهم السلام) in level are: the Scholars and the people of Jihād. The scholars direct the people toward that which the Messengers (عليهم السلام) have come with, while the people of Jihād fight for the sake of that which the Messengers have come with.”²⁶

An-Nadr bin Shumayl said: “Whoever wants to be noble in this life and the next, he should seek knowledge. And it is sufficient for him in terms of happiness that he is entrusted with Allah’s religion, and he is (a liaison) between Allah and His slaves.”²⁷

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) mentioned in his work entitled Tarīq Al-Hijratayn (2/764): “So (Allah) made the level of the truthful ones connected to the level of the Prophets (عليهم السلام). These are the Rabbāniyūn, those firmly rooted in knowledge; they are the intermediaries between the Messenger (ﷺ) and his Ummah. They are his (ﷺ) successors, intimate friends, his group, his close assembly, the ones who carry his religion, and are guaranteed to remain upon the truth, not harmed by those who betray or oppose them, until the affair of Allah comes, while they are (firm) upon that.”

²⁶ Reporting from previous source

²⁷ Reported from previous source (I/504)

The Scholars of Sunnah did not gain this lofty and high status, that no other status even comes close to, except because they inherited a complete inheritance from the Prophets (عليهم السلام).

The Messenger (ﷺ) said:

“And indeed the Scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets (عليهم السلام) and certainly the Prophets (عليهم السلام) did not leave as inheritance dinar or dirham, but rather they left knowledge. So whoever takes to this inheritance, has earned a complete fortune.”²⁸

Thus this inheritance has led to them being described by the Prophetic characteristics, such as having fear of Allah, being mindful of Him at all times, abstaining from the worldly life, while desiring the hereafter. The people of knowledge are the people of guidance: (they are) the people of success, those who follow the Prophet (ﷺ). The scholars are people of insight, trustworthiness, those who rely upon Allah and have certainty. They are the people of justice, courage, and truth. Consequently, these traits have made them qualified to carry out that which the Prophets (عليهم السلام) have carried out.

²⁸ Collected by Abū Dawud (3641), and this is the wording found in his collection. Also collected by Ibn Mājah (223) from the ḥadīth of Abū Darda (رضي الله عنه).

Ash-Sha'bī said: "In every nation, the scholars were the worst people, except the Muslim (Ummah): their scholars are the best of them."²⁹

Sufyān bin Uyānah explained Allah's statement pertaining to Isaa (ﷺ):

﴿ وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا



حَيًّا

دُمْتُ

"And He has made me blessed wheresoever I be, and has enjoined on me prayer, and charity, as long as I live." [Maryam: 31]

Meaning: (that Allah has made Isaa one who) taught (the people) beneficial knowledge."³⁰ So (oh gentle reader) how vast is the benefit of knowledge? For this reason Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) mentioned, as is found in the previously sited work, "and this indicates that for a person to teach another individual beneficial information it is the blessing that Allah has placed within him. For indeed true blessing is the attainment of good, as

²⁹ Quoting from Majmū' Al-Fatāwa (7/524)

³⁰ Quoting from Ibn Al-Qayyim's work The Key to the Abode of Happiness (1/524).

well as its growth, and continuation. This reality does not exist except with inherited knowledge from the Prophets (عليهم السلام) and by way of teaching it.”

On the authority of Ahmad bin Sinān who reported on the authority of a man he mentioned, “That he saw the Prophet (ﷺ) in a dream, and the Prophet (ﷺ) was standing in the Masjid between two gatherings of knowledge. In one of them was Ahmad bin Hanbal and in the other was Ahmad bin Abi Duā'd, and the Prophet (ﷺ) was saying:

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَيَكْفُرُوا بِهَا بِكَفْرٍ﴾

“They are those whom We gave the Book, Al-Hukm (understanding of the religious laws), and Prophethood. But if these disbelieve therein (the Book, Al-Hukm and Prophethood), then, indeed We have entrusted it to a people (such as the Companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) who are not disbelievers therein.” [Al-Anaam: 89]

The Prophet (ﷺ) was pointing to Ibn Abi Duā'd and his companions (saying)

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ
فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَيْسُوا بِهَا بِكَافِرِينَ﴾

“They are those whom We gave the Book, Al-Hukm (understanding of the religious laws), and Prophethood. But if these disbelieve therein (the Book, Al-Hukm and Prophethood), then, indeed We have entrusted it to a people (such as the Companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) who are not disbelievers therein.” [Al-Ana’am: 89] and the Prophet (ﷺ) pointed to Ahmad bin Hanbal and his companions (while quoting the statement ‘Indeed We have entrusted it to a people who are not disbelievers in it’).³¹

Sahl bin At-Tustarī said: “Whoever wants to look at the gatherings of the Prophets (عليهم السلام) then he should look at the gatherings of the Scholars. A man comes and says: ‘Oh so and so, what do you say about a man who swore against his wife with this or that? So he responds saying: his wife is divorced. Another person comes, and says I have taken an oath to do this or that (what’s the ruling)? And he responds saying: Do not carry out

³¹ Collected by Al-Khatīb Al-Bagdadī in his work entitled The Nobility of the People of the Prophetic Tradition number (II) and its chain to Ahmad bin Sinān is authentic.

this statement. (These gatherings are) not for anyone except a prophet or a scholar, thus recognize their status!”³²

Ibn Al-Qayyim said in his work The Key to the Abode of Happiness: (I/492-494) in explaining the statement of Allah:

﴿ فَقَدْ وَكَّلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَّيْسُوا بِهَا بِكَافِرِينَ ﴾

“We have entrusted it to a people (such as the Companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) who are not disbelievers therein.” [Al-Ana’am: 89]

“And there is no doubt that this is for the Prophets (عليهم السلام) firstly, and for the believers secondly. The ones most entitled to be included within this verse are the followers of the Messenger (ﷺ) his successors in his ummah, his inheritors. They are the ones entrusted with it (i.e. the Book, Al-Hukm, etc). And this gathers all the statements that have been mentioned concerning the verse. The intended meaning is that this entrustment is specific to those who stand with it (i.e. the Book, Al-Hukm, and Prophethood) in terms of knowledge, actions, and in combating its enemies and defending it, refuting the distortion of the misguided, fabrications

³² Quoting from The Key to the Abode of Paradise (I/505)

of the people of falsehood, and misinterpretations of the ignorant.”

And Allah has not entrusted the scholars of ḥadīth with protecting his religion, except due to the fact that He has made them a proof against the entire creation. Allah does not pay any attention to the ignorant ones, as opposed to the people of knowledge, for they are the ones who are welcomed and well-liked with Allah. Allah, The Most High, said:

﴿ قُلْ ءَامِنُوا بِهِٓ ؕ أَوْ لَا تُوْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْآذَانِ سُجَّدًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّنَا إِن كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا ﴿١٠٨﴾ ﴾

Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to them): "Believe in it (the Qur'ān) or do not believe (in it). Verily! Those who were given knowledge before it (the Jews and the Christians like 'Abdullah bin Salām and Salmān Al-Farisi), when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration. And they say: Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the Promise of our Lord must be fulfilled. " [Al-Israa: 107-108]

Ibn A'shoor mentioned in his tafseer (15/233): "The meaning of this verse is that: Your (i.e. the disbelievers) belief in the Qur'ān and absence of belief is equal. That is because Allah is in no need

of their faith in Him, rather He is (sufficient) with the Imān of those who were given knowledge before the Qur'an was even revealed. They have sounder intellects, and are more superior in station; they are those who have been given knowledge. For indeed they listen to the Qur'an and believe in it; it increases them in faith in their own Books (i.e. the Injil and Torah) which mention the promise of the Messenger who (this Qur'an) was revealed to."

So when it was the case that the scholars of Al-Islām, those who cling firmly to Him, are a proof with Allah, He praised them frequently in His Book as it is well known. Likewise, His Messenger (ﷺ) praised them in his Sunnah. Rather Allah even made the various creatures supplicate for the scholars. The Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Indeed Allah, His Angels, the inhabitants of the Heavens and the Earth, even the ant in its hole, and the whale in the sea, send the ṣalāh³³ upon the person who teaches the people beneficial knowledge."³⁴

³³ **Translator Note:** As for the word As-ṣalāh, the scholars have spoken about its meaning. The most correct statement made concerning its meaning is that which has been mentioned by Abū Al-A'liyaa Ar-Riyāhi, that (when referring to Allah) it means the Commendation of Allah upon His slave in the Highest gathering of Paradise. [See Sheikh

And on the authority of Abī Darda (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "...Indeed those that are in the heavens and the earth seek forgiveness for the scholar, even the whales in the deep depths of the ocean."³⁵

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in the work The Key to the Abode of Paradise (I/253): "When it was the case that the one who teaches the people beneficial knowledge is one who openly promotes the Lord's religion and His rulings, and assist the people in getting to know Him by way of His Names and Attributes, Allah made for the scholar a portion of His honor, and a portion of the supplication of the inhabitants of His heavens, all of this is an acclaim and honor for the one who teaches the people beneficial knowledge, (and is) a proclamation of the praise for him amongst the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth."

Muhammad bin Sālih Al-Uthaymīn's Explanation of Al-Aqīdah As-Sāfiriniyah

³⁴ Narrated by At-Tirmidhī number (2685) from the ḥadīth of Abī Umāma (رضي الله عنه), and authenticated by Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī (رحمه الله) in Sahīh At-Tirmidhī.

³⁵ Narrated by Abū Dawud number (3641) and it is a hasan ḥadīth .

How wonderful is the statement of Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim in explaining the creation's need of the Scholars of the Sunnah: "As for those who have knowledge of Allah and His command(s), they are the life and spirit of creation; the creation cannot go without them the blink of an eye."³⁶

In the work The Nobility of the People of the Prophetic Tradition, Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī³⁷ mentioned very precious words clarifying the lofty status of the scholars of ḥadīth, as is found on page (28): "Allah has made the people (of ḥadīth) the pillars of the religion, and with them He destroyed every repulsive innovation. So they are indeed Allah's trustworthy agents from amongst His creation, and the liaisons between the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Ummah. (They are) those who exert great effort to safeguard his religion. Their glow is radiant, their virtues are well

³⁶ The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/371)

³⁷ **Translators Note:** He is Ahmad bin Alī bin Thābit bin Ahmad bin Mahdi Al-Baghdādī. One of the Scholars of Al-Islām, an Imām, Hāfith, Muhaddith, one of the signposts of the Sunnah and author of many works including those written in science of ḥadīth entitled Al-Kifāyah fee 'ilm Ar-Riwāyah as well as Al-Jāmi lii Akhlāq Ar-Rāwī wa Adāb As-Samī'. He was known popularly as Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī and died in the year 463 after the prophetic Migration.

known, their signs are bright, their methodologies are apparent, their proofs and evidence are dominant, and every deviant group is bias toward some whim which they return to and depend upon, or approve of an opinion that they are committed to, except the People of ḥadīth. For indeed the Book (of Allah) is their tool, and the Sunnah is their proof, and the Messenger (ﷺ) is their group, and to him they are ascribed. They do not ascend upon desires, and they do not pay any attention to the opinions of men. That which they narrate from the Messenger (ﷺ) is to be accepted, and they are the entrusted and reliable ones responsible for (these narrations). They are the ones who safeguard and protect the religion, carriers and haulers of knowledge. If (the ruling of) a ḥadīth is differed about, then to them should be the return, so that which they determine and decide, it should be accepted and obeyed. From amongst them is every scholar and faqeeh, attentive leader in the religion, zaahid amongst his tribe, specialized with nobility, a precise recitor, and an eloquent orator. They are the magnificent majority, and their way is the straight path. And every innovator, with their belief, is apparent, and is not bold in speaking openly upon other than their methodology. Whoever plots against them Allah will destroy them, and Allah will humiliate the one who opposes them. They are not harmed by those who forsake them, and the one who abandons them will never succeed. As for the one who seeks to protect his religion, to

their guidance he is certainly in need. And the one who looks upon them with evil will (surely) regret. Allah is certainly able to aid them (and give them success).”

In the introduction of the book A Refutation of Az-Zanādiqah and Al-Jahmiyah Al-Imām Ahmad mentioned on page (170): “All praise belongs to Allah who placed in every age, intervals from the Messengers, a group from amongst the scholars, who call to guidance those who have strayed. They are patient upon the harms. With the Book of Allah, they give life to the dead, and with Allah’s Light they give sight to the blind. How many have they brought back to life from those who have been killed by Iblis?! And how many misguided and astray ones have they guided?! How great is their influence upon the people, and how bad is the people’s influence upon them. They repel from the Book of Allah the alterations of the fanatical extremists, the deception of the people of falsehood, and the incorrect interpretations of the ignorant ones.”

And the essence of what has to be said in explaining the virtues of knowledge and its people is disseminated in the books which discuss this topic.



The Scholars are the People in most need of Islāmic Knowledge

It should not be unknown to the scholars, callers, and students of knowledge that, from amongst the Muslims, they are the ones in most in need of Islāmic Legislative Knowledge. (It is mentioned) in Al-Hilya by Abū Nuaym³⁸ (7/281) with a good chain by way of Ahmad bin Ayyūb that he said: “The people gathered with Sufyān bin Uyaanah and he said, “Who are the most in need of this knowledge? They were silent, and then they said, speak oh Abū Muhammad! He said: The scholars are the most in need of this knowledge, because ignorance amongst them is most despicable, and also because they

³⁸ **Translator’s Note:** Abū Nuaym Ahmad bin ‘Abdullah bin Mahrān bin Ahmad bin Ishāq Al-Asbahānī, from the Great Scholars of ḥadīth, who narrated from the reliable narrators and likewise they narrated from him as well. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said about him, “He was from the most major scholars of ḥadīth, was amongst those who authored many works from which the people benefited, and he is more noble than to be described as (merely) *thiqah* (i.e. reliable), for indeed his level is far above that.” [Majmū’ Al-Fatāwā (17/18)]. Al-Khatīb Al-Baghdādī said about him, “I have not seen anyone who the word memorization has been rightly used to describe them, except two men: Abū Nuaym Al-Asbahānī and Abū Hāzim Al-A’raj.” [ṭabaqāt Ash-Shāfi’ee Al-Kubrā]. He died Approx 430 after the Prophetic Hijrah.

are sought out by the people, and they are the ones asked (for religious verdicts.”

Allahu Akbar! How great is this clarification, and how pious is such a phrase.

So to Allah belongs the glory for the achievement of the Scholars of the Salaf, and how excellent is the one who said:

**Each time I was disciplined by life, it showed me the weakness of
my intellect**

**And every time I increase in knowledge, it increased me in
knowledge of my ignorance**

So whoever is going to cry, let the people of knowledge be the first of those who shed tears, due to the large amount of their time that has passed them by without benefit, and (let them cry) over the knowledge that has vanished from them after attaining it. Indeed that which they have lost is greater and more precious than anything that anyone has lost from the continuously fading worldly life. The Scholars of the early generations along with those who followed them in the latter generations used to express their regret and sadness with tears gushing forth over that (which they lost of knowledge), for certainly reports have been narrated about them. From these reports is that which is narrated about

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Amīr Al-Mu'minīn Shu'ba bin Al-Hajjāj, that he would cry if he forgot a ḥadīth!!

Also the Great Scholar Sufyān Uyaanah used to say: "If Al-Hateeah³⁹ cries over his poetry, then it is even more befitting for me to cry over a narration of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." There are many examples similar to these.



³⁹**Translator's Note:** He is Jurūl bin Mālik bin Jurūl bin Jawiyah bin Makhzūm bin Mālik bin Qatee'ah bin Isaa bin Mulaykah, a famous poet given the nickname "The Midget" due to his short stature. He lived during Pre-Islāmic period and became Muslim during the period of (Abū Bakr) As-Sadiq [See Ibn Kathīr's Al-Bidāyah wa An-Nihāyah].

Allah created Men and Jin to know Him, with His Names, Attributes and Actions

It is well known that Allah created the Jinn and Mankind to worship Him alone without any partners. Allah, The Most High, said:

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

“And I (Allah) created not the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone).” [Ad-Dhāriyāt: 56]

And also Allah created us to know Him with His Names, Attributes, and His Actions. This knowledge is not acquired except (by seeking) Islāmic Legislative Knowledge, which Allah (in fact) created us for. This is indicated by Allah’s statement:

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَنْزِلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

“It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof (i.e. seven). His Command descends between them (heavens and earth), that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge.” [At-Talāq: 12]

And Allah the Most High said:

﴿ فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لِدُنْيَاكَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ ﴾ (١٩)

“So know (O Muhammad ﷺ) that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women. And Allah knows well your moving about, and your place of rest (in your homes).” [Muhammad: 19]

Al-Allāmah Ibn Qayyim has explained this issue in detail in his book (entitled) The Key to the Abode of Happiness I/535, he said: “Knowledge is not always a tool that is sought (in order to achieve) something else. Because no doubt knowledge of Allah, His Names, and His Attributes it is the most noble of all knowledge, and it is sought for itself, as the goal intended in it of itself. Allah the Most High said:

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَنْزِلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴾ (١٢)

“It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof (i.e. seven). His Command descends between them (heavens and earth), that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge.” [At-Talāq:12]

For indeed Allah has informed us that He has created the heavens and the earth, and sent down revelation between them, in order that His slaves know that He has full knowledge of all things, and that He is able to do all things. So (obtaining) this knowledge (of Allah) is the reason for this creation, and is an objective that is sought for itself. Allah, the Most High, said:

﴿ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لِدُنْيَاكَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ
 وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلِّبَكُمْ وَمَثَوَاتِكُمْ ﴾

“So know (O Muhammad ﷺ) that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women. And Allah knows well your moving about, and your place of rest (in your homes).” [Muhammad: 19]

Thus knowledge of Allah’s oneness, and knowledge that there is no deity that deserves to be worshipped but him, it is a matter that is sought in it of itself, although it is not sufficient by itself, but rather it is must that (along with this knowledge), the slave must worship Allah alone without any partners. So they are two affairs that are sought for themselves: knowledge of The Lord by His Names, Attributes, Actions, and Rulings, and (secondly) that He is worshipped with the requirements of those affairs. So just like how worshipping Allah is a sought matter that is intended in

its essence, likewise knowledge of Allah (is something that is sought out in it of itself.)”

Al-Allāmah Ibn Rajab said in his treatise entitled: “The Inheritors of the Prophets” which is included in The Collection of Works from Al-Hāfith Ibn Rajab I/41: “So the best of knowledge is knowledge of Allah; and it is knowledge of Allah’s Names, Attributes, and Actions, which obligate for individuals to have knowledge, fear, love, honor, exaltation, and glorification of Allah. (Also it necessitates) that one dedicates himself to Allah, relying upon him, as well as (exerting) patience, being pleased with Allah (and that which He has ordained), and being busied with Allah, and not His creation. And that (knowledge) is followed by knowledge of His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Judgment, the details relating to that, and knowledge of the commands and prohibitions of Allah, and His legislations, His rulings, and that which He loves for His slaves from statements, inward and outward actions, and that which He hates from actions of worship from statements, inward and outward actions.”

So submit, oh Muslim, a complete submission and have certainty that Allah created you for the greatest objective, and the most praiseworthy aim, and that is (for you to have) knowledge of

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(Him), His rights, and His Rulings (and to worship Him alone without any partners).



The 2nd Section

The Disappearance of Knowledge

The Proofs for the Decrease and Disappearance of Knowledge

There has not come a verse in the Qur'an mentioning that knowledge will disappear. But the disappearance of knowledge has come in the Qur'an in meaning, which is a decrease in knowledge, and this is based on the statement of some Scholars. Those Ulama who take the position that the (concept of) decreasing knowledge is in fact mentioned in the Qur'an use as (their) proof the (following) statement of Allah, the Most High:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَأَلَّهِ بِحُكْمِكُمْ لَا مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ
وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

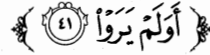
“See they not that We gradually reduce the land from its outlying borders. And Allah judges, there is none to put back His Judgment and He is Swift at reckoning.” [Ar-Ra'd:41]

Ataa (explained this verse to mean), “The death of its scholars and the best of its people.”⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Collected by Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues I/600-601. He said: “And the statement of Ataa in explaining this verse is very good. The scholars have accepted it wholeheartedly.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: This narration is not authentically reported on the authority of Ataa, because it is by way of Talha bin Amr Al-Hadrami Al-Makki, and he has been declared a Matrook narrator⁴¹, according to Ahmad, An-Nasaai, Al-Bukhārī, Ibn Al-Madīnī, and others. (Also) this narration has been reported on the authority of Ikrima and Al-Hasan, but it is not authentically narrated (from them either).

In explaining this verse, there are other explanations, the best of them being the statement of those who say, **“The meaning of the statement: ‘Its Decrease’ is that the Muslims will gain power (and authority) over the polytheist, and the intended meaning of ‘Land’ here is Mecca.”** This explanation is strengthened by the fact that this verse is Makkeyah (i.e. it was revealed before the Prophetic Migration to Madinah), and also the statement of Allah



“And have they not seen” [Ar-Ra’d: 41]

⁴¹ **Translator’s Note:** A narrator who is very weak due to him being known for frequent errors, or some scholars of praise and disparagement have accused him of lying.

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This is an address to the polytheist who (were) alive (when the verse was revealed). Also this tafsīr (i.e. that the meaning of this verse is the dominance of the Muslims over the polytheist) is strengthened due to (that which follows), which is the statement of Allah, the Most High:

﴿ وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقَّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

“And Allah judges there is none to put back its Judgment and He is swift at Reckoning.” [Ar-Ra’d: 41] and also the statement of Allah in Surah Al-Anbiyah

﴿ بَلْ مَنَعْنَا هَؤُلَاءِ وَءَابَاءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ طَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا أَفَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ﴾

﴿ ٤٤ ﴾

“Nay, We gave the luxuries of this life to these men and their fathers until the period grew long for them. See they not that We gradually reduce the land (in their control) from its outlying borders? Is it then they who will overcome.” [Al-Anbiyah: 44].

So the statement of Allah

﴿ أَفَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ﴾

“Is it then they who will overcome” is a question of denial and rejection. With this question Allah is rendering false the thought of the disbelievers that they will be dominant. (As for this explanation of the aforementioned verse) a group from amongst the scholars of tafsīr have deemed this to be the most correct explanation. From amongst them are Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī, Ibn Kathīr, and As-Shanqīī. For more information on this topic look to my book Naqd An-Nathriyāt Al-Kawniyah, pages (342-343).



The Prophetic Narrations that mention the disappearance of knowledge

Many prophetic narrations have been reported indicating that knowledge will disappear. (Here) I will mention that which is easy (for me). From amongst these narrations:

The First Prophetic Narration:

On the authority of Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“Be patient! For indeed there will not come upon you a time period except that the period that follows it will be worse, until you meet your Lord.”**⁴²

(‘Abdullah) bin Mas’ūd has explained the meaning of this ḥadīth (with detail). He said (رضي الله عنه): **“There will not come upon you a day, except that it is worse than the day before it, until the hour is established. And I do not mean that life will be difficult or that a person will be inflicted with sickness, but rather there will not come upon you a day, except that knowledge has decreased more than the day that has passed before it. So if the scholars die, the**

⁴² Collected by Al-Bukhārī under ḥadīth number 7068

people become equal. As a result they will not command with the good nor forbid the evil. With that they will be destroyed.”⁴³

⁴³ Ya'qūb Al-Faswī collected it with this wording in Dhayl al-ma'rifah and at-Tārikh as it is in Fath Al-Bārī 13/27 by way of Al-Hārith bin Hasīrah on the authority of Zayd bin Wahb on the authority of ('Abdullah) bin Mas'ūd (ﷺ). (As for) Al-Hārith, Al-Hāfith (Ibn Hajr) says about him in At-Taqrīb: 'truthful, but makes mistakes.' This narration was also collected by Ad-Dārimī 1/279 narration number 194, Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues narration number 2007, Ibn Waddāh in (the work entitled) Innovation and the Prohibition of It narration number 78, and Al-Khatīb in Al-Fiqh and Al-Mutafaqih 1/456 number 484 by way of Mujālid on the authority of As-Shu'bah on the authority of Masrūq, on the authority of ('Abdullah) bin Mas'ūd (ﷺ) with the following wording: "There does not come upon you a year, except that it is worse than the year before it. I do not mean a year less vegetatious than another year, and neither do I mean (that there will be) a leader better than another leader, but (what I intend) is that your scholars, righteous people, and learned ones will die and you will not find those who succeed them. There will come a people who examine the affairs with their personal opinions." This narration was declared sound by Al-Hāfith (Ibn Hajr) in Fath Al-Bārī 13/27-28, and it is as he said.

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So based on the fact that the meaning of the ḥadīth is as Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) mention, the ḥadīth would thus remain upon its general application, referring to the majority of the situations, (meaning) that there is no time period except that it is worse than the time period before it, except seldom. And this meaning agrees with the condition of the Muslims throughout their history. (For example) the knowledge during the time of the Companions was much more than knowledge during the time of their successors. (Likewise) knowledge during the time of the Tābi'e'n was greater than during the time of their successors.

As for after the conclusion of the time period of the early generations, the number of deviant scholars increased; and they have spread and gained control over many Muslims. Many Muslims have responded to their call and (accepting their falsehood). So (the situation has become one in which) knowledge is limited to a small number of people. This decrease in knowledge is continuous in the Ummah until the point when (the people will) look for one scholar for all of the Muslims.

(It is important to point out that) this reduction in knowledge does not oppose the ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه): **“Verily Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, sends for the Ummah at head of every one hundred years, one who comes and revives for them their religion.”** Rather this revival is partial and

not complete. It is during certain time periods and not others, and it is also relative. Thus sometimes the reviving will be in At-Tawhīd, sometimes in acts of worship, social transactions, and other times it may be in politics. Also, the revival is relative in terms of it being accepted or rejected, spread or not. For example: Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah was one of those who revived the religion, but his revival of the religion did not spread during his life time like how it has spread during our time period. And from the rare events is that which will occur during the time of Al-Mahdi, where the scholars of Al-Islām will increase and Allah will establish justice upon his hands. With him Allah will destroy all other religions. (But) the time of Al-Mahdi is very brief in comparison to all the centuries that have passed.

The Second Prophetic Narration:

On the authority of Anas (bin Mālīk) (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“Verily from the signs of the Hour is that knowledge will disappear, ignorance will become pervasive, alcohol will be consumed, and fornication will become widespread.”**⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Collected by Al-Bukhārī number 80, and the wording is his. Also collected by Muslim under ḥadīth number 2671.

The Third Prophetic Narration:

On the authority of 'Abdullah and Abū Musa (رضي الله عنهما) they said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **"Indeed near the Hour are days in which ignorance will descend in (the midst) of them, knowledge will be removed, and Al-harj will increase."** Al-Harj is killings.⁴⁵

The Fourth Prophetic Narration:

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **"Knowledge will be removed, ignorance and trials will appear, and al-Harj will increase."** It was said: Oh Messenger of Allah, and what is al-harj? He said, **"like this"** with his hand; so he moved it up and down as if he intends killings.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Collected by Al-Bukhārī ḥadīth number 7062 and Muslim ḥadīth number 2672

⁴⁶ Collected by al-Bukhārī number 85 and Muslim 6733 with the (following) wording: **"The time period will be shortened, and knowledge will be removed."** This narration is also with Ibn Mājah, number 4052 with the wording, **"and knowledge will decrease."**

The Fifth Prophetic Narration:

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Verily Allah does not remove knowledge by taking it from the hearts of the people, but He removes knowledge with the death of the scholars, until He does not leave a single scholar. Thus the people will take ignorant ones as their leaders; they will be asked, and they will give religious verdicts without knowledge, going astray and leading others astray.”⁴⁷

The Sixth Prophetic Narration:

It is reported on the authority of Auf bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) that he narrated: “While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) one day, he looked at the sky and said, “In this time knowledge will be removed.” So a man from the Ansār named Zayād bin Labīd, said: Will knowledge disappear oh Messenger of Allah, while the Book of Allah is with us, and we have indeed taught it to our children and wives!?” So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘I used to think you were from the most knowledge of the inhabitants of the city of Al-Madinah.” Then he mentioned the

⁴⁷ Collected by Al-Bukhārī number 100; and this wording is his. (This narration was also) collected by Muslim number 2673. We will address this narration soon, if Allah wills.

misguidance of the people of the Book, and that they have with them that which they have from the Book of Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic. So Jubayr bin Nufayr met Shadād bin Aws in the Musalla, and narrated to him this ḥadīth on the authority of Auf bin Mālik, so he said: **Auf (has indeed) spoken the truth! And then he said, 'do you know what the disappearance of knowledge is?' He said, I said: I do not know! He said: (It is) the death of its carriers! He said: and do you know the first knowledge that will disappear? He said, I said: I do not know!! He said: "Al-khushū' (i.e. humility) until you barely (can) find a person who has khushū'."**⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Collected by Ahmad 2/26-27, and the wording belongs to him. Also collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 5/138 number 247, Ibn Hibbān 4572, At-Tabarāni in Al-Kabīr 18/43 number 75, Al-Bazzār in Al-Bahr Az-Zakhār number 274I, Al-Hākim 1/98/99, and At-Tahāwīyah in Al-Mushkil I/278 number 303. All of these (narrations) are by way of Ibrāhīm bin Abū Abla on the authority of Al-Walīd bin Abdur Rahmān on the authority of Jubayr ibn Nufayr on the authority of Auf bin Mālik. It is an authentic narration. It has been declared authentic by Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī (رحمته الله) in Knowledge Necessitates Actions page 58 ḥadīth number 89, as well as our teacher (Muqbil) Al-Wādie' in (his work) Dalā'īl An-Nabūwa page 369. It was also collected by At-Tirmidhī number 2653, Ad-Dārimī 1/87, Al-Hākim and At-Tahāwī on the authority of Abū Darda (رضي الله عنه) that he said: "We were with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) then he raised his eyes

to the sky, and said: 'In this time, knowledge will be taken from the people, until they will not be able to do anything.' So Zayād bin Labīd Al-Ansārī said: How will knowledge be taken from us, and we have read the Qur'ān?! For by Allah, we indeed recite it, and teach it to our wives and children! He (ﷺ) said: "May your mother be bereaved of you oh Zayād! For indeed I used to consider you to be from the scholars of Al-Madīnah. This Torah and Gospel which is with the Jews and Christians, how did it benefit them?' Jubayr said: So I met up with Ubadah bin As-Sāmit, I said: have you not heard what your brother Abū Darda has mentioned?! So I informed him of that which Abū Darda had mentioned. (So) he said: "Abū Darda has spoken truthfully, if you so desire I will inform you of the first knowledge to be raised from the people: Al-khushū' (tranquility). There will soon come a time when a group of people will enter the Masjid and you will not see a single person with humility (from amongst them)."

This narration is sound. It was collected by Ahmad 4/160, Ibn Mājah ḥadīth number 4048, Abū Khathamah in Al-Ilm ḥadīth number 52, Al-Hākim I/99, At-Tahāwi I/279 ḥadīth number 304 by way of Sālim bin Abū Al-Ja'd on the authority of Zayād bin Labīd, and Sālim did not hear from Abū Dardā, so it is Munqati'. (Also) collected by Al-Bazzār as it is in Kashf Al-Astār ḥadīth number 235 and in it there is the following addition: "And no scholar dies from this Ummah, except that (his death) leaves a crack in Al-Islām and it is not sealed until the Day of Judgment."

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There are other prophetic narrations, which we will mention in the appropriate places. So these (previously mentioned) prophetic narrations clearly and decisively point out that Islāmic knowledge will (in fact) disappear. This disappearance will only take place gradually, a little at a time, till knowledge in totality is removed, where there is not a single scholar that will remain on the face of the earth. And the disappearance will pass over the Qur'ān at night. To Allah we belong, and to Allah we return.



The Wisdom behind the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioning the Disappearance of knowledge

It is not unknown to the one who has knowledge about the goals of the Islāmic Legislation that the wisdom behind the Prophet (ﷺ) informing (his Ummah) about the disappearance of knowledge is clarified in the following (points):

- 1) A proclamation that (the disappearance of knowledge) will inevitably take place.
- 2) The call to embark upon knowledge, competing and racing toward it. This is that which the people of knowledge, the pious predecessors, and those who followed them understood (from the Prophet's ﷺ informing about the disappearance of knowledge).
- 3) Al-Allāmah (Muhammad) bin Sālih Al-Uthaymīn pointed out in his **"Explanation of Riyād As-Salihīn"** 5/454: "By mentioning the reality (of a situation) does not necessitate that this is an approval of (that event) taking place. Thus, if the Messenger (ﷺ) informed about a thing taking place, this does not mean that he approves or allows it. (So for example) as the Messenger (ﷺ) informed and swore that:

'You will follow the way of those before you'

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Meaning that you will traverse the same paths as those who came before you.

**“They asked: “The Jews and the Christians? He said: “Yes
the Jews and the Christian.’**

So he informed (us) that this Ummah will fall into those things that the Jews and the Christians committed. (The Prophet (ﷺ) is informing us) with the objective of warning and cautioning, and not informing with the purpose approving and allowing it.”



The Disappearance of Knowledge is of two types: Tangible & Abstract

After I have mentioned, (oh gentle reader), the prophetic narrations which point to the disappearance of knowledge, here I will mention to you that the disappearance of knowledge is of two types: a tangible disappearance and one that is more abstract.

(As for the) abstract disappearance of knowledge, it breaks down into two categories: knowledge of the heart and knowledge of the tongue; (that is) because Islāmic knowledge is of two types.

Al-Hasan Al-Basrī said: **“Knowledge is of two types: Knowledge which is in the heart, and that is the beneficial knowledge. Then there is the knowledge which is on the tongue, (which) is Allah’s proof against His slaves.”**⁴⁹

Al-Hāfith Ibn Rajab said in his work entitled Jāmi’ Al-Ulūm wa Al-Hikm (2/299) while discussing the disappearance of knowledge: **“Knowledge is of two types: One of them is the produce which is in a person’s heart, and the second (type) is that which is on the tongue.”**

⁴⁹ Collected by Ibn Abī Shaybah I2/35364, Ad-Dārimī number 376, and Al-Khatīb in At-Tārīkh 4/346. Its chain is authentic.

The First knowledge that will disappear will be from the specific and meticulous Actions of the Heart and the Foundations of Faith

The proofs from the Qur'ān and Sunnah indicate that the actions of the heart are the foundation for the actions of the limbs. (These) actions of the heart are many; (they include) love, honor, fear, awe, awareness, dependence, reliance, pleasure, humility, submissiveness, and obedience. The narrations that mention that the first facet of knowledge to disappear will be humility and honesty indicate that precise knowledge will vanish first. Humility and honesty are both actions of the heart. And that which will disappear from them is the obligatory completeness and precise (components of them), not the origin of them, such as is mentioned in the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ) on the authority of Anas (bin Mālik) which is collected by Al-Bukhārī (13) and Muslim (45):

“None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”

The negation (of faith) in this ḥadīth is a negation of perfect (and complete) faith, not (a negation) of the origin (of faith). Also,

from that which indicates this type of disappearance (i.e. the disappearance of this precise knowledge), is the fact that the Muslim will always (have a level) of truthfulness and humility with him as long as Imān is in his heart. Also, from that which indicates this, is the fact that the beginning of this disappearance of knowledge took place during the time period of the early generations, (in spite of) it being a time period of safety in the religion. And to Allah belongs the achievement of Ash-Shāfi'ee when he said: **“Whoever seeks knowledge, let him be meticulous, so that the precise knowledge will not vanish.”**⁵⁰

Complete humility and honesty is attained by being (very) precise in knowledge and (then) benefiting from it (and acting upon it). The absence of the completeness that has been mentioned is from not being meticulousness in knowledge. To not be meticulous shows a deficiency within it onself. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, as is found in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 7/582: **“If the outward obligatory actions are deficient, this is due to a deficiency of the Imān which is in the heart. Because it is not imagined that with the obligatory faith that is in the heart, that the obligatory outward actions would be absent. Rather the complete presence of the faith in the heart, necessitates the**

⁵⁰ Collected by Al-Bahayqī in The Entrance number (416) and in The Merits of Ash-Shāfi'ee 2/142.

complete presence of the obligatory actions of the limbs, and likewise the decrease in the faith in the heart would necessitate a decrease in the actions of the limbs. That it because determining complete faith in the heart without an apparent (representation) such as statements and actions, is like assessing a complete cause without its effect, and a reason without its outcome, and this is impossible.”

He also mentioned in the previous reference 10/5-6, while speaking about the actions of the heart: “And it is from the foundations of faith and (from) the principles of the religion such as loving Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), relying upon Allah, making the religion sincerely for Him, thanking Allah, being patient upon His decree, fearing Him, desiring Him, and those things that follow that... So I mention: these actions are all originally obligatory upon all of the responsible ones from the creation, with a consensus amongst the scholars. The people are of three types pertaining to these (actions of the heart), just like how they are of three types when it comes to the outward actions of the limbs. There is the one who oppresses himself, the one who is moderate in his deeds, and then there is the one who hastens toward good⁵¹.”

⁵¹ Translator’s Note: “Then We gave the Book (the Qur’ān) for inheritance to such of Our slaves whom We chose. Then of them are

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I mention: The believers range greatly in relation to these inward actions of the heart. Therefore, the one whose actions of the heart are abundant will obtain help from Allah, as well as protection, security, success, and guidance. This will be in a manner that will not be obtained by the one whose inward actions of the heart are weak. So be mindful of Allah (oh gentle reader), be mindful of Allah, in fortifying (and obtaining) the knowledge in order to correct the hearts, and build them (up) with the fear, awareness, awe, and magnification of Allah!!



some who wrong their own selves, and of them are some who follow a middle course, and of them are some who are, by Allah's Leave, foremost in good deeds. That (inheritance of the Qur'ān), that is indeed a great grace." [Fātir 35:32]

The First knowledge that will disappear will be the Specific knowledge of Allah

The specific knowledge of Allah it is knowledge of Allah with His Names, Attributes, Actions, and by those things that He loves, is pleased with, hates and refuses from inward and outward statements and actions. That is because this knowledge obligates the magnification, love, fear and awareness of Allah. (It also) obligates that (one) seeks Allah, desires to meet Him, and that (one) turns (diligently) to the obedience of Allah.

Al-Allāmah Ibn Rajab mentioned in his work The Superiority of the Knowledge of the Salaf over the Knowledge of the Successors page 69: "(It is the foundation of the knowledge of Allah) which obligates fear and awe of Him, and necessitates love for Him, as well as loving to be near and close to Him, and desiring to meet Him. This is followed by knowledge of Allah's rulings, and the statements, actions, situations, and beliefs which He loves and is pleased with from the slave. So whoever actualizes these two types of knowledge, his knowledge is at that point deemed beneficial knowledge. This is the knowledge through which one obtains the submissive heart, the satisfied soul, and the invocation that is answered. Likewise, whoever is deprived of this beneficial knowledge has fallen into the four affairs that the Prophet (ﷺ)

sought refuge from⁵² and his knowledge will be destructive upon him and a proof against him. As a result, this person (will) not benefit from (his knowledge). (That is because) he did not submit his heart to his Lord, and his soul was never full from (seeking) the worldly life, rather he increased in his zealousness and pursuit of (the dunya). (Consequently) his invocation was not answered, (all because) he did not act upon his Lord's commands and neither did he avoid that which his Lord hates and dislikes. (And this situation) refers to the one whose knowledge was that which it was possible to actually benefit from, that which is derived from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah. Because if (a person's) knowledge was obtained from

⁵²Translator's Note: Zayd bin Arqam reported: "I am not going to say anything but only that which Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to say. He used to supplicate saying "O Allah, I seek refuge in you from incapacity, from laziness, from cowardice, from miserliness, decrepitude and from torment of the grave. O Allah, grant my soul the sense of righteousness and purify it, for Thou art the Best Purifier thereof. Thou art the Protecting Friend thereof, and Guardian thereof. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowledge which does not benefit, from the heart that does not fear (and tremble), from the soul that does not feel satisfied and the supplication that is not answered." [See English Translation of Sahīh Muslim]

anywhere other than that, then it is not beneficial in itself, and it is impossible to (ever be) benefited from. Rather its harms are greater than its benefits.”

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said in his work The Key to the Abode of Happiness (I/311-312): “So similar to how knowledge of (Allah) is the most noble and honorable of all sciences, it is the origin of all of them as well. Similar to how everything that is present is dependent upon Al-Malik Al-Haqq Al-Mubīn, and in complete need of Him in actualizing its identity and (knowing its proper) place, likewise every knowledge is dependent upon the knowledge of Allah, and is in need of it in order to itself be actualized. So knowledge of Allah is the origin of all other knowledge, just like how Allah, Glory be Him, is the Lord, Owner, and Creator of everything... Thus knowledge of Allah, Glory be to Him, His Names, and His actions, necessitates the knowledge of everything other than Him. He is the Lord and Owner of everything; and knowledge of Allah is the origin and foundation of all knowledge. Therefore, whoever knows Allah, (then) he will know everything other than Allah. And whoever is ignorant of his Lord, (then) he will be even more ignorant of everything other than Allah...and the point here, is that knowledge of Allah is the origin of all other knowledge, and it is the foundation of the slave’s knowledge of that which will give him felicity, completeness, and benefit him in his worldly life as

well as his hereafter. (Thus) ignorance of Allah obligates (that the slave) will be ignorant of his own self, that which will benefit and complete his soul, and that which will lead to (the souls') purification and success. Therefore knowledge of Allah equates to the slave's happiness. And ignorance of Allah is the origin of all misery (and wretchedness)."

I mention: This (specific) knowledge is grand, and it is rare that scholars and callers are given success to this (type of knowledge) not to mention other than them. So be keen with reference to obtaining (this knowledge)!! Rather Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said in his work entitled, Dispelling (the notion of) Opposition between the Intellect and the Text, 7/174: "The origin of truth is from knowing the Truth (Allah) and loving Him. For verily Allah is Al-Haqq Al-Mubīn (i.e The Clear Truth); and loving Allah is the origin of all worship. For this reason, knowing and loving Allah is the absolute greatest of all affairs. And this was the religion of Ibrāhīm, the Khalīl of Allah, the Most High, (who was) the one who Allah made a leader and example for the people."

So this glorious knowledge (i.e. the detailed knowledge of Allah) it will be the first that will disappear, and amongst it will be (the disappearance) of humility and honesty, and other (aspects of knowledge), as we will discuss soon. So if this type of knowledge

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is removed, the majority of the students will be deprived of benefiting from knowledge in a specific manner. (Consequently) deficiency will enter upon their knowledge, thus vanishing gradually, until it will either become knowledge (sought for the purpose) of boastfulness, showing off, arrogance, self amazement, and conceit, or knowledge whose purpose is for obtaining wealth, status, and praise. And to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.



The First knowledge that disappeared at the conclusion of the time of the Salaf was the knowledge of Allah with His Names & Attributes

Know, oh Slave of Allah, that the crime of the Mu'tazilah and Al-Jahmiyah against Al-Islām is enormous. That is because they sought out that which Allah specified for Himself, in being described (with the description) of completeness, beauty, and greatness. They negated (this description) from Allah, either by negating the meanings of His attributes, or by negating the wordings *and* the meanings of His attributes. So this negation did away with the Names and Attributes of Allah, and destroyed Tawhīd Al-Asmaa wa As-Sifāt (Singling out Allah with His Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes). Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Tamiyyah said in his work Clarifying the deception of the Jahmiyah I/323: "Then once the books of the Greeks were translated into Arabic around the year of 200, and (even) before and after that, and the People of rhetoric took these books, and proceeded with them in various types of falsehood in the affairs of worship, in which many of them went astray because of. (And in these books) are many affairs of medicine and math, which are not harmful (as long as they are dealing with those topics). So the people became different categories, (based on the usage of the books). There

were some people who accepted these books, while there were others who deemed permissible that which these books contained, and then there were those people who opposed that which is contained in these books based on their own principles and fundamentals, accepting that which agrees (with their principles) and (leaving off) that which opposes them. (Finally) there were those people who opposed (these books) based on that which the Messengers came with from the Book of Allah and the (Prophetic) Wisdom. So due to these books being translated into Arabic, all types of corruption and confusion occurred, which necessarily led to negligence and deficiency in knowledge of the Book of Allah and the (Prophetic) Wisdom which the Messengers (عليهم السلام) came with.”

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim mentioned in his book Madārij As-Sālikīn 3/349: “So the Mu’atilah (i.e. those who deny Allah’s Names and Attributes) and the Jahmiyah sat at the head of the first principle, thus coming between the hearts of the slaves and knowledge of their Lord. They referred to affirmation of Allah’s attributes, His highness above His creation, His rising above His throne, (they called all of this) tashbeeh (resembling Allah to His creation), Anthropomorphism, and hashwaan (i.e. superfluous, insignificant, subordinate). They caused the feeble minded to stay away from (affirming of Allah’s attributes). They referred to

Allah's descending to the Sky of this world, His speaking according to His will, His pleasure after His anger, His anger after His pleasure, and His ever-present hearing of His servant's voices, His vision that sees the actions of His servants, they named all of this, and that which is similar to it, occurrences (or events). And they named His Exalted Face, His outstretched Hands, and His Fingers which upon them He will place the creation on the Day of Judgment, (they called them) body parts and limbs, all in an effort to conspire (upon falsehood) and deceive the people, similar to the (example) of one who wants to distance a person away from honey so he alters its description, saying a yellowish liquid resembling diarrhea, or warns against any good thing by calling it by the ugliest of all names, out of mere deception and trickery. Those who oppose the Messengers (عليهم السلام) do not have anything except deceitfulness in their speech and actions. So when the plotting of the Mu'aṭilah (i.e. those who deny the Attributes of Allah) had reached its completion, and the affects had penetrated the dark hearts of those ignorant to the reality of faith and to that which the Messengers (عليهم السلام) came with, this resulted in (people) turning away from Allah, His remembrance, and (turning away) from loving Him and praising Him with His Attributes of Perfection and Majesty. Thus the intense love, desire, and amiability (of the hearts) turned to other than (Allah)."

He also mentioned in the aforementioned source, page 351: “So reality of love, repentance, reliance, and the station of perfection in worship is impossible for (the one who denies the Names and Attributes of Allah) like the impossibility for one to obtain fruit although he neglects to plant seeds, rather it is even more impossible.”

Ibn Rajab said in his work entitled, The Superiority of the Knowledge of the Salaf over the knowledge of the Successors, (42): “From amongst the newly innovated matters, is that which the Mu’atazilah innovated and those who traversed their way, in terms of speaking about Allah’s Essence and His attributes using intellectual proofs; it is even more dangerous than speaking about the Divine Decree. That is because speaking about the Divine Decree is speaking about Allah’s actions, the Most High is He. While this is speaking about Allah Himself and His Attributes.”



Humility will be the first detailed knowledge that will disappear

Humility is the heart of faith, the spirit of Al-Islām; it is from the actions of the heart and its effects appear on the limbs. Prophetic narrations have been reported indicating that the first knowledge of the heart that will disappear is humility, as is found in the ḥadīth of Shaddād, in which he asked Jubayr bin Nufayr **“Do you know what type of knowledge is first to vanish? Jubayr said: I do not know! Shaddād said: humility, to the point where you will not see a single person with humility.”**⁵³

And in the prophetic narration of Ubada bin As-Sāmit (رضي الله عنه), (it is reported that he said) to Jubayr bin Nufayr: **“I will indeed inform you about the first knowledge that will be raised from the people: (it is indeed) humility. Soon a group will enter a masjid, and you (will) not see a single humble person.”**⁵⁴

⁵³ Its reference has just proceeded. It is authentic.

⁵⁴ Reported by Ahmad and others, in the (chain) is some weakness. However it is corroborated with other supporting texts which have previously been mentioned in the section discussing the prophetic narrations that indicate the Disappearance of Knowledge.

At-Tahāwī said in his work entitled Mushkil Al-Athār I/28I:

“The humility which Shaddād intended in this ḥadīth, and Allah knows best, is submissiveness, humbleness, and servility to Allah the Mighty, the Majestic.”

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, as it is found in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 7/28: **“Humility consists of two meanings: one is humbleness and submissiveness and the second is: tranquility and serenity.”**

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in Madārij As-Sālikīn (I/522): **“The truth is that humility is to surrender to two decrees: It is to submit with humbleness and submissiveness to Allah’s Command (and to) His Pre-Ordainment.”**

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: the meaning of the two decrees (mentioned by Ibn Al-Qayyim) are Al-Hukm Al-Qadree (the Divine Decree) and Al-Hukm Al-Dunyawi (the Worldly decree, judgment). The prophetic narrations about the disappearance of humility are a sign from the signs of Prophethood, because (certainly) the disappearance of humility has actually taken place, and humility is gradually continuing to fade away from the Muslims until it fades away in totality. (This humility) is missing in the place (where it is most necessary for it to be present), which is the Prayer. So that which is intended by the disappearance of knowledge in humility, is that the Qur’ānic verses that have been revealed and prophetic narrations which

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have been reported about rectifying the hearts are not pondered over and (neither) are they reflected upon. Thus hearts (will not be) affected by the Speech of Allah (nor) the speech of His Messenger (ﷺ).



The Amānah will be the first knowledge that will disappear

And from that which the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned will disappear is the Amānah (i.e. the trust, honesty, responsibility, duty) which is the opposite of Al-khiyānah (i.e. deceit and treachery). Al-Amānah is to fulfill the rights of Allah in a manner that he has legislated, and to fulfill the rights of Allah's slaves in a manner that has been clarified by Him and His Messenger (ﷺ). So here I will mention to you (a number) of Prophetic Narrations which state that the Amānah will be the first thing to be removed from the Muslims, except from those who Allah bestows His Mercy upon.

On the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه), he said "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) mentioned to us two narrations. I have seen one of them, and I am waiting for the other. (He ﷺ) mentioned to us

"That the virtue of honesty descended in the roots of men's hearts and then they learned it from the Qur'ān and then they learned it from the Prophetic tradition. The Prophet (ﷺ) further told us how honesty will be taken away: He said: "(A) man will go to sleep (at night) during which honesty will be taken away from his heart and only its trace will remain like the trace of a dark spot. Then man will go to sleep (at night), during which honesty will decrease (more and more) still so that its trace will

resemble the trace of blister as when an ember is dropped on one's foot which would make it swell, and one would see it swollen but there would be nothing inside. People would be carrying out their trade but hardly will there be a trustworthy person. It will be said, 'in such-and-such tribe there is an honest man,' and later it will be said about some man, 'What a wise, polite and strong man he is!' Though he will not have faith equal even to a mustard seed in his heart." No doubt, there came upon me a time when I did not mind dealing (bargaining) with anyone of you, for if he was a Muslim his Islām would compel him to pay me what is due to me, and if he was a Christian, the Muslim official would compel him to pay me what is due to me, but today I do not deal except with such-and-such person."⁵⁵

Al-Kharāiti mentioned in Makārim Al-Akhlāq I/338 number 173, Tamām Ar-Rāzi in Benefits number 708, Al-Bukhārī in At-Tārīkh I/'58, and Al-Qādee in Musnad Ash-Shihāb numbers 216 and 217 on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه), that he reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"The first thing that will be lost from your religion is Al-Amānah, and the last thing will be the prayer."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Reported by Al-Bukhārī 6497 and Muslim I43

⁵⁶ Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī (رحمته الله) graded it to be sound with corroborating narrations in his Series of Authentic Prophetic

Note: The previously mentioned ḥadīth of Anas (رضي الله عنه) (was also) collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 6/265, as well as in Akḥbār Asbahān 2/183 with the wording: **“the first matter which you will lose from your religion is the Prayer.”**, and it is very weak due to Yazīd Ar-Raqāshī who is an abandoned narrator, and it opposes the authentic narrations that report that the last matter to be lost from the firm bond of Al-Islām is the prayer.

At-Tabarānī collected it in As-Saghīr I/I38, and from his pathway Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 2/I74, Al-Bayhaqī in Ash-Shuab 7/215 number 4892 on the authority of Umar (رضي الله عنه). And it was (also) collected by Al-Qādi' in Musnad Ash-Shihāb 216, and Al-Bayhaqī in Branches of Faith 7/216 number 4893 on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, with a chain to the Prophet (ﷺ) with (the following) wording: **“The first thing that will be removed from this Ummah is shyness and Al-Amānah.”**⁵⁷

Narrations, under ḥadīth number 1739. Also At-Tabarānī collected it in Al-Kabīr 7/295 number 7182 from the ḥadīth of Shaddād (رضي الله عنه) without the mentioning of 'Prayer'.

⁵⁷ Collected by Abdur Razzāq 3/363, Ibn Abu Shaybah 8/341 number 146, Al-Kharāiti I/343 number 178, At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr 9/361, (number) 153, Al-Bayhaqī in his Sunnah 6/289 and in Branches of Al-Imān number 4891, Al-Khatīb in The History of Baghdād 12/85. It

The scholars have (pointed out) that these (aforementioned narrations) are signs of Prophethood (ﷺ), (by him speaking about something that would occur before it actually took place).

Ibn Al-Mulqin said in (his work entitled) A Clarification in Explaining Al-Jāmi' as-Ṣaḥīḥ 32/345: **“And it is from the signs of his Prophethood. That is because in (these reports) the Prophet (ﷺ) is informing about the corruption of the people’s religion and the decrease in their truthfulness toward the end of times, and there is no way to know of that, before it takes place, except by way of revelation.”**

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: From that which is learned from the ḥadīth of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) is that the Amānah (i.e. trust, truthfulness, honesty etc.) will gradually decrease, not disappearing all at once. Also from that which we learn from this

was authenticated by Al-Albānī in Saḥīḥ Al-Jāmi (5075) on the authority of (‘Abdullah) bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) that he said: **“The first matter that will be removed from your religion is Al-Amānah, and that last matter to be lost is the Prayer.”**

The ḥadīth is sound after gathering (and investigating) all of its chains. As for the narration of (‘Abdullah) bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه), it takes the ruling of raf’ (i.e. a narration that is ascribed back to the Messenger (ﷺ) either implicitly and explicitly).

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ḥadīth is that the disappearance of honesty occurred during the time period of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم), from others besides them, and this will be clarified soon.

The scholars have differed about the removal and disappearance of Al-Amānah: is it with the death of its people, such that its disappearance is similar to that of the disappearance of knowledge, or is that which is intended is that it will be removed from the hearts of (the honest and truthful ones)? The (opinion) which seems to be most apparent is that sometimes its disappearance is with the death of its people, and sometimes with the (actual) change of its people (i.e. the honest and truthful become corrupt). As for the Amānah being removed by the death of its people, this is like the Companions; for certainly they have passed away and they were (no doubt) truthful and honest, at the highest level. The same thing occurs with all of the truthful people of every generation. As for (the honest people changing and becoming corrupt) this is apparent in some of the Muslims that were known to be truthful, then they change either due to them accompanying the dishonest ones, and thus they become deceitful like them. Or (this may occur) with other than that.

Regardless, the condition of many of the Muslims in latter times, in the arena of honesty, they are as the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

“If you see the people not fulfilling their covenants, and they cannot be entrusted, and have become like this” and he intertwined his fingers. He (the narrator) said: So I stood and asked him, “What do I do when that occurs, May Allah make me your ransom? He (ﷺ) said: “Stick to your home, and hold back your tongue, take that which you know is truth, and leave off that which you know is evil, and be committed to saving yourself, and leave off the affairs of the general people.”⁵⁸



⁵⁸ Reported by Abū Dawud number 4343 and authenticated by Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī in his Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations number 205.

A Lack of Arbitration with the Prophet's Sunnah (ﷺ) will be the first apparent knowledge that will disappear

From amongst the prophetic narrations that have come about the disappearance of knowledge are those that have specified that from the first knowledge that will vanish is abandoning arbitration with a part of the Prophetic Methodology.

On the authority of Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said **“Indeed the Islāmic Handholds will be broken one handhold at a time. So every time a handhold is broken, the people will attach to that which follows. The first of them to break is Al-Hukm (i.e. judging by the Book and Sunnah), and the last of them is the Prayer.”**⁵⁹

The breaking of the Hukm has been explained to mean leaving the prophetic Sunnah. Ad-Dārimī reported in ḥadīth number 98 and Al-Faswi in Al-Ma'rifah wa At-Tārīkh 3/386, from his way,

⁵⁹ Reported by Ahmad 5/251, Al-Hākim 4/92, Ibn Hibbān 6715, At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr number 7486, and Al-Bayhaqī in Branches of Faith 5277. This ḥadīth has a corroborating ḥadīth that supports it from the ḥadīth of Fayrūz Ad-Daylamī found with Ahmad 4/232, Ad-Dārimī number 297, and Al-Lālākāī in The Explanation of the Creed of the People of the Sunnah & The Unified Group.

Al-Lālākāī in The Explanation of the Creed of the People of the Sunnah & The Unified Group I/104 number 127, Ibn Battah in Al-Ibānah I/350 number 229, and Ibn Waddāh in Innovation and the Prohibition of Newly Innovated Matters page 66, on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Ad-Daylami he said: **“It reached me that the first thing to vanish from the religion is leaving off the Sunnah. The religion will fade away one Sunnah at a time just as a rope’s strength weakens gradually,”** and its chain is authentically reported to ‘Abdullah.

So this breach in judging is by leaving the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This appears clearly in the prophetic traditions that oppose the desires of the individuals who leave of the Sunnah, and it is that which took place toward the conclusion of the time of the Companions from the different (deviant) groups and sects, the first of them being the Khawārij, the Shia’h As-Sabiyah, the Qadariyah, and so on and so forth.

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned, as it is found in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 10/356-357: **“And (legal) judgment is the work of the rulers and leaders...So when the nation of the Rightly Guided Caliphs ended, the kingdom became such that there was deficiency in the rulers, so it is necessary that there would also be weakness within the people of knowledge and religion. Toward the end of the caliphate of Ali (ﷺ) there**

occurred the innovation of the Khawārij and the Rāfiḍah. They are (two innovated groups) that are associated with al-Amānah (i.e. honesty, trust, etc) and al-khilāfah (i.e. leadership, caliphate) as well as those affairs that follow these, such as actions and legislative rulings.

The kingdom of Muawiyah was a kingdom and a mercy. So when Muawiyah (ﷺ) passed away the leadership of Yazīd came along, and trials took place during this time period, such as the assassination of Husayn (ﷺ) in Iraq, the fitnah of Ahl Al-Hurra in Al-Madinah, and they surrounded Mecca when 'Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr resisted. Then Yazīd died, and the Ummah was divided up. Ibn Az-Zubayr was in Al-Hijāz, Banu Al-Hakm were in Shām, Al-Mukhtār bin Abī Ubayd and others made a rush for Iraq, and that was all toward the conclusion of the time period of the Companions. There had survived from the companions the likes of 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, 'Abdullah bin Umar, Jabir bin 'Abdullah, Abū Saeed Al-Khudrī and others. (When) the innovation of Al-Qadariyah and Al-Murjah took place, the survivors from amongst the companions such as 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, 'Abdullah bin Umar, Jābir, Wāthila bin Al-Asqa', and others (ﷺ) refuted them. Generally, in those times the Qadariyah spoke about things pertaining to the slave's actions and likewise this was the case with the Murjia'h. Their speech (revolved)

around obedience, disobedience, the believer, and the evil doer, and other things like that, from the affairs of word choice, legislative rulings, the promise (of paradise), and (threat of) the punishment of the Hell-fire.”

So oh (Muslim), who holds the Qur’ān and the Sunnah to be mighty, rush to arbitrating using the (Book of Allah and the Sunnah), ruling by them and accepting their ruling whether it is for or against you. Be mindful of Allah oh Ahl As-Sunnah in bringing life to prophetic traditions which the people have abandoned. This is done by having knowledge of them and through implementation, and by calling to them.

And if a Sunni wants to know whether he is sincere in holding firm, and in following the Prophetic Methodology, let him look at (how he behaves) when differing with others. Does the truth take precedence with him, even if it is against some worldly benefits or (against) what (he has come accustomed to)? Also if the correct legislative ruling is with the one who opposes you, will you still accept the truth? And if there is a dispute between two people, where a person is (clearly) correct, however he is not close to you and there is another individual who (is clearly) in opposition (to the truth) but he is a close friend or relative, will you be fair to the one who is correct although he is unknown to you, or will you aide the one who is close to you (although he is

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wrong)? So the way in which knowledge disappears here, it is either due to ignorance of the proof, or by ignorance of its meanings, or by not acting upon it.



A Response to a Discrepancy

A person might say: how do we make reconciliation between these prophetic narrations that mention that there will be three things that (all) will disappear first: the disappearance of honesty, humility, and ruling (by the Sunnah).

The response: there is no contradiction between them, because each disappearance differs from the other. The disappearance of humility it is most apparent in the worship of Allah. The disappearance of honesty is most apparent in interactions amongst the people; and both of them are from the (inward) actions of the heart. (As for) the disappearance of ruling (by the Sunnah) this is outwardly apparent for the Muslims. As oppose to the disappearance of honesty and humility, their traits do not appear on the limbs, except seldom. So what we learn from the disappearance of honesty and humility is that the disappearance of knowledge from the heart will occur before the vanishing of knowledge from the limbs.



Knowledge first began to disappear after the Death of the Messenger (ﷺ)

Some from amongst the scholars were confused by the Messenger's (ﷺ) statement "These days knowledge will be taken away," thinking that the disappearance of knowledge took place during the time period in which the Prophet (ﷺ) lived.

At-Tahāwī said in Muskhal Al-Athār I/280-281 as he responded to the misunderstanding concerning the disappearance of knowledge during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), "So our response for him pertaining to this (is to say) that this narration is from the best of narrations and the most authentic of them, and that that which it consist of such as the Prophet (ﷺ) looking to the sky and him saying upon doing that,

'These days knowledge will be taken away,'

it is only an indication from him about a time period to come in which knowledge will in fact disappear, for it is sincerely permissible that it is referring to a time period after him. Because (the noun) 'this' is only a word used to refer to (items, things, etc). (Examples of this usage) is the statement of Allah, The Most High is He:

﴿ لَا يَحْزَنُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقَّهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ هَذَا يَوْمُكُمْ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴾ (١٠٣)

The greatest terror (on the Day of Resurrection) will not grieve them, and the angels will meet them, (with the greeting): " *This* is your Day which you were promised." [Al-Anbiya: 103].

They (who are referred to in the verse) are not in the day in which (that verse) was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). As the statement of Allah, the Most High is He,

﴿ هَذَا مَا تُوَعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ ﴾ (٣٢)

" *This* is what you were promised, - (it is) for those oft-returning (to Allah) in sincere repentance, and those who preserve their covenant with Allāh. [Qaf: 32]

(The word) *this* is not referring to a thing that (the companions) can see, the day in which this was said to them. Thus, there are many examples of this in the Qur'ān. And similar to them is that which is found in the aforementioned ḥadīth of Auf; it is possible that when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) looked to the sky he was shown what would be in the time period when knowledge will disappear and thus for that reason he said what he said."

I (Muhammad al-Imām) mention: There are many proofs that indicate that the disappearance of knowledge only occurred *after* the death of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). From them:

- 1.) The constant increase in knowledge during the time period of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).
- 2.) Al-Islām was completed upon the revelation of the statement of Allah, the Most High is He,

﴿الْيَوْمَ يَبْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ
وَإَخْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَمَّمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضَيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ﴾

“This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islām as your religion.” [Al-Mā'idah: 3]

(This verse was revealed) during the farewell Hajj and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) passed away briefly after that. In this brief period revelation continued to ascend upon him in the form of the Prophetic Sunnah, up until he became sick, which eventually led to his death (ﷺ). Rather (revelation continued) even until the last moments before

his death. Anas (رضي الله عنه) said: **“That which the Messenger (ﷺ) generally advised with during the moments before death was ‘The prayer, and that which you have been entrusted with’”** ⁶⁰

- 3.) Also from that which indicates that knowledge did not disappear during the time period of (the Prophet ﷺ) is his statement: **“The stars are the safety of the sky, so when they go, that which the sky was promised will come to pass. And I am the safety to my Companions, so when I go, that which was promised for my Companions will come to pass.”**⁶¹
- 4.) The many prophetic narrations, in which the Prophet (ﷺ) mentions the trials that will occur in his Ummah,

⁶⁰ Reported by Ibn Mājah (2697). It was also narrated by Alī (رضي الله عنه) number 2698. Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī graded it to be authentic in Irwā Al-Ghalīl 2178, and other narrations which mentioned that the last thing the Prophet (ﷺ) said was this and that.

⁶¹ Reported by Muslim 2531, on the authority of Abū Mūsā Al-Asha’rī (رضي الله عنه). (Also from the Sunnah) another indication of the disappearance of knowledge is the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) (informed) that certain things which were promised to the Companions will come to pass, but only after his death (ﷺ). (From these things is the vanishing of knowledge).

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indicate that they are after his death. From amongst them are the trials that occurred amongst the Companions (رضي الله عنهم). Thus they are restricted to the time period of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم).

- 5.) The Companions did not understand from the Messenger's statement, **"These days knowledge will be taken away,"** that it was taking place in the Prophet's (ﷺ) time period when he was informing about it; and they are the decisive proof in understanding. That is because they have more knowledge of the statement as well as the situation in which it was mentioned.
- 6.) Some Companions cried after the Messenger's (ﷺ) death due to the ceasing of revelation. From amongst them: Abū Bakr, Umar, and Umm Ayman, and they said, **"Revelation has stopped,"** which is reported on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) as is found in the collection of Muslim (2454). So this is proof that they do not deem the disappearance of knowledge to be before the Messenger's (ﷺ) death.
- 7.) Some of the narrations that have been reported about the disappearance and removal of knowledge has specifically mentioned that this removal is due to the death of the scholars; and the Companions are most noble carriers of knowledge and they are many. And thus it is known that

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what is intended is their death after the passing of the Messenger (ﷺ) in different times, not in his (ﷺ) lifetime.

In general, these points are sufficient in (clarifying) that the disappearance of knowledge never happened during the lifetime of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the statement that it occurred during his lifetime is falsehood. These points also clarify that the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ), **“These days knowledge will be taken away,”** does not necessitate that it is occurring in the time when the statement was being made, and Allah knows best.



Was there any knowledge that disappeared during the time of the Companions (ﷺ)?

Verily Allah has made the Companions a safety for those after them from trials and misguidance. This is due to their extensive legislative knowledge along with them acting according to what (that knowledge) necessitated.

Muslim reported⁶² on the authority of Abī Mūsa that the Messenger (ﷺ) said, “...And my Companions are a safety for my Ummah. If (they die) away, that which my Nation was promised will come to pass.”

An-Nawawī said in his explanation of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, I6/68 in commenting on the (aforementioned) statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): “(This means they are a protection) from the appearance of innovation, newly invented matters, trials in the religion, as well as from the appearance of the devil’s horn, from the dominance of Rome and other (nations) upon them. (They are a safety) from the attack against Al-Madinah and Mecca and (they are a protection from) other than that. All of this is from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) miracles (that he ﷺ informed us of these things although they had not yet happened).” That which An-Nawawī has

⁶² ḥadīth number 2531

mentioned is the statement of the majority of the scholars who have explained (this ḥadīth found in) Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. This ḥadīth and those similar to it point to that which Allah has placed in the Companions (ﷺ) of good, blessing, might, status, truthfulness, and effort in preserving and aiding Al-Islām.

So (here) we will put forth examples showing how Allah has used the Companions to preserve, spread, and extend Al-Islām all over the earth. Likewise (we will put forth examples) indicating that with (the Companions), Allah rectified affairs, and with them Allah did away with major trials and confrontational occurrences.

(Take for example) Abū Bakr As-Saddīq. He took authority over the caliphate following the death of the Messenger (ﷺ) and said, **“I am not one to leave off anything that the Messenger (ﷺ) did, except that I will act upon it. For indeed I fear that if I were to leave off anything from his (ﷺ) affair, that I will go astray.”**⁶³

And (Abū Bakr) is the one who said, **“By Allah if they were to withhold from me (a single) she-camel that they used to give to**

⁶³ Reported by Al-Bukhārī number 3093. This wording is found in Al-Bukhārī, also reported by Muslim ḥadīth number 1759.

the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) I would fight against them for withholding it.”⁶⁴

Also, it is known that Abū Bakr fought against the people who apostated, those who abandoned the prayer, and those who withheld the Zakah. (He fought against them) until he returned them back to Al-Islām!

And (then there was) Umar (رضي الله عنه) (who) Allah made a well-fortified fortress against trials, to the point that he has become famous amongst the people as the ‘Lock of Trials,’ rather that (nickname) has been authentically reported from more than one Companion. From these reports is that which has been reported from (‘Abdullah) bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه), that he said **“Umar was a well fortified fortress of Al-Islām, it could be entered and not exited. So when he died, a gap was left in the fortress.”⁶⁵**

And on the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) that he said, **“There is not a long period of time that stands between you and evil**

⁶⁴ Reported by Al-Bukhārī ḥadīth number 1400 and Muslim ḥadīth number 20.

⁶⁵ Reported by Abdur Razzaq in Al-Musanaf 7/290 ḥadīth number 13215, Ibn Abi Shayba 6/354, ḥadīth number 31977, and Ahmad in Virtues of the Companions I/331 ḥadīth number 356 and it is authentic.

befalling you except the death in the neck of a man who will die, and he is Umar.”⁶⁶

And also Uthmān bin Affān (رضي الله عنه). (He) exerted patience upon the fitnah of ‘Abdullah bin Saba and his (i.e. ‘Abdullah bin Saba’s) rebelling against him. Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) prevented the Companions from fighting him, until he (i.e. Uthmān was killed). And this (decision of Uthmān) was only to shut the doors of fitnah. So who has the ability to be this patient?!

Then there was Alī (رضي الله عنه) who fought the Khawārij, and along with Alī were the Companions. He scorched many from amongst the Sabiyyah. This was also in order to safeguard Al-Islām and to wipe out innovation and deviations.

And do not forget, (oh gentle reader) the (efforts) of Al-Hasan bin Alī (رضي الله عنه) by way of giving up the Caliphate out of obedience to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) (in commanding the Ummah to be obedient to the Ruler). So after this concession of power (from Al-Hasan), the Muslims became unified. Safety returned and the Muslims regained power. (Thus) they continued to engage in Military expeditions (striving) in the way of Allah.

⁶⁶ Reported by Ibn Abī Shayba 14/65 number (38286), and this wording is found in his collection, Ar-Ruyāni 3/I07, and Nuaym bin Hamād I/42, and its chain is authentic.

It is well known that Allah blessed the Companions beautifully. They were the forerunners to every virtue, in embarking upon good, in taking on the responsibility of Al-Islām in terms of knowledge and actions. They undertook the task of inviting to Al-Islām, and defending it (with their lives and their wealth). (They) sacrificed their wealth and lives in the way of Allah. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) said in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 3/156: **“And whoever looks at the lives of these (Companions) with knowledge and insight (reflecting over) that which Allah bestowed upon them by way of the various virtues (and merits), he will come to know that they are the best of creation after the Prophets (عليهم السلام). There has never been and will never be anyone like them. They are the elite from the best and the most honorable of generations (in the sight of) Allah.”**

And to Allah belongs the acknowledgement (for their success) and upon Allah is their reward. From Allah is their thanks, and it is upon the Islāmic Ummah to recognize their right and to commend them. As for that which took place between some Companions, during the caliphate of Alī (عليه السلام), this was due to nothing more than the fitnah of Ibn Saba in the killing of Uthmān. This fitnah (i.e. that took place between the Companions) was not due to the pursuit of worldly gains, status, or seeking power, let alone for the purpose of innovating in the religion as I clarified that in my treatise (entitled), Combating

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Fitnah. So this which took place between them is immersed in their large amount of good deeds.

Based on this, the term 'Disappearance of Knowledge' is not used in referring to the time period of the Companions. But if it is inevitable that some knowledge is removed, it is (merely) a small amount from the specific knowledge at the end of the time period of the Rightly Guided Caliphate when fitnah first began to occur.



The Disappearance of Knowledge during the time of the Successors (رضي الله عنهم)

Certainly the time period of the Tābi'een was a time period of wellbeing and much good, (which is established by) with the testimony of the Messenger (ﷺ) for (this generation) in his statement in the reoccurring narration **"The best people are my generation, then those who follow them..."**⁶⁷

However, during the time period of the Tābi'een some knowledge was removed; and that appeared in certain affairs which I will gather in the following points:

- I.) Some of the Rulers, along with those who followed their example, delaying the prayers beyond their prescribed time. Al-Bukhārī reported in ḥadīth number 530 on the authority of Ibn Shihāb that he said, **"I entered upon Anas bin Mālīk in Damascus, while he was crying. I said to him, 'What is it that makes you cry?!' He said, 'I do not recognize (from the people) anything from that**

⁶⁷ Reported by Al-Bukhārī ḥadīth number 2652 and Muslim ḥadīth number 2533 from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), and it has been reported by other Companions.

which I (learned from the Messenger ﷺ) except this prayer, and (even it has) been lost!”

On the authority of Al-A'mash that he said, 'I heard Salīm say, 'I heard Umm Ad-Darda (رضي الله عنها) say, 'Abū Darda (رضي الله عنه) entered upon me (one day) while he was angry. So I said, 'What angers you?' He said, 'By Allah I do not recognize anything from the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) except that they pray in congregation!’⁶⁸

Muslim reported in ḥadīth number (534) on the authority of ('Abdullah) bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) that he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “**Indeed there will be leaders over you who will delay the prayer beyond (its prescribed time) and strangle it until the gagging of the deceased**⁶⁹. So if you see that they have done that, then

⁶⁸ Reported by Al-Bukhārī ḥadīth number 650, Ahmad in his Musnad 5/195, 6, 443, and Ibn Wadāh in Innovation and the Prohibition of it number 196.

⁶⁹ **Translator's Note:** It is said that the one who is at the brink of death strangles with his saliva when there remains only a small amount of time before his soul leaves his body. So the prayer will be delayed so much so that there will be only a small amount of time which remains before the

pray the prayer at their prescribed times, and make your prayer with them supererogatory.”⁷⁰

These narrations clearly (show) that there occurred during the time of the Tābi’een lenience in performing the prayer, and this is a disappearance of the knowledge of humility, honesty, worship, as well as in safeguarding the prayer. From these narrations we learn (as an additional benefit) that the prayer was not completely abandoned during the time period of the Tabi’een, but rather lenience with the (prayer).

- 2.) The appearance of the people of innovation and partisanship. From amongst them are the Khawārij and the Sabiyyah. They appeared during the caliphate of Alī bin Abī Tālib (ﷺ), then Ma’bad Al-Juhanī Al-Qadri appeared at the conclusion of the time period of the last

prayer time ends. [See An-Nawawi’s explanation of Sahīh Muslim ḥadīth number 534].

⁷⁰ This narration has been reported from Mu’ādh bin Jabal, Al-Barrā, and Abī Dharr (ﷺ) as is collected by Muslim under ḥadīth number 649. It has also been collected by Ibn Mājah on the authority of Ubādah bin Sāmit (ﷺ), ḥadīth number 1257, and Qabidah bin Waqqās (ﷺ) as is found with At-Tabarānī in Al-Awsat 3/102-103 number 2623, and others have collected this narrations as well.

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survivors of the Companions. But these innovators were not accepted within society. Rather they only snatched *some* individuals. So the fact that they appeared during the conclusion of the time period of the Companions does not make it correct for one to say 'knowledge disappeared during the time of the companions' because these (innovators) were during the time period of the Tābi'een (and not the Companions).

- 3.) The changing of the Rightly guided caliphate to a Monarchy, and changing from a Shurā in choosing the Caliph, to (the Caliph being decided by way of) inheritance. This is known to have occurred during the Caliphates of Bani Umayyah, and is not in need of any narrations (to establish this reality).
- 4.) The appearance of fighting over the Monarch, as occurred between 'Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr and Abdul Mālik bin Marwān. Because of this fighting the Ka'bah was burned, and people were (even) prevented from performing Hajj to the Sacred House of Allah.

In spite of the aforementioned narrations about the time period of the Tābi'een, it should not be understood that the good in their time period was little, rather it was a (great deal of good). Perhaps this which took place and things similar to it are included in Anas' (ﷺ) statement, **"Indeed you do actions, which you**

perceive as insignificant as a strand of hair, while we certainly used to consider them, during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), from the destructive (and major) sins.”⁷¹

Similar to this narration is that which is reported on the authority of Abī Sa’eed Al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) found with Ahmad (3/3) and on the authority of Ubadah bin Qart (رضي الله عنه) that he said while addressing some of the Tābi’een “Verily you all do actions, that you perceive to be as insignificant as a strand of hair, we used to consider them from the destructive sins.”⁷²



⁷¹ Reported by Al-Bukhārī ḥadīth number 6492

⁷² Collected by Ahmad in Al-Musnad 5/79, Ibn Al-Mubārak in Az-Zuhd number 181, Al-Bayhaqī in Branches of Faith 5/454, number 7259. Its chain is authentic.

The Prophetic Narrations that mention the Disappearance of knowledge until knowledge will only exist on the tongue

Allah gave His Messenger (ﷺ) insight into the change of affairs that would occur amongst the Muslims, caused by a gradual disappearance of knowledge. From (that insight) is that which has been reported from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) where the Messenger (ﷺ) said,

“There will come a time period upon my Ummah when the reciters will be many, the scholars will be few, knowledge will disappear, and al-harj will be widespread. They said, And what is Al-Harj? He said, “Killing amongst you all. Then there will come a time period where men from my Ummah will recite the Qur’ān, and it will not go beyond their collarbone. Then after that there will come a time period in which the disbelieving hypocrite who associates partners with Allah will debate with the believer with that which is similar to what he says.”⁷³

⁷³ Collected by Al-Hākīm 4/457 and this wording is his, At-Tabarānī in Al-Awsat 4/171 number 3301, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues 1/607 no. 1043.

It is a sound ḥadīth.

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On the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“Indeed that which I fear for you all is a man who will recite the Qur’ān, to the point where its splendor will appear upon him and he will be a helper to Al-Islām, (then all of a sudden) he will alter (the religion) to (the extent that) Allah wills, and then (he will slip) from it, throwing it behind his back, and will seek to attack his neighbor with a sword, (while) accusing him of polytheism.” (Hudhayfah) said, I said: Oh Prophet of Allah, which of them is more rightly described as a polytheist, the accuser or the one being accused? He (ﷺ) said: rather the accuser.⁷⁴

On the authority of Abī Wāil he said, I heard ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd say:

‘Do you know how Al-Islām is decreased?’ They said: How? (He responded saying), as a dirham decreases due to extended

⁷⁴ Collected by Ibn Hibbān no. 81, Al-Bazzār in *Al-Bahr Az-Zakhār* 7/220 no. 2793, Abū Yalaa as it is found in Ibn Kathīr and Al-Bukhārī in *At-Tārīkh* 4/301, and its chain was graded as good by Al-Haythamī in *Al-Majma* 1/178, and Ibn Kathīr graded the chain to be good in his *Tafsīr* 6/452. I (Muhammad Al-Imām) say: and it is as he said. Al-Albānī said in *A Series of* no.3201: **“The ḥadīth is sound if Allah, the Most High, wills because in general it has corroborating narrations.”**

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circulation. And perhaps there will exist in a tribe two scholars, so one of them dies and half of their knowledge disappears, and then the other dies and thus their knowledge disappears in totality.⁷⁵



⁷⁵ Collected by Al-Aājūrī in Differing amongst the Scholars page 21. Its chain is authentic.

The Beginning stages of the disappearance of knowledge from the tongue

Previously we mentioned that the beginning of the disappearance of the knowledge of the heart took place after the death of the Messenger (ﷺ) during the time of the Salaf. This disappearance will continue to increase until the disappearance of knowledge of the tongue will occur. So here I will mention the beginning stages of the disappearance of the knowledge of the tongue. So I say:

The beginning stages of the disappearance of knowledge of the tongue appeared during the conclusion of the time period of the Salaf at the hands of misguided and deviant parties and sects, as a result of them embarking upon the sciences of the disbelievers especially the philosophy of the Greek Polytheist. This appeared during the Caliphate of the Caliph Al-'Abbāsī Al-Ma'mūn. He was the one who summoned the books of philosophy and other books as well. He ordered for them to be translated into Arabic, and was extremely fond of them.

The most famous of the groups and parties are Al-Jahmiyyah, Al-Mu'tazilah, and then Al-Ashariyah. In the greatest fundamentals of Al-Islām and in its greatest foundations of creed and faith, these groups and sects have made the sciences of philosophy their principles which they depend upon. The deviance did not cease in

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these previously mentioned groups, but rather (even) the Rāfiḍah Al-Imāmiyah, Al-Ithnaa Ashriyah, Ar-Rāfiḍah Az-Zaydiyyah, and the Khawārij have turned to seeking (knowledge of) faith and creed from the Mu'tazilah, as we clarified in our book, The Rāfiḍah of Al-Yemen over the Years. Not to mention the group Al-Ismaeliyah Al-Batiniyah who openly profess to be upon the creed of the Rāfiḍah, but they are upon pure unadulterated disbelief! I add to that the appearance of the Ashariyah, which is from the sects of theoretical argumentation and rhetoric. (Then there were) As-Sufiyah who turned to boycotting legislative knowledge, and (instead) embarked upon knowledge of Al-Khiraq (i.e. knowledge of rags and poverty, which are from the distinguishing traits of the Sufiyah). After that (they) established all kinds of innovated birthday celebrations, and gave life to the innovation of the graves, and energized (various) means of polytheism and superstition. So these group's evil has spread, and their sparks have flew in the fourth century of the Hijrah and raged against the Muslims, harming them in various fields, with the most serious being in their harm against the creed and worship of the Muslim Ummah. These groups continued to cause havoc over the years, and they continue to be present even now, sometimes they have moments of strength and sometimes moments of weakness. These groups learn legislative knowledge

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of the tongue with the purpose of refuting it with philosophical sciences, and gaining insight into ways to oppose it and falsify it or to mix it with the sciences of the disbelievers. This is from the disappearance of knowledge. This disappearance will continue until the Qur'ān and the Sunnah are removed, and to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.

So oh Sunni, be cautious of participating with the groups and parties (misguidance), aiding them in removing knowledge and spreading ignorance. Rather seek knowledge, in order that you may be (a means of) strength for your brothers, a rescuer for your society, and rectifier of your Ummah. Thus be very mindful of wavering (and failing to do) this. For indeed the affair is serious, the time is brief, your life is departing, and the dunya is vanishing!!!



Much of the knowledge in the heart and tongue will disappear due to At-Tamadhub (i.e. following a particular school of thought)

Know, oh gentle reader, that the Muslims were upon Sunnah during the time period of the Salaf, then (they) gradually began to change from once holding firmly to the (Sunnah) to fanatically following schools of thought. Here (I will mention) some of the many statements of the people of knowledge establishing the fact that (the general body of Muslims) were upon Sunnah:

Abū Mansūr Abdul Qādir bin Tāhir At-Tamimī Al-Baghdadī mentioned in the book Usūl Ad-Dīn I/317 that the harbors of Rome, Al-Jazārah, Shām, Azerbaijan, all of them were upon the way of Ahl al-ḥadīth, and likewise the bays of Africa, Andulus, and every bay behind the ocean of Morocco, and likewise the bays of Yemen on the shore of (Zanzibar) its people were the people of ḥadīth.

In al-khiṭāt and al-āthār by Al-Maqrizi 2/333 it mentions: 'In most cases Africa was upon Sunan and narrations. And this was also mentioned by Ibn Hazm in 'Ar-Rasāil', up until Al-Qādi Asad gained power, thus the Hanafis were placed in control, and

after him Al-Muizz bin Badīs who forced the people upon the Māliki school of thought.”

Ash-Shahrastanī said in Al-Milal I/9, “Ash-Shāfi‘ee, his companions, and his students were from Ahl al-ḥadīth. Sufyān At-Thawrī was from Ahl Al-Ḥadīth, likewise Dawūd bin Ali bin Muhammad Al-Asfahāni Ath-Thahirī (was from Ahl Al-ḥadīth).”

He also mentioned in the previous reference, I/47: “Ahmad was from the people of ḥadīth and likewise his companions.”⁷⁶

These reports clearly indicate that that Muslims during the time of the Salaf were upon Sunnah and the way of the people of ḥadīth. They depended entirely upon that which the Messenger (ﷺ) came with, in terms of knowledge and action. Then gradually a change occurred, until innovation eventually became wide spread. And (to this day) the mutual estrangement does not cease to continue in following the Prophetic Methodology, but rather it has increased over the years! And by way of (blindly) following a particular school of thought, innovation and creedal misguidance

⁷⁶ Reported from Qadm Ashāb al-ḥadīth by Al-Muḥadīth Abdul Haqq Al-Hasimī, printed amongst his treatises page (56-57).

spread amongst many of the leaders of the schools of thought. The people of innovation followed schools of thought in the (legal matters of the religion), while remaining upon their belief in deviated fundamentals. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Tamiyyah said, as it is found in Minhāj As-Sunnah An-Nabawiyah 5/261: **“And likewise the people of the four schools of thought along with others, especially due to the fact that many of them became deceived by certain fundamental statements. Thus they mixed one thing with another until the one following the Hanbalī, Shāfi’ee, and Mālīkī school of thought mixed up within (these schools) components from the fundamental principles of the Ashariyyah and Salimiyyah, and other than that. They added it to Mālīk’s school of thought as well as that of Shāfi’ee and Ahmad. Likewise, (the followers of Abū Hanifah), they mixed into their madhab some of the fundamental principles of the Mu’tazilah, Al-Karāmiyyah, and Al-Kulābiyyah.”** They changed (to) innovation and misguidance. (Indeed it is) to Allah we complain.

(I will mention) the narrations that have been reported about the division of the Islāmic ummah into sects and factions, until they become seventy two groups, all of whom will be in the fire. (I will also mention) the narrations that are reported about the changing condition of the Muslims due to the appearance of (frequent) sin. From (these narrations) is that which is reported by Al-Bukhārī

(no. 2651 and Muslim no. 2535) on the authority of Imrān bin Husayn that he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“The best of you all are my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them. Imrān (رضي الله عنه) said, ‘I don’t know whether (he mentioned) one generation or two generations after his (ﷺ) generation.’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘Indeed there will be after you people who deceive and cannot be entrusted, and they (will) bear witness before it is sought from them (i.e. they will bear witness to falsehood), they will make vows and not fulfill them, and obesity will appear amongst them.’”

Al-Bukhārī reported (no. 6434) on the authority of Mirdās Al-Aslamī (رضي الله عنه) that he said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The righteous (people) will pass away in succession one after the other, and there will remain (on the earth) useless people like useless husk of barley seeds or bad dates, and Allah will care the least for them..!”

From this it is established that the disappearance of knowledge in the later years will be a sure thing in (both) the knowledge of the heart and tongue. This disappearance will continue until knowledge is removed from the heart and tongue in totality. We ask Allah for safety and well being!!



The Disappearance of Knowledge from all of the legislative sciences in recent times

There are many sciences of the Islāmic Legislation, with the mother sciences being al-Aqīdah, worship, and (knowledge of) the permissible and impermissible. The disappearance of knowledge within these sciences has taken place gradually, most clearly occurring after the time period of the Salaf, when the misguidance and fanaticism of the people of innovation became active, and the desires of the people of deviation burst forth upon many Muslims. (Thus the people began to accept different) schools of thoughts. More than one scholar specifically mentioned this disappearance of knowledge (within the mother sciences of the religion).

Al-Hāfith Ibn Hajr said, as it is found in Al-Jawāhir wa Ad-Durar (I/87): “There is no doubt that in every country, it has occurred a decline in (the number of students) busied with (all of) the various sciences, but the portion of this honorable (legislative) knowledge from this decline is (even) more. That is because many of the Islāmic Countries have lost those who can investigate (and research) the Riwayah not to mention the Ad-Dirayaa (it self).⁷⁷ That is only due to their reliance upon blind-

⁷⁷Translator’s Note: The Science of ḥadīth in terms of *riwāyah* is a science that researches what is reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) in terms

following, and (due) to a weakness in their eagerness in trying to (obtain) that with which they will obtain the level of Al-Ijtihād, even if it be in some of them.”

Rather Ad-Dhahabī said in Siyar A'lām An-Nubala (10/134): “And today there is no knowledge and no worship. (Instead there is only) randomness, grammatical mistakes, frequent spelling errors, and only a small amount of memorization. If (a person stays away) from committing the major sins, and abandoning the obligations, then (surely) to Allah belongs praise for (such an) achievement.”

He also said (as it is found in) Tadhkira Al-Hufāth I/530: “The Companions of ḥadīth have nearly perished and vanished away. The people have changed, and (have been) replaced with (types of) students, those who the enemies of al-ḥadīth and As-Sunnah laugh at and make mockery of. The scholars of this time period, in most cases, have become devoted to blind following in the

of his actions, statements, physical description etc. While the Science of ḥadīth in terms of **dirāyah** researches the narrators and narration in order to determine whether it can be accepted or rejected, whether the narrators are reliable, precise, truthful, or whether they are liars, weak in memory, forgetful, etc. [See Al-Uthaymeen's Explanation of Al-Bayquniyah]

secondary aspects (of legislation) without any type of verification, and are dedicated to rationalities from the (so-called) wisdom of the early generations, and opinions of the people of rhetoric, without even understanding most of it. As a result, calamity became widespread, desires took root, and the beginning and introductory signs of the disappearance (and vanishing) of knowledge from the people loomed. So may Allah have mercy on the one who embarked upon this affair, held back his tongue, (was diligent in) reciting the Qur'ān, cried over the time period (in which he lived), and constantly looked in (Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī & Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim). (May Allah have mercy on the one) who worshipped Him before death reached him.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: So the Islāmic Legislative sciences are continuously decreasing, and this is a confirmation of the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ):

“No time period comes upon you, except that the period after it will be worse than it!”⁷⁸

And the decrease that is mentioned, it is within the people, not in the Islāmic Legislative knowledge – Al-Qur'ān and As-Sunnah. So the disappearance of knowledge during our time is more than in previous (times), and likewise it will be greater after our time

⁷⁸ Reported by Al-Bukhārī No. 7068 from the ḥadīth of Anas (رضي الله عنه)

period until understanding is obliterated in totality. So will there be anyone who works hard, seeks knowledge, in order that Allah will give life, by way of him, to sealed hearts, deaf ears, and blind eyes, and give new life to the knowledge of Riwayah and dirayah, or become rejuvenated, even if it be for only a brief moment of time?!

As for the other sciences such as medicine, lineage, and other than that, the Muslims have wasted them in a way never done before. Take for example medical knowledge. Al-Bayhaqī narrated in The Merits of Ash-Shāfi'ee on the authority of Harmala, he said: "Ash-Shāfi'ee used to pant over that which the Muslims lost from knowledge of Medicine, saying, 'they lost a third of knowledge, and entrusted it to the Jews and Christians.'"⁷⁹

Sālih Jazara said, "I heard Ar-Rabee' say: I heard Ash-Shāfi'ee say, I do not know a knowledge after (the knowledge of) Al-Halāl and Al-Harām more noble than the knowledge of medicine, except that the people of the book dominated us in it."⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Narrating from Siyar A'lām An-Nubalaa 10/57.

⁸⁰ Reporting from the previous source

The Disappearance of knowledge until the majority of the Muslims' actions will be based on ignorance

If knowledge disappears with the death of the scholars and with the deviation of those scholars who come after them, many Muslims will begin to perform acts of worship upon ignorance. This is due to them thinking that their mere understanding of what they hear from (the Qur'ān and Sunnah) is sufficient in them understanding Al-Islām. All the while they blind follow their forefathers, and depend on this taqlīd (as a means of obtaining knowledge). The (Messenger ﷺ) the truthful one, the one who is believed, mentioned this state of affairs. On the authority of 'Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه):

“There will come upon the people a time period, when they will gather and pray in the Masjids, and there is not a believer amongst them.”⁸¹

⁸¹ Collected by Ibn Abī Shayba in Al-Imān page 33 no. 101, as well as in Al-Musannaf no. 300870. Al-Hākim collected it in Al-Mustadrak 4/442, Al-ājūrī in Ash-Sharia' no. 260, 261, 262. Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī said in his verification of Al-Imān by Ibn Abī Shayba, **“Its chain is Mawqūf (it ends at a companion) and is authentic with the conditions of Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.”**

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: the meaning (of this ḥadīth), and Allah knows best, is that hypocrisy will increase amongst those praying due to ignorance. So this wretched ignorance is a result of a small amount of scholars of Sunnah, and many individuals who put themselves up in front to teach, while not being qualified for such a thing! On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“There will come a time period upon my Ummah, when there will be many recitors, a few scholars, and knowledge will be taken away.”⁸²

On the authority of (‘Abdullah) bin Mas’ūd, he said to a person, **“...There will come after you a time period, when the scholars will be few, while the preachers will be many. There will be many people asking (for knowledge), while only a few (will be there to) give.”⁸³**

⁸² Collected by Al-Hākim in Al-Mustadrak 4/457. He said its chain is authentic, while Adh-Dhahabī did not comment on it. Also this narration was collected by At-Tabarānī in Al-Awsat 3/319 no. 3277, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues I/607 no. I043. It is a sound ḥadīth .

⁸³ Collected by Al-Bukhārī in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad no. 789 (the wording is his), Abdur Razzāq in Al-Musnaaf no. 3787, Abū

The Disappearance of Knowledge

So Oh Ahl as-Sunnah, embark upon seeking beneficial Islāmic knowledge in order to close the gaps, spread good, and in order to protect the Creed and actions of the believers, and to correct their conduct.



Khaythama in Al-'Ilm no 109, and At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr no. 8566-8567. Al-Hāfith said in Fath Al-Bārī 10/510, “**its chain is authentic.**” Al-Albānī graded it to be authentic in Sahīh Al-Adab Al-Mufrad. This type of statement is not made by way one’s own opinion. Mālik narrated it Al-Muwwatta and other than him Munqati’, but the consideration is given to the narration that connects (authentically to the Messenger ﷺ).

The Disappearance of knowledge until abandoning the texts becomes deeply rooted

On the authority of Amr bin Shuayb (who narrated) on the authority of his father (who narrated) on the authority of his grandfather that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“There will come a time period upon the people when they will be filtered (and sifted out). Only the scum will remain. (They are) those whose oaths and trustworthiness will be corrupted. They will differ and they will be like this; he (ﷺ) intertwined between his fingers.” They said Oh Messenger of Allah, ‘what is the escape from that?’ He (ﷺ) said, ‘Take (hold) of that which you know to be good and leave (off) that which you know to be evil; focus on your private affairs. And leave off the affairs of the general people.’⁸⁴

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in his book (entitled) I'lām Al-Muwaqieen (4/170-171), “And when the boycotting of the text became deeply rooted amongst most of the people of desires and innovation, their sciences (which they used) in their (legislative)

⁸⁴ Narrated by Ahmad 2/220 and declared sound by Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī in his A Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations No. 205

questions and evidences were at the highest level of corruption, uneasiness, and contradiction...as for the foundations of their religion, then they have openly proclaimed in their books that the statement of Allah and His Messenger do not necessitate certainty in the fundamental affairs of the religion, but rather (they say the statements of Allah and His Messenger) are only used as proof by Al-Hashwiya (i.e. a derogatory term to describe Ahl As-Sunnah), anthropomorphist, and those who resemble Allah to His creation (as they claim). As for their subdivision sciences, they have sufficed themselves with blind following individuals who may have compiled some abbreviated texts, which do not mention a verse from the Qur'ān, nor (a ḥadīth from the) Sunnah. There (is not even) a statement of (even) the Imām that they claim to following (in the affairs of) their religion. Rather, they only depend upon the statement(s) of a particular author when issuing legislative verdicts, passing judicial rulings, transferring rights, (handling marital affairs), and dealing with (the shedding of) blood, and (distribution) of wealth. The noblest and most knowledgeable leader, (in their eyes), is the one who can (accurately) quote the wording of the book (of their school of thought), and say "This is how he said it, and this is the wording." So (with them) the ḥalāl is that which the book (of their school of thought) has deemed ḥalāl, the ḥarām is that which it has deemed ḥarām, obligatory is that which it has made

obligatory, falsehood is that which (this book) has deemed falsehood, and correct is that which it has called correct.

What are we to do with these people in times like these? Indeed, they have pushed us to an affair in which the (human) rights cry out to Allah (a loud outcry). The (people's) blood, their wealth, and their private parts yell out to their Lord, a (loud uproar). This is a situation in which the rulings have changed. Halāl and harām have been altered. In this time period the people have deemed good that which is at the highest level of evil, and as for (those newly invented acts of worship) which Allah has not legislated nor His Messenger (ﷺ), (the people) have made these acts into the (most noble) ways of getting closer to Allah. (In this time) truth is strange, and even stranger than the truth, is the one who knows the truth, and even stranger than them both is the one who invites to it, and uses it to sincerely advise himself and mankind.”

Al-Hāfith said in Fath Al-Bārī (13/16), while discussing the disappearance of knowledge, “and that which is intended from the ḥadīth is the intensification of that (difficult and evil situation) until there does not remain anyone to combat it, except rarely. Based on this is the expression of the disappearance of knowledge, such that there will not remain except pure ignorance. And that does not prevent it from being a group from the people

of knowledge, because at that time they will be obscure amongst these people.” Then he (Al-Hāfith) mentioned the ḥadīth of the disappearance of Al-Islām.



Some of the people of innovation request that knowledge be raised

The deviance and misguidance of the people of innovation and partisanship does not stop at any limit. Rather (the people of innovation) only spread, widen, increase, and expand in (their) falsehood. May Allah have mercy on Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, where he said, as it is found in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 8/425, **‘Innovation in its early stages is a hand span, then it increases in (its) following until it becomes an arm’s length, miles, and farāsikh⁸⁵.’**

From that which they (i.e. the people of innovation) have arrived to, is their open request to abandon the truth which opposes their whims (and desires). If they were able to bury it, removing it from the face of the earth, they would do so. But the only thing preventing them is their inability.

From that which is well known from some of them, is that which Ibn Abi Al-Izz mentioned in his Explanation of At-Tahāwīyyah I/121, where he said, **“Until this misguidance led some of them, such as Ahmad bin Abi Duā’d Al-Qāḍī, to the point where they advised the Khalifah Mamūn to write on the shrouds of the Ka’bah: “There is nothing that resembles Him, and He is the**

⁸⁵ **Translator’s Note:** Plural of farsakh, equally approx 3 miles.

Mighty, the Wise,” distorting the speech of Allah to negate His being described, the Most High is He, as the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing!! As Jahm bin Safwān, the other misguided one, said, “I would love to remove from the Muṣḥaf, the statement of Allah, the Most High,

﴿ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ﴾

‘Then he rose over the throne.’ [Al-A’raaf: 54]

So we ask Allah, the Mighty, the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing, that He makes us firm with a firm statement in the life of this world and the Hereafter, with His favor and generosity”.

Ad-Dhahabī mentioned (as found in) Siyar A’lām An-Nubala 10/455, “Ahmad bin Hanbal said, I was informed by a man from Aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth that Yaḥya bin ṣāliḥ said, “Only if the People of ḥadīth were to leave off ten narrations, meaning those about seeing Allah in the hereafter.’ Then Ahmad said, ‘It is as if he inclined to the opinion of Jahm.’ I (Ahmad) said: Al-Mu’tazilah say, ‘if the scholars of ḥadīth left off one thousand ḥadīth about the names and attributes of Allah, and about Allah being seen (in the hereafter) and about His ascension, they would be correct.’ The Qadariyah say, ‘If they only left off seventy ḥadīth about the divine decree (they would be correct).’ The

Rāfiḍah say, 'if the majority (of the Muslims) would leave off a thousand ḥadīth that they claim to be authentic, they would be correct.' And many from the people of opinion reject those narrations that Al-Hāfiḥ Al-Mufti Al-Mujtahid Abū Hurayrah narrated directly from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and they claim that he was not a faqīh, while they come to us with weak narrations, (or even narrations) that do not have a chain at all, while seeking to use them as proof!!' We say, 'Everyone will stand in front of Allah, the Most High, on the Day of Judgment.' Oh Glory be to Allah! The narrations about (the Believers) seeing Allah in the hereafter are reoccurring, and the Qur'ān confirms that, so where is the fairness?!"

Abdur Rahmān bin Ahmad bin Al-Husayn An-Naysāburī the Shiite said, as it is found in Lisān al-Mizān 3/405, "If I had backing from the (governmental) authorities, I would remove fifty thousand narrations which the people act upon, that do not have any origin or (any level of) authenticity (i.e. according to the one making this statement)."

Adh-Dhahabī said in The History of Al-Islām: This Speech is from an individual who has hatred against Al-Islām, and the Muslims. He has exceeded all bounds in Shiism."

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said (as it is) in As-Sawāiq Al-Mursala 3/1039-1040, "For this reason you find many of these

people do not like that prophetic texts be reported, or that they be spread and disseminated. (Some of them) may even make it a condition in places, in which they are in charge of, that the narrations about the Attributes of Allah not even be mentioned. Some of the later generations, and with them he's the best of them, even tried to remove the Books of Sunnah which were authored about Attributes of Allah, desiring to conceal and hide them. It has reached me from many of them, that (one of these individuals) would be on the verge of standing and taking off (upon arriving at) the conclusion of Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, due to what is in it of At-Tawhīd and refutation of the Jahmiyyah. (One of them) was even heard slandering Muhammad bin Ismā'īl (Al-Bukhārī). What is the sin of Al-Bukhārī, although it is the case that he has conveyed that which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said?! Another from amongst these people said, 'Al-Bukhārī has tarnished his authentic collection of narrations with this that he has brought in the end of it (i.e. the Chapter about At-Tawhīd).' It is known that this (statement) is in clear contradiction to that which Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) love in terms of reporting from the Prophet (ﷺ), when he said, "Let the one who is present convey to the one who is absent."⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Collected by Al-Bukhārī no. 1741 and Muslim 1679 from the ḥadīth of Abū Bakra (رضي الله عنه).

The Disappearance of Knowledge

If the people of misguidance had the ability to burn the books (of Ahl As-Sunnah), they would. From those who are known for this crime is Ismā'īl As-Safawī, founder of The Nation of Safawiyah 905 hijriyah. Ash-Sheikh Mar'ee Al-Ḥanbalī mentioned in his book 'Nuzhatu An-Nathirīn' while speaking about the crimes of Ismā'īl As-Safawi, **"And his military used to prostrate to him, and obey his orders, and he used to claim Lordship. He killed scholars, burned their books, and excavated graves of scholars of ahl As-Sunnah. He removed and burned their skeletons. If a leader was killed he declared the man's wife and wealth permissible (for another person)"**⁸⁷

How similar is the evening to the morning! Here (in present times) you have the Rāfiḍah of Al-Yemen requesting that the centers of ḥadīth be closed down. (We ask), what is the crime of the centers of ḥadīth except that they (make du'a for the Companions of the Messenger ﷺ) asking Allah to be pleased with them, and that they detest the Ar-Rāfiḍah because of their slander against many of the Companions?!!

⁸⁷ Reported from the book The Nation of As-Safawiyah and its affect on the Muslim World page 21

It is well known to anyone who is aware of the war of the Rāfiḍah against the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, that they slander the Qur'ān, and believe that it is distorted, while Allah says,

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

“Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'an) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).”

[Al-Hijr: 9]

Likewise Allah says,

﴿ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾

“Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it; (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise (Allah).”

[Fussilat: 42]

Likewise the Rāfiḍah slander Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, even though they know the (entire) Islāmic Ummah has accepted (these books) wholeheartedly. So no one should wait for the Rāfiḍah in al-Yemen or other (than Al-Yemen) to leave off this defamation against the religion of Al-Islām.

The Disappearance of Knowledge

Oh my dear Sunni Muslim brother, praise Allah (alone) for being safe from these deadly sicknesses. You should free and prepare yourself for calling to knowledge and acting upon it. Obtain your portion of knowledge before you are hindered from it, as it was hindered from these people of innovation. There is nothing between you and arriving to this contemptible position except that you become humiliated and incline to the callers of misguidance, partisanship, and agencies. May Allah keep us all safe from every misguidance!



The Disappearance of Knowledge in our times

The disappearance of knowledge has taken place more in our time than in previous time periods. And how not when teaching has decayed and the people seek to learn other than Al-Islām?! Rather some of the Muslim children turned toward learning that which even contradicts Al-Islām, causes it to be forgotten, or even in the eyes of the one learning, is a substitute for Al-Islām. Large numbers of Muslim children traveled in order to learn from disbelievers in their lands. They did not only learn from them the permissible worldly sciences such as medicine, (chemistry, engineering, etc). But rather they learned from them (various fields of study) such as the Arabic Language, Islāmīc History, Fiqh, and other than that. With this teaching, the enemies aimed to throw doubts upon the students, planting (within them) understandings that distort (the image) of Al-Islām and even war against it. Rather they (even) learned from them sciences that are impermissible, such as magic, astrology, and other than that. Rather the Jewish and Christian countries established schools, institutions, and universities in many Islāmīc Countries, teaching the Muslim Children that which corrupts them.

The duping and the lost have appeared due to this evil teaching. So much so that The Ottoman Sultan Abdul Ḥamīd The Second,

mentioned as it is found in the book The Plotting against the Countries of Shām page (60) while speaking about the Jewish and Christian Schools that are in the Muslim Countries, “Indeed they pose a great danger to our lands! Our mistake was tremendous, when we allowed every country in every time and place to establish whatever schools they wished (in our lands). Here we are today, reaping the harms of the (seeds) we planted. We allowed them to open schools. Consequently, they began to teach the students ideologies that are in opposition to our lands.”

In the same source he mentioned, as is found on page (69) “Indeed the ideologies that have been imported from Europe present a great danger to us, and lead to a painful catastrophe where it is the case that the Muslims around me are in state of heedlessness (ignorantly blissful). So I have no choice but to resist (and combat) these ideologies with all the strength I have been given; indeed they are poison that destroys the intellects and hearts!”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) say: Where are the Rulers of the Muslims and (deviant) parties in comparison to this correct (and pure) knowledge, sharp realization, religious jealousy, and manly sense of honor?

At any rate, ignorance in previous time periods did not occur the way it has occurred during our era. This is a confirmation of that

which the Noble Companion Anas (رضي الله عنه) narrated (when he reported that) the Messenger (ﷺ) said: **“Indeed from the signs of the Hour is that knowledge will disappear, ignorance will remain, intoxicants will be consumed, and fornication will appear (openly).”**⁸⁸

Ignorance has become a distinguishing feature upon (many) Muslims due to them remaining (without knowledge and without learning). It has become firmly fixed within them, to the point that they have even become a laughingstock with the disbelievers. This ignorance is from the signs that the Final Hour has drawn near. May Allah have Mercy on Ash-Sha'bī, where he said, **“The Hour will not be established until knowledge becomes ignorance, and ignorance becomes knowledge.”**⁸⁹

At-Tuwayjarī said in Ittihāf Al-Jamā'ah (2/94), **“And certainly the confirmation of this ḥadīth has appeared in our times...Most people have boycotted knowledge, and those who seek it (and are concerned with it) have decreased in number. Most people's**

⁸⁸ Reported by Al-Bukhārī no. 80, and this wording is found in his collection. The Narration was also reported by Muslim no. 2671

⁸⁹ Reported by Ibn Abī Shayba I4/I26 no. (38584) and in its chain is Mujālid, who is a weak (narrator). However, the meaning (of this narration) is correct.

interest has turned toward newspapers, magazines, and that which is similar to that, things that consists predominately of pure ignorance which has appeared and become established in our era. (This ignorance has) disseminated throughout the east and the west to a large extent, becoming popular amongst all (social) classes. People have become infatuated with it. (And they have the audacity to) refer to the ignorance found in these social media outlets as knowledge, education, and advancement. As for (the people) who busy themselves with (these different sources), they refer to them as refined and educated. With some of these foolish individuals, the affair has even increased in stupidity and self amazement that they have called those who are interested in legislative knowledge backwards, and named the books of beneficial knowledge yellow books, in order to belittle them, and distance (the people) from them.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) said: Do not forget what happened recently in many Muslim lands in that some disbelieving countries obligated upon the Muslim rulers to adopt Democracy⁹⁰ in (the official) learning curriculums. So how great is this calamity that

⁹⁰ Translator’s Note: “If you are asked, ‘What is Democracy?’ Say, ‘It is (a type of government) where the people rule themselves, without any Book (from Allah) or (Prophetic) Sunnah.” [Question 45 from Ash-Sheikh Yahya bin Alī Al-Hājūrī’s book Beneficial Elementary Principles pertaining to Tawhīd, Fiqh, and Aqīdah]

The Disappearance of Knowledge

has befallen the Muslims and their children? Indeed to Allah we belong and to Allah shall we return!



**If beneficial knowledge fades away,
harmful knowledge will increase and
become wide spread amongst the Muslims**

From the great danger upon the Muslims that stems from the disappearance of legislative knowledge: an increase in harmful knowledge. As legislative knowledge decreases, the people are pushed toward other sciences, thus they become squandered. So much so Al-Imām Ash-Shāfi’ee mentioned, “**If it were not for the People of the Mahābir (i.e. quills, referring to students of knowledge and scholars), the heretics would have preached on the manābir (i.e. pulpits),**” narrating from *As-Siyar* 10/70.

This is a reality that must not be ignored nor overlooked. What a terrible calamity; how many breaches has it opened of evil, and how many doors of good have closed due to an increase in the sciences of misguidance, such as magic, astrology, philosophy, polytheism, disbelief, innovation, sins, and other than that. And add to what has preceded that which is present in our times from daily, weekly, and monthly newspapers and magazines. In some nations there are tens or even hundreds of them. (As for) those who run them, they are writers who the majority of them are deviant, rather some of them are even fierce rivals against Islām and (the Muslims). (They are) those who befriend the enemies of Allah.

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Even greater than that which has proceeded is the importing of the books of the orientalist from the Jews, Christians, and other than them. And add the fact that many of the groups and sects depend upon (these books). These writings fill up the bookstores, market places, and book fairs.

So every sect has hundreds of books, daily newspapers, magazines, publications, and other media outlets. From the greatest causes of this spread is the disappearance of the carriers of legislative knowledge. So may Allah give the Muslims tranquility as the scholars of the Sunnah disappear. Is there anyone who will have jealousy upon seeking legislative knowledge?! Is there anyone who will save the Muslims?! Is there anyone who will rectify and correct for the people (the affairs of the religion) as they journey to their Lord? (Will there be anyone) who directs the people to the Sunnah of their Messenger (ﷺ)?



The 3rd Section

The Reasons why Knowledge will Disappear

As for knowledge, Allah has made many causes for its disappearance. Some of them have been mentioned clearly, and others have not been mentioned so plainly. (The reasons) are many, with some (reasons being) more important than others. We have been keen in this (literary) journey of ours in exhausting most of the reasons for the disappearance of knowledge, considering their importance, and the dire need for them. (Without further delay) I mention to you the following:

The Prophetic Narrations which indicate that the reason for the Disappearance of Knowledge is the Death of the Rabbānī Scholars

There is no difference amongst the people of knowledge that the reason for the disappearance of knowledge is due to the death of the scholars, the carriers of knowledge. This is indicated by many clear narrations. (For this reason) they are the main focus in this issue. From amongst them:

The First Prophetic Tradition:

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allah does not take away the knowledge by removing it away from the hearts of the people. Rather He takes it away with the death of the religious scholars, until none of the religious scholars will remain. (Thus) the people will take as their leaders the ignorant ones. When consulted they will give religious verdicts without knowledge. They will go astray and will cause the people to be misguided as well.”⁹¹

⁹¹ Collected by Al-Bukhārī Number 100 (and the wording is his), Muslim (2673), At-Tirmidhī 2652, Abū Dawūd number 4333, Ibn Mājah 52, and Ahmad 2/457. This narration was reported by some narrators and they said that it was on the authority of Aisha (رضي الله عنها) and Al-Hāfith mentioned in Fath Al-Bārī that the narration is shādh

The Second Prophetic Tradition:

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“There will come a time period upon my Ummah, where there will be many reciters, (but only) a small number of scholars.

(irregular, i.e. a narration in which a reliable narrator opposes those that are more reliable, either in number, precision, or truthfulness.)

(I3/349) He also mentioned in Fath Al-Bārī I/257: “This ḥadīth has become known to be from the chain of Hishām bin Urwa (Az-Zubayr bin Al-Awwām). So it has occurred that more than seventy people reported from him, (scholars) from the people of the haramayn, Irāq, Shām, Khurasān, Egypt, and other places (as well). And Urwa Abū Al-Aswad Al-Madanī agreed with him in his narration on the authority of his father, and his ḥadīth is found in both Bukhārī and Muslim, as well as Az-Zuhrī and his ḥadīth is in An-Nasāi, and Yahya bin Abū Kathīr, and his ḥadīth is in ‘Sahīh of Abī Awānah’, and he agreed with his father in reporting from ‘Abdullah bin Amr bin Umar bin Al-Hakam bin Thawbān, and this ḥadīth is in Sahīh Muslim.”

Muhammad bin Aslam At-Tuusi, Al-Khatīb Al-Baghdād, and Nasr Al-Maqdasi have gathered the different narrations of this previously mentioned ḥadīth of ‘Abdullah bin Amr.

Knowledge will be taken away, and Al-Harj will increase.” They said, ‘what is al-harj’ oh Messenger of Allah? He said, “(It is) killing amongst you. Then there will come a time where the men will recite the Qur’ān. (It will) not go beyond their collarbone. Then there will come a time where the disbelieving polytheist hypocrite will debate the believer about Allah, with the likes of what he says.”⁹²

The Third Prophetic Tradition:

On the authority of Shadād bin Ays (رضي الله عنه), and in this narration he said to Jubayr bin Nufayr: “Do you know what is the disappearance of knowledge? I said: I do not know. He said: it is the death of its carriers.”⁹³

The Fourth Prophetic Tradition:

On the authority of Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said “Seek knowledge before it goes away. They said, ‘And how will knowledge leave Oh Prophet of Allah, and we have the Qur’ān in our midst?’ So he became very

⁹² Collected by Al-Hākim in Al-Mustadarak 4/457, and the wording is found with him. Also collected by At-Tabarāni in Al-Awsat 3/319, under ḥadīth number 3277 and it is a sound narration.

⁹³ Collected by Ahmad and other than him. It is authentic, and takes the ruling of being ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

angry, then he said, 'May your mother be bereaved of you, was the Torah and the Gospel not amongst the Children of Isrā'eel, and it did not benefit them at all, indeed the disappearance of knowledge is the death of its carriers, indeed the disappearance of knowledge is through the death of its carriers.'⁹⁴

Oh reader, you have read these prophetic narrations and learned their meanings, indeed it is tremendous news. And how would it be anything other than that, when it informs us about the changing of the Ummah from its foundation of might, honor, safety, stability, and authority in the land, to the opposite of that? All of these changes are due to negligence and laxity in seeking legislative knowledge. So how great is the need and how severe is the necessity for embarking upon seeking Qur'ānic and Prophetic knowledge? The condition of many of the Muslims is as the poet said:

**Like Camels in the desert killed by severe dehydration, while the
water is carried above their backs**

⁹⁴ Reported by Ad-Dārimī I/309 number 246; and the wording is with him. This narration was also reported by Ahmad 5/266, At-Tabarānī 8/256, ḥadīth number 7867, Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number (136 & 137), and Al-Khatīb in At-Tārīkh 2/212. It is a sound ḥadīth do to corroborating texts.

The Disappearance of Knowledge

The Qur'ān is present amongst the Muslims, and likewise the Prophetic Sunnah. In spite of this, many Muslims are lost in ignorance, and in their transgression they have strayed.



Authentic Narrations (from the Early Generations) explaining that the Disappearance of knowledge is due to the Death of the Scholars of Al-Islām

I do not know a difference amongst the scholars of the early generations that the disappearance of knowledge is due to the death of the Scholars of the Prophetic Sunnah, as is indicated by the previously mentioned narrations. And (in what follows) I have sufficed by only mentioning those narrations that have been authentically reported.

The First Report: On the authority of ('Abdullah) bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), and it has already been mentioned with the ḥadīth of Anas (bin Mālik) (رضي الله عنه) and in it (is the statement): **"If the scholars die, the people will all become equal. They will not command with the good, and they will not forbid the evil. With that, they will be destroyed."**⁹⁵

⁹⁵ It is a sound narration, collected by Abdur Razzāq in his *Musannaf* II/252 number 20465 with the wording: **"Seek knowledge before it is removed; and its removal is with the death of its people (i.e. the scholars)."** This narration is also authentic.

The Second Report: On the authority of ('Abdullah bin 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه), that he asked: "Do you know what the disappearance of knowledge is?" We said: No. He said "the Death of the Scholars."⁹⁶

The Third Report: On the authority of Salmān (رضي الله عنه) he said: "The people will remain upon good as long as the first (from the scholars) remain, in order that he will teach, and that the last will

⁹⁶ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/310 number 249 and Abū Khathama in Al-I'lm number 53. It is sound do to what came after it.

On the authority of ('Abdullah bin 'Abbās), when Zayd bin Thābit died he said: "Whoever would like to see how knowledge disappears, then this is its disappearance." Collected by At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr with this wording 5/I09 number 475I, as well as Al-Hākim in Al-Mustadrak 3/428, and in its chain is Alī bin Zayd Jad'ān. He is a weak narrator. This report was also collected by At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr under number 4749, Ibn Sad in 'At-Tabaqāt' 2/361-362, Al-Hākim 3/422, as well as Al-Faswī in Al-M'arifa and At-Tārīkh I/485 by way of Hammād bin Salamah on the authority of Ammār bin Abī Ammār that he said: "When Zayd bin Thābit died, I sat with ('Abdullah) bin 'Abbās in the shade of courtyard, then he said: "This is how knowledge disappears, today a great amount of knowledge has been buried."

Its chain is authentic.

learn. So if the first die, before he teaches, or before the last learn, then the people will be in ruin.”⁹⁷

The Fourth Report: On the authority of Abū Darda (رضي الله عنه) that he used to say: “What is the problem that I see your scholars die, and the ignorant ones from amongst you all do not seek knowledge?! Seek Knowledge, before knowledge is removed! For indeed the disappearance of knowledge is with the death of the Scholars.”⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/310 number 248 and it is a sound ḥadīth.

⁹⁸ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/311-312 number 251, Ahmad in Az-Zuhd page I44, Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya I/212, 221 and in its chain is Sālim bin Abū Al-Ja’d, he did not hear from Abū Dardā. It has come from him in a long version with the wording “Seek knowledge before knowledge is taken away. (For indeed it is) taken away with the death of its people. The scholar and the student are partners in good; and everyone else, there is no good in them. Indeed the wealthiest person is a learned man, who the people are in need of his knowledge, then he (teaches and) benefits those who are in need of him. And if the people deemed themselves in no need of his knowledge, he benefits himself with the knowledge that Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, has given him. What is the problem, I see your scholars die, and the ignorant from amongst you do not seek knowledge?! I fear that the first will die, while the last have not learned. And if the scholar were to seek

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The Fifth Report: On the authority of Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) when he heard Abū Hurayrah narrate about the disappearance of knowledge he said: “As for (the disappearance of knowledge) it is not being taken from the chests of the scholars, but rather with their death of the scholars.”⁹⁹

The Sixth Report: On the authority of Ibn Sirīn he said: “Knowledge has disappeared, and nothing has remained except dust in receptacles of evil.”¹⁰⁰

knowledge, he would increase in knowledge, not decreasing at all. And if the ignorant sought knowledge he would surely find it available. So why is it that I see you all stuffed (from eating) food, while you are starving in need of knowledge?!”

Collected by Al-Bahayqī in Branches of Faith 2/269 number 1720, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number 1036. This wording is found with him; there is no problem with its chain.

⁹⁹ Ahmad reported it 2/481 (the wording belongs to him) and Al-Bazzār as it is in Kashf Al-Astār 1/125 number 236. Its chain is authentic.

¹⁰⁰ Narrated by Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues 1/595 number 1022. Its chain is

The Seventh Report: On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Dinār, he said: “Umar bin Abdul Al-Azīz wrote to the inhabitants of Al-Madinah (saying) ‘pay attention to the prophetic narrations; for I have indeed feared (the disappearance of) the gatherings of knowledge, and the death of the scholars.’¹⁰¹

The Eighth Report: On the authority of Al-Hasan Al-Basrī, it is reported that he said: “The death of the scholars (leaves) a gap in Al-Islām, and nothing will seal this (gap) as long as the night and day run.”¹⁰²

The Ninth Report: On the authority of Hilāl bin Khabāb Abū Al-Alaa he said: “I asked Saīd bin Jubayr, I said ‘What is the sign

authentic. The point of reference from the report is the statement “in receptacles of evil” (meaning) with the scholars of evil.

¹⁰¹ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/43I number 505, Ar-Rāmahūrmazī in Al-Muhadīth Al-Fāsīl number 346, and Al-Khatīb in Taqyid Al-I‘ilm page 106. The chain is authentic.

¹⁰² Collected by A-Dārimī I/35I number 333, Ahmad in Az-Zuhd page 262, Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number 102I (the wording is from him). It is authentic; and it is not authentically ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the authority of any Companion.

of the hour and the destruction of the people? He said: If their scholars die.”¹⁰³

The Tenth Report: On the authority of Hamād bin Zayd he said: “The death of a youth from the people of ḥadīth used to reach Ayyub, and (the effects would be seen) on him. While the death of a man, who may have been known for worship, used to reach him, and (the effects of that) would not be seen on him.”¹⁰⁴

The Eleventh Report: On the authority of Kathīr bin Zayād in his Tafsīr “The affair will only increase in intensity.” He said: The death of the scholars.”¹⁰⁵

The Twelfth Report: On the authority of Muhammad bin Sirīn he said “I asked Ubayda about a verse in the Book of Allah, so he

¹⁰³ Collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 4/276, Ibn Abū Shayba I4/38 number 38202, Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number I023 (the wording belongs to him) and Al-Bayhaqī in Branches of Faith number I542. Its chain is authentic.

¹⁰⁴ Collected by Al-Khatīb in The Nobility of the People of Al-ḥadīth number II9.

¹⁰⁵ Collected by Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number I040. Its chain is good until Kathīr.

said: 'It is obligatory upon you to have taqwā of Allah and uprightiness, because those who have knowledge about the reason why the (verses of the) Qur'ān were revealed have died.'¹⁰⁶

It has been authentically reported from these narrations that the disappearance of Islāmic Legislative knowledge is due to the death of its carriers, and the absence of those to succeed them. So based on this (fact), the scholars have proceeded in their speech. Al-Qurtubi said in Al-Mufhim 6/705, (commenting on the narrations about the disappearance of knowledge): "It is a text (that mentions) that the disappearance of knowledge will not occur by being erased from the hearts, but rather by the death of the scholars and the survival of the ignorant, those who assume the positions of the scholars in issuing Islāmic rulings and teaching. They will give legislative rulings based on ignorance, and then teach it (to the people). Thus ignorance will become widespread and apparent. This (calamity) has (in fact) occurred just as the Prophet (ﷺ) has informed, especially in these times. (All of this) is an indication of his prophethood, because the ignorant ones, along with the youth have assumed positions of

¹⁰⁶ Collected by Sa'eed bin Mansūr in his Collection of hadīth I/185, Ibn Abū Shayba I0/243 number (30601), At-Tabarī in his Tafsīr I/86, Abū Ubaydah in Virtues of the Qur'ān page (377). Its chain is authentic.

(teaching in the) schools, issuing religious rulings, and the qualified ones have been deprived of these positions.”

An-Nawawī mentioned in The Explanation of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 16/183: “This ḥadīth clarifies that the disappearance of knowledge which is mentioned in the previous narrations, it is not that knowledge will be erased from the chests of the memorizers, but the meaning is that its carriers will pass away, and the people will take the ignorant ones as their leaders, who will issue religious verdicts based on ignorance, thus going astray and leading others into error as well.”

Ibn Kathīr said in An-Nihayah in Al-Fitan and Al-Malāhim' (I/39): “(This clearly establishes) that knowledge is not ripped from the people’s chests once Allah has bestowed it to an individual.”

Ibn Hajr said in Fath Al-Bāri I/260: “It *is* possible for Allah to remove knowledge from the peoples’ chests, but this prophetic narration indicates that this does not happen.”

Al-Mubārakfurī said in his comments on the work As-Sunan Al-Wāridah fi Al-Fitan 3/593 “Most of scholars have taken the last position: that the meaning of the reduction and vanishing of knowledge is that which is indicated by the ḥadīth of ‘Abdullah

bin Amr (ﷺ) and others, (that this refers to) the death of the scholars along with the knowledge they possess.”



The Death of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) is a sign of the disappearance of a great amount of knowledge

The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) were a well fortified fortress and a closed door in front of misguidance and deviance. So when they died, that door was broken and that fortress was destroyed. (Consequently) evil and trials gushed forth against the Muslims, with a (severe) outpour. This, however, is a confirmation of the (Prophet's) statement (ﷺ): "My Companions are safety for my Ummah, so if my Companions die, that which my Ummah is promised will come to pass."¹⁰⁷

Al-Qurtubī said in *Al-Mufhim* 6/485, "The meaning of this narration is that: As long as his (ﷺ) Companions (رضي الله عنهم) are alive, the religion will be visibly established, truth will be apparent, and victory against the enemies (of the religion) will take place. When his Companions passed away, the people of desires dominated, and the enemies were given the upper hand. The level of the religion has continued to decrease, and its diligence has recoiled, until (eventually) there will not remain on the face of the earth

¹⁰⁷ Reported by Muslim number 2531 on the authority of Abū Mūsā (رضي الله عنه).

anyone saying 'Allah, Allah'. This is that which the Prophet's (ﷺ) ummah has been promised. And Allah knows best."

Al-Imām An-Nawawī said while commenting on the aforementioned ḥadīth, (16/68): "The Companions are a safety from the appearance of innovation, newly invented matters, and trials in the religion, and from the appearance of the horn of the devil, and dominance of Rome and other (nations) upon them. (They are a safety from) the attack against Al-Madinah and Mecca and other than that. All of this is from the Prophet's (ﷺ) miracles."

The Major Companions, which included the Rightly Guided Caliphs, were the greatest barricade for trials. On the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه), he said, "There is not a long period of time that stands between evil befalling you all except the death in the neck of a man who will die, and he is Umar."¹⁰⁸

On the authority of Samra bin Jundab (رضي الله عنه): he said "Verily Islām was in a well fortified fortress, and they have certainly punctured an opening in Al-Islām with the killing of Uthmān (رضي الله عنه). They

¹⁰⁸ Reported by Ibn Abī Shayba I4/65 number (38286) (this wording is found in his collection), Ar-Rūyānī 3/I07, and Nuaym bin Hamād I/42. Its chain is authentic.

have torn open an incision. They most certainly will not be able to close this opening until the Day of Judgment.”¹⁰⁹

Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) mentioned after the news of Uthmān’s assassination had reached him, “Today the people have descended to the brink of Al-Islām, how many expeditions have they departed from it.”¹¹⁰

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) said in Minhāj As-Sunnah An-Nabawiyah 6/231 “No apparent innovation occurred during the caliphate of Uthmān (رضي الله عنه). So when he was killed, the people divided up and two opposing innovations were introduced: the innovation of the Khawārij, who deemed Alī (رضي الله عنه) to be a disbeliever, and the innovation of the Rāfiḍah, those who claimed him to be the most entitled to be the Imām. (Others) claimed him to be infallible, or to (even) be a Prophet, (while others even claimed that he was) worthy of worship!”

¹⁰⁹Collected by Ibn Asākir in (the book entitled) History of Damascus 39/483, in the biography of Uthmān with a sound chain. This is in spite of the difference of whether Al-Hasan heard from Samra.

¹¹⁰ Reported by Ibn Abī Shayba 14/19) number 38664. Its chain is authentic.

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These two innovations had ceased at the hands of Alī bin Abī Tālib, the Leader of the Believers, (ﷺ) as it is well known. His subduing of these innovations was a consequence of his actions with which he defended the religion of Al-Islām and its people. This is the case with anyone who has been granted vast knowledge, upright guidance, and (the success) to traverse the path of the Pious Predecessors. (The one who follows their way) will become a well fortified barricade to many of the trials, and a key to various good.



The Death of the Scholars of Sunnah is a Corruption for the World's Order if they are not replaced

We have previously mentioned that the decrease and disappearance of knowledge is with the death of the scholars. (In this section) this issue will become increasingly clearer:

Know (oh noble reader), if one from amongst the scholars, who acted upon the truth and was firmly rooted in knowledge, were to die, (his death) would (surely) leave behind a gap that cannot be closed until the Day of Judgment. Likewise the gaps in Al-Islām will increase and enhance, without anyone to close them, until (eventually) the religious and worldly affairs of the Muslims will be corrupted. For you is the following clarification:

So we say: If a scholar dies, he (may) pass away along with his knowledge, because (he did not author books or manuscripts). So such a scholar, his knowledge is buried along with him. This occurred with many of the scholars from amongst the Companions and their students. For this reason, when Umar (ﷺ)

passed, ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd said, **“Indeed I think that Umar has passed away with nine-tenths of knowledge.”**¹¹¹

It has been authentically reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that when Zayd bin Thābit passed away he said, **“Today, a large amount of knowledge has been buried.”**

Al-Bukhārī reported in At-Tarīkh Al-Kabīr 2/27-28 number (1579) with a sound chain on the authority of Qatāda that he said: **“When Anas bin Mālik passed away Mawraq Al-Ajali said, ‘Today half of knowledge has gone!’ It was said, ‘How is that Oh Abā Al-Mu’tamir?’ He said, ‘When a man from the people of desires opposed us in the prophetic ḥadīth, we said (to him): let’s go to one who has heard it from the Prophet (ﷺ).”**

And ‘Āishah (رضي الله عنها) was an authority for the Companions. Abū Mūsā Al-Ash‘arī said, **“There has never been a time when a ḥadīth was dubious to us, Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), except that upon asking ‘Āishah (رضي الله عنها) she would have some knowledge about (the affair).”**¹¹²

¹¹¹ Reported by Abū Khaythamā in Al-Ilm page (18) and At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr 9/179-180 number 8809. Its chain is authentic.

¹¹² Reported by At-Tirmidhī 3883, and graded authentic by Al-Albānī (رحمته الله).

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On the authority of Al-Hasan Al-Basrī, its grading has proceeded with an authentic chain that he said: **“The death of the scholars (leaves) a gap in Al-Islām, and nothing will seal this (gap) as long as the night and day run.**¹¹³

(Then it may be the case that) a very well learned scholar may die, and his knowledge has been recorded in books and other works of his. So although much of his knowledge has been facilitated with respect to it being in his books, the gap will remain due to his death. That is because the presence of a scholar’s books is not like the presence of the scholar (himself). With his presence, his counsel along with his knowledge is spread amongst the Islāmic Ummah throughout the east and western parts of the earth. Large masses of people seek Islāmic Knowledge at his hands, and are effected by hearing his voice, seeing him, and in other ways as well.

¹¹³ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/351 number 333, Ahmad in Az-Zuhd page 262, Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number I02I and the wording is from him. It is authentic; and it is not authentically ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the authority of any Companion.

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Or (it may be the case) that a scholar may die, and a well versed student of his has recorded his knowledge, and there has emerged from amongst the students one who is qualified to undertake the task of intellectual succession (to the scholar who has passed). On the other hand, although he has established a tremendous foundation, it is a foundation that most of the time will not remain. Thus (the scholar's) knowledge will gradually disappear on the part of his students, either entirely or partially. So the disappearance of knowledge is continuous, and (it) will increasingly diminish, because the scholars are gradually decreasing.

It is known that the presence of the scholars of Islām and Sunnah serves as rectification of creation, and with their absence is a destruction of creation. So as their presence decreases, corruption will increase within a society, until their presence ends in totality. At that point the hour will be established.

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in The Key to the Abode of Happiness I/265:

“Since the rectitude of the existence is with the presence of the scholars, and if it were not for them, the people would be like animals, rather their condition would be even worse, (from this we realize that) a scholar's death is a calamity, which is not restored except by his successors who come after him. The

scholars guide and regulate mankind, nations, and kings. So their death is a corruption of the world's order. For this reason Allah continues to plant in this religion those who succeed the ones who have proceeded. With them he preserves His religion, His Book, and His servants.

Ponder if there was a man who has surpassed everyone in the world with his wealth and generosity, and the people were severely in need of him, and he (in fact) was dutiful to them in every possible way. (Imagine if he) dies and this provision (with which he supported the people) comes to an end. The death of a scholar is far more catastrophic than the death of the likes of this man, (even though) the likes of this man, with his death nations and large groups of people die. As it was said:

Know that a catastrophe is not a loss of wealth

And neither is it that a sheep dies or a camel

But a disaster is the loss of a noble man

Who with his death, many from creation die as well

Another (poet) said:

And the death of Qays, it is not the death of a single man

But rather (it is) a people's structure that you have destroyed

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Note: It should not be understood by the fact that the Companion's knowledge was not recorded, that it was not preserved. Rather it is preserved up to this hour and will remain preserved into the Day of Judgment. But it is divided throughout various books, and it may be considered difficult to (fully) benefit from this knowledge except for the one who easily has access to many authoritative reference works and time to research and study. Even though the knowledge of the early generations has become more accessible in our times in terms of corrective revision, more than in years past and also in terms of writing, (authoring), and printing.

So oh Muslim who possesses a sound intellect and the ability to learn, teach, and act upon knowledge, until you meet your Lord, (I advise you to) embark upon (seeking this knowledge) and do not slow down. For indeed if you were to leave off (seeking, learning, and acting upon knowledge) you would be from those who aided in the corruption of the Islāmic world's structure, destroying their lives, weakening their power, deteriorating their strength, demolishing their might, and reducing their earnestness.



The Origin of the Disappearance of Knowledge is due to not implementing it

The Disappearance of knowledge caused by not acting upon it is the origin of it vanishing and being removed. That is because Ibn Labīd said,

“Oh Messenger of Allah, how will knowledge leave, while we read the Qur’ān and teach it to our children, and our children teach it to their children until the Day of Judgment?! He said, ‘May your mother be bereaved of you oh Zayād! For indeed I considered you to be one of the most knowledgeable men of Al-Madinah; these Jews and Christians, don’t they read the Torah and the Gospel, while they do not act upon a single (verse) in them?’”¹¹⁴

This (narration) means that your recitation of the Qur’ān without acting upon it does not benefit you, just like the condition of the Jews and the Christians, who did not benefit from the Torah and the Gospel.

To Allah belongs the achievement of the one who said, “If it were not for the intellect there would be no knowledge; and if it were not for actions there would be no need for knowledge.”

¹¹⁴ Collected by At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr 5/265 number 529I.

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Every scholar, every caller to Allah, and student of knowledge should look (and ask himself) is his fear of Allah, mindfulness of Him, awe, glorification, and love of Allah, his dependence upon Allah, his embarking upon worshipping Allah and repenting to Him, is it more than that of the general people's or not? If he does not act upon knowledge in these important actions, then his knowledge will be harmful to him in this life as well as in the next. and it is only a small amount submerged (and lost in the wind).

Here are some statements of the Ulamaḥ in clarifying the harms of not acting upon the Qur'ān and the (Prophetic) texts:

Abū Darda (رضي الله عنه) said: **"You are not a scholar until you act (upon your knowledge)."**¹¹⁵

Sufyān bin Uyānah said, **"The most ignorant of the people is the one who leaves off what he knows, and the most knowledgeable of the people is the one who acts upon what he knows. The best**

¹¹⁵ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/336-337 number 301, and this wording is found with him, Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya I/213, and Wakee' in Az-Zuhd number 220. It is authentic.

of the people is the one who has the most humility for Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic.¹¹⁶

If he (who does not act upon his knowledge) is the most ignorant of the people, than how far away is he from being a scholar!!

Also, if the scholar does not act upon his knowledge, Allah will not place blessing in his admonishments, and neither will they be accepted by the people, and this is from the reasons for the disappearance of knowledge.

Mālik bin Dinār said, “Indeed if the scholar does not act (upon his knowledge) his admonishments will slip from the hearts as rain drops slip (off) rocks.¹¹⁷

Likewise the blessing is removed from the teacher who does not act upon his knowledge.

It is reported on the authority of Abī Ad-Dardā that he (ﷺ) said, “The thing I fear the most is that I will stand for my account (on

¹¹⁶ Collected by Ad-Dārimī 1/355, number 342, and its chain is authentic.

¹¹⁷ Collected by Ahmad in Az-Zuhd 2/304, Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 2/472, Al-Khatīb in Al-Iqtidā number 98, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number 1255, and it is authentic.

the Day of Judgment) and it will be said to me, “You had knowledge, so what have you done with what you learned?”¹¹⁸

Ibn Aqīl said in Sharh Al-Iqnaa “I have seen (certain) people, the only thing preventing them from oppressing (others) is incapability. I am not referring to laymen, rather the Scholars...so I pondered over the affair of the two groups, and all of a sudden the etiquettes of knowledge do not affect them. Is this anything other than the behavior of soldiers, who attack while they are in their country and are committed to the Masājid while they are in a state of weakness”.¹¹⁹

So oh Muslims, hasten toward acting upon the knowledge that Allah has taught you before the curse and punishment (of Allah)

¹¹⁸ Collected by Ibn Al-Mubārak in Az-Zuhd number 39, Ahmad in Az-Zuhd page 170, Ibn Abī Shayba in Musannaf 13/311, Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues I/680 number 1201, Al-Bayhaqī in Branches of Faith 2/286 number 1783, Al-Khatīb in Knowledge Necessitates Actions number 55, and Al-Albānī graded it to be sound in his checking of Knowledge Necessitates Actions. So Allah alone I ask to provide us with beneficial knowledge and righteous action.

¹¹⁹ Reporting from the book: Al-Burhān in freeing Salafiyah from the foolishness of the Extremist, and the Negligence of the Foolish page 129.

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descends upon you, before the dark and gloomy trials occur.
Allah, the Most High is He, said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا

عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

“O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?
Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not
do.” [As-Saff: 2-3]



From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Not Inviting to It

To invite to Allah is to convey the knowledge which the caller carries. So that which is obligatory upon the one who has been provided with beneficial knowledge is to call the slaves of Allah to His obedience, (doing) that which he has legislated and leaving off that which Allah has prohibited. Calling to Allah is the job of the Messengers, from the first to the last of them. So whoever is concerned with following behind their example let that also be in benefiting the Muslims to rectify their affairs, and saving them from that which harms them in their religion and in their worldly life just as the Prophets (عليهم السلام) were. For indeed, from the greatest of things that lead to success and rectification is to call (the people) to (the worship of) Allah.

Al-Imām Ash-Shawkanī said in the book entitled The Manners of Seeking Knowledge, (I34-I35), “So the scholar who is satisfied (and pleased) with that which has come to us from (Allah), which Allah the Most High sent in order to perfect noble manners...If he makes his main concern and objective bringing about religious benefits for the slaves and warding away from them any harms, (in such a case) he will be from the most beneficial and successful Muslim callers and carriers of the (divine) proofs that has come from the Lord of all the worlds.”

Before him, Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, “It is obligatory that the Muslims be one hand (united) against the disbelievers, and that they unite and combat upon the obedience of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and upon Al-Jihād for the sake of Allah. (It is obligatory) that they call the Muslims to that which the early generations were upon from truthfulness and righteous manners. For indeed this is from the greatest principles and fundamentals of Al-Islām and Al-Imān, with which Allah sent the Messengers and revealed the Books, and it is from the greatest acts of worship.”¹²⁰

So when the carriers of knowledge play games with (the affair) of calling to Allah, it will result in ignorance becoming widespread amongst the people. (This ignorance) will take the place of knowledge, and legislative knowledge will then be boycotted and (the people will) wage war against it. Sufficient is this as a reason for its disappearance.



¹²⁰ Summary of the Religious Verdicts of Egypt page 509

From the Causes of the Disappearance of knowledge: the Deviation of the Scholars

If a scholar makes a mistake, and he is followed in his mistake, the world goes astray. So what if he deviated from the truth and became a caller to this (deviance)?! Certainly, this is harmful to him and misery upon those who are tested by him.

Allah, the Most High, said:

﴿وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ
الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ
أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحَمَلَ
عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثُ أَوْ تَرَكَهُ يَلْهَثُ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا فَأَقْصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾﴾

And recite (O Muhammad ﷺ) to them the story of him to whom We gave Our Ayāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), but he threw them away, so Shayṭān (Satan) followed him up, and he became of those who went astray. And had We willed, We would surely have elevated him therewith but he clung to the earth and followed his own vain desire. So his description is the description of a dog: if you drive him away, he

lolls his tongue out, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls his tongue out. Such is the description of the people who reject Our Ayāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect. [Al-A'rāf: 175-176]

On the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) it is reported that he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Indeed that which I fear for you all is a man who will recite the Qur'ān, to the point where its splendor will appear upon him and he will be a helper to Al-Islām. (Then all of a sudden) he will alter (the religion) to (the extent that) Allah wills, and then (he will slip) from it, throwing it behind his back, and will seek to attack his neighbor with a sword, (while) accusing him of polytheism." (Hudhayfah) said, I said: 'Oh Prophet of Allah, which of them is more rightly described as a polytheist, the accuser or the one being accused? He (ﷺ) said: rather the accuser.¹²¹

¹²¹ Reported by Ibn Hibbān number 81, Al-Bazzār as it is found in Al-Bahr Az-Zakhār 7/220 number 2793. It was graded sound by Al-Haythamī in Al-Majma I/178 and Abū Ya'laa as it is found in Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr 6/452. Ibn Kathīr said: its chain is sound. I (Muhammad Al-Imām) comment: And it is as he said.

Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī (رحمه الله) said, in A Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations, (320I), "The ḥadīth is sound if Allah the Most High wills, because it has corroborating texts to support it."

On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) (it is reported that he entered upon Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه), and said, "Advise me Oh 'Abdullah. So Hudhayfah said, 'Has not certainty come to you?' (Ibn Mas'ūd) said, 'yes by my Lord.' (Hudhayfah) said, 'Verily true misguidance is to approve today that which you used to disapprove yesterday, and to disapprove that which you used to approve of yesterday. And beware of being multicolored (i.e. two faced, one who behaves differently depending on who he is around) for indeed the religion of Allah is one religion.¹²²

Ad-Dhahabī said in As-Siyar 7/152-153, while speaking about the different types of scholars, "And (there are) a people who acquired knowledge and used it to obtain positions of leadership. Thus they became oppressive, and left off restricting themselves to authentic (sources of) knowledge. They committed major sins and fawāhish of all types. May they be destroyed!! These are not Scholars! Some of them did not fear Allah with respect to their knowledge, rather (some of them) pursued stratagem (in legislative affairs). When they gave juristic verdicts they were

¹²² Reported by Alī bin Al-Ja'd in his Musnad number 3083, Al-Lālākāī in The Explanation of the Creed of the People of the Sunnah & The Unified Group I/90 number 120, Al-Bayhaqī in As-Sunan Al-Kubra II0/42, Al-Hārith bin Abī Usamah in his Musnad as it is found in Bagiyah Al-Bāhith I/527. It is an authentic narration.

based on concession and excessive ease, and when they narrated, they mentioned the odd narrations (i.e. either odd opinions or narrations in which reliable narrators opposed those more reliable than them either in number or characteristics.) Some of them were insolent against Allah and fabricated prophetic traditions. Thus Allah disgraced (and exposed) them; their knowledge vanished and became a provision to the Hell-fire. These categories (i.e. the scholars mentioned by Ad-Dhahabi earlier in his work), all of them narrated many narrations, and were proficient in general, and after them came a generation whose deficiency in knowledge and action become plain.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) say: There are some scholars whose deviation (truly) harms the Muslims significantly, especially if this deviant scholar is persistent in seeing himself to be correct and if he is well known amongst the people. (The affair is worse) if the instigating trouble makers are active in his deviance using all types of devilish methods, such as their statements: “He’s balanced (he takes the middle course); he understands the times, (he is) enlightened, he has grabbed hold of the heart of the legislation.” This type of scholar, if the Islāmic Ummah has good thoughts about him, he will flip them upside down, changing their state from uprightness to misguidance.

Al-Imām Sufyān bin Uyanah said, “The one who goes astray from our scholars has a resemblance to the Jews; and whoever goes astray from the worshippers, then he resembles the Christians.”¹²³

Al-Hāfith Sufyān Ath-Thawrī said, “Seek refuge in Allah from the trial of the ignorant worshipper, and the fitnah of the wicked scholar. For indeed their fitnah is the fitnah of every tested individual.”¹²⁴

Woe to the Islāmic Ummah from this wicked category of scholar. The Ummah will surely go astray if they were to be deceived by this type of scholar, accepting his deviance, misguidance, and errors.



¹²³ It is a sound narration.

¹²⁴ Reported by Ibn Al-Mubārak in Az-Zuhd page (18), Al-Aajūri in The Manners of the Scholars page (108) narration number 70, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues I/666 number II6I and it is an authentic narration.

From the reasons behind the Disappearance of Knowledge: Being Ignorant of the goals and objectives of the Islāmic Legislation

Knowledge of the Islāmic Legislation's objectives is a foundation for carrying out the religion in a correct manner. So when the carriers of Al-Islām are ignorant about the aims of the legislation, they are bound to produce failure and lost. Whoever is ignorant to the ease of Al-Islām will fall into harshness and obstinacy. (Likewise) whoever is ignorant to (importance of) holding firmly to Al-Islām, will fall into ignobility, sins, and will allow the religion to be the object of belittlement and lowliness.

Al-Izz bin Abdus Salām said in Qawāid Al-Ahkām 2/I60, "Whoever is keen on understanding the objectives of the Islāmic Legislation in bringing about good and warding off evil, he will gain the knowledge that it is not permissible to be negligent as it pertains to such and such a good, and (likewise) it is not permissible to draw near to such and such a harm, even if there is not a consensus, text, or specific analogy about the issue."

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: So what about the condition of the one who is ignorant of that which is well known from the religion, and he begins to behave haphazardly, while he claims to be from the gigantic (personalities) of Al-Islām.

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah has some words in which he clarifies that the objective of Al-Islām is to correct the interior, not merely the exterior. He mentions in (his work entitled), Repelling the Apparent Opposition Between the Intellect and the Text 9/372-373, “**And the creation, their rectification and happiness is in Allah being the one they worship, the one who for Him they should have the highest degree of love and desire, and that should be the greatest goal, and the ultimate objective...and it is obligatory that He be the intended aim for all movements (and actions).**”

Ash-Shātībī said (in his work entitled) Al-Muwāfaqāt (2/8), “**Verily (Allah) intended, with His legislation, the establishment of (various forms of) good, both the (good) of this life as well as that of the hereafter.**”

Whoever understands the legislation in any other way, he is ignorant. Let’s put forth an example (describing the one who does) not have understanding of the objectives of the Islāmic legislation, (and instead) follows his desires:

It is well known that the Islāmic legislation came to remove the people from following their desires to following (Allah’s) legislation. Following ones desires is contrary to worshipping Allah, (it opposes) sincerity, honesty, love, honor and being pleased with and submitting to Allah’s legislation and order. So

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whoever does not understand the objective of worship, his worship will be based on customary habits and outward appearance. By following (ones) desires there are harms that are above imagination.

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 19/34: **“And a human being, if his nature and frame of mind become corrupt, will desire things that harm him, and will take pleasure in them. Rather he will even be so passionately in love (with it) that he will corrupt his intellect, his religion, his etiquettes, his body, and his wealth (to obtain this desire)”**¹²⁵.

¹²⁵ **Translator’s Note:** Look at the case of many individuals that are addicted to heroin, cocaine, alcohol, various forms of marijuana, as well as many of the prescription drugs that are plaguing society. These addicts have no limit to what they are willing to sacrifice to be intoxicated, even if it means risking their own lives and the lives of their children. Everyone must be mindful of the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) **“Whoever meets Allah addicted to intoxicants, it is as if he met Allah as one who worships an idol.”** [Al-Albānī authenticated this narration in Sahīh At-Targhīb wa at-Tarhīb, due to corroborating narrations 2364]. Also the Prophet (ﷺ) said, as found in the ḥadīth of “Abdullah bin ‘Abbās, **“Stay away from intoxicants, for indeed (intoxicants) are the key to every evil.”** [Graded by Al-Albānī as hasan due to other narrations, as is found in Sahīh At-Targhīb wa at-Tarhīb]

Another example:

Al-Islām has prohibited fornication, and likewise prohibited every pathway, cut off every road, and has closed every door that leads to it. So whoever is ignorant of the objective of the Islāmic Legislation in prohibiting fornication ----- which is to safeguard (people's) honor from accusation and evil thoughts ---- he will be concerned with warning the people from fornication and will not warn from those things which actually lead to it such as 'tabarruj' (i.e. women openly displaying themselves in public in an illicit immodest fashion), as well as the intermingling between men and women, men and women being alone with one another, hearing women's voices (without a need), and (listening to others) describe them. So (we say) to the one who strives to rectify the people, (I advise you to) become proficient in knowing what Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) intend. For (indeed) it is from the fundamental ways of (obtaining) benefit from Islāmic Legislative Knowledge.



From the reasons behind the disappearance of knowledge: Seeking knowledge from the Youth and leaving off the Elders

That which we intend here by 'youth' are those who have only obtained a small amount of knowledge, and then felt they were in no need of the scholars, although they themselves were not firmly rooted in (knowledge). These 'youth' are the ones who strove to cut off the path ways to the Major Scholars. There are many narrations warning from seeking knowledge at the hands of the youth if the elders are present.

It comes on the authority of Abī Umayyah Al-Jumahī¹²⁶ that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, **'Verily from the signs of the hour is that knowledge is sought from the youth.'** ¹²⁷

¹²⁶ **Translator's Note:** Safwān bin Umayyah bin Khalaf bin Wahb bin Hadhāqah bin Jamh Al-Qurashi al-Jumahi, Abū Wahb, and he is also called Abū Umayyah Al-Mekki, a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), his father was killed the day of Badr as a disbeliever, and he became Muslim after the conquest of Mecca. He died during the days of the assassination of Uthmān (رضي الله عنه). It was also said year 41 or 42 in the early days of the Caliphate of Muawiyah (رضي الله عنه).

On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) he said, "The people will not cease to be upon good as long as they take (knowledge) from their elders. If they seek it from the youth and the wicked ones, they will be destroyed."¹²⁸

On the authority of Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), he said, "Indeed I have come to know the time in which the people will be upright

¹²⁷ Collected by Ibn Al-Mubārak in Az-Zuhd (61), Abū Amr in 'Al-Fitan' (62), Al-Lālākāī in The Explanation of the Creed of the People of the Sunnah & The Unified Group I/85 number I02, At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr number (I055), Ibn Munda in Al-Ma'rifa 2/20-21, Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues I/612 number (I051), and Al-Khatīb in Al-Faqīh and Al-Mutafaqqih 2/100 narration number (775). It is a sound ḥadīth, look in Al-Albānī's Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations ḥadīth number (695).

¹²⁸ Reported by Ibn Al-Mubārak in Az-Zuhd number 815, Abdur Razzāq (20446), Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues (I057, I058, I059, I060) and the wording belongs to him. It is an authentic narration, and was narrated as a statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) by Al-Harawi in The Blameworthiness of Philosophical Rhetoric, but it is not authentic. Some scholars have decisively mentioned that this narration takes the ruling of being ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

and the time when the people will be corrupt, if fiqh comes from the youth, the elder will resist it. If fiqh comes from the elder the youth will follow him and they both will be guided aright.”¹²⁹

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: Based on this, the scholars have determined that the origin of evil and trials amongst the Muslims is from this category (of people) who are not firmly rooted in Islāmic Knowledge, and neither have they returned to those who are (actually) firmly rooted in it. Rather these individuals who are not firmly rooted proceed unilaterally with their own opinion. (As for those) who are more knowledgeable than them, those whose feet are more firmly established, and have precedence in age, (these individuals) deem them to be foolish. Here are (the statements of some of the scholars about this category):

¹²⁹ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues I/615 narration number I055, and its chain is sound. Al-Qāsim bin Asbag collected it in his Musannaf as it is (found) in Fath Al-Bārī with the (following) wording: “**The corruption of the religion is if knowledge comes from the youth, thus the elder is recalcitrant to it. The rectification of the people is if knowledge comes from the elder, in which the youth follows him upon it.**” Al-Hāfith graded its chain to be authentic in Fath Al-Bārī I/301.

Ibn Hazm said in his work entitled, Al-Akhlāq wa As-Sayr page (91), “There is no harm upon the Islāmic Sciences and its people more destructive than the novices (i.e. unqualified beginners in the field). For indeed they are ignorant, while they think they know, and they corrupt but believe they are rectifying.”

Ash-Shātībī said in his work (entitled) Al-‘Itisām I/145: “Undeniably every firmly established (scholar) would never innovate. Innovation only occurs from one who did not gain mastery over the knowledge in which he innovated in, according to that which the ḥadīth points to. (This will be explained) later, with the permission of Allah. Certainly people are only ruined by the ignorant ones, those who perceive themselves to be scholars.”

Al-Imām ash-Shawkānī said in al-Badr at-tāli’ I/473 in the biography of Alī bin Qāsim Hansh, “From the fascinating speech that I heard from him (is that) he said the people are of three levels: The highest level are the elders, they know the truth as well as the falsehood, and if they differ, it does not lead to trials, due to their knowledge of what each of them possess. The lowest level are the common folk (who are) upon the fitrah, they are not averse to the truth, and they are followers of those who emulate it, if he is correct, so are they, and if he is wrong, they are as well. (As for the) third level, they are the origin of evil and the source for the trials that exist in the religion. They are the ones who did

not devote their efforts to knowledge in order that they rise up to the first level, and they did not leave it off so that they be grouped with the lowest level. When they see someone from the highest level say something that they are not familiar with, and it opposes their beliefs----which their negligence caused them to fall into---- they aim at him arrows of rebuke, ascribe to him every disgusting statement, and alter the fitrah of the lowest level of people (i.e. the common people) so that they no longer accept the truth. (This is done) by using fabricated misrepresentations. (When this occurs) trials will appear intensely in the religion. This is the meaning of his words, which we heard from him. And he surely spoke truthfully. If a person were to ponder over that (which was mentioned) he would find the affair to be like he said.”

Important Note: The reader may understand from the aforementioned statements of the Scholars that the learned from amongst the students of knowledge are generally blameworthy; but this is not the case. Rather the students of knowledge are the scholars’ ambassadors to mankind. The blameworthy from amongst them are those who compete with the scholars, deeming themselves in no need of their guidance, advice, and knowledge sought at their hands. For more information about this, look to my book [The Beginning and Ends of Deviance](#).

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(We summarize) this issue by saying there are two types of students who have learned:

The First Type: (students) who do not deem themselves independent (of the scholars), nor are they deceived by their (own limited) knowledge. (These students) are not amazed by their own understanding. Rather they (graciously serve) as ambassadors for the scholars, returning to them, narrating from them, acting based on their directives, and they continue from where (the scholars) connected. These are the ones who it is desired that the Ummah will be pleased with them. Certainly they are with the Scholars, the Rabbaniyīn, and likewise it is desired that in the future they will be Imāms of guidance, and authorities for the Ummah.

The Second Type: These (students) are keen on being independent with their knowledge and competing with their elders. They are amazed by their understanding and eloquence, deceived by those impressed ones around them, especially when they hear from them, “Oh Sheikh! Oh Sheikh!” And when one of (these students) reviews some treaties or authors (some books), the Devil will deceive him, saying to him “You, You¹³⁰.” And if (this student) hears his (*own*) teacher say to him “Oh Our

¹³⁰ **Translator’s Note:** As it is said in colloquial English, “You are the man, you that bull!”

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brother,” and not “Oh Sheikh” he holds it against his teacher.

We ask Allah for well being!



From the reasons for the disappearance of knowledge: Seeking knowledge with the people of Innovation and Hizbiyyah (Partisanship)¹³¹

Every Muslim should know that innovation is the enemy of the religion, it is deadly poison. And why shouldn't it be so, when (it is the case that) the introduction of

¹³¹ **Translator's Note:** Dr. Rabī' bin Hādī Al-Madkhalī, former Department Head and Professor at the University of Al-Madinah, was asked about the meaning of partisanship. From that which he said was the following: "Everyone who opposes the Methodology of the Salaf, is considered to be from the misguided parties. (As for Hizbiyyah) it does not have any conditions. Allah called the previous nations Ahzāb. Likewise He called Quraysh, once they gathered, Ahzāb, although they did not have a specific organization, rather that which they had was Shirk (i.e. polytheism). Therefore it is not a condition that the hizb be organized. But if it becomes organized, then the affair is even worse. (Also) being fanatic to a specific idea that opposes the Prophetic Sunnah, and fanatically taking people as enemies based on this idea, (likewise) this is partisanship. If an individual adopts a deviant ideology, and then gathers the people upon this (deviant principle), this is considered a hizb, whether it is (an official) organization or not."

Source: [<http://ia700209.us.archive.org/4/items/hyzbya/hyzbya.mp3>]

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(newly invented matters) within the religion is a reason for the disappearance of Prophetic traditions, with which the religion is established?!

On the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) he said, **“There does not come upon the people a year except that they introduce innovation (into the religion). In that year they kill prophetic traditions, until the point when the innovation will live and the prophetic traditions will die.”**¹³²

Al-Haythamī said in Al-Majma I/188: The men (of the chain) are reliable narrators.

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) say: Al-Haythamī mentions this phrase while there are some weak narrators in its chain. In this chain (there is a narrator by the name of) Mahdi bin Abi Mahdi, and his condition is unknown, but this narration is strengthened by that which is narrated on the authority Hasān bin Atiyah. He said,

¹³² Collected by Ad-Dāni in Al-Fitan 3/613, narration number 277, Ibn Waddāh page (38), as well as others.

“A people never innovated in their religion except that Allah removes from the Sunnah that which is similar to it, and does not return it to them until the Day of Judgment”¹³³

Indeed every Muslim should know that the foundation for the presence of innovation, its spreading, and its gaining control over the Muslims, is only due to knowledge being sought at the hands of the people of innovation and partisanship. This acquisition (of knowledge) is an object of caution, both legislatively and intellectually, based on the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ), **“Indeed from the signs of the hour, is that knowledge will be sought from Youth.”¹³⁴** The people of knowledge have explained the meaning of ‘Youth’ (in this narration) to be the people of innovation, and that is the correct (explanation of the word ‘Youth’ as found in the narration).

¹³³ Collected by Ad-Dārimī in his Musnad I/231 narration number 99, Ibn Wadāh in Innovation and the Prohibition of It narration number 90, Abū Nuaym in Hilyatu Al-Awliyah 6/73, Ya’qūb bin Sufyān Al-Faswi in Al-Marifah wa At-Tārīkh 3/38, and its chain is sound.

¹³⁴ It is a sound ḥadīth, and its reference has proceeded.

Ash-Shātībī said about this explanation, **“It is correct, because the people of innovation are ‘Youth’ in knowledge, and for this reason they became from the people of innovation.”**¹³⁵

The pious predecessors used to warn with intensity against seeking knowledge at the hands of the people of innovation. On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) he said, **“The people will continue to be in (a state) of good as long as they take knowledge from their elders. If they seek knowledge from the youth and the wicked from amongst them, they will be destroyed.”**¹³⁶

This report has also come from Ibn Abdul Barr, narration number (I059) with the (following) wording, **“If knowledge is with your youth, the youth will belittle the elders.”**¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Al-I’tisām 2/I74.

¹³⁶ Collected by Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in his A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues narration number (I057) and Al-Harawi in (his work entitled) The Blameworthiness of Philosophical Rhetoric narration number I412. Its chain is authentic; its takhrīj has proceeded.

¹³⁷ It is authentic with this wording.

On the authority of Ibn Sirīn, he said, **“Indeed this knowledge is religion, so watch who you take your knowledge from.”**¹³⁸

On the authority of Mālik, he said to Khālid bin Khadāsh, **“Fear Allah, and watch where you take this affair from.”**¹³⁹

Al-Harawī collected in the previous reference narration number I389 with the wording, **“Indeed this knowledge is religion, so watch who you take your religion from. I have met seventy (people), and he pointed with his hand to the Masjid of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), saying: so and so said, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said. And I did not take any knowledge from them...).** This narration, I do not know it to be authentically reported from any of the Companions and not from the Messenger (ﷺ), but it was authenticated on the authority of other than Mālik from the (students of the Companions).

¹³⁸ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/398 narration number 438, Ibn Sa’d 7/194, Ibn Hibbān in Muqadimatu Al-Majrūhīn I/21, Ibn Iddi in Muqadimatu Al-Kamāl I/155, Al-Khatīb in Al-Faqīh wa Al-Mutafaqqih 2/191, narration number 844, and its chain is authentic.

¹³⁹ Collected by Al-Harawī in The Blameworthiness of Philosophical Rhetoric narration number 886, I391, Al-Khatīb in ‘Al-Kifāyah (I52) and its chain is authentic.

Also Yaqūb bin Shayba Al-Fasawī collected this narration in Al-Ma'rifa and At-Tarīkh I/684 and Ibn Abdul Barr in At-Tamhīd I/66 on the authority of Mu'an bin 'Isa that he said Mālik bin Anas used to say, "Do not seek knowledge from four (types of people), but acquire it from anyone other than them. Do not acquire knowledge from a shameless person, openly known for foolishness, even if he be from amongst the people who report many narrations. Do not acquire knowledge from a liar, who lies in reports amongst the people, if that has been experienced from him, even if he is not accused of lying on the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). (Do not) acquire knowledge from a person of desires, who calls the people to his desires. And do not take knowledge from an elder who has virtue and worship, if he does not know what he is saying."¹⁴⁰

The scholars who (come after the salaf) treaded upon the same path as those who proceeded. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, as it is found in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 28/205: "This is a true statement from the scholars of the early generations and from the Imāms, that the testimony of the callers of innovation is not accepted, neither are they prayed behind, and knowledge is not sought from them."

¹⁴⁰ Its chain is authentic.

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In the book Fatāwa of the Muslim Imāms in cutting the Tongue of the Innovators, by its compiler Mahmūd Muhammad Khatāb As-Subkī, page (131): “The Mujtahidūn from amongst the scholars have united upon the fact that it is not permissible to acquire knowledge from an innovator. They (also) said, that fornication, which is from the major sins, is lighter than a person asking an innovator about his religion”.

In the same book page (61): “And that which is sought from a person is that he acts based on that which agrees with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah, and to leave off everything that opposes that. Everyone who hates the Sunnah and hates acting upon it, he is a disbeliever, and it is obligatory to stay far away from him. Whoever from amongst the Mashaykh has innovated and left off the Sunnah, it is obligatory to be distant from him, to boycott and shun him as well. It is not permissible to seek knowledge from him. For indeed it corrupts the religion, and what corruption is greater than that?”

Oh Muslim, what sound minded person would allow the scholars of innovation and partisanship gain control over his heart intellect, and soul? (These innovators will) plant destructive doubts in the people’s intellect and heart. (This will lead to an individual) perceiving truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth. The permissible will be impermissible, and likewise the opposite.

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(The people of innovation) will alter the distinguishing characteristics of the religion. They will change the established principles of brotherhood for the sake of religion, along with the noble interactions (the take place amongst) the Muslim. As a result of this, the people's blood and honor will (no longer be sacred). Lives (will be) lost and the Islāmic Ummah will break apart in to parties, fighting one another. This will lead to trembling fanaticism, and declining conditions. (Oh noble reader) nothing illustrates this to you like that which you see in this time period from the vast calamities and havoc caused by the (misguided) call of the scholars of innovation and partisanship, regardless of their different types.

So (fear) Allah, and (be mindful of) Him in (knowing the importance of) learning at the hands of (the scholars of) Ahl As-Sunnah and their ambassadors. Indeed seeking knowledge at their hands is nourishment. It is a cure, a healing, liveliness, strength, light, and guidance!!



From the reasons behind the Disappearance of Knowledge: Following the Jews, the Christians, the Magians, and other than them from the people of disbelief

Imitating the enemies of Al-Islām is a door (which leads a Muslim) to (become) ignorant of the religion and (can even cause him to) wage war against it. This is from the greatest things that lead to the disappearance of knowledge. The Prophet (ﷺ) has warned (the Muslim Ummah) from imitating the disbelievers. He said,

“Whoever imitates a people, then he is from them.”¹⁴¹

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said in Prerequisites of the Straight Path I/270 while commenting on this ḥadīth, **“The least of its conditions is that it points to the impermissibility of imitating the disbelievers, even though the apparent meaning (of**

¹⁴¹ Reported by Abū Dawud (4031), Ahmad 2/92, Ibn Abī Shaybah 1940I, At-Tahāwi in Mushkil Al-Aathar (1231), and by At-Tabarānī in Al-Awsat no. 8323. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah has graded its chain to be good in Prerequisites of the Straight Path I/269. Also, Al-Irāqī declared it to be authentic, as well as Al-Albānī in Sahīh Al-Jāmi’ (6149).

this ḥadīth) indicates that the one who imitates the disbelievers is a disbeliever himself.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) say: The correct ruling about the one who imitates the Kufār is that there are details (involved). From amongst them are those whose imitation is that of sin and evil. (Then) there are those whose imitation is that of hypocrisy and disbelief. So whatever of them it maybe, resembling the disbelievers contradicts the wisdom of sending Messengers and revealing divine scripture. Likewise it contradicts the aim of the Islāmic Legislation in rescuing the Muslims from following the whims of their enemies. Allah the Most High said,

﴿وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ﴾

And so judge (you O Muhammad ﷺ) between them by what Allah has revealed and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they turn you (O Muhammad ﷺ) far away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you. [Al-Maaidah: 49]

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Tamiyyah mentioned in Prerequisites of the Straight Path I/290 while explaining the ḥadīth of hastening to break the fast “This is a text (establishing) that the religious dominance that will occur due to hastening to break the fast (on

time) is due to opposing the Jews and the Christians. And if opposing them is a reason for the victory of the religion, then the only reason for the sending of the Messengers is to make the religion of Allah victorious over every religion. The essence of opposing them is from the greatest objectives of the sending (of the Messengers).”

What a calamity! How great are the harms and evils that violate ones religion and worldly life, as a result of imitating the disbelievers, some general and others more specific. The Muslims who imitate the disbelievers have become so fond of them in these times, to the extent that could not be perceived. There has come from amongst them leftist, rightist, easterners, westerners, communist, socialist, secularist, callers to freedom and equality, and there are those who follow the west in everything they do! These are issues of disbelief and heresy. This imitation is a finale of distancing oneself from Allah, His religion, His slaves, and His Awliya. The Famous Historian Ibn Khaldun clarified the dangers of imitating (the disbelievers) and how it is a psychological defeat that leads to a defeat on the battlefield at the hands of the enemies of Al-Islām, (as is mentioned in his “Introduction” pages 184-185. He said (رحمه الله): “Indeed the one who is conquered (and defeated) is always passionately fond of imitating the dominator in his religious practices, his attire, his creed, and all other affairs and customs. This is because the soul always believes

there to be perfection (and completeness) in the one who dominated it, and to whom it has submitted. The soul considers him perfect, (this) is either due to what has become established in the soul from honoring the one who has attained dominance, or due to the soul being deceived by the one who is dominate, and that the soul's submitting is not due to a natural dominance, but due to the perfection of the conqueror. So if the soul becomes deceived by that, and becomes attached (and fixated) upon this belief, it will follow every practice of the dominator, and will attempt to mimic him; that is imitation. Or it is possible that the soul sees the victor to be superior over it not due to tribal solidarity, or physical strength, but rather due to what the soul has followed of his customs and manners, and its being deceived by that due to the dominance...look at every country, how it is the case most of the time that the people wear the clothing of the military personnel and administrative forces. That is because they are dominant over them. This is to the point that if there was a nation living next to another nation who is dominant over them, a large portion of this imitation and emulation penetrates their soul."

Until he said: "As it is in Andalus (Spain) in these times with the Galician Nations, for indeed you find them imitating them in their clothing, their appearance, and many of their customs and habits, so much so (that they even) draw images (of the one who

dominates them) on their walls, in the factories, and in their homes. The wise observer will come to the conclusion that these are (clear) indicators of the dominance (of others) over (these people). The command belongs to Allah alone. Keeping (the aforementioned) in mind, ponder the secret of the statement: "The common folk are upon the way of the King," for indeed this statement is in line with that which we are addressing. Because the ruler is dominant over the ones beneath his authority, and the citizens emulate him, due to their belief that he is complete, similar to the belief of children toward their fathers, and students toward their teachers."

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) said: If it was not in resembling the Jews and the Christians and the disbelievers anything but the fact that it becomes settled upon the one imitating that he is deficient in his intellect, his intelligence, his Imān, and that he loses certainty, and then becomes incapable of understanding the sources of happiness and might, (that would be sufficient in understanding the evil of imitating the disbelievers). (It leads to) affirming perfection for the enemy, and describing him with honor and majesty. (Imitating the enemies of Al-Islām leads to) following them, surrendering to them, humbly submitting to them, and giving them precedence over Allah, the Subtle the Well Informed, as well as (over) the Noble and Merciful Messenger. (Eventually this individual) will not consider himself of any value

next to the enemies of Allah, rather he will despise himself, deeming himself not qualified to criticize, correct, investigate, or research. Allah's punishment upon this category is what He mentioned in His statement,

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ

الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

“And be not like those who forgot Allah (i.e. became disobedient to Allah) and He caused them to forget their own selves, (let them to forget to do righteous deeds). Those are the Fāsiqūn (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” [Al-Hashr: 19]

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in The Sickness and the Cure page (244): “Allah punished the one who forgot Him with two punishments. The first punishment is that Allah has forgotten this individual. Secondly: Allah caused him to forget his own soul. As for the meaning of Allah forgetting his slave it is that he neglects and abandons him, and leaves him to waste. Thus destruction is closer to him than the hand is to the mouth. As for (the slave) forgetting about his own self, it means that he forgets the lofty shares, and the means that will lead to the felicity, success, and self rectification. As for that which completes his soul, Allah causes him to forget it in totality. (The thought of completing his faith) does not come across his mind, and it is not

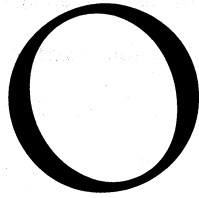
something that he remembers. He is not concerned with it, so that perhaps he may seek it out. For indeed it does not occur to him lest he may aim for it, or even prefer it. Also (Allah) causes the (slave) to forget his own defects, harms, and shortcomings. (As a result) the thought of curing his soul does not come to mind. Neither does he strive to remove the flaws and sicknesses that lead him to corruption and destruction.”

Allah punished (those who forgot Him) by placing (their enemies) who they emulate, in power over them. (These are those who) enslave and humiliate them, plunder their wealth, and eventually conquer them, making them taste an evil torment.

So (Oh noble reader) will there be any one who will hold their head high, and be displeased with following (behind) the disbeliever?!



From the reasons behind the disappearance of knowledge: Not knowing the people of evil with detail, in order to avoid them



On the authority of Hudhayfah bin Al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه), he said,

“The people used to ask the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about the good, and I used to ask him about the evil, fearing that it would reach me. So I said, Oh Messenger of Allah, We were in ignorance and in evil and Allah has bestowed upon us the present good, will there be any evil after this good? He said Yes. I asked Will there be good after that evil? He said Yes, but it would be tainted with Dakhan (i.e. a little evil). I asked, What will its dakhn be? He said, “there will be some people who will lead (people) according to principles other than my Sunnah. You will see their actions and disapprove of them. I said, will there be any evil after that good? He said, Yes, there will be some people who invite others to the gates of hell, and whoever accepts their invitation to it, will be thrown in it (by them). I said O Allah’s Messenger! Describe those people to us. He said, they will belong to us and speak our language. I asked (O Allah’s Messenger)! What do you order me to do if such a thing should take place in my life? He said, adhere to the group of Muslims and their Leader. I asked, if there is

neither a group (of Muslims) nor a leader (what shall I do)? He said, Keep away from all those different sects, even in if you had to bite onto the root of a tree, till you meet Allah while you are still in that state.”¹⁴²

Ibn Abi Jamra said, “This hadīth has within it (a sign) of Allah’s wisdom, (in making) each of His slaves unique in their own way. (Allah) made beloved to most of the Companions the question about the various types of good, in order that they may act upon it, and teach (this information) to others. While Allah made beloved to Hudhayfah the question about evil, so that he may avoid it, and in order that (this question) may be a reason for (this evil) to be removed from those who Allah wants to be safe.”¹⁴³

Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī said in Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations (in explanation) of this prophetic tradition 6/54I no. 2739: “This ḥadīth is of great magnitude. (It is) from the signs of his (ﷺ) prophethood. (This narration points to) his (ﷺ) sincerity (in advising) his Ummah. How great is the Muslims’ need for (this ḥadīth) in order for them to be saved from division and partisanship which separated (the Muslims’) union, divided

¹⁴² Reported by Al-Bukhārī 3606 and Muslim 1847

¹⁴³ Reporting from Fath Al-Bārī 13/47

up their unity, and removed their might. This was (from the) causes which allowed their enemy to gain power over them, which is a confirmation of Allah's statement, the Blessed, the Most High:

﴿ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَأَصْبِرُوا ۗ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

“And obey Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength departs, and be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are the patient.” [Suratul Anfāl: 46]

It is collected by Al-Hāfith Abī Kathama An-Nasāi in his book (entitled) The Book of Knowledge page 74,

On the authority of Abī Al-Bahtarī on the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه), he said, ‘Indeed my Companions learned the good, while I learn the bad.’ It was said, ‘And what led you to (ask about the evil)?’ He said, ‘Verily the one who learns the places of evil is saved from them.’¹⁴⁴

He also narrated (pg. 28) no. II4 on the authority of Abī Darda (رضي الله عنه), that he said, “Knowledge is (obtained) by learning, and

¹⁴⁴ Its chain is authentic

forbearance (is obtained) by (seeking to have) self-control. Whoever seeks good will obtain it, and whoever seeks protection from evil will be saved from it.”¹⁴⁵

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said, as it is found in The Benefits page (165-167 according to the arrangement of Al-Halabī), the text of which is, “Whoever does not clearly know the way of the Mujrimīn (i.e. criminals, polytheists, sinners etc), he will (eventually make the mistake of) thinking that some of their path is from the path of the believers, as it has taken place in this Ummah in various affairs pertaining to creed, knowledge, and actions. (Certain practices of the) Mujrimīn, the disbelievers, and the enemies of the Messengers (have) entered into the path of the believers, by one who did not know that it was actually from their way. Thus (this person) called to it, declared takfīr upon the one who opposed it, and made permissible that which Allah has declared impermissible, as it has taken place to the majority of the people of innovation from the Jahmiyyah, Qadariyyah, Al-Khawārij, Ar-Rawāfiḍ, and those similar to them, those who introduced innovation, called to it, and declared takfeer upon the one who opposed it.

¹⁴⁵ Its chain is authentic.

The people in this situation are four groups: The first group are those who it has been made descriptively manifest to them the path of the criminals as well as the path of the believers, in terms of knowledge and action. They are the most knowledgeable of the people. The second group are (those people) who are blind to both the paths (of the criminals and the believers); they resemble animals. (You will find) these people (most often tread) within the path of criminals, traversing it more (than the path of the believers). The third group are those who (focus on) knowing the path of the believers, while they remain ignorant of its opposite. The person (in this category) only knows the opposite (path) in a general sense, by merely contrasting, realizing that everything which opposes the path of the believers is falsehood, even if he does not have detailed insight about the way of the evil doers. As for the fourth group, they are those who have detailed knowledge of the path of evil, of innovation, and of disbelief, while only having general knowledge of the path of the believers. This is the condition of the people who concerned themselves with studying the statements of previous nations and the people of innovation. Thus they knew, in detail, the path of evil, while only knowing (the path of the) Messenger (ﷺ) in a general sense, even though certain things may in fact be detailed to them. Whoever ponders the books of this fourth book, will see this clearly... That which is intended (here) is that Allah, Glory be to Him, loves that the

path of His enemies be (clear) and well known, in order that (their ways) may be avoided and despised. And Allah loves that the path of His Awliyah be known, in order that (their path) may be loved and traversed. There are many benefits and secrets in having knowledge of (these paths) which no one knows except Allah. From amongst them is knowledge of the generality of Allah's Lordship and Wisdom, glory be to Him, along with (knowledge of) the completeness of His Names and Attributes, their implications, meanings, requisites, and the way they relate to Allah's actions (and how He deals with His creation).

I mention (Muhammad Al-Imām): Look oh (noble) Muslim reader. Where are we (in comparison to) these groups? Do not seek for yourself anything except that which offers you safety in your religion. And there is no safety except by being equipped with understanding of the religion.



From the causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge after the time period of the Salaf: A Decrease in traveling to seek (knowledge).

The time period of the Salaf was adorned with (frequent) traveling to seek legislative knowledge, to the point that (students of knowledge) would journey for nights, days, weeks, and (even) months in pursuit of a single ḥadīth, as it will (be discussed) soon. Rather some of the scholars of ḥadīth used to travel around the world in their journeys (pursuing knowledge). From them are the following names:

1) Makhūl Ash-Shāmī¹⁴⁶, Adh-Dhahabī mentioned in At-Tadhkira (108) that he said, **“I traveled around the earth seeking knowledge...I was freed in Egypt, and I did not leave a science except that I gathered it, from what I reckon. Then I went to Iraq, then to Madinah; and I did not leave in them any knowledge except that I gathered it, based on what I reckon. Then I went to Shām and filtered my knowledge.”**

2) Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm Al-Asbhāni known famously as Ibn Al-Muqri said, **“I traveled around the east and**

¹⁴⁶ **Translator’s Note:** Makhūl Ash-Shāmī, Abū ‘Abdullah: Well known, reliable, faqīh, died approx 113 after the hijrah.

the west many times, and I entered Al-Bayt Al-Maḳdās ten times.”¹⁴⁷

3.) The Great Hāfith Muhammad bin Ishāq bin Manda Al-Asbahāni, traveled to Naysābur, then to Baghdād, then to Damascus, then Mecca, then to Egypt, Bukhāraa, Merv, Balj, and surrounding countries.¹⁴⁸

4.) Al-Hāfith Al-Imām Abū Nasr As-Sajzī: Al-Khatīb said in Ar-Rihla (212): “(I) circled the horizon in the path of seeking prophetic narrations.”

(These scholars of the Salaf) used to spend the majority of their lives traveling, to the point that some of their traveling used to occupy thirty years, others forty years, and some even more than that. It is known that the (average) life span of the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) is between sixty and seventy years, and it is rare that a person’s life span exceeds that.

So after this major effort (and struggle) in seeking ḥadīth, circling around the earth, sacrificing lives, and precious valuables, there

¹⁴⁷ Ar-Rihla by Al-Khatīb 210-211.

¹⁴⁸ Ar-Rihla by Al-Khatīb.

The Disappearance of Knowledge

has occurred a withdrawal, recession, and laziness (in traveling to seek knowledge). In later years many students of knowledge have turned their attention to the worldly life, to the point that weakness in this art is more apparent than in other areas. Al-Hāfith Ibn Hajar said as it is found in Al-Jawāhir wa Ad-Durrar I/87, “There is no doubt that in every country, it has occurred a decline in (the number of students) busied with (all of) the various sciences, but a significantly greater decline has occurred in those busied with seeking this honorable legislative knowledge. That is because many of the Islāmic countries have lost those who can investigate (and research) the Riwayah, not to mention the Dirayaa (itself). That is only because they relied upon blind-following, and because their desire to obtain (the tools) which will allow them to reach the level of al-ijtihād has weakened, even if it be in some of them.”



From the Reasons for the Disappearance of Knowledge: Following a School of Thought

The major principle which the people of Al-Islām traverse upon is that which is famously reported from Mālik. He said: “There is no one after the Prophet (ﷺ) except that his statement is accepted and rejected, except the Prophet (ﷺ).”

Al-Albānī said, (Ibn Abdul Al-Hādī authenticated it in Irshād As-Sālik I/227, and Ibn Abdul Barr narrated it in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues 2/925 No. (1761), as well as Ibn Hazm in Usūl Al-Ahkām 6/145 from the statement of Al-Hakam bin Utaybah and Mujāhid. Taqī Ad-Dīn As-Sabki reported it in Al-Fatāwa I/148 from the statement of Ibn ‘Abbās, amazed by its soundness. Then he said, “Mujāhid reported this statement from Ibn ‘Abbās, and Mālik reported it from him and has famously been reported from him. I, (Al-Albānī), said: then Al-Imām Ahmad narrated it from them all. Abū Dawūd said in Questions of Al-Imām Ahmad page (276): I heard Ahmad say, “There is no one except that his opinion is accepted and rejected, except the Prophet (ﷺ).”¹⁴⁹

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Tamiyyah said in Minhāj As-Sunnah 5/262, “Verily guidance moves where the Messenger moves, and where

¹⁴⁹ From Usl of The Prophet’s Prayer Described I/27, Commentary.

his Companions move. And knowledge does not move with anyone else's Companions."

It is incumbent upon every Muslim to be keen on knowing and accepting the truth, treading upon it and obtaining it during situations of ambiguity. The Muslim should be firm upon this until he meets his Lord. While at the same time be very cautious of blind following any Imām. Because the people's zeal for seeking knowledge has weakened, there have been some people who follow schools of thought. These people have turned toward the four Imāms, while their backs are turned toward the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and that which the Salaf of this Ummah were upon. (They have turned their backs to the Salaf) in those things that oppose their school of thought, (even if it be in line with the Qur'ān and Sunnah). So (you find these people) taking the statement of one scholar and leaving off tens of statements of other scholars, or even hundreds. And the most harmful blind following upon the Muslims, is the blind following of the scholars in their mistakes and errors. Great fitnah has occurred between the Muslims due (to many of them) blind following the Four Imāms. The results (of this fitnah) have caused the body to tremble, the hearts to break, and the eyes to shed tears. (Indeed) it is an infraction upon the sanctities of the Muslims by declaring them to be non-Muslims, deeming their honor, blood and wealth (to no longer be sacred), and even

(actually) taking lives (due to this extreme blind following). Look at the section in my book (entitled) Al-Kashf Al-Mubīn an Asnāf Al-Mubadilīn which will illustrate this to you. (All of this fitnah has transpired) even though the four Imāms warned (vehemently) against blind following them.

Abū Hanīfah said: **“If a ḥadīth is found to be authentic, it is my madhab.”**

In another wording: **“It is not permissible for anyone to take our statement if he does not know from where we derived it (i.e. our proof etc.)”**¹⁵⁰

It was reported from Abū Hanīfah that he said, **“If I said a statement that opposes the Book of Allah and the Narration(s) of the Messenger (ﷺ) leave off my statement.”**

As for Al-Imām Mālik, then we have previously mentioned his tremendous principle, **“Everyone’s statement is accepted and rejected except the Prophet’s (ﷺ).”**

It is authentically reported from Al-Imām Ash-Shāfi’ee that he said, **“There is no one except that the Sunnah may escape him and be absent from him. So regardless of what statement I say or foundation I establish, (if there is a) narration from the**

¹⁵⁰ Graded to be authentic by more than one scholar.

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that is in opposition to what I say, then the (correct) statement is that which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, and it is my position (as well).”¹⁵¹

Al-Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal said, “Do not blind follow me, and do not blind follow Mālik, and not Ash-Shāfi’ee, nor Al-Awzāi’, or Ath-Thawri, (but rather) take from where they took from.”¹⁵²

Ibn Al-Qayyim mentioned some precious words surrounding (this topic of) the harms of blind following the four Imāms and other than them. He said (as it is found) in I’lām Al-Muwaqī’in 2/227-228, “The Twentieth Angle: The groups who blind follow have opposed the command of Allah, the command of His Messenger, the guidance of his Companions, and have opposed the (known) custom of the (true) scholars. (Instead) these individuals treaded a path opposite to the path of the people of knowledge. As for them (opposing) the command of Allah, (that

¹⁵¹ Collected by Al-Hākim with a connected chain to Ash-Shāfi’ee, and (also collected) by Ibn Asākir in The History of Damascus. It is (also) with Al-Harwī in The Blameworthiness of Philosophical Rhetoric (47), Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 9/10, and Ibn Hibbān as it is found in Al-Ihsān 3/284, with an authentic chain to Ash-Shāfi’ee.

¹⁵² Look to The Origin of The Prophet’s Prayer Described by Al-Albānī I/32 Commentary.

is due to the fact that) Allah commanded the Muslims to return to Him and His Messenger during times of dispute, but instead the blind followers said, 'We will only return the affair to the one who we follow.'

(As for the people) opposing the command of (Allah's) Messenger, (then that is due to the fact that) the Messenger (ﷺ) commanded the (Muslims) to hold firmly to his way and the way of his rightly guided successors during times of differing, and he commanded (the Muslims) to hold fast to it, biting upon it with one's molar teeth. (But instead) those who blind follow said, 'Rather during times of differing we hold fast to the statement of the one we follow, and we give it precedence over everyone else's statement.'

(As for them opposing the guidance of the Companions) then it is well known by necessity that there was not amongst the (Companions) a single person who used to blind follow another man in all of his statements, and then oppose everyone else from amongst the Companions, not rejecting a single statement of (the one they are blind following) and not accepting a single statement of anyone else. This is from the greatest types of innovation, and ugliest occurrences.

As for these (blind followers) opposing the Imāms (this is due to the fact that) the Imāms prohibited that they should be imitated,

and they (even) warned from this as it has been previously mentioned.

As for these people opposing the way of the People of knowledge, indeed the path (of the people of knowledge) is seeking out the statements of the scholars, correcting and examining them, comparing them to the Qur'ān, authenticated prophetic traditions, and to the statements of his rightly guided successors. So that which is in agreement with the (Qur'ān and Sunnah) they accept it, take it as a religion, judge by it, and give religious verdicts based on it. As for that which opposes that, they do not pay any attention to it, rather they reject it. As for those affairs that are not clear to them, (then they are considered to be) from the affairs of *ijtihād* which at the most it would be merely permissible and not obligatory to take these positions. (And if they took these positions which were based on a scholar's religious *ijtihād*, true follower of the people of knowledge) would not obligate upon anyone (to take their positions) and (would never be from those who say) 'Indeed it is the truth, at the exclusion of that which opposes it.'

This is the way of the people of knowledge, past and present. As for these people of the later generations, they reversed the path, turned the principles of the religion upside down, falsifying the

Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), and the statements of his successors and Companions.”

He also said in (his book entitled) The Soul (264), “Whoever compares the statements of the scholars to the Divine Texts, weighing them (alongside them), opposing that which contradicts the text, (this person) has not invalidated (the statements of the scholars) nor has he wronged them. Rather (this person has actually) followed the scholars, because they all commanded with (this methodology of giving precedence to the truth). Thus the true follower of (the people of knowledge) is the one who acts upon that which they advised with, not the one who opposes them.

Opposing them in a position which they came with, which the text opposes, is easier than opposing them in a general principle that they commanded with and called to, which was to give precedence to the text over their statements. From here it becomes clear the difference between following a scholar in everything he says, and (actually) utilizing their understanding in order to obtain insight from the light of their knowledge. As for the first person (who blindly follows), he takes the scholar’s statement without examining it, or seeking to learn his proof (which he extracted) from the Book and the Sunnah, rather (this person) makes (the statement of the scholar) like a rope which he

places around his throat, imitating the (scholar) with it. For this reason it is called "taqlīd" (i.e. blind following). (This is in opposition) to the one who utilizes the scholar's understanding and seek insight with the light of his knowledge in quest of the Messenger (ﷺ). (This second group) makes the scholars a guide to the first guide (i.e. the Qur'ān and Prophetic texts). So if he arrives at the proof, he is satisfied with (the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Texts) and what it indicates. (He) is in no need of drawing conclusions with other than (the divine texts)."



From the causes of the Disappearance of knowledge: Following behind the Unclear Texts

On the authority of 'Āishah (رضي الله عنها) she said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recited this verse:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۗ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ ۗ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾



“It is He Who has sent down to you (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book (this Qur’ān). In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book, and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials, etc.), and seeking for its hidden meanings, but none knows its hidden meanings save Allah. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it; the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord." And

none receive admonition except men of understanding.” [Alii Imrān: 7]

After reciting this verse, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “If you see those following that which is not entirely clear, they are the ones who Allah has named, so be cautious of them.”¹⁵³

On the authority of Ibn Tawwūs on the authority of his father, he said that Al-Khawārij were mentioned to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) and that which afflicts them while reciting the Qur’ān. He (رضي الله عنه) said, “They believe in the clear, and go astray at the unclear

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَأَمَّنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“but none knows its hidden meanings save Allah. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it; the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord.” And none receive admonition except men of understanding.” [Alii-Imrān: 7]¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Collected by Al-Bukhārī no. 4547 and Muslim no. 2665

¹⁵⁴ Collected by Al-ājūrī in Ash-Sharīa’ no. 47 and its chain is authentic.

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(It is reported) on the authority of ‘Ubaydullah bin Abī Yazīd that he said, I heard Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) and he mentioned the Khawārij, their efforts, and their prayer. He then said **“They do not work harder than the Jews and the Christians, and they are still upon misguidance.”**¹⁵⁵

It is reported on the authority of ‘Āishah (رضي الله عنها) that she said about Allah’s statement,

وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ

“And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it” [Alii Imrān: 7]

She said, **“From their firmness in knowledge is that they believe in the clear and unclear (verses), while they do not know the hidden meanings.”**¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵Collected by Al-ājūrī in Ash-Sharia’ I/I44 no. 48 and its chain is authentic.

¹⁵⁶ Collected by At-Tabarī his Tafsīr 6/202 no. (6626) and its chain is sound.

On the authority of Qatāda, it is reported that he said about the statement of Allah,

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ

“So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials, etc.), and seeking for its hidden meanings” [Alii Imrān: 7]

He (Qatāda) said, “People sought out the hidden meanings, but they erred and instead were inflicted with fitnah, seeking that which was unclear from (these verses). Thus they were destroyed because of that.”¹⁵⁷

And Ibn ‘Abbās explained the meaning of ‘Clear’ and ‘Unclear’ when he said, “The clear texts are the abrogating (verses), the *halāl*, the *harām*, the limits, obligations, and that which is believed in and acted upon.

He said,

وَأَخْرَجْتُ مِنْهَا

¹⁵⁷ Collected by At-Tabarī in his Tafsīr 6/189, and its chain is authentic.

‘...and others not entirely clear’

As for the unclear verses, they are those which are abrogated, as well as (knowledge of) that which came first, that which came later, its example (in the Qur’ān), (as well as the) subdivisions, and that which is believed in, but not acted upon.¹⁵⁸

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said, as it is found in ‘*Tlām Al-Muwaqīn*’ 2/294, “As for the path of the Companions, their successors, the Imāms of ḥadīth such as Ash-Shāfi’ee, Al-Imām Ahmad, Mālik, Abū Hanīfah, Abū Yusef, Al-Bukhārī, and Ishāq, it is the opposite of this path (which the deviant ones tread). (As for their path) they return the unclear verses to the clear verses, and likewise they take from the clear (verses) that which explains to them the (meaning of the) unclear verses, and makes them plain. (Consequently) that which (the unclear verse) indicates is in line with the clear verse, and the religious texts all agree one with another, and confirm each other. For indeed all of it is from Allah, and that which is from Allah there is no differing or contradiction within in it...And there are many examples for this

¹⁵⁸ Collected by At-Tabarānī in his *Tafsīr* 6/175 no. 6574 and Ibn Abī Hātim in his *Tafsīr* 2/592 no. 3167. Its chain is sound based on the opinion of those who grade to be sound (that which is reported from Alī bin Abī Talha on (the authority of) ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه)).

principle, those related to both the fundamentals and subsections of the religion.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mentioned: the harm of the people of innovation and partisanship is the following of unclear verses and (having it take the place) of the clear verses, rather even taken precedence over the clear verses. Whoever falls into this has gone astray and has caused others to err. He is destroyed and has destroyed others. He has deviated, and led others away from the straight path. There is no ability to change, and no power except with (the help of) Allah.



From the causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Frequent debating

On the authority of Abi Umāma (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “No people have deviated away from the straight path after having been upon guidance, except those who engaged in debating,” then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recited this verse,

﴿ وَقَالُوا ءَأَلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ

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“And they say: "Are our (gods) better or is he [Iesa (Jesus)]?" They quoted not the above example except for argument. Nay! But they are a quarrelsome people.” [Az-Zukhruf: 58]¹⁵⁹

Due to the fact that debating is such a great cause of corruption, the Salaf warned from it frequently. Umar bin Abdul Azīz said, “Whoever makes his religion the object of argumentation, he will

¹⁵⁹ Reported by At-Tirmidhī 3253, Ibn Mājah 48, and it has been declared authentic by Al-Albānī as it is found in his comments on Al-Miskhāt (180). Likewise (Muqbil) Al-Wadī'ee authenticated it in As-Sahīh Al-Musnad no. 479.

frequently change positions (i.e. will not have firmness upon the truth".¹⁶⁰ We seek refuge in Allah from frequently shifting.

Also on the authority of Ibrāhīm An-Nakha'ee it is reported that he said about the statement of Allah,

﴿ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَرْنَا أَخَذْنَا مِيثَقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴾

“And from those who call themselves Christians, We took their covenant, but they have abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them. So We planted amongst them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection (when they discarded Allah's Book, disobeyed Allah's Messengers and His Orders and transgressed beyond bounds in Allah's disobedience), and Allah will inform them of what they used to do.” [Al-Mā'idah: 14]

He said (that which was placed between them was),
“Argumentation and debating about the religion.”¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Collected by Ibn Batta in Al-Ibānah no.s (566, 568, 569, and 577. Likewise it was collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 1770, and (this narration) is authentic.

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(It is reported on the authority of) Al-Awwām bin Hawshab that he said, **“Be cautious of arguing about the religion, for indeed it renders the deeds null and void.”**¹⁶²

(It is reported) on the authority of Bakr bin Mudr that he said, **“If Allah wants evil for a people, he coerces them to argumentation, and prevents them from actions.”**¹⁶³

Al-Fazāri said: Umar bin Abdul Azīz was asked about the fighting of the People of Saffayn. He responded, saying **“This is blood that Allah has withheld my hands from; I do not want to stain my tongue with it.”**¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Collected by Ibn Batta in Al-Ibānah no. 588 and Ibn Abdul Barr no. I772. Its chain is authentic.

¹⁶² Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. I773; and its chain is authentic.

¹⁶³ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. I777, and its chain is authentic.

¹⁶⁴ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. I778 and its chain is good.

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I (Muhammad Al-Imām) said: To Allah belongs the praise for your success Oh Umar! How cultivated is your heart with good, your intellect with guidance, and your understanding with correctness. Where are the feeble-minded in comparison to these fundamental principles of Umar? They did not find any way out except but to slander the best of the Muslims. How evil is that which they do?

On the authority of Ibn Al-Hanfiyah, that he said, **“The dunya will not perish until the argumentation will be about their Lord.”**¹⁶⁵

(It is reported) on the authority of Al-Jārūdi that he said, **“Ash-Shāfi’ee (رحمه الله) became sick while in Egypt, with a sickness that was a hardship upon him, so people entered upon him, and amongst them was Hafs Al-Fard. So all of them said to him (i.e. Ash-Shāfi’ee), ‘Who am I?’ eventually, Hafs Al-Fard asked him, ‘Who am I Oh Abū ‘Abdullah? He said you are Hafs Al-Fard, may Allah *not* preserve you, nor protect you, nor safeguard you until you repent from that which you are upon!”**

¹⁶⁵ Collected by Ibn Batta in Al-Ibānah no. 616 and 617, also collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 1781. Its chain is authentic. This narration has been narrated being ascribed to the Messenger (ﷺ), but it is not authentically reported in such a way.

(Note): This Hafs is from the people of philosophical rhetoric. He was (from those who) used to constantly debate (about the affairs of the religion).¹⁶⁶

Ash-Shāfi'ee also said about the people of innovation and rhetoric: **"My ruling about the people of philosophical rhetoric is that they be beaten with palm branches, and dragged around throughout the clans and tribes. (For indeed) this is the recompense for the one who abandons the Book and the Sunnah, and (instead) grabs hold of rhetoric."**

Al-Hasan Al-Bastī said, **"Do not sit with the people of desires, do not debate with them, and do not listen to them."**¹⁶⁷

Several scholars from the people of knowledge have reported a consensus about (the impermissibility of) debating, especially (debating) about the Names and Attributes of Allah. Al-Baghawī said, in Explanation of the Sunnah 1/216, **"And the Scholars of the Salaf from Ahl As-Sunnah have agreed upon the prohibition of argumentation and debating about the Attributes (of Allah), as**

¹⁶⁶ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 1791 and it is authentic.

¹⁶⁷ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 1803, and its chain is good, if Hishām bin Hisān heard from Al-Hasan.

well as debating over the science of Kalām (i.e. theological rhetoric) and learning it.”

Ibn Abdul Barr said in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues under no. 1799, “The people of Fiqh and narrations from every country have agreed that the people of philosophical rhetoric are people of innovation and deviance, and no one considers them to be from the Fuqahaa. Rather the scholars are the people of narrations and understanding. They vary within it in terms of their precision, distinction, and comprehension.”

In summary: From the signs of the people of innovation and partisanship is that they drown within frequent debating. This (frequent argumentation) is in order to (encourage the people) to agree with their doubts. Therefore, every individual who argues (in support of) falsehood, he deserves to be deemed blameworthy. He is a criminal against knowledge and one who wastes time. He is a corrupter of brotherhood, love, and friendship. He is an ignorant fool and a feeble-minded idiot. (For indeed) every intelligent person would be above (such buffoonery). And if the legislative benefit called for debating and discussion, then it should be based on the need, whether obligatory, highly recommended, or permissible. It should be according to the considered regulations and recorded principles.

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) said, as it is found, in Majmū Al-Fatāwah 20/I64-I5, “Thus everyone who debates with the people of Al-Ilhād and innovation, and does not eradicate them, he has not given Islām its due right, and has not fulfilled the requirements of knowledge and imān. With his words he has not obtained the cure to that which is in the (peoples’) chest, nor (has he) relaxed the soul. (In addition to this) his speech has not promoted any knowledge or certainty.”



From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Not Pondering over the Speech of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ)

Acquiring knowledge without pondering over it is the foundation for every misguidance. That is because Allah says while addressing the disbelievers,

﴿ أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

“Have they not pondered over the Word (of Allah, i.e. what is sent down to the Prophet ﷺ), or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old?” [Al-Muminūn: 68]

That which is understood from the verse is that if they were to ponder, they would have believed and submitted.

Therefore, the origin of the misguidance of the deviant groups, parties, and individuals in the Ummah of Al-Islām, is that they have not pondered the Speech of Allah and the speech of His Messenger (ﷺ). Take a lesson from the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ) to Zayād bin Labid: “**May your mother be bereaved of you Oh Zayād, for I used to consider you to be the most knowledge man in Al-Madinah. Do you not see that the Jews have the Torah? They read it, but they do not benefit from**

it at all. And (likewise) the Christians have the Gospel. They read it, and do not benefit from it at all.”¹⁶⁸

Also, (oh noble reader), take a lesson from that which the Prophet (ﷺ) said about the Khawārij. On the authority of Abū Saīd Al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه), he said that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, “There will appear amongst you (individuals), those who you will denigrate your prayer in comparison to their prayer, your fasting in comparison to their fasting, and your actions in comparison to their actions. They will recite the Qur’ān and it will not go beyond their collarbone. (These people) will exit the religion faster than the arrow exits the prey.”¹⁶⁹

On the authority of Jābir bin ‘Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said about Dhu Al-Khuwaysirah and his People,

“...Indeed this (man) and his Companions will recite the Qur’ān. It will not go beyond their collar bones. They will exit the religion as the arrow exits the prey.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ The grading of this narration has already proceeded.

¹⁶⁹ Reported by Al-Bukhārī no. 9058, and this wording is found in with him. Also Muslim reported it no. I064

¹⁷⁰ Reported by Muslim no. I063

Thus, (from these aforementioned narrations we learn that) not pondering over the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is the calamity of the Khawārij. (Rather), it is the calamity of every sect of misguidance.

(It is reported) on the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه), that he said, "A people will recite the Qur'ān, establishing it (with the precision) of an arrow, not leaving off (a single) alif; but their faith will not go beyond their collarbone."¹⁷¹

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim has some beautiful words in The Key to the Abode of Happiness I/553, in which he clarified the dire need for pondering over the Qur'ān. He said, "There is nothing more beneficial to the heart than reciting the Qur'ān, (if it is done) while pondering and reflecting. Indeed (the Qur'ān) includes all the levels of those who tread (the straight path). It includes the conditions of those who do righteous deeds and the stations of the people who have knowledge. It is that which inherits love, yearning, fear, desire, repentance, reliance, pleasure, dependence, thanks, patience, and every other characteristic which the heart is alive and complete with. Likewise (pondering over the Qur'ān) prevents a person from having all blameworthy attributes and actions with which the heart is corrupt and destroyed. If the people (only) knew the (benefit) of contemplatively reciting the

¹⁷¹ Reported by Saī'd bin Mansūr I/249 and its men are reliable.

Qur'ān, they would have busied themselves with it at the exclusion of everything else. (How great would the benefit be) if (a person) were to recite it while pondering (its meaning) to the point that he even repeated a single verse a hundred times or even an entire night, all because he was (spiritually) in need of this verse to heal his heart. Therefore, thoughtfully reciting a verse with understanding is better than completing the Qur'ān without reflecting (over it) or understanding (its meanings). Likewise it is more beneficial to the heart, and will more likely lead to acquiring (true) Imān and the sweetness of faith. This was the custom of the Salaf. Some of them used to repeat a (single) verse until morning.”

To Allah is the praise for the success of the poet who said:

Ponder the Qur'ān if you desire guidance

Because knowledge is (obtained) by contemplating over the Qur'ān

Rather Allah says,

﴿ كَتَبَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾ (٢٩)

“(This is) a Book (the Qur’ān) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.” [Sad: 29]

Therefore, be mindful of Allah and ponder over His Book. Reflect over its meanings and contemplate over the beginning and end of it, its contexts, and (that which) it gives priority to. Reflect again and again, over and over. (Then finally) rejoice with a victory from Allah.

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in The Key to the Abode of Paradise I/545: **“Here are five affairs: Reflecting (over the Qur’ān), then there are the fruits of this reflection, which is knowledge. (The fruit of knowledge) is the (increase of faith and more knowledge) that occurs in the heart. The fruit of that is (the) desire (to do more righteous deeds), and the fruits (of that desire) is more knowledge. So pondering (over the Qur’ān) is the initiation and key to good in its entirety.”**

It is well known to the one with sound intellect that understanding the speech of Allah and the speech of His Messenger (ﷺ) is more important than memorizing it. For this reason Allah called (us) to ponder His speech, commanding (us) with (this reflection), (while) he did not command us to memorize (the Qur’ān) by heart. The Messenger (ﷺ) encouraged us to understand the religion. He said,

“Whoever Allah wants good for, He gives him understanding in the religion.”¹⁷²

He (ﷺ) did not say ‘He gives him *memorization*.’

Al-Hāfith Abū Ali An-Naysabūri said: **“Understanding is more precious to us than memorizing.”**¹⁷³

Al-Hāfith Hamza As-Suhmī said, **“I said to Abi Bakr bin Abdān: What is the difference between *dirayah* and knowledge? He said knowledge is above memorization.”**¹⁷⁴ (However,) whoever Allah has given understanding *along* with memorization, then this is the completion which is not gathered except in a small number of individuals.



¹⁷² Reported by Al-Bukhārī no. 71 and Muslim no. 1037, from the ḥadīth of Muawiyah (رضي الله عنه)

¹⁷³ The History of Al-Islām by Adh-Dhababī 7/349

¹⁷⁴ Inquiries of Hamza no. 379

From the reasons behind the disappearance of knowledge: Not returning to the People of Knowledge during times of Fitnah

The calamity of trials & tribulations is great. Its evil is immense; and its consequences are fatal. So whoever exposes himself to trials, he is not safe from it pulverizing him, causing him to topple. (This is) because (fitnah) prevents a person from understanding the truth, seeking it, and establishing it. So whoever is tested with fitnah then he has subjected himself to the disappearance of his religion (along with the affairs) of his worldly life. Look what one trial can do.

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Hudhayl, it is reported that he said that Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) said after the assassination of Uthmān,

“Today the people have descended to the brink of Al-Islām, how many expeditions have they departed from it!!! Ibn Abī Hudhayl said: By Allah these people have strayed away from the middle (path) until the point that there exist a rugged terrain between them and (Al-Islām). They are not guided to it, and they do not know it.”

If this is the (result) of a single fitnah, than what about (an individual) who is constantly subjected to fitnah night and day, while as a resident and during his travels? Thus whoever does not

refer to the people of knowledge during times of fitnah --- those who see it before it occurs ---- then a person will not know how his religion perishes. So, (oh reader), be prepared to return (your affairs) to them.

Al-Hasan Al-Basrī (رحمه الله) said, "When fitnah draws near, it is recognized by the scholar; and when it retreats it is known by the ignorant."¹⁷⁵

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: the confirmation of that is in the Book of Allah,

﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَلَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ ﴾

"But those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: "Woe to you! The Reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain except those who are patient (in following the truth)." [Al-Qasas: 80]

¹⁷⁵ Collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 9/24, Ibn Sa'd in At-Tabaqāt 7/166, Al-Bukhārī in At-Tārīkh 4/322, and Ad-Dinawarī in Al-Majālis 6/86-87, and it is a sound narration.

So the scholars said this statement to those who were tested (and amazed) by the wealth of Qārūn. These people, who the scholars were advising, did not accept this precious advice, so they remained upon this bedazzlement and ignorance. When Allah sunk Qarun, they said,

﴿ وَأَصْبَحَ الَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا مَكَانَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيَكَابُ اللَّهُ
 يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَوْلَا أَنْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا
 لَخَسَفَ بِنَا وَيَكَانَهُ لَا يَفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾

‘And those who had desired (for a position like) his position the day before, began to say: "Know you not that it is Allah Who enlarges the provision or restricts it to whomsoever He pleases of His slaves. Had it not been that Allah was Gracious to us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us up (also)! Know you not that the disbelievers will never be successful." [Al-Qasas: 82]

(Oh noble reader) recognize Allah’s gift which He has bestowed upon you oh Muslim, in placing amongst you scholars of ḥadīth. (Realize this Allah’s munificence upon you) by returning to (the scholars). For surely this (gift) is known by the people who search for the truth.

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Ubaydullah bin Umar Al-Umari said, "Allah has blessed us with Nāfi"¹⁷⁶

'Abdullah bin Wahab said, "If it were not for Mālik (bin Anas) and Al-Layth (bin Sa'd) I would have been ruined."¹⁷⁷



¹⁷⁶ Collected by Ibn Abi Hātim in Praise and Disparagement 8/452, and in (the chain) is Nuaym ibn Hamād. Some criticism has been mentioned about him in terms of his memory.

¹⁷⁷ Collected by Al-Khatīb in At-Tārīkh 13/7.

From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: It being acquired by the Non-Arabs

If non-Arabs acquire Islāmic knowledge and do not strive to perfect the Arabic language, they will introduce strange things into the religion, due to their inaccuracy in the Arabic language. So imagine (then) if they were (also) despicable in their etiquettes and vile in their mannerism?! The calamity would be (even) greater. The Salaf used to fear for knowledge from this category. ¹⁷⁸

On the authority of Urwa bin Az-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه), it is reported that he said, **“the affair of the Children of Israeel remained balanced, nothing within it, until the Al-Muwwaladun emerged, the**

¹⁷⁸ **Translator’s Note:** In our time period there have appeared individuals who have spoken about Allah’s religion without anyone preceding them from the early generations except the deviant Jahmiyyah Sect. These so-called callers to Allah have no knowledge of the Arabic language, and instead of them sufficing with the authentic narrations and statements of the Companions, they have fabricated falsehood about the Qur’ān, (even) comparing the Muṣḥaf to paper money and Christian hymnals. The atrocities are endless, but this is the result of embarking upon rhetoric and abandoning seeking knowledge at the hands of the Scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah. We ask Allah for safety.

children of the people's captives, they were children of women from other (nations), those who the Children of Isrā'eel took as captives. So they issued statements based on opinion, and thus led others into misguidance."¹⁷⁹

On the authority of Al-Faryāni (it is reported that he said): "When Sufyān used to see these Nabateans recording knowledge, his faced used to change. So I said, Oh Abaa Abdillah. We notice you that when you see these people writing knowledge, it is unbearable for you?! He said, knowledge was with the Arab, as well as the gentlemen from amongst the people, so if it leaves

¹⁷⁹ Collected by Ad-Dārimī in his Sunan I/241 no. 122. This wording is found in his collection. Also collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 2015, Al-Bayhaqī in Marifatu As-Sunan wa Al-Athār I/188/335 and in The Entrance, Al-Harawī in The Blameworthiness of Philosophical Rhetoric I/354-355, and Al-Fasawi at the end of Al-Ma'rifah wa At-Tārikh 3/393, and The History of Baghdād I3/394, It is authentic, although it is not authentically ascribed as a statement of the Prophet (rather it is a statement of a companion). It is not authentically reported from Umar bin Abdul Azīz.

from them and ends up with these people, meaning the Nabateans and the lowly people, the religion will be changed.”¹⁸⁰

This which the Salaf feared has actually occurred, which is indicated by the appearance of the callers of innovation such as the Qadariyah and others who were from the non-Arabs.

We are saddened from that which has occurred previously (as well as in later years). (We see) the Muslim children learning the language of the non-Arabs, while being ignorant of the Arabic language. This also has evil consequences.

(However, it is important to note) that as for the non-Arabs who learn the legislative knowledge, and strive to study and perfect the Arabic language, speaking and writing in this manner, and have been (given) success to follow the prophetic methodology then surely these individuals are noble and honorable. From the time of the Messenger (ﷺ) until this very hour, great and renowned scholars have appeared (within the Ummah), those who have sought knowledge in this (correct) manner. While some times they are small in number at other times they are many. And here we are as an Ummah, after the Qur’ān, we depend on the

¹⁸⁰ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 1072 as well as Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi liAkhḷāq Ar-Rāwi wa As-Sāmi no. 371 and its chain is authentic.

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authentic collection of prophetic narrations of (Imām) Al-Bukhāri and (Imām) Muslim, both of whom were non-Arabs!!



From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Leaving off learning from those who have the Correct Understandings

It is necessary for the one who has been provided with the correct understanding that he embarks upon seeking beneficial knowledge. He should not neglect (his own soul).

Al-Bayhaqī narrated in The Entrance page (351) no. (687), and Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi' li Akhlāq Ar-Rāwi wa As-Sāmi I/326 it is reported on the authority of Mālik that he said, “Rabī'ah used to say: It is not suitable for a person who recognizes that he has a level of knowledge to waste himself.” (Its chain is authentic)

Al-Hāfith said in Fath Al-Bāri I/234: “That which Rabī'ah intends here is that the one who has understanding and is susceptible to learning, it is not suitable for him to neglect himself, not busying himself with seeking knowledge, (rather he should be diligent) in order that (his neglect) will not lead to a disappearance of knowledge.”

Ibn Al-Munīr mentioned in his book Al-Mutawāra alaa tarājim al-Bukhārī page 61:

“Indeed the person who possesses understanding, if he neglects himself (by) not learning, this negligence will lead to a disappearance of knowledge. That is because the idiotic person,

who lacks understanding, does not accept knowledge, thus it will disappear from him. Likewise, if he does not (exert himself in order to) learn the (correct) understanding, knowledge will also disappear from him, eventually disappearing in totality, which is from the signs of the (hour). This only occurs in association with the worst of mankind. Thus it is a must the people safeguard themselves from this as much as possible.”



From the Causes of the Disappearance of knowledge: Acquiring it from Newspapers (and other Media Outlets)

During our times, the fitnah of acquiring knowledge from newspapers is greater than in years past. And how could it not be the case, when the Islāmic arena in every country has become filled with newspapers, journals, and magazines?! This is for no reason other than (the fact that people) have vehemently turned to reading these (magazines and newspapers expecting to obtain knowledge from them). Do not forget that the majority of these newspapers are owned (and operated) by their (perspective) countries. (These newspapers) speak with the tongue (of the Government, expressing its views), and cater to their politics. The majority of national politics during our time (are filled with) deviance. Or (it may be the case that) the newspaper is owned by misguided partisan organizations, (those that promote) disbelief or innovation. (These newspapers) attempt to adorn (and beautify) disbelief, heresy, misguidance, or innovation which these (deviant) parties follow. So what correct understanding could the Muslim (possibly) seek to obtain from these newspapers, journals, and magazines?! Not to mention that some of them are leased by the (leaders) of falsehood, and work with the enemies propagating all types of wickedness, heresy, disbelief, and other than that. There

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has occurred an aversion to seeking knowledge at the hands of the scholars due to the vast circulation of these newspapers amongst the people. There are (even) those who depend on these newspapers and magazines, thinking that they have become scholars who understand current affairs, and that they are in no need of (obtaining) true religious understanding. The reality is that such a person has no experience with current affairs. By relying upon these newspapers and journals, the most that will be obtained is compound aggravated ignorance, which is to have knowledge of affairs upon other than their reality (while the person thinks he is knowledgeable). There is much contradiction with the heads of newspapers and magazines, because they take the stances of their owners, regardless of what it is. So to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.



From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Alienating the people away from the Scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah wa Al-Jamā'ah, separating between them and the Muslims

The agents of Iblīs are those who deter the Muslims away from the scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah, away from their classes, sermons, lectures, and from even visiting them. These misguided and ignorant deviants have various ways and methods which they traverse to separate the Children of the Muslims from the scholars of the prophetic methodology.

From these methods is that which Adh-Dhahabī mentioned in Siyar A'lām An-Nubala (6/395-397): (On the authority of Abī Yusef (it is reported) that he said: **Abū Hanīfah said, 'When I wanted to seek knowledge, I began to choose between the different sciences, and asking about their end. So it was said, 'study the Qur'ān.'** So I asked, 'if I were to memorize it, what would be the end result of it? They said: you will sit in the Masjid, and the young children will recite to you, then it will not be long until one of them memorizes more than you or becomes your equal, causing your authority to fade away!!'

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mentioned: Whoever seeks knowledge for leadership, perhaps *he* may think about this. (But not the one who is sincere) because it has been authentically reported from

Al-Mustafā (ﷺ) that he said, “the best of you is the one who learns the Qur’ān and teaches it to others.”¹⁸¹

Glory be to Allah! Is there a place better than the Masjid? And is there is a (way of) spreading knowledge better than by teaching the Qur’ān? Nay, by Allah! And are there any students better than young children who have not committed any sins? (Indeed) I reckon this story to be fabricated; in its chain there are those who are not reliable.

(In the conclusion of this fabricated story) he said: “I said, ‘and (what) if I heard the narrations, recording (and memorizing) them until there is no one in the world who memorized more than me? They said, ‘If you grow old, and weaken you will narrate, and these young children will gather around you, and you will not be safe from error, then they will accuse you of lying, thus becoming a disgrace upon you in the end. So I said, ‘I have no need of this.’”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: Now, as I have definitively mentioned, that this story is fabricated. For indeed Abū Hanīfah sought knowledge of ḥadīth, and was frequent within it in the 100th year of the Hijriyah onward and at *that* time young children

¹⁸¹ Collected by Al-Bukhārī no. 5028 from the ḥadīth of Uthmān bin Affān (رضي الله عنه).

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were not listening to narrations. This is a terminology that was found after the 300th year of the Hijriyah. Rather the major scholars were seeking al-ḥadīth; and the Fuqahaa did not have any knowledge, after the Qur'ān, other than (the knowledge of ḥadīth). (And at that time) the books of the Fuqahaa were not even written at all.

Then he said, "I said: I will learn grammar. So I said (to myself) if I learn grammar, Arabic, what will be the end of my affair? They said, you will sit as a teacher, the most you will earn is two to three dinār. So I said: 'this has no (praiseworthy) end to it.' So I said, (what if) I looked into poetry, until the point where there is no one more knowledgeable of poetry than me? They said, 'you will praise such and such a person, and he will give you a gift or bestow something upon you, and if he deprives you, then you will ridicule him. I said: 'I have no need of this.' I said, and what if I look into theological rhetoric, what will be the end result? They said, 'anyone who looks into philosophical rhetoric will not be safe from being slandered or being accused of heresy. Thus he will be executed or submit in a blameworthy fashion.'"

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: May Allah curse the one who has fabricated this fairy tale!! In that time was there any presence of the knowledge of theological rhetoric?!

He said, "I said 'And if I learn fiqh? They said, you will be asked and you will issue religious verdicts to the people and you will be requested to judge, even if you were young. So I said (to myself), 'There is no science more beneficial than this, so I stuck to Fiqh and learned it.'"

Also in the previous source (15/559): (Ibrāhīm bin Ahmad At-Tabarī said, "I heard Al-Khuldi¹⁸² say, I took off toward 'Abbās Ad-Durī¹⁸³, while I were a young male, so I took notes during a class and (then) I left, and I was met by a Sufi. So he asked, 'what is this?' So I showed him. He said, 'Woe to you! You leave off knowledge of khiraq (i.e. knowledge of rags and poverty, one of the distinguishing signs of the Sufiya) and you acquire knowledge of paper (i.e. knowledge of narrations)?! Then he tore the papers,

¹⁸² **Translator's Note:** He is Abū Muhammad Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Nasīr bin Qāsīm Al-Baghdādī, a scholar of ḥadīth and was the Sheikh of the Sufiya in Baghdad during his time period. Al-khuldi died 348 after the migration, and was 95 years of age [See Ad-Dhahabi's *Siyar A'lām An-Nubala*].

¹⁸³ **Translator's Note:** He is Al-'Abbās bin Muhammad bin Hātim Ad-Durī, was an Imām in ḥadīth and from the companions of Al-Imām Ahmad, Yahya bin Ma'īn, and Abū Dawūd At-Tayālisi. He was born in Baghdad in the year 185 of the Hijrah Calendar, and died year 271 after the Hijrah.

and his words had entered into my heart, so I did not return to 'Abbās and I stood (at Arafah) fifty six times. I (Adh-Dhahabi) said: 'That is no more than an ignorant Sufi, who rips of prophetic narrations, and encourages an unknown affair, so *he* is (actually the one) in need of knowledge!'

Be cautious and beware that the Muslim Children will lend ear to those (types of people). Indeed they are highway robbers. And to Allah belongs the praise for the achievement of Ibn Al-Jawzi when he said, 'Highway robbers are four types: a heretic who causes you to doubt about Allah's religion, a deviant who misguides you from the Sunnah of the Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), the heedless one who causes you to forget Allah's remembrance, and the sinner who approves the sins which you commit.'

How (great is the number of people) who have been distracted away from their Lord, from following their Prophet (ﷺ), and from imitating the righteous predecessors? All (of this is) due to them answering (the call) of the people of innovation and partisanship.

Indeed the path of the people of innovation and partisanship in our time period ---especially the Muslim Brotherhood---is one (that emphasizes) defaming (and belittling) the scholars, callers, students, and the love ones of Ahl As-Sunnah. (This is done) with all types of slander. It suffices us to narrate here that which

has become well known from the statements (of the people of falsehood) about the scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah. These (statements) indicate their (absolute) disregard for the Ulama. (From that which they have said about the scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah) is that they are: scholars of superficialities, scholars of menstruation and post-natal bleeding, scholars of the royal court, mummified scholars, scholars of the mid-ages, scholars of yellow books, scholars who do not understand reality, and other than that. Indeed these people should know that their example in this defamation is every misguided deviant and every miserable evil doer from the early generations. (Take for example) Amr bin Ubayd Al-Mu'tazilī saying in ad-dua'fā by Al-Uqayli 5/1756, **“Do you not hear? The speech of Al-Hasan and Ibn Sirīn when you listen (to them) is nothing more than discarded menstruation pads!”**

Rather with some of them it got to the point that they even desired the death of the Scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah! The people of innovation during the time of the Salaf have preceded them in this. Al-Lālikāi mentioned in The Explanation of the Creed of the People of the Prophetic Tradition and the Unified Group no. (35) on the authority of Hamād bin Zayd that he said, **“I visited Ayyub As-Sakhtiyānī while he was washing Shuayb bin Al-Habhāb, while he was saying, ‘Indeed those who desire the death of the people of Sunnah (merely) want to put out the light of**

Allah with their mouths. Allah will complete His Light even if the disbelievers dislike it.”

Their example in this are the disbelievers and the polytheists about whom Allah said:

﴿يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَيَأْبَى اللَّهُ إِلَّا أَن

يَسْمَ نُورَهُ، وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

“They (the disbelievers, the Jews and the Christians) want to extinguish Allah's Light (with which Muhammad (ﷺ) has been sent - Islāmic Monotheism) with their mouths, but Allah will not allow except that His Light should be perfected even though the Kāfirūn (disbelievers) hate (it).” [At-Tawba: 32]

Do not forget the Muslim Brotherhood and (the fact that) their branches are established upon a secret society, consisting of plotting, planning, deception, lies, trickery, dishonesty, and other than that. From that which their secret society dictates to them is that if they want to kidnap someone they would do a (thorough) study of how to capture him. They have a number of ways of kidnapping. (So much so that they) will go to one who loves worship, under the guise of aiding him with worship. Likewise they may come to a teacher under the guise of helping him upon his teaching, and each person they place someone to overpower him who will corrupt and hunt him according to that which is

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appropriate to him. So may we be sufficed and (protected) from the evil of partisanship!



From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Forgetfulness

To forget knowledge is a defect that many people are tested with. If it were not for forgetfulness, knowledge would be plentiful in every time period. However, the Salaf have directed (us) to safeguard knowledge from forgetfulness, by reviewing and studying collectively, sitting with the scholars, and by reviewing that which has been memorized repeatedly.

On the authority of Alī bin Abī Tālib (رضي الله عنه), (it is reported that he said): **‘Constantly revisit and review these narrations, for indeed if you do not do that, it will disappear from you.’**¹⁸⁴

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) (it is reported that he said): **“Everything has that which impairs it, and the impairment of knowledge is forgetfulness.”**¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ Collected by Abū Bakr bin Abī Shayba 8/522, Ad-Dārimī I/488, Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi I/236-237 no. 465-466, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 623, and the wording is found with him. It is authentic.

¹⁸⁵ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/487 no. 647, and the wording is his. Also collected by Ar-Rāmāhurmāzī in Al-Muhaddith Al-Fāsīl page 545, Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi’ no. 468, Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of

And (it is reported on the) authority of Az-Zuhrī that he said, “Knowledge has calamities. From its calamities is that a scholar is abandoned until he passes away along with his knowledge; and from its calamities is forgetfulness and lying, and it is the most serious (and worst) of its calamities.”¹⁸⁶

On the authority of Al-Hasan, he said: ‘Knowledge is ruined by way of forgetfulness and through neglect.’¹⁸⁷



Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 706, and its chain is authentic.

¹⁸⁶ Collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 3/364, and it is a good narration

¹⁸⁷ Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/488 no. 649 and Ibn Abī Hātim in Praise and Disparagement 2/362, and its chain is good.

From the Causes of the Disappearance of Knowledge: Not Acquiring Beneficial Books

Not acquiring beneficial books leads to a decrease in knowledge and negligence in seeking it, a delay in being skilled in it, and not excelling in it. This is no doubt from the decrease and disappearance of knowledge. For this reason it is incumbent that the student, and those endowed with knowledge, be keen on acquiring books, frequently doing that and being enlightened by the encouragement of the people of knowledge upon that. The Great Scholar Yahya bin Ma'īn said, "It is necessary that the scholar of ḥadīth takes truthfulness as his *izār*, and books as his cloak."¹⁸⁸

Al-Hāfith Marwān bin Muhammad said, "There are three things that a Companion of ḥadīth cannot do without: memorization, truthfulness, and accurate books. Thus, if he erred in one of them, while having the other two, it will not harm him. If he were to err in his memory, he would then return to his truthfulness and to the accuracy of his books and will not be harmed."¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ Al-Kifayah by Al-Khatīb 266

¹⁸⁹ Praise and Disparagement, Al-Kāmil by Ibn Iddi 1/159, and Al-Kifayah by Al-Khatīb (265)

To Allah (alone) belongs the praise for the success of Al-Khalīl bin Ahmad, when he said, “**Make your capital that which is in your books, and that which is in your heart (should be) for gaining understanding.**”¹⁹⁰

Ibn Al-Muqri said, “**I walked seventy journeys because of a single manuscript of Mufaddal bin Fadāla**¹⁹¹; and if it were to be presented to a baker for a (mere) loaf of bread he would not accept it.”¹⁹²

Oh reader, accustom yourself to being around books, living with them, and freeing up time to read them. They are the best of intimate friends and the most excellent sitting companions. They do not distract you, rather they save you. They do not weaken you. Rather (the more time you spend with them) the more you are strengthened. They do not anger and exhaust you. Rather they bring you joy and relaxation. So be keen on purchasing and acquiring books, and make that a fraction of your provisions and livelihood. (Verily) Allah’s help is sought.

¹⁹⁰ Taqyīd Al-Ilm’ by Al-Khatīb (I40-I41)

¹⁹¹ **Translator’s Note:** Mufaddal bin Fadāla bin Ubayd, Al-Imām Al-Allāmah, scholar of ḥadīth, a judge in Egypt. Yahya bin Maʿīn said he was reliable. He died I8I after the hijrah.

¹⁹² The Journey in Seeking Knowledge by Al-Khatīb 2I0.

From the Causes of the Disappearance of knowledge: To concede that the Islāmic Legislation is not sufficient for the people's needs

From the astonishing misguidance is being ignorant of the Islāmic Legislation's completeness, not realizing (that it is) comprehensiveness of everything that rectifies the conditions of the entire creation regardless of the time and place, whether in the past or in the future.

Al-Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim said in At-Turaq Al-Hakimiyah fi As-Siyāsatu Ash-Shariyah I/30-31, while speaking about those who have made many of the legislative punishments inoperative due to them thinking that the (Islāmic) legislation is deficient in that regards. He said, "In this place feet have slipped and understandings have strayed. It is a stressful situation and a difficult battlefield where a group of people have been negligent, making the legal punishments inoperative, squandering rights, and encouraging the evildoers (to commit) corruption. They have (described) the legislation as deficient, inadequate, not able to carry out the needs and concerns of the people. They (have even said the legislation) is in need of (something else to supplement it). They obstructed themselves from the correct paths to obtain truth along with implementing it. Rather they have negated (the legislative paths) as a result of them thinking that they oppose the

legislative principles. Even though they, along with others, know that it is absolute truth, in line with reality. ...And it is a type of deficiency in knowing the legislation, the reality of current affairs, and how they accommodate each other that obligated upon them (this faulty logic). So when the Muslim Rulers saw these (circumstances), and (noticed) that the people's affairs were not upright except with a (authoritative) command behind that which these people understood from the legislation, they introduced continuous evil and extensive corruption from their political circumstances. Thus the affair became more aggravated. Rectification became more difficult. (As a result) it became complicated upon those who (actually) have knowledge of the reality of the (religion) to save people from that, and to rescue them from this destruction."



The Disappearance of knowledge Due to Sins

Abū Dawūd narrated in his collection of ḥadīth no. 4690, At-Tabarī in Tahdhīb Al-Athār no. 910, Al-Hākim I/22, Ibn Munda in Al-Imān 2/579 no. 519, Ibn Nasr in Ta'thīm Qadr As-Salāh no. 536, Al-Lālākāī in As-Sunnah no. 1864, and Al-Bayhaqī in Branches of Faith no. 4979, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, **“If a man commits fornication, faith leaves him and it is like a shade (cloud) over his head. If he abandons (the sin), his faith returns to him.”**¹⁹³

This narration has been reported (as a statement of a companion), but it is more accurately reported as a statement of the Messenger (ﷺ). It comes with the wording, **“Whoever fornicates and drinks alcohol, Allah removes faith from him, as a person removes a shirt from his head.”**¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Authenticated by Al-Irāqī, Al-Hāfith Ibn Hajr in Fath Al-Bārī 12/75, and Al-Albānī in Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations no. (509), May Allah have mercy on all of them.

¹⁹⁴Reported by Al-Hākim I/22.

On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), it is reported that he said, **"Indeed I reckon that a person forgets knowledge that he once knew, due to sins that he has committed."**¹⁹⁵

The defect of this narration is that there is a disconnection in the chain. Al-Qāsim bin Abdur Rahmān bin 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd did not hear from ('Abdullah) bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه). Wakī' reported this in Az-Zuhd, 269, by way of Al-Hasan bin Sa'd on the authority of Abdur Rahmān bin 'Abdullah, on the authority of ('Abdullah) bin Mas'ūd. Abdur Rahmān did in fact hear (and narrate) from his father. Al-Bayhaqī collected in Branches of Faith no. (1604) on the authority of Ali bin Khashrām that he said, **"I complained to Wakī' about my weakness in memorization. So he said, 'Seek aid in (strengthening) your memory by staying away from sins.'"**

¹⁹⁵ Collected by Ibn Al-Mubārak in Az-Zuhd (83), Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya I/131, Abū Khuthayma in Al-Ilm (132), At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr 9/212, no. 8930, Al-Bayhaqī in The Entrance no. 487, Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues II95, Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi' no. 1850, as well as in al-Iqtidaa no. 96. Al-Haythami said in Majma Az-Zawā'id I/199, **"At-Tabarānī reported it in Al-Kabīr and its men are reliable, except that Al-Qāsim did not hear from his grandfather."**

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Its chain is good, and it is collected by Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi' 2/258, no. 1785. In it is the following addition from some others:

I complained to Wakī' about my poor memory

So he directed me to leave off sinning

**And he mentioned to me that to memorize knowledge is a favor
(from Allah)**

And the favor of Allah is not attained by a sinner

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: It has become widely thought that these lines are the words of Ash-Shāfi'ee, however it is not authentically reported (from him).

Abū Bakr bin Al-Arabī said in Aaridatu Al-Ahwadi 10/87: **“A man may sin until his sin does away with his actions.”**

Ibn Al-Jawzi mentioned stories in (the book entitled) The Evils of Following One's Desires which indicate how Allah punishes the students of knowledge and the memorizers of the Qur'ān if they commit sins.

From (these stories):

That which he mentioned on page (127) on the authority of Abī 'Abdullah bin Al-Jalā, that he said, **“I was standing looking at a young Christian boy, with a beautiful face. So Abū 'Abdullah Al-Balakhī passed by me and said, 'For what reason are you standing? So I said, 'Oh uncle, do you think this face will be punished in**

the fire? So, with his hand, he hit my shoulders, and said, 'You will surely find the outcome of that after a while.'"

Ibn Al-Jalā said, "So I found its outcome after forty years. It caused me to forget the Qur'ān."¹⁹⁶

He also mentioned in the same (book) page (128), (it is reported) on the authority of (Abū Adyān)¹⁹⁷ that he said, "I was with my teacher, Abū Bakr Az-Zaqāq. A young man passed by, so I looked at him, and my teacher saw me, while I was looking at him. So he said, 'Oh my dear son, you will surely see the outcome of that even if it be after a period of time.' So twenty years passed, while I am keeping an eye out, and I had not seen the outcome (as of yet). So I went to sleep one night, while I was thinking about it, and (I had awoken) and it had caused me to forget the entire Qur'ān."

So every Muslim male and female should fear Allah and distance themselves from committing sins, especially the callers, the

¹⁹⁶ **Translator's Note:** Narration number 406 in The Evils of Following One's Desires

¹⁹⁷ **Translator's Note:** Narration number 407 in The Evils of Following One's Desires

scholars, and the students of knowledge. For indeed sins have dangerous outcomes and unsuccessful ends.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ **Translator's Note:** There are countless narrations from the scholars of the Salaf warning from lustfully looking at young beardless men (Al-Amrad). From amongst these narrations is that which comes on the authority of Sufyān Ath-Thawrī. He said, **"Indeed a woman has one shayṭān with her, while a (beardless youth) has with him two shayṭāns."** On the authority of Sa'īd bin Al-Musayibb, he said **"If you see a man constantly looking at young beardless boys, then accuse him."** On the authority of Ibn Taymiyyah, he said **"Mālik bin Anas used to prevent the beardless youth from entering his sittings of knowledge to hear (the narrations)."** Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, **"The handsome beardless boy is similar to a woman in certain affairs. It is not permissible to kiss him with any form of desire. Rather only the one who is safe from fitnah is allowed to kiss him such as his father and brothers. And with the consensus of the people (of knowledge) it is not permissible to look at him with desires. Rather the majority of the scholars say it is impermissible to look at him, if one even fears he may have desires upon looking."** Also Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned, **"Whoever repeatedly looks at a beardless youth, and those like him, or constantly looks, and then he says 'I am not looking at him, with any (sexual) desires,' indeed he has lied in this statement of his..."**

Source: [Majmū Al-Fatāwā 247/32. Many of these narrations are gathered on the following site: <http://www.sahab.net/forums/index.php?showtopic=131631>]

These narrations indicate the completeness and perfection of Al-Islām. There is no sickness except that Al-Islām offers the cure. There is no

doubt, except that Al-Islām refutes it. There is no caller to corruption, except that Al-Islām exposes him and shuts close the doors to all evil and all corruption, whether it is the corruption of disbelief, polytheism, innovation, hypocrisy, or even those who call to free-mixing amongst the genders, or those who promote homosexuality and lesbianism in the name of human rights and huriyyah at-ta'bīr (i.e. freedom of expression). These aforementioned narrations show that the scholars of the religion sealed every door that leads to various acts of evil, such as homosexuality and pedophilia, sicknesses that many evildoers have fallen into. If a person can forget pages of information due to lusting over a beardless youth, what about those who lust over women, night and day, on the television screen, on the computer chat rooms, in the market place, coming and going? The harms are endless, the effects are paramount, and if anyone is destroyed due to what he looks at with the eyes Allah has given him or due to what he puts forth with his hands that Allah has blessed him with, he can blame no one but himself. So the human being has to fear his Lord and single Him out with worship. The human being must follow the guidance found in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, holding firmly to the way of the Companions, especially during these times, where evil is promoted everywhere, called to, and defended at the expense of disobeying our Creator, Provider, Sustainer, and the One true God, who none has the right to be worshipped but He, Allah. Surely Allah's help is sought.

The Disappearance of knowledge caused by the Muslims Rulers opening the arena for the Scholars of Misguidance to spread their deviance

There is nothing more harmful upon the Muslims than the rulers allowing the scholars of misguidance to spread their deviance and to call to fitan in the name of Al-Islām. This is the calamity of the Islāmic Ummah in years past and years to come since the Muslim Rulers have deviated. Furthermore, this is that which the Prophet (ﷺ) used to fear upon his Ummah.

Abū Dawūd reported in ḥadīth number (4252), along with Ad-Dārimī (215), At-Tirmidhī (2229), and Ahmad (5/278), on the authority of Ath-Thawban (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“Indeed I fear upon my Ummah Imāms who lead (people) astray.”¹⁹⁹

That which is intended by ‘Imām’ is the Muslim ruler. So when misguidance becomes widespread amongst the rulers, and they allow misguidance to be disseminated, (there is no need to ask) about the condition of the Muslims after that!

¹⁹⁹This is the wording collected by Ahmad.

Take a lesson from that which occurred with the Caliphate of Al-'Abbāsī Al-Mamūn when he accepted the arabization of the philosophical books, allowing for them to be spread amongst the Muslims, all at the hands of the Mu'tazilah, Al-Jahmiyah. From this, all (types) of evil resulted.

Ibn Kathīr said in his work entitled, The Beginning & The End, 13/228 year 657 Al-Hijriyah, "and after the Tartars took hold of Baghdad, Al-Khawājah Nasir Ad-Dīn At-Tusī did an observation of the city of Marāghah²⁰⁰ ...and established the House of Wisdom, placing within it the Philosophers, and paid each one of them three dirhāms (daily). He also establish the House of Medicine for doctors, (paying them) two dirhāms a daily. Likewise he established a school of Fiqh, and for each Faqīh was one dirham a day. Lastly, he established the school of Hadīth, and each scholar of ḥadīth was paid a half a dirham a day."

From there the studying of Philosophical sciences became widespread and apparent. So after it was the case that the people studied prophetic narrations, they began to study Greek Philosophy and rhetorical methodologies.

²⁰⁰ **Translator's Note:** Pronounced Maraghah or Maraghih, a city in Northwestern Iran.

The Disappearance of Knowledge

And the most expansive and harmful enabling that took place in this arena, was the Ottoman Dynasty enabling the Sufis (to propagate their deviance and giving them a platform). Certainly, they opened the door wide open for (the Sufis). Thus they filled up the Muslims Lands with innovations, acts of polytheism, and superstitions, to the point that they made it such that major innovation, shirk, and sins would be carried out monthly, or (even) weekly!

The innovation and polytheism of the Sufis inspired grave worshipping, which is the origin of shirk, and has the oldest history amongst creation. It is a corruption to the greatest form of pure Islāmic Monotheism, which is singling out Allah will all acts of worship. (Likewise it corrupts) the greatest type of worship, which is the servitude of the heart, such as being sincere and truthful to Allah, while relying upon (Him), trusting in Him, hoping for Him, desiring that which is with Him, fearing from Him, being mindful of Him, honoring and loving Him, and by (finally) being pleased with Him as a Lord and God.

The Rāfiḍah and Al-Qarāmitah share along with the Sufis in this shirk. Rather they are the two founders of this shirk as well as other types of misguidance.

It would be lengthy to narrate the statements of the people of knowledge about this very serious issue, but I will suffice with

that which Al-Manāwī reported in Fayd Al-Qadīr 2/274, on the authority of Ar-Rāgib, that he said, "There is nothing more obligatory upon the ruler than to pay close attention to those who confront leadership, with knowledge. An infraction in this (i.e. paying close attention to them), equates to the spread of evil and its people, and (then) mutual hatred and dissension will occur. That is because there are four types of leaders:

The Prophets (عليهم السلام): Their ruling is upon a specific group from amongst the people, their inward and outward affairs. (Then there are the) scholars whose jurisdiction is over the inward affairs of a specific group (from amongst the people). (Also) there are the preachers, they rule over the internal affairs of the general people. The rectification of the world is in monitoring the condition of these leaders, in order that the general people may service the specific group, and that the special group may lead the general people. But the corruption of the world is if the opposite of this were to occur. So when certain people sought out intellectual leadership without due right, their ignorance caused them to introduce matters into the religion, which the general people grabbed hold of, sufficing themselves with it, and (these leaders) sought (nothing but) worldly benefit and leadership. Thus they found assistance from the general people, because they were (in fact) working with them, and due to being close to them in their nature. (With this) they opened paths that were

(previously closed), raised curtains that were previously lowered, and sought the status of the special group from amongst the people (i.e. the true scholars), arriving there with shame and evil. Consequently they declared the scholars to be innovators and negated their knowledge, in order to rape them of their intellectual leadership, and to dispute with them over their level. So they invigorated their followers (above) the scholars, until they trampled over them with their hoofs and paws. So this led to (societal) ruin, wide spread outrage and shame.”

From that which causes many Muslims to accept evil is the fact that they look at the Government Scholars (i.e. those who give rulings to please the status quo) with a look of amazement, thinking good thoughts about them. Thus they accept that which comes from them even if it be falsehood. But if these people were to get to know the scholars who hold firmly to the prophetic methodology, those who distance themselves from the kings and rulers, they would be more rightly guided in their path and statements.



Pitfalls that harm knowledge and its people

There are many things that harm knowledge. It is necessary that the scholar as well as the student of knowledge get to know them. From amongst them: amazement, self conceit, and narrating it to the one who does not benefit from it. On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Al-Mukhtār (it is reported that he said), “Denial of ḥadīth is to fabricate a narration, forgetfulness is that which eats away at it, and wasting it is to narrate it to one who is not from its people.”²⁰¹

On the authority of Kathīr bin Murrā Al-Hadramī, he said, “Indeed in your knowledge there is a right upon you, as there is within your wealth a right: do not narrate knowledge to other than its people, thus you would belittle it, and do not withhold knowledge from its people such that you fall in sin, and do not speak with Al-Hikmah amongst the foolish, such that they will belie you, and do not speak with falsehood amongst the wise, such that they will detest you.”²⁰²

²⁰¹ Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number 693. And its chain is good.

²⁰² Collected by Ad-Dārimī I/380 number 390, Al-Khatīb in Al-Jāmi’ number 754, Ar-Rāmahūrmazī page 575, and Ibn Abdul Al-Barr in A

The Disappearance of Knowledge

It is mentioned on the authority of Ash-Shāfi'ee that he said: **“The madman is the one who knows the level of knowledge then wastes it, or was lazy within it until it passed him by.”**²⁰³

It has been authentically reported from some of the Salaf that they used to recite to their slave girls and children in order to strengthen their memory and as a means of reviewing.

From these pitfalls is to conceal knowledge. There is a severe punishment for the one who conceals knowledge, and the threat upon him in the Qur'ān and Sunnah is certain. Even if it were only the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ) **“Whoever is asked about knowledge, and then conceals it, he will be silenced with a bridle of fire on the Day of Judgment,”**²⁰⁴ (this narration alone is sufficient to show the evils of concealing knowledge).

Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 708, and the wording belongs to him. Its chain is good.

²⁰³ Reporting from the book Ishāq Al-Kutub page 245

²⁰⁴ Reported by Abū Dawūd 3758, At-Tirmidhī 2649, Ibn Mājah 266, Al-Hākim I/101, from the ḥadīth of Abi Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه). It was declared authentic by Al-Albānī in Sahīh At-Targīb wa At-Tarhīb no. 120.

The Disappearance of Knowledge

So oh student of knowledge, oh caller to Allah, say the truth even if it be sour, and make it apparent even if it is hidden, and be patient upon that which befalls you, for indeed that is from the affairs of firm resolve and determination. Follow the example of the Imāms of the religion.

On the authority of Yazīd bin Marmaz he said, **“Najda wrote to Ibn ‘Abbās asking about five characteristics, so Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘Indeed the people say that Ibn ‘Abbās corresponds with the Hururiyah (i.e. the Khawārij), and if I did not fear concealing knowledge I would not have written to (them).”**²⁰⁵

From those things that eat away at knowledge is mutual hatred between scholars, callers, and students of knowledge, which is from the dangerous sicknesses that every Muslim must strive to avoid. If (this is not avoided) it will lead to various types of transgression and aggression.

The author of the book *Afāt Al-Ilm* said on page (173-174), **“Rancor produces eight affairs: the first is envy, and it is that you desire that a blessing be removed from someone. So (this envious person) is grieved when a blessing befalls another person, and is delighted when a calamity befalls him. The second affair is to**

²⁰⁵Collected by Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 12. Its chain is authentic.

increase in concealing inward envy and to rejoice by the trial that has befallen (another person). The third is to boycott and abandon (this envied person), while having hostility toward him, to separate from him, even if he were to turn toward you (with love and respect). Fourthly, and it is less than (the previous), to turn away from him, belittling him. Fifth, to speak (ill) about him in a manner that is not permissible by lying, backbiting, spreading his secrets, and exposing his private (faults). The sixth affair is to mockingly imitate him and make fun of him. The seventh matter is to harm him by physically attacking him and hitting him, exerting bodily harm to him. The eighth matter is to withhold his rights by not fulfilling the debt, not tying the ties of kinship, and not (even) repelling oppression. And all of that is impermissible!”

From the pitfalls is not being fair and just with others. Ibn Abdul Barr said in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues no. 866 on the authority Mālik he said, “**There is nothing in our time period (which you find less of) than fairness.**”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: Mālik mentioned this while he was in a time period of well being. (So what about) the condition of those who are in an era of weakness in Al-Imān, corruption in certainty, deviance in understanding, and fanaticism to the (opinions of men)?!!

The Disappearance of Knowledge

So oh noble Muslim, be fair to the people, just as you desire that the people show fairness to you. Implore justice whether for or against you, and be cautious of oppressing others, for indeed oppression is darkness on the Day of Judgment.

From the pitfalls (which harm knowledge): ostentatiousness. For indeed loving pomp breaks the backs (i.e. leads to ones destruction). So whoever is not aware of this hidden sickness within side himself, he will surely succumb to his own ruin.

Adh-Dhahabī said in *Siyar* (4/494), “it is necessary for the scholar to speak with (correct) intention and a pure goal. If he is amazed by his speech, he should keep quiet, and if his silence amazes him, then he should speak. And he should never become tired of calling himself to account. For indeed the soul loves pomp and praise.”

He also said in the same source, as is found in *As-Siyar* I8/I91-192, while advising the callers and the scholars, “So he should follow the truth, and not tread behind legislative concessions. He should be cautious to not blind follow once the proof has been established. If he fears from the one who provokes controversy from amongst the *Fuqahā*, then he should conceal it, and not show off. Perhaps he may be amazed by himself, or may love the spotlight, thus he will be punished, and from within his own self an intruder enters upon him. How many men have spoken the

truth and commanded with the good, and yet Allah places over him one who harms him, due to his evil intent and love of religious leadership. This is a hidden sickness that has entered the hearts of the Fuqahā.”

The many proofs from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah which warn against showing off are well known. No one from the callers and scholars has fallen, stumbled, or come to ruin after knowing the truth except after being overcome by hidden shirk (showing off and wanting to be seen and heard). Abū Bakr bin Al-Arabi said in Aridatu Al-Ahwaydi (10/121): “Knowledge may be a cause for the destruction of the one who possesses it, if it was sought for other than the face of Allah.”



There will never cease to be a party from my Ummah established upon the truth until the last of them fights against Ad-Dajjāl

It should not be understood by the mentioning of the disappearance of the knowledge found in the heart and on the tongue towards the final days, that there will cease to be within the Muslim Ummah those who will establish the religion, intellectually, in deeds, as well as calling to it, and defending it. Rather, there will (always) be a group that will carry (those things out) and they are well known from the numerous (and reoccurring) authentic narrations, based on the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ):

“There will never cease to be a group from my Ummah, who fight upon the truth, victorious against those who oppose them, until the last of them fight against ad-Dajjāl.”

A number of scholars have mentioned the large frequency of the narrations about the victorious and Saved Sect. From amongst them: Ibn Taymiyyah, As-Suyūṭī, Az-Zubaydī, and Al-Kattānī. As for this group, most scholars have explained them to be Ahl Al-Hadīth, from Ahl As-Sunnah wa Al-Jamā’ah. The meaning of this is that they are the first to be included in this (saved) sect. That is because they are the ones who Allah has strengthened in every age, by spreading knowledge, calling to Allah, and fighting against the

people of innovation and misguidance, (armed) with proof and clear evidence, so much so that Ishāq bin Musa Al-Khatamī said, “No one from this Ummah has been firmly established like the People of Hadīth. That is because Allah the Mighty and the Majestic said in His Book,

﴿ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
 كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ
 لَهُمْ وَلَيَجِدُنَّهُمْ مِن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمَنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن
 كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

“Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islām). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fāsiqūn (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” [An-Nūr: 55]

So that which Allah was pleased with, He strengthened its people in it, and He did not give power to the People of Desires; and did

not allow a single narration to be accepted from them on the authority of Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). While narrations from the people of ḥadīth are accepted when narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions. Then if there were amongst them an individual who innovated (in the religion) a newly invented matter, his narrations would be rejected, even if he were from the most truthful of people.”²⁰⁶

The people of ḥadīth have achieved the praiseworthy perfection. Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, as it is found in Majmū Al-Fatāwa 4/90-10): “And it is well known that the People of Ḥadīth share with every group in those attributes of perfection that they adorn themselves with. While at the same time, they are distinguished, with that which is not found (in the other groups). For indeed the one who disputes against (the people of ḥadīth) it is a must that he opposes them with another (incorrect) way, such as rationalizing, analytical deduction, (relying upon) opinions, philosophical speculation and rhetoric, proof seeking, argumentation, debating, inspiration, public speaking, personal passion, inclination and other than that. All of these methods, the People of Ḥadīth have the purest form and the best essence of it. So they are the most complete of the people in terms of intellect,

²⁰⁶ Collected by Al-Khatīb Al-Baghdādī in his work entitled The Nobility of the People of ḥadīth no. 55. Its chain is good.

the most just of the people in (their usage of) analogy, the most correct (of the people) in their opinions, the most relevant of them in speech, the most accurate of them in their point of view, the most guided of them in their seeking of proofs, the most upright of them in debating, the most complete of them in discernment, the most truthful of them in inspiration, the most unique of them in insight and being informed, the most correct of them in listening and speaking, and the greatest and best of them in inclination and taste. Likewise this applies to the Muslims in relationship to the other nations, and applies to the people of Sunnah and Hadīth in relationship to the other methodologies.”

In the prophetic narrations about the Victorious group, there is a refutation against those who say, “This time period does not have a Mujtahid in the Legislation.”



The 4th Section

The Disappearance of the Qur'ān

The tribulation of the Muslims as mentioned in this chapter is severe and it is greater than the Disappearance that is mentioned in the second section.

It is not unknown to the one who has understanding of this issue that the first and second section are the origin and cause for the disappearance of the Qur'ān. So as people increase in safeguarding knowledge, the time period in which the Qur'ān is raised becomes more and more delayed, and likewise the opposite is true. The decision belongs to Allah before and after!!

The Disappearance of the Qur'ān

The disappearance of the Noble Qur'ān and the Sunnah is a momentous occurrence that will befall all the people of the earth. It marks the establishment of the Day of Judgment and the destruction of the world. Indeed this disappearance (of the Qur'ān) has been mentioned in the Prophetic Tradition.

On the authority of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Al-Islām will extinguish as the embroidery of a fabric becomes worn-out, until the point where no one will know what fasting is, what praying is, what sacrificing is, and what charity is. The Book of Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, will be taken away by night and not a single verse will remain on earth. A group from amongst the people will remain: the elderly man and woman. They will say: we found our forefathers saying this statement: "Lā ilāha illa Allah" so likewise we said it."²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Collected by Ibn Mājah Number 4049 and the wording belongs to him. Also collected by Al-Hākim (4/473), Nuaym bin Hamād in The Book of Trials, and Al-Bazzār number 2838 by way of Abū Muawiyah on the authority of Abū Mālik Al-Ashjaee', who narrated from Ribī'ee bin Hirāsh, who narrated from Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه). Al-Bazzār said (concerning this narration): "A group from amongst the scholars

narrated this ḥadīth on (the authority of) Abū Mālīk Harrāsh from Ribī'ee from Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) as a mawqoof narration, a narration that stops at a Companion. And we do not know anyone who raised it to the Prophet (ﷺ) except Abū Kurayb on the authority of Abū Muawiyah.”

As for this Abū Muawiyah he is Muhammad bin Khāzim Ad-Darīr. Al-Hāfith (Ibn Hajr) mentioned in Tahrīr At-Taqrīb (3/234) concerning (this narrator): “The most well learned from the people pertaining to the narrations of Al-A'mash, but he may have delusions in other narrations.” Here are some affairs:

1.) Abū Muawiyah was followed (by other narrators in conveying from Abū Kurayb). Abū Awānah Waddāh bin 'Abdullah Al-Yashkurī followed him in this regard, and he is a reliable trustworthy narrator. This concurrence was mentioned by Al-Buṣayrī in Az-Zawā'id (2/307) no. (1429).

2.) Even if we were to submit and say that the narration which stops at Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) is in fact the weightiest, it would still take the ruling as being a narration that is ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ). That is because this type of statement is not made based on one's opinions, and Hudhayfah is not known to narrate from the People of the Book.

3.) A number of scholars have reported this narration authentically ascribing it to the Prophet (ﷺ). Al-Hākim said: “**this is an authentic narration upon the conditions of Muslim, and not collected by Bukhārī or Muslim.**” Ad-Dhababī did not speak about it. Ibn Hajar mentioned

in Fath Al-Bārī (13/21): **“Its chain is strong.”** Al-Buṣayrī said, **“its chain of narrators is authentic.”**

It was declared authentic by Ash-Sheikh Al-Albānī in Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations number (87), and Sheikh Al-Wāḍī‘ in Al-Sahīh Al-Musnad number (293), and other than these scholars. So this authentic grading from these scholars indicates that they gave more weight to the ḥadīth being ascribed back to the Prophet (ﷺ) and not to Hudhyfah.

4.) The ḥadīth has a corroborating text. On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), he said the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“The hour will not be established until a red wind is sent from the direction of Yemen, and with (this wind) Allah will take the soul of everyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day. The people will not renounce it, due to the small amount of people who die because of it. An elderly man will have died from the children of so and so, and an elderly woman will have died from the children of so and so. So the Book of Allah will be taken away by night; and it will be raised to the heavens. There will not remain a single verse on earth. Then the earth will release its hidden treasures from gold and silver, (but) they will be of no (value) after that day. (To the point that) a man will pass by (these treasures), kicking them with his foot, saying, ‘people before us used to fight over this, and today it is of no benefit!’”**

Collected by Ibn Hibbān in his Sahīh 15/266, Abū Ya’laa abbreviated it in his Musnad, and in his chain is Abdul Ghaffār bin ‘Abdullah. Ibn

Abī Hātim mentioned him in Praise and Disparagement 6/54, without any praise or criticism. The other narrators of the chain are reliable, so therefore it can be used as proof. Also, it was collected by Al-Hākim 4/506 with the wording:

“The Book of Allah will be taken away by night. It will be raised to the heavens, and by the morning there will be no verse on the earth from the Qur’ān, the Torah, the Gospel, and not the Psalms. It will be removed from the chests of the men. They will awaken not knowing what the (Book of Allah) is.” [Declared authentic by Al-Hākim, and its chain is hasan]

5.) And there are narrations (from Companions) which testify to the ḥadīth. From them is that which is narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) he said: **“Indeed this Qur’ān which is with you will soon be removed from you! He said: I said: ‘How will it be removed from us and Allah has made it firmly established in our hearts, and we have preserved it in our Muṣḥafs?’ He said: ‘It will be raised in a single night, so that which is in the hearts will be raised, and that which is in the Muṣḥaf will vanish, and the people will awaken in dire need of it.’** Then he recited the statement of Allah (the translation of its meaning is):

“And if we willed, we could surely take away that which we have revealed to you...” [Al-Isrā: 86]

Collected by Ibn Abī Shayba in Al-Musannaf number (30697) and the wording is (found in his collection). It was also collected by

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My dear brother who reads this book, the disappearance of the Qur'ān is an event which there is nothing that compares to it, not before or after it. It is a terrifying occurrence. How not, when it is the removal of that which, by it remaining the Ummah will survive, and in its disappearance is the end of the ummah?! I ask you by Allah, how will the condition of the people be when they awaken, not finding a single verse to recite, neither in the Muṣḥaf nor in their chests?! By Allah, being (dead) inside the earth is better than being (alive) on top of it. Without the Qur'ān death is better than life.

Oh Allah, preserve for us the Religion of Al-Islām, the Qur'ān, and the Prophetic Sunnah of the best of Creation (ﷺ). For verily there is no change and no strength except with Allah.

AbdurRazzāq number (5981), At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr no. (7698), and it was collected by Al-Bahayqī in Branches of Faith with the wording:

“Recite the Qur'ān before it is removed, because the hour will not be established until it is raised” They said: “these Muṣḥafs will be raised, what about that which is in the people's hearts?” He said: “It will take place at night, and it will be raised from their chests, so they will awaken and say: ‘It is as if we used to have knowledge of something, then they will begin to engage in poetry.’” And the narration of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) has recently proceeded.

The Disappearance of the Qur'ān is from the Major Signs (of the Hour)

A person may think that the disappearance of Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm is not from the Major Signs of Allah, and not a major sign of the Day Judgment. The reason they present for this is that the Disappearance of the Qur'ān is not mentioned in the prophetic narrations which mention the ten major signs of the hour. However, the truth is to the contrary.

Sadīq Hasan Khān mentioned in his book entitled, An Announcement about that Which was, and will be before the Hour, while speaking about the major signs of the hour, on page (175), he mentioned the disappearance of the Qur'ān saying: "And it is from the severest of catastrophic affairs. He mentioned in Al-Buhja: It is established from the Islāmic Scholars that it will first be raised from the Muṣhafs, and (it will take place) as they sleep at night. The people will awaken, and there will not remain a single written letter, after that (the Qur'ān) will be removed from the chest."

As-Sāfārīnī mentioned in his book From the Major Signs of the Day of Judgment (98): "From the Signs of the Hour is that the Qur'ān will be raised, and indeed it is from the most severe of all calamities."

Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī mentioned in Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations (I/173) under ḥadīth number (87):

“...And in this ḥadīth there is some serious information mentioned, which is that there will come a day when there will be no trace of Al-Islām; the Qur’ān will disappear, and there will not remain a single verse. This will not happen decisively, except after Islām has taken control, reaching every corner of the earth. The phrase (lā illāha illa Allah: that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah) will be made uppermost. As it is found in the statement of Allah, the Blessed and Most High:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَى
الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

‘It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islām), to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikūn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate (it).’”

[At-Tawba: 33]

The author of the book Authentic Narrations about the Signs of the Hour said, as it is found on page (310): ‘From the most severe and dangerous of all calamities upon the Ummah is the

disappearance of the Qur'ān from the Mushāfs and the chest, the extinguishing of the Qur'ān in totality.”



The Creed of the Pious Predecessors Concerning the Disappearance of the Qur'ān

It is not proper for a Muslim to be uncertain concerning the belief about the raising of the Qur'ān and it returning to the One who spoke with it, the One who revealed it, Allah, all Glory belongs to Him. That is because (this belief) is the belief of the pious predecessors. This was the creed of those (who are) from the best of creation, and those who continue to follow them upon this belief. No doubt they are the People of Hadīth, (even) to this very hour of ours.

On the authority of Amr bin Dinār he said: "I met the people and they (had in fact) met the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). And (I met) other than (them as well), over a period of seventy years, all of them saying: 'Allah, Mighty and Majestic is His Name, is the Creator, and everything other than Him is created, except the Qur'ān, for verily it is the Speech of Allah, the Most High, from Him it came and to Him it shall return.'²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Collected by Al-Maqdasī in Ikhtisās Al-Qur'ān (6). Its chain is Authentic.

Sufyān At-Thawrī said: “The Qur’ān is the Speech of Allah. It is not created. From (Allah) it commenced and to Him it shall return. Whoever says other than this has disbelieved.”

Abū Bakr bin Iyāsh said: “The Qur’ān is the Speech of Allah. He revealed it to Jibrīl, and Jibrīl revealed it to Muhammad. From Allah it originated and to Him it shall return.”

These three narrations are all authentic. They have been collected by Al-Hāfith Diyā Al-Maqdasī in (his work) Ikhtisās Al-Qur’ān.

Al-Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal said: “I met the men, the scholars, and Fuqahā in Mecca, Kufa, Basra, Shaam, Thugoor, Khorasan, and I saw them upon the Prophetic way and the Jamaa’h. So I asked the fuqahā about it, and everyone said: ‘The Qur’ān is the Uncreated Speech of Allah, from Him it began and to Him it will return.’”²⁰⁹

Al-Hāfith Abū Al-Walīd At-Tayālīsī said in Al-Masā’il by Abū Dawud page (66): “The Qur’ān is the Speech of Allah, (and) it is not separate from Allah.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Previous Reference

²¹⁰ Its chain is Authentic

So, oh noble reader, hold onto this correct and enlightened creed with your molar teeth. (For indeed) it is from the treasures of good and blessing. From that which should strengthen your creed and make you firm, are the numerous narrations and consensus concerning this belief (that the Qur'ān will return to Allah).

Sheikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned in Majmū Al-Fatāwa (6/528-529): “And that which the Pious predecessors have agreed upon is that the Qur'ān is the Revealed Uncreated Speech of Allah, from Him it began and to Him it shall return.

The Salaf only mentioned ‘from Him it began,’ because the Jahmiyah from amongst the Mu'tazilah and other than them used to say that He created the Speech in a place. Therefore, (in refuting this falsehood) the Salaf said ‘from Him it began’ meaning that He is the One who spoke with it, and that it is not from some of the creation. As Allah the Most High said:

﴿ تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴾

“The revelation of this Book (the Qur'ān) is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise” [Az-Zumar:I]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

“And if We had willed, surely! We would have given every person his guidance, but the Word from Me took effect (about evil-doers), that I will fill Hell with jinn and mankind together” [As-Sajda:13]

Allah also said,

﴿ وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَيَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

“And those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) from your Lord is the truth, and guides to the Path of the Exalted in Might, Owner of all praise” [Saba:6]

Allah the Most High said:

﴿ قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) Ruh-ul-Qudus [Jibrīl (Gabriel)] has brought it (the Qur’ān) down from your Lord with truth, that it may make firm and strengthen (the Faith of) those who believe and as a guidance and glad tidings to those who have submitted (to Allah as Muslims).” [An-Nahl: 102]

The meaning of (the Salaf’s) statement: ‘to Him it will return’ is that it will be raised from the chests and the Mushāfs, so there will not remain in the chests a verse nor a letter, as it has been reported in a number of narrations.”



The Reason for the Disappearance of the Qur'ān

The reason the Qur'ān will be raised is due to it being completely boycotted (and abandoned). The people will not strive to learn and teach it, not to mention the fact that they will not act upon it, call to it, or defend it. (Also from the reasons for the Qur'ān being raised) is that (the people will) not turn to (the Qur'ān) in the future. That is because there is no ummah after the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ), and there will be no offspring from the children of this Ummah, who will come later, prepared to accept the Qur'ān. So the Divine wisdom necessitated that it be raised after such a long period of it being boycotted (and abandoned). When this abandonment takes place, the Qur'ān will then be raised.

Ibn Nasr Al-Maqdasī narrated in Al-Hujjah as it is found in Mukhtasarihi (I/83) number 74 on the authority of Yazid bin 'Abdullah, he said that Mu'ādh said: **"The Qur'ān will soon be removed. They said: will it be removed to the point where it will not be read. He said: No, but the people will traverse one path, while the Qur'ān will traverse another."**²¹¹

²¹¹ Its chain is authentic

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That which is apparent from this narration is that the Muslims will completely leave off the recitation of the Qur'ān. If they do not recite it, then even more so they will not benefit from it at all. So the Divine Wisdom necessitated that it would be raised to the One who revealed it, and He is Allah the Mighty, the Wise.



The Condition of the People after the Qur'ān is removed

Prophetic narrations have indicated that the greatest evil upon the Ummah is for it to remain without a Qur'ān. The disappearance of the Qur'ān is a tremendous loss; the condition of this Ummah will be the worse (it has ever been) as it awaits the establishment of the hour. (And certainly) the hour is even worse and more bitter. On the authority of A'ishā (رضي الله عنها), she said I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, "The night and the day will not cease, until Al-Lāt and Al-Uzza are worshipped." So I said: Oh Messenger of Allah, for indeed I thought that when Allah revealed

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾

"It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islām), to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikūn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate (it)." [At-Tawba: 33]

that it means that it will certainly be fulfilled. He (ﷺ) said: "Indeed for that it will be what Allah wills. Then Allah will send a sweet wind, at which point everyone with a mustard seed of

faith will die, and only those who have no good in them will remain; and they will return to the religion of their forefathers.”²¹²

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr (ﷺ) he said: “Indeed from the last affair of the Ka’bah is that an army will attack the (Holy) House, and the Muslims will go toward them, and Allah will send a wind from the east, and it will not leave a single individual who has in his heart a mustard seed of faith except that it takes his life, until it finishes from the best of them, and only the wicked from the people will remain. They will not command with the good nor forbid the evil, and everyone alive will seek out the idols which their forefathers used to worship. Then they will take these idols as objects of worship. The affair will worsen until the point where these people will commit adultery in the pathways like animals. And it is upon these individuals that the hour will be established. So whoever informs you about anything other than this, then he has no knowledge.”²¹³

Also on the authority of (‘Abdullah bin Amr) he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “**The Hour will not be established**

²¹² Collected by Muslim ḥadīth no. 2907

²¹³ Collected by Al-Hākim 4/457. He declared it authentic, and Ad-Dhahabī was quiet about it.

until the people (sexually) mount on one another in the streets like donkeys. I said: 'will that indeed occur?' He said: yes, it will indeed occur."²¹⁴

In the long ḥadīth of An-Nawwās bin Samān about Ad-Dajjāl, Yajūj, Majūj, about the final days it is mentioned:

"...And while they are in that state when Allah will send a pleasant wind, which will be soothing even under their armpits, and will take the soul of every believer and every Muslim; only the most wicked of people will remain, who will commit adultery like donkeys. The hour will be established upon them."²¹⁵

Al-Qurtubī mentioned in At-Tadkhira page 744, while speaking about the condition of the people after the Qur'ān will disappear: "They will apostate and return to the state in which they were before Islām, worshipping idols and statues. The women of Daus will be sent circumambulating around these idols to the point

²¹⁴ Collected by Al-Bazzār in his Musannaf 4/148) number (3408), and he said: "We do not know it to be reported authentically from any other way except on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Amr with this chain." Collected by Ibn Hibbān no. (6767) and the wording belongs to him. It is authentic.

²¹⁵ Collected by Muslim no. 2937 and the wording (is found in his collection). It was also collected by Ahmad 4/181-182.

where their posteriors will shake in the final days. That is after everyone who has a mustard seed of faith in their heart has died.”

We cannot do anything except praise Allah for the blessing of having the Qur’ān in our midst. (We must) praise Him for the presence of Al-Islām, and for preserving the Sunnah of the Best of Creation (ﷺ). Oh Allah give us safety, oh Allah give us safety!

The Ummah will not reach such a condition that has been described in the aforementioned narrations, except by abandoning the Qur’ān. So, (oh noble reader), nourish your heart with Allah’s revelation. Delight your soul, open your ears, purify yourself, and exalt your intellect by pondering and seeking to understanding the Qur’ān. (Certainly), there is no change and no strength except by Allah.



After the Qur'ān is removed, the hour will be established upon the worst people

The removal of the Qur'ān from the people warns of an imminent evil: it is the establishing of the hour. This removal will not leave any good. Rather only pure evil will be amongst the people. Upon them the hour will be established.

Al-Imām Muslim narrated on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) that he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“the Hour will not be established upon anyone who says: Allah, Allah.”** In another narration **“until it will not be said on the earth: Allah, Allah”**²¹⁶

Al-Imām Ahmad reported on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) 3/162 with the wording: **“The hour will not be established upon anyone who says Allah, Allah.”** He also narrated with number (2949) on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) that he said the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“The Hour will not be established except upon the most evil of all people.”**

²¹⁶ Sahīh Muslim ḥadīth no. 148

Al-Imām Ahmad narrated (3/499) on the authority of I'lbā As-Sulami that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“The hour will not be established except upon the scum of the people.”**²¹⁷

It has become the general practice of the scholars in their explanations to affirm the apparent meaning of these narrations. An-Nawawī mentioned in The Explanation of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2/153: **“As for the meaning of the ḥadīth it is that the hour will be established upon the most wicked of the people.”**

Al-Hāfīth Ibn Hajr mentioned in Fath Al-Bārī 13/97: **“Muslim narrated after the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) the ḥadīth of ‘Āishah (رضي الله عنها), that which clarifies the time in which that will take place, and its wording ‘The night and the day will not vanish until Al-Lāt and Al-Uzza are worshipped.’ And in it (is the wording): ‘Allah will send a pleasant wind, and everyone who has in their heart a mustard seed of faith will die, so it will only remain those who do not have any good in them, and they will return to the religion of their forefathers.’**

Also with Muslim is the ḥadīth of ‘Abdullah bin Amr ‘Ad-Dajjāl will appear in my Ummah’ (the known narration). In it is (the statement), ‘Allah will send Isa bin Maryam (ﷺ) and he will seek

²¹⁷The ḥadīth is Hasan

out (the Dajjāl) and will kill him. Then the people will live for seven years, then Allah will send forth a cold wind from Shām. And there will not remain on the face of the earth anyone who has in his heart a mustard seed of faith, except that he will die.’

In (this narration is the statement): ‘So the most evil of people will survive, and they will be as careless as birds with the characteristics of beasts not recognizing the good nor forbidding the evil. The devil will appear to them in the form of a man and command them to worship idols, and then the trumpet will be blown.’”

The author of the book Authentic Narrations about the Signs of the Hour mentioned on page (310), “From the most severe and dangerous of all calamities upon the Ummah is the disappearance of the Qur’ān from the Mushāfs and from the chests. The extinguishing of the Qur’ān in totality, and the death of everyone who has a mustard seed of faith, all of that will take place towards the end of time, and are from the signs of the hour. (This is) in preparation of the hour being established upon the most wicked of people, those do not know anything about Al-Islām at all.”

In Fath Al-Bārī (13/25) Al-Hāfith Ibn Hajr reconciled between these prophetic narrations that we began the chapter with, along with the narration “There will never cease to be a group from

amongst my Ummah.” He said, “The reconciliation between it and the ḥadīth ‘There will never cease to be a group’ is that the ḥadīth ‘there will never cease to be a group’ is understood to refer to up until the time of the blowing of the pleasant wind which takes the soul of every believer and every Muslim, there will only remain the most wicked of people, and the hour will attack them by surprise.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: based on this, the meaning of the ḥadīth (that mentions) “There will never cease to be a group from amongst my Ummah, who will not be harmed by those who opposed them and not those who betray them until the hour is established,” (is that this group will remain) to *near* the coming of the hour, and not up until the hour itself. (This meaning is attained) by making reconciliation between this ḥadīth, along with the narrations that mention that the believing men and women will die before the establishing of the hour. Also, after the disappearance of the Qur’ān, the door of repentance will be closed, and the remaining major signs of the hour will come such as ‘The Beast’ which Allah mentioned in His Book with His statement,

﴿ وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ

النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

“And when the Word (of torment) is fulfilled against them, We shall bring out from the earth a beast to them, which will speak to them because mankind believed not with certainty in Our Ayāt (Verses of the Qur’ān and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ).” [An-Naml: 82]

Also from the signs (of the Hour) is the Sun rising from the west, at which point all of mankind will believe. But their faith at that time will be of no benefit and it will not be accepted from them. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: **“Whoever repents before the Sun rises from the west, Allah will accept his repentance.”**²¹⁸

The hour will be established upon these people, those whose repentance was not accepted after the Sun has risen from the west. They are those who ‘the beast’ will mention about them that they did not believe with certainty. With this reconciling between the texts it becomes clear that when the Qur’ān is raised, there is nothing after it except the establishment of the Hour, even if that is followed by the appearance of the other major signs of the hour. That is because the appearance of these signs is nothing other than an announcement about the nearness of the

²¹⁸ Collected by Muslim no. 2703 from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

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establishment of the hour upon these people, and not that repentance will be accepted or that righteous deeds will be raised (up to Allah).



The Disappearance of the Qur'ān is a refutation against those who say that Al-Islām is preserved in the Four Schools of Thought

The controversial unrest with some fanatics of the four schools of thought has reached such a level that they believe that these schools of thought contain all beneficial knowledge and the entire religion of Al-Islām. (They believe) that with these schools of thought, a person can do without the Qur'ān. Rather some of them have been so insolent that they have said: **“When Al-Masīh Isa bin Maryam descends in the last days, he will rule based on their school of thought!”** Some of them have openly said that there is no harm to the Muslims when the Qur'ān disappears because they will have the four schools of thought. (Oh noble reader) look at this tremendous ignorance.

Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī said in A Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations (I/173-175) under ḥadīth number (87) clarifying what we have mentioned: **“How far off is the misguidance of some blind followers who believe that the religion is preserved in the four schools of thought, and that there is no harm upon the Muslims when the Qur'ān is removed, if we were to presume that such a thing would occur!! This is what one of the major Muftis from the non-Arabs openly mentioned to me, and he speaks pure**

classical Arabic with ease. That was when the conversation between he and I took place about al-Ijtihād (independent judgment in affairs of Islāmic Jurisprudence) and at-Taqlīd (i.e. blind following). I said to him: 'If the affair is as you say, that the Muslims are not in need of Mujtahidīn, because the Mufti finds the response to the exact issue or one similar to it. (I ask you) will there be any harm if we were to suppose that the Qur'ān would disappear? He said, 'this will not take place.' I said, 'I am only saying, *if* we were to suppose that this takes place.' He said, 'there will be no harm if we were to suppose that this took place.' I said to him, 'So what is the value of Allah's favor upon His slaves, by preserving and protecting the Qur'ān. As He said,

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

"Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'ān) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)." [Al-Hijr: 9]

(What is the value of this blessing) if this preservation is not necessary with the presents of scholars?!" The reality is that this answer that we got from this Mufti by way of discussion is the answer of every blind follower on the face of the earth. The only difference is that some of them do not have the insolence to

openly express this, even if their heart harbors (this belief). We seek refuge in Allah from failure.”

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: You do not find one proof, not to mention more than that which indicates the four schools of thought will survive up until that time in which the Qur’ān will be raised. Rather the proofs that have been narrated indicate that these schools of thought will not survive to that time. In the ḥadīth of the vanishing of Al-Islām **“Until the point when no one will know the Salāh, charity, nor fasting.”**

So if these schools of thought were present the people would know about these and others affairs from the religion of Al-Islām. The authentic narrations have mentioned that Allah will send a wind from Al-Yemen softer than silk, taking the life of every believing man and woman. This death is before the disappearance of the Qur’ān, because Allah guaranteed that it will be preserved and then it will be raised. As for the schools of thought, they will vanish with the death of the believers, and that is if we were to submit (to the notion) that they will even remain up until *that* time period. But I do not think that (is the case), because the proofs indicate that all of the religions will vanish and disappear with the descending of (Isa) bin Maryam.

The schools of thought certainly consist of positions that oppose the book of Allah and the Sunnah, so there is nothing preventing

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them from vanishing as other than them fade away. That is because (these schools of thought) are not preserved with Allah's protection. As for our statement that (these schools of thought) will vanish with the vanishing of all other religions at the time of the descending of Al-Masīh, this is based on the potentiality that they will even remain until that time, and that is not (absolutely) necessary. So, (oh noble reader), you witness now during this time period a major turning away from the schools of thought amongst the Muslims. Therefore, it is not farfetched that there will come a time period when the Muslims will turn away from them more and more. Even if we were to suppose that they will remain until the time of the Mahdi and the descending of (Isa) bin Maryam, (both of them) will (no doubt) rule by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, the Islāmic Legislation and not other than that. So what is the benefit of their existence when this (wind) is sent? Rather the divine wisdom necessitates that they are not present. And Allah knows best.



Will the Ancient House (the Ka'bah) be Raised?

It has come in some prophetic narrations (the report of the) raising of the House. As it is found in Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān, ḥadīth number (6753), on the authority of ('Abdullah) bin Umar (رضي الله عنه). He reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, **"Enjoy this House, for indeed it was destroyed twice, and will be raised a third time."**²¹⁹

Ibn Khuzaymah explained the meaning of (the ka'bah) being raised as its destruction. He said in the aforementioned source: **The Prophet (ﷺ) intends by his statement 'and will be raised a third time' after the third time in which (it is destroyed). That is because to raise that which is destroyed is impossible and if there is no physical structure, and the House is destroyed, it is not referred to as a house."**

Abdur Razzāq collected on the authority of Abū Qulāba on the authority of Ka'b (ḥadīth number 9180) that he said concerning

²¹⁹ Collected by Ibn Khuzaymah in his *Saḥīḥ ḥadīth* number (2506), Al-Bazzār ḥadīth number (1072), Abū Nuaym in *Reports of Al-Asbahān'* I/202, Al-Hākim I/441, and it is authentic.

the K'abah: **"You will destroy it, Oh Ummah, three times, and then it will be raised on the fourth time, so enjoy it."**²²⁰

That which is apparent from the narration is that K'ab obtained this information from the writings of the People of the Book (the Jews and the Christians). There are many Prophetic narrations that specify that the Ka'bah will be destroyed in the last days and not raised up. And from amongst these narrations:

The ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) on the authority of Abū Qatāda (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **"A man will be made leader between the Black Stone and the Station of Ibrāhīm, and the House will not be seized unlawfully except by its people, and when they take it unlawfully, do not ask about the destruction of the Arab. Then Ethiopia will come and destroy it in a very vicious manner, such that it will not be reconstructed after that. They are the ones who seek to extract its treasures."**²²¹

This demolition is after the appearance of Yajūj and Majūj. That is because it was narrated on the authority of Abū Saīd Al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) the he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

²²⁰ Its chain is authentic (up until) Abū Qulāb. K'ab is the one known as K'ab Al-Ahbār.

²²¹ Narrated by Ahmad 2/291

“The people will continue to perform Hajj and Umrah even after the appearance of Yajūj and Majūj.”²²²

And on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), he said, I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, **“By him in whose hand is my soul, Ibn Maryam will certainly invoke the name of Allah while performing Hajj, Umrah, or both, at the valley of Rawha.”²²³**

Also, the destruction of the K’abah will not take place until after the death of the believers.

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه) he said: **“From the last affairs of the K’abah is that Ethiopia will attack the House, and the Muslims will turn toward them. Allah will send upon them a (pleasant) wind from the east, not leaving a slave who has in his heart a mustard seed of piety except that he will die. Until the point where Allah finishes with the best of them, there will only remain the most crooked of people. They (are those who) will not command with the good, nor will they forbid the evil. Every living soul will turn toward the idols which their forefathers used to worship. Eventually they will fornicate in the pathways like animals, and upon (these people) the hour will be**

²²² Collected by Al-Bukhārī ḥadīth number 1593

²²³ Collected by Muslim ḥadīth number 1252

established. So whoever narrates to you something after this, he has no knowledge."²²⁴

So (oh noble reader), we return to the issue at hand: the raising of the Blessed House. We have previously mentioned that the authentic prophetic reports specifically mention the destruction of the Sacred House close to the establishment of the Day of Judgment and not that it will be raised. The difference between the destruction and raising of the Sacred House is clear. Also Ibn Khuzaymah's explanation of 'raising' as meaning destruction has preceded. Also, many from amongst the Scholars commence their chapters with the wording "the destruction of the House is by it being destroyed, not by it being removed."

From that which indicates that the Ka'bah will not be raised up is the fact that it did not descend from Allah, but it is only rocks and dirt from the earth. (In addition to that) there is no apparent wisdom in the Sacred House being raised (up to Allah), because

²²⁴ Narrated by Al-Hākim 4/457. He declared it authentic. Ad-Dhahabī was silent about it, and it is such, but it stops at 'Abdullah (bin Amr). So it is feared that it is from the two Zāmilatah (e.g. manuscripts obtained during the Battle of Al-Yarmūk) that he found from the books of Ahl Al-Kitāb, but it agrees with other narrations that mention that the believers' souls will be taken after the appearance of Yajūj and Majūj.

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there is no proof that the Sacred House will testify for those who made circumambulation around it. Furthermore there is no proof that the people of paradise will make circumambulation around it either.

(We) summarize this issue (by saying) the Sacred House will not be raised before the Day of Judgment, but rather destroyed. And Allah knows best.



Will the Black Stone Disappear?

On the authority of 'Āishah (رضي الله عنها) who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Touch this stone often, because you are on the verge of losing it while the people are making circumambulation around it one night. They will awaken in the morning and would have indeed lost it. For verily Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, does not leave on earth anything that is from paradise, except that he returns it back to Him before the Day of Judgment."²²⁵

On the authority of 'Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه) he said: "Jibrīl descended with this (Black) stone from paradise, so enjoy it. For verily you will continuously be in a state of good as long as it is in your midst. For certainly (Jibril) will soon come and return with it from where he came (i.e. paradise)."²²⁶

²²⁵ It was collected by Al-Azraqī in Reports of Mecca I/342-343 and its chain is weak because of the presence of Uthmān bin Sāj, a weak narrator.

²²⁶ Collected by Al-Azraqī in Reports of Mecca I/63-64. Al-Haythamī said in Al-Majma' 3/242, "Narrated by At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr; and the men of the chain are the narrators of the Sahīh."

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This narration's chain is sound, but it stops at ('Abdullah bin Amr) and does not take the ruling of being ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ) out of fear that it is from the reports of the Children of Isrā'eel.

It has been reported from him as well with (another wording): **"Indeed Allah will remove the Qur'ān from the men's chests, as well as the black stone, before the day of judgment."**²²⁷ In this narration is Uthmān bin Sāj, a weak (narrator). In addition to that, this narration stops at 'Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه) and is not ascribed back to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Uthmān (bin Sāj) said: I narrated from Mujāhid that he said: **"How will you be when the Qur'ān is removed from your chests at night, (when it is) deleted from the hearts? (How will you be when) the stone is raised?"**²²⁸ This narration is not authentically reported from Mujāhid, because Uthmān (bin Sāj) is a weak narrator and his teacher is mubham (i.e. an unmentioned narrator).

(Thus) it is apparent from these chains of narrations that Uthmān bin Sāj was inconsistent in his reports. Sometimes he

²²⁷ Collected by Al-Azraqi in Reports of Mecca I/343.

²²⁸ Previous reference

reported the narrations ascribing it back to the Prophet (ﷺ) and sometimes he ascribed the narration back to a Companion. In some instances the narration would end at a successor to the companions. In the narration of Yūsūf bin Māhik he said,

“Allah has certainly made the Black Stone an Eid for the people of this Qibla, as the table spread was a day of celebration for the Children Isrā’īl...and indeed Jibrīl placed it in its place, and certainly he will come (back) to it, and take it from its place.”²²⁹

Based on this, there is not an authentic narration from the Prophet (ﷺ) or (any of his) Companions indicating that the Black Stone will be raised before the Day of Judgment. The majority of them revolve around (the narrator) Uthmān bin Sāj. So although his weakness is slight, he was the only one who narrated these reports and presented conflicting narrations. Therefore these reports are munkar (i.e. narrations in which an unreliable narrator opposes reliable narrators), which causes these narrations to be even more weak.

So we rely upon the narrations that have been authentically reported, which (mention) that the black stone will be brought forth on the Day of Judgment.

²²⁹ Previous reference, there are a number of defects in this narration.

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Al-Imām Ahmad collected (I/247), along with Ad-Dārimī (1881), Al-Azraqī in Reports of Mecca (I/323), Ibn Mājah (2944), At-Tirmidhī (961), Al-Hākim (I/457), Ibn Hibbān (3711), Ibn Khuzaymah (2736) and others by way of ‘Abdullah bin Uthmān bin Khuthaym on the authority of Saīd bin Jubayr on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“Allah will certainly bring the (Black) stone forth on the Day of Judgment, and it will have two eyes which it will see with, along with a tongue to speak with. And it will bear witness for the one who caressed it.”²³⁰

No doubt there is a difference between the raising of the Black Stone to Allah *before* the Day of Judgment and it being resurrected *on* the Day of Judgment. That is because if it were raised to Allah (*before* the Day of Judgment) then this would be a special distinguishing characteristic, making it unique from other inanimate objects. As for it being resurrected and testifying (on the Day of Judgment), these are (characteristics) that are shared

²³⁰ This ḥadīth was declared sound by At-Tirmidhī, and authenticated by Al-Hākim, Ibn Khuzaymah, Al-Albānī, (Muqbil) Al-Wadie’ in As-Sahīh Al-Musnad (under ḥadīth number) 595, and others.

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by (other things) as well. For (certainly) the Lord of all the worlds will bring forth the earth, and no doubt it will bear witness to those actions that were perpetrated upon it.



The 5th Section

Weak Narrations about the
Disappearance of Knowledge

The First Prophetic Tradition:

On the authority of Abū Umāma Al-Bāhili (رضي الله عنه) he said: When the Prophet (ﷺ) was at the Farewell Hajj, he (ﷺ) stood, and on that day he was (riding) behind Al-Fadl bin ‘Abbās²³¹ on the Camel of ādam. So he said: “Oh people, seek knowledge before it is taken away, and before it is removed.” And at that point Allah had revealed:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنَ أَشْيَاءَ إِن تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ
وَإِن تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنزَلُ الْقُرْءَانُ إِن تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴾

“O you who believe! Ask not about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if you ask about them while the Qur’ān is being revealed, they will be made plain to you. Allah has forgiven that, and Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Forbearing.”

[Al-Māi’dah: 101]

(Abū Umāmah Al-Bāhili) said: We disliked asking many questions, and we become certain about this when Allah, the

²³¹ **Translator’s Note:** The cousin of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and the oldest of the children of Al-‘Abbās. He was martyred during the Caliphate of Umar.

Mighty and Majestic, revealed (this) verse upon His Prophet (ﷺ). He said 'Thus we went to a Bedouin Arab, and we enticed him with an outer (clothing) garment. So he wrapped it around his head as a turban until I saw the outer lining hanging from his right eyebrow. (Abū Umāmah) said: then we said to him, 'ask the Prophet (ﷺ).' So (the Bedouin) said to (the Prophet (ﷺ)): 'Oh Prophet of Allah: 'How will knowledge be removed from us, while the Masāhif are within our midst. And we have learned what is in it, and we have taught it to our women, children, and servants?! He said: So the Prophet (ﷺ) raised his head and his face had turned red due to anger. He said: 'May your mom be bereaved of you!! These Jews and Christians have in their midst Scriptures, and have reached the point where they barely hold on to a letter from that which the Prophets (عليهم السلام) have brought. Indeed from the disappearance of knowledge is the removal of its Carriers," three times. ²³²

²³² Collected by Ahmad 5/266 (this wording is found in his collection). This narration was also collected by Ad-Dārimī summarized under ḥadīth number (240), as well as Ibn Mājah number (228), At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr number (7867, 7875) and it is very weak because it revolves around (the narrator) A'li bin Yazīd Al-Alhānī, an abandoned narrator (i.e a narrator known for frequent errors or one who has been accused of lying).

The Second Prophetic Tradition:

On the author of Sahl bin Sa'd, on the authority of his father (ﷺ), on the authority of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he said: "The Ummah will continue to be upon the Sharī'ah as long as three things have not appeared amongst them: as long as knowledge has not been removed from amongst them, and children of (*al-hinth*) sin have not increased, and as long as As-ṣaqqārūn have not appeared. He said: and what are As-ṣaqqārūn or As-Saqlāwūn, oh Messenger of Allah? He said: "A generation that will exist in the last days, their greeting will be to curse one another."²³³

On the authority of Abū Saīd Al-Khudrī, he narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Allah the Mighty and Majestic will indeed take the lives of the scholars, and He will remove the knowledge along with them, and there will develop a generation of youth who will jump on one another like wild asses, and the elderly and decrepit will be oppressed."²³⁴

²³³ Collected by Ahmad 3/439, At-Tabarānī in Al-Kabīr 20/439, Ibn Iddi in Al-Kamāl 3/1011, Al-Hākim 4/444, and he declared it authentic. Then Ad-Dhahabī followed after it with his statement: "the ḥadīth is *Munkar*."

²³⁴ Collected by At-Tabarānī in Al-Awsat 2/250 and he said: "No one narrated this ḥadīth on the authority of Amr bin Al-Hārith, except

The Fourth Prophetic Tradition:

On the authority of Abū Zāhiriyah (ﷺ), --- ascribing the ḥadīth to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) --- “Indeed Allah said: ‘I will disseminate (Islāmic) knowledge in the last days to the extent that man, woman, male, female, the free person, the slave, and the old and the young will know of it. So when I have done that, I (will) take them by My right upon them.’”²³⁵

The ḥadīth is weak because it is a mursal narration (i.e. a narration in which a Tabī‘ narrates directly from the Prophet ﷺ).

Rishdayn (bin Sa’d bin Muflih Al-Mahri), (and) Al-Hajāj bin Rishdayn was alone in narrating this chain.”

(Also) Al-Haythamī said in Al-Majma I/201: “And in the chain is Al-Hajāj bin Rishdayn bin Sad on the authority of his father (Rishdayn bin Sa’d), and Al-Hajāj has been declared weak by Ibn ‘Idi, and no one declared him reliable. (As for his father) the scholars differed on whether or not he could be used as proof, but the majority of scholars have declared him weak.”

²³⁵ Collected by Ad-Dārimī number 259, and Ibn Abdul Barr in A Collection of Narrations Clarifying Knowledge and Its Virtues number 1210. It was also collected by Abū Nuaym in Al-Hilya 6/100, this wording is found in his collection.

Abū Zāhiriyah Hudayr bin Kurayb is a *tabi'* (i.e. from the generation that followed the companions).

The Fifth Prophetic Tradition: On the authority of 'Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-'As (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "The affairs of Bani Israeel continued to be balanced up until the appearance of the *muwalladun* (i.e. an arab man of mixed lineage, resulting from being born to a non-arab slave woman), the children of female prisoners of war from other nations. They issued religious verdicts based on their own opinions. Thus they went astray and lead others to misguidance as well."²³⁶

²³⁶ Collected by Ibn Mājah, number 56. The report has narrators missing from the chain. It was also collected by Al-Bazzār as is found in *Kashf Al-Astār* I/96. He said (about this narration): "We do not know of anyone who said: 'On the authority of Hishām, on the authority of his father, on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Amr, except Qays. Others narrated it with a Companion missing from the chain."

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) comment: Qays bin Ar-Rabi' is a weak (narrator). Therefore the ḥadīth is also weak. And we have previously mentioned that this narration has (infact) been authentically reported from the statement of Urwa bin Az-Zubayr.

Translator's Note: Al-Hāfith mentioned about Urwa in *At-Taqrīb* "Urwa bin Az-Zubayr Al-Awwām bin Khuwalid Al-Asadi, Abū

The Sixth Prophetic Tradition: On the authority of ‘Abdullah (ﷺ), who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **‘Learn the Qur’ān, seek knowledge, and teach it to the people. (Likewise) learn the science of inheritance, and teach it to the people. For indeed, I am a man that will die, and knowledge will be removed, to the point that two men will differ over (the ruling of) inheritance, and they will not find anyone to inform them.’**²³⁷

‘Abdullah Al-Madanī, reliable, scholar, (well) known, from the mid level students of the Companions. He died in the year 94 of the Islāmic calendar based on the most correct position. He was born in the early years of the Caliphate of Uthmān (ﷺ).”

²³⁷ Collected by Abū Ya’laa in his Musnad under number 5028, Ad-Dārimī under number 227, and this wording is found in his collection. This narration was also collected by Al-Hākim 4/333, Al-Bahayqī 6/208, and At-Tayālisi under number 76.

Also, this ḥadīth is narrated by Auf bin Abū Jamīlah, who has indeed been inconsistent in his reporting. Sometimes he says: on the authority of Sulaymān bin Jābir on the authority of Abū Al-Ahwas, on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd. Sometimes he narrates (saying): on the authority of a man named Sulaymān bin Jābir, (who narrates) on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd. Other times he says: on the authority of a man, (who narrates) on the authority of Sulaymān bin Jābir. And sometimes (he even narrates) saying: “It has reached me on the authority of Sulaymān bin Jābir.” Al-Albānī mentioned in Irwā Al-

The Seventh Prophetic Tradition: On the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd (رضي الله عنه): he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "There will come a time period upon the people where knowledge will be removed, the scholars will die, and only the ignorant people will remain. They will go astray, and lead others astray as well."²³⁸

The Eighth Prophetic Tradition: On the authority of 'Āishah (رضي الله عنها) who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Touch this stone often, because you are on the verge of losing it while the people are making tawwāf around it one night. Then they will awaken in the morning and would have indeed lost it. For verily Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, does not leave on

Ghalīl (under ḥadīth number) I664, "At-Tirmidhī has mentioned that this narration has a defect of being inconsistent (and unstable) in the narrator's reporting. Al-Haythamī mentioned in Al-Mujma 4/223 that it had a defect (as well) when he stated: 'And in its chain is he who I do not know.'"

I (Muhammad Al-Imām) mention: Sulaymān bin Jābir is an unknown narrator, therefore the narration is weak.

²³⁸Collected by Ibn Iddi in Al-Kāmil 2/463 and he said: "This ḥadīth with this chain is Munkar. No one narrates it on (the authority of) Abū Hazim except Bakr bin Sulaym. I do not know it except from this way."

earth anything that is from paradise, except that he returns it back to Him before the Day of Judgment.”²³⁹

The Ninth Prophetic Tradition: On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-‘As (رضي الله عنه) he said: **“Before the Day of Judgment, Allah will remove the Qur’ān from the men’s chests, and He will remove the black stone as well.”**²⁴⁰

The Tenth Prophetic Tradition: On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه), he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“The Hour will not be established until the Qur’ān returns from where it came. It will have a noise around the throne like the sound of bees. So Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, will say to it: What’s**

²³⁹ It was collected by Al-Azraqi in Reports of Mecca I/342-343 and its chain is weak because of the presence of Uthmān bin Sāj. Al-Hāfith mentioned in At-Taqrīb that he has weaknesses.

²⁴⁰ Collected by Al-Azraqi in the previous source I/343. Its chain is like that before it. Ibn Abdul Hakīm also collected it in The Conquests of Mecca (255) and Ad-Daylami in Al-Firdous under number 7542 on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr (رضي الله عنه) connecting it back to the Prophet (ﷺ) with the following wording: **“The Hour will not be established until the Black stone and the Station of Ibrāhīm are raised.”** Al-Allāmah Al-Albānī said in Series of Authentic Prophetic Narrations under ḥadīth number 4789, **“This chain is weak, due to the weakness of Ibn Lahia’ as well as his teacher Abū Zura’h.”**

with you? So it (the Qur'ān) will say: 'From you I have come, and to you I return. I am recited and not acted upon.' With that, the Qur'ān will be removed."²⁴¹

With the completion of this section, I finish this book of mine. All praise belongs to Allah, who with His favor, righteous deeds are complete!!!



²⁴¹ Collected by Ad-Daylami in Musnad Al-Firdous 5/79-80 ḥadīth number 7513, and its chain is in Zahr Al-Firdous 4/201. It is weak because in its chain is (‘Abdullah) bin Lahia’h, a weak narrator. Also, Abū Qabīl, the narrator of it, who reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Amr, even though he is reliable, he used to narrate from the books of the previous nations. Thus it is feared that this may be from those narrations.