

2- A duty on each Muslim

Why do we learn and teach Islam?

We learn and teach Islam:

First: to be honest with Allah, Almighty, and with people

A true Muslim (who does not claim such status either by heritage or ID) is the one who believes that Allah, the One and only One, has sent the seal of prophets and messengers – Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with guidance and true religion to all people. Hence, a Muslim testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is the Slave and Messenger of Allah. Accordingly, a Muslim is required to know, understand and follow Allah revelation in the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) including his sayings, deeds and statements which clarify and detail the Holy Revelation.

Who comes that a person claims faith while he does not duly know Islam? It is just like a person claiming to know medicine while he did not study it or another who works as a lawyer while he did not study law.

“And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they believe not. They (think to) deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!” (Surah Al-Baqarah :8/9)

Faith is not mere wishes. How easy it is to utter the two testimonies of faith and get involved in the Muslim community! Yet, there is a wide gap between embracing Islam and declaring one as a Muslim and true faith as Allah said:

“The bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You believe not but you only say, 'We have surrendered (in Islam),' for Faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not decrease anything in reward for your deeds. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Surah Al-Hujurat: 14)

This gap is bridged by exerting efforts in learning this religion. Learning it is a crucial point demarcating between honesty and claims. In a Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

No one is a true believer until he makes his wishes and desires subservient to what has been revealed to me. (Al-Baghawi)

Needless to say that such matter shall not be fulfilled without being fully acquainted with the religion revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Second: a sign of obedience to Allah and His Messenger

The first verse of the Holy Qur’an revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) was:

“Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists).” (Surah Al-Alaq: 1) It means: read, recite and follow what shall be revealed to you from the Words of Allah (not the sayings of human beings). It is similar to the following verses:

“Verily, We shall send down to you a weighty Word (i.e. obligations, legal laws, etc.)” (Surah Al-Muzzamil: 5)

“And when We have recited it to you [O Muhammad through Jibrael (Gabriel)], then follow you its (the Qur'ân's) recital. Then it is for Us (Allah) to make it clear to you” (Surah Al-Qiyamah: 18/19)

“And (it is) a Qur'ân which We have divided (into parts), in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And We have revealed it by stages.” (Surah Al-Israa: 106)

“Then, when Mûsa (Moses) had fulfilled the term, and was travelling with his family, he saw a fire in the direction of Tûr (Mount). He said to his family: "Wait, I have seen a fire; perhaps I may bring to you from there some information, or a burning fire-brand that you may warm yourselves." (Surah Sad: 29)

“And We sent not (as Our Messengers) before you (O Muhammad) any but men, whom We inspired, (to preach and invite mankind to believe in the Oneness of Allah). So ask of those who know the

Scripture [learned men of the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], if you know not. With clear signs and Books (We sent the Messengers). And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad) the reminder and the advice (the Qur'ân), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought." (Surah An-Nahl: 43/44)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"The people of the Qur'an are the people of Allah and His distinct salves." (Reported by An-Nasaei, Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim)

The best of you is that who learns the Holy Qur'an and teaches it. (Reported by Al-Bukhari)

"The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. Prophets did bequeath neither dinars nor dirhams, but they left knowledge. One who acquires is considered to have achieved a full share of grace. (Reported by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasaei, Ibn Majah, Ahmad and Ibn Hibban)

"Whoever comes to my mosque only to learn or teach goodness, he is in the position of the fighter for the cause of Allah." (Reported by Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim)

“If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. He who is slow-paced in doing good deeds, his (high) descent does not make him go ahead.”
(Reported by Imam Muslim)

“For those people who assemble in one of Allah's Houses (mosques) and recite the Book of Allah and teach it to each other, there will descend upon them the tranquility and mercy will cover them and the angels will flock around them and Allah will mention them in the presence of those near Him. (Reported by Imam Muslim)

“The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars.”
(Reported by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasaei, Ibn Majah, Ahmad and Ibn Hibban)

((أفضل العبادة الفقه)) (الطبراني)

((ما اكتسب مكتسب مثل فضل علم يهدى صاحبه إلى هدى أو يردده عن ردى، وما استقام دينه حتى يستقيم عقله)) (الطبراني)

“He who recites the Qur'an in a period less than three days does not understand it.” (Reported by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasaei and Ibn Majah)

“If Allah wants to do good for somebody, he makes him comprehend the Religion (i.e. Islam).” (Reported by Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim)

فالعلم المفروض - فرض عين- على كل مسلم هو: العلم بالقرآن وبالسنة وفهم ما يستنبط منها من فضائل وأحكام، وحقائق وتصورات.

أما سائر العلوم والفنون فهي:
إما علوم يبصر بها المؤمن روعة الخلق وإعجاز الخالق، كالتي تشير إليها الآية:

“See you not that Allah sends down water (rain) from the sky, and We produce therewith fruits of varying colors, and among the mountains are streaks white and red, of varying colors and (others) very black. And of men and *Ad-Dawâb* (moving living creatures, beasts, etc.), and cattle, in like manner of various colors. It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All--Mighty, Oft-Forgiving.” (Surah Fatir: 27/28)

وهي معارف واجبة على المسلم ليزداد إيماننا ويقينا لأن:
(الكلمة الحكمة ضالة المؤمن فحيث وجدها فهو أحق بها)) (الترمذي)

The other types of sciences are useful for the Muslim nation such as agricultural, industrial, informational and medical technologies. These sciences are a collective duty on the Muslim nation. **Some Muslims** must be specialized in **these sciences**; otherwise the whole nation shall be apt to fall in sins. They are indicated by the Qur’anic command:

“And make ready against them all you can of power” (Surah Al-Anfal: 60)

These sciences are studied in order to attain power and glory for the Muslim nation.

“But honor, power and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad), and to the believers.”

Third: to implement its system and rulings

Islam is an all-comprehensive and integrated system for thought, belief, manners, morals, worship, work and individual and group relations. Studying this system is the starting point for honest and full commitment to the virtuous deeds and commandments enjoined by Allah and His Messenger and avoiding vices and prohibitions banned by Allah and His Messenger. When an employee works for an employer or an organization, such employee shall pay attention to knowing business duties, regulations, statues and the things which lead either to reward or punishment. How about the Lord of the Worlds? Shall we go astray from His wise approach to the deviations, whims and vanities of human beings?

We should be fully aware of all His legislations in all areas of life so that we shall submissively act in accordance with His rulings:

Then We have put you (O Muhammad) on a plain way of (Our) commandment [like the one which We commanded Our Messengers before you (i.e. legal ways and laws of the Islamic Monotheism)]. So follow you that (Islamic Monotheism and its laws), and follow not the desires of those who know not. (Surah Al-Jatheyah: 18)

“Say (O Muhammad): "Obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad)."
But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers.”
(Surah Al-Imran: 32)

“And obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad) that you may
obtain mercy.” (Surah Al-Imran: 132)

“And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one
another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Surah Al-
Anfal: 46)

"And verily, this (i.e. Allah's Commandments mentioned in the above
two Verses 151 and 152) is my Straight Path, so follow it, and follow
not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path.”
(Surah Al-Anaam: 153)

“Do they then seek the judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance? And who
is better in judgment than Allah for a people who have firm Faith.”
(Surah Al-Maaidah: 50)

“The command (or the judgment) is for none but Allah. He has
commanded that you worship none but Him (i.e. His Monotheism),
that is the (true) straight religion, but most men know not.” (Surah
Yusuf: 40)

“While they have been ordered to reject them. But *Shaitân* (Satan) wishes to lead them far astray. And when it is said to them: "Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger (Muhammad)," you (Muhammad) see the hypocrites turn away from you (Muhammad) with aversion.” (Surah An-Nisaa: 60/61)

“Or have they partners with Allah (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allah has not allowed.” (Surah Ash-Shura: 21)

“O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day.” (Surah An-Nisaa: 59)

“He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad), has indeed obeyed Allah.” (Surah An-Nisaa: 80)

“And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).” (Surah Al-Hashr: 7)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

I have left among you two things if you hold fast to them, you would never go astray: the Book of Allah and my traditions. They shall not set apart until they come to my basin." (Reported by Al-Hakim)

"Those of you who survive me will notice a lot of differences. I will be incumbent upon you to follow my Sunnah (tradition) and the practices of my rightly guided successors (Caliphs) and hold fast with these precepts and traditions." (Reported by Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi)

Fourth: to perform the duty of calling for Islam

Allah ordained on the Muslim nation to be sources of guidance and exert their utmost efforts to spread the true call for Islam everywhere and in every generation on the individual, family or tribe level or even on the level of the whole Muslim nation. Such ordinance necessitates clear understanding and thorough knowledge of the religion you are calling for:

"And warn your tribe (O Muhammad) of near kindred." (Surah Ash-Shuara: 214)

"And recommend one another to the truth and recommend one another to patience." (Surah Al-Asr: 3)

“You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad and his *Sunnah* (legal ways, etc.)] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin *Al-Ma'rûf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid *Al-Munkar* (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah.” (Surah Al-Imran: 110)

“Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) order for *Iqamat-as-Salât*. [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational *Salât* (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the *Zakât* and they enjoin *Al-Ma'rûf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden) [i.e. they make the Qur'ân as the law of their country in all the spheres of life].” (Surah Al-Hajj: 41)

“But strive against them (by preaching) with the utmost Endeavour, with it (the Qur'ân).” (Surah Al-Furqan: 52)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“May Allah brighten a man who hears a tradition from us, gets it by heart and passes it on to others. Many a bearer of knowledge conveys it to one who is more versed than he is; and many a bearer of knowledge is not versed in it.” (Reported by Ahmad and Ibn Majah)

((يا أبا ذر لأن تغدو فتعلم آية من كتاب الله خير لك من أن تصلى مائة ركعة، ولأن تغدو فتعلم بابا من العلم عمل به أو لم يعمل به خير لك من أن تصلى ألف ركعة)) (ابن ماجه)

“It is incumbent upon those who are present to inform those who are absent because those who are absent might comprehend (what I have said) better than the present audience.” (Reported by Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim)

Allah menaced the person who concealed knowledge or hid the true call for Islam in His saying:

“Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allah and cursed by the cursers.” (Surah Al-Baqarah: 159)

“Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Dawûd (David) and 'Iesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). That was because they disobeyed (Allah and the Messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from the *Munkar* (wrong, evildoing, sins, polytheism, disbelief, etc.) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do.” (Surah Al-Maaidah: 50)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

If one is questioned about knowledge (of religion) and conceals it, he will be bridled with a bridle of fire on the Day of Resurrection. (Reported by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'ei, Ibn Majah, Ahmad and Al-Hakim)

The parable of one who learns science but does not spread it is like one who hoards treasures and does not spend it. (Reported by At-Tabarani)

Abu Hurairah narrated: People say that I have narrated many Hadiths (the Prophet's narration). Had it not been for two verses in the Qur'an, I would not have narrated a single Hadith, and the verses are: "Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allah and cursed by the cursers. Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful. (Reported by Al-Bukhari)

Fifth: seeking for winning and salvation in the Hereafter

In the Day of Judgment:

“That Day shall a man flee from his brother, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children. Everyman, that Day,

will have enough to make him careless of others.” (Surah Abas: 34/37)

In this Day, a person shall be thoroughly and fairly put into account for whatever goodness, evil or acts of obedience or disobedience whether big or small, as Allah said:

“(Remember!) that the two receivers (recording angels) receive (each human being after he or she has attained the age of puberty), one sitting on the right and one on the left (to note his or her actions). Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it).” (Surah Qaf: 17/18)

“So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it.” (Surah Az-Zalzalah: 7/8)

“And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We as Reckoners.” (Surah Al-Anbiyah: 7/8)

“Then as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy, He will live a pleasant life (in Paradise). But as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be light, He will have his home in *Hawiyah* (pit, i.e. Hell). And what will make you know what it is? (It is) a hot blazing Fire!” (Surah Al-Qari'ah: 6/11)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

A bondsman of Allah will remain standing on the Day of Judgment till he is asked about his age and how he spent it; about his knowledge and how he applied it, about his wealth; how he acquired it and in what way he spent it, and about his health and how he wore it out. (Reported by At-Tirmidhi)

How could we be saved from the torment of Allah and win His blessings and pleasure if we do not specifically know in details goodness and evil in the sight of Allah, how we obey Him and avoid falling in sins? There is no way out except through honestly learning Islam so as to act in accordance with it in order to attain the pleasure of Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said:

((فقيه واحد أشد على الشيطان من ألف عابد)) (الترمذي)

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters,

Learning Islam as much as one could and understanding the goals of the Holy Qur'an and the authentic prophetic traditions are not a mental luxury, a knowledge which a person may show off or an intellectual discourse which loudmouthed people may claim. They are:

1- A duty on each Muslim

- 1- A duty necessitated by true faith in the Islamic message
- 2- Compliance to the commands of Allah and His Messenger
- 3- A prerequisite for acting in accordance with the teachings of Islam and implementing its rulings
- 4- A basis for performing the duty of calling others to Islam and enjoining goodness and prohibiting wrongdoings
- 5- A necessity for being prepared to the ultimate, inevitable destination: either Paradise or Hell-fire

On the Day of Resurrection and Reckoning, all of us shall be held accountable for the extent of our knowledge of Islam, acting in accordance with its teachings and calling others to adhere to it. There shall be no excuse for any person who managed to learn Islam, but he/she did not pay attention to it.