

# Acquiring Knowledge from Authentic Sources

إِنَّ هَذَا الْعِلْمَ دِينٌ

فَانظُرُوا

عَمَّنْ تَأْخُذُونَ

دِينِكُمْ

- محمد ابن سيرين

*Shaykh Imran Patel*  
*hafizakullāh*

*In the name of Allāh, the Most Gracious,  
the Most Merciful*

The Glorious Qur'ān has declared the nation of Muḥammad ﷺ to be the best of nations. This honour is rightly deserved in light of how they fulfill the great obligation of enjoining good and prohibiting evil. In one verse of the Glorious Qur'ān, Allāh ﷻ commands the people that there should be a group of people who fulfill this noble responsibility in every era. (3:110) Allāh ﷻ has decreed this deed upon each and every Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, from our forefather, Ḥaḍrat Ādam ﷺ, to our most beloved, Muḥammad ﷺ, every Prophet had made this their life mission. And this succession did not end here, rather after Muḥammad ﷺ, his Companions ﷺ, the Tābi'īn (followers), the Mufasssīrīn (commentators), the Muḥaddithīn (traditionists), the Fuqahā (jurists), and the righteous servants of Allāh ﷻ made it the goal of their life to fulfill this noble task. To this day, there are many individuals who spend their days and nights to fulfill this self-sacrificing responsibility setting aside even the necessities of life. These individuals are in constant worry of safe guarding, protecting and spreading the teachings of Islām, and their sacrifices are not to be forgotten.

## **A Poisonous Injection**

Conversely, on the other side of the spectrum, we find those individuals who have rejected the universal statements of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ and the

---

educated and learned scholars or have done inaccurate interpretations of their statements under the illusion of serving the dīn. In fact, their actions are altogether contrary to the service of our treasured religion. The treacherous have put forth these individuals by injecting them with the poison of 'liberalism'. Amongst them are those who took matters to an extreme; some attacked the honour of the beloved Companions ﷺ, whilst others went as far as making messianic and prophetic claims, thus casting themselves out of the fold of Islām. Similarly, some began interpreting the Glorious Qur'ān according to their own limited intellect despite their unworthiness, hence falling into the interpretation of those verses whose meaning is known to Almighty Allāh ﷻ alone.

In present day times, we increasingly find that there are individuals who seemingly work as Islāmic Preachers and corrupt the minds of the people by spreading their false ideologies through propaganda via the internet, television and social media. These people are the very ones who foolishly attempt to interpret the Glorious Qur'ān according to their limited ability, whereas our Prophet ﷺ has clearly stated: "Whomsoever interprets the Glorious Qur'ān according to their own thinking and is correct, will still be sinful." (At-Tirmidhī) Thus, interpretation of the Glorious Qur'ān according to one's thinking is rejected by the consensus of our nation, and those who carry out this despicable action have been promised the hell fire. Therefore, we must

---

understand that whether it is interpretation of the Glorious Qur'ān or any of the Islāmic Sciences, academic boundaries have been set. Hence, even if a learned scholar crosses these confines, then this will be their solitary opinion.

## Prerequisites for Tafsīr

Moreover, the scholars have stated that one must master fifteen sciences before interpreting the Glorious Qur'ān. Now let us see for ourselves if those who interpret the Glorious Qur'ān and claim to do service of dīn on social media have completed these fifteen prerequisites while studying in an Islāmic Institute or seminary or studied under an educated teacher. The answer will certainly be in the negative; unfortunately, having an in-depth knowledge of these fifteen sciences is a distant dream, rather, these people haven't even scratched the surface of these sciences, nor are they familiar with the principles of interpreting the Glorious Qur'ān. Furthermore, they not only disregard the explanations of the Ṣaḥābah (Companions) ﷺ, Muḥaddithīn (traditionists), Fuqahā (jurists), and our pious predecessors ﷺ, but also arrogantly classify them as baseless. In the same breath, they attempt to classify Aḥādīth books apart from Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī as being unsubstantiated and unauthentic, which is completely incorrect and an evidence of their unfamiliarity with the principles and the science of ḥadīth.

## Principles of Tafsīr

‘Allāmah Jalāluddīn As-Suyūṭī رحمته الله - an eminent scholar from the ninth century, whose academic caliber was such that when a question arose, he lit a candle and continuously wrote till dawn, until he prepared a booklet - speaks of the principle that when conducting tafsīr of the Glorious Qur’ān, one should first look at other verses of the Glorious Qur’ān, then the Sunnah (Aḥādīth of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and then the statements of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم because they were present at the time of the descent of divine revelation and as a result, were significantly more aware of which situation certain verses were revealed in. Imām Ḥākim رحمته الله mentions that the explanation of a Companion رضي الله عنه who witnessed a revelation holds the status of a ḥadīth whose chain of narration reaches the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Thus, it is obligatory for the commentator of the Glorious Qur’ān to be pious, devout, god conscious (muttaqī), and one who refrains from the pleasures of this world. ‘Allāmah Ṭabarī رحمته الله states that the first condition for the commentators’ interpretation to be correct is that their ‘Aqā’id (beliefs) are flawless and they are not a servant of their desires. We must see if the beliefs of those who interpret the Glorious Qur’ān and discuss other topics of religion under the title of ‘Islāmic Scholar’ are correct. There are unfortunately some people who have adopted flawed thought processes such as polytheism, and parade around issuing Islāmic verdicts and interpretations. We must be vigilant in not only keeping a

distance from these individuals, but also doing our utmost best to halt their ‘progressions’ in the public world. These unfortunate souls are not Ḥuffāz, nor have they studied Islāmic Sciences from a proficient teacher, rather, have only glimpsed through few literatures.

## True Knowledge

Knowledge is not simply reading a few books, rather it is the concept of items being transferred into the student’s heart from the teacher’s bosom. If reading books was sufficient then the Companions رضي الله عنهم would have been only given the Glorious Qur’ān, and being experts in the Arabic language, they would have understood the Glorious Qur’ān. However, this was not the case because along with the Books of Allāh تبارك وتعالى, the People of Allāh عليه السلام (in the form of Prophets صلى الله عليهم وسلم) were also sent. This is why we find such stories that although the Companions رضي الله عنهم were Arabic linguists, they came short of understanding several verses of the Glorious Qur’ān and made mistakes. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr رحمته الله - a famous commentator - mentions a simple analogy as follows: In Ṣaḥīh Al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīh Al-Muslim there is an incident that when the following verse was revealed,

*“Eat and drink until the white thread (of dawn) becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night].” (2:188)*

‘Adī Ibn Ḥātim رضي الله عنه took the literal meaning of

---

the verse, thus he took two threads - one white and one black – and placed them under his pillow, and he continued to watch them, but no distinction appeared. So, the following day he came in the blessed gathering of Nabī ﷺ and related the incident. Nabī ﷺ informed him that he had misinterpreted the verse and the correct interpretation was eat and drink [the meal of seḥrī] until you see the twilight on the horizon from the darkness of the night. ‘Adī Ibn Ḥātim ؓ had made a mistake despite being a brilliant companion and an expert in the Arabic language. In general, the Arabs were experts in the Arabic language at that time to such an extent that they would consider non Arabs to be ‘Ajam (dumb) due to their lack of eloquence. If such a prominent companion can err in this way, then how can the apparent ‘Islāmic Preachers’ of our time understand and correctly interpret the Glorious Qur’ān from merely reading a few books? Surely, this is folly.

## **A Message to Ponder Upon**

It has become a normal trend for the vast majority to just log in on to their mobile or electronic devices and browse through the internet whenever a question arises. This is not the correct and appropriate way of acquiring knowledge because there is plenty of unauthentic content on the internet which only the learned can easily understand. Many websites are controlled and managed by not only those Muslims who hold false ideologies and methodologies;

---

but rather by those non Muslims who want to hurt Islam. They will post articles in which some points and arguments will be according to Sharī'ah and some completely contradictory to Islāmic teachings. Many a times there may be such wordings and literature that if one wholeheartedly believes them to be true it will cast them out of the fold of Islām.

### **‘Lending an Ear’**

In conclusion, Muslims must not be captivated and lend their ear to every preacher, cleric, or seemingly informative ‘scholar’. Rather, one must thoroughly investigate and scrutinize every aspect of the preacher before proceeding in any aspect of their ‘supposed’ knowledge. Also, it is integral that we closely study and analyze their chain of knowledge and realize who they have acquired this knowledge from.

(Shaykh) Imran Patel (ḥafīzahullāh)  
Director of Al-Ḥikmah Academy  
Toronto, Canada

AL-HIKMAH  
ACADEMY  
TORONTO • CANADA

© Al-Ḥikmah Academy

**Al-Ḥikmah Academy**

Toronto • Canada

Tel: +1 (647) 868-2540

E-mail: [info@alhikmah.ca](mailto:info@alhikmah.ca)

(1-1000) 2019/07