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Introduction

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him; we seek His help, forgiveness and guidance. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our own souls and misdeeds. None can mislead whomsoever Allah guides, and none can guide whomsoever Allah causes to go astray.

I testify that there is no deity worthy of being worshiped except Allah. He is One and has no partner. I equally testify that Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger.

This book has not come with anything new, rather it is compiled information that is indispensable for Muslims in their day-to-day life. It is also meant to be a reminder for the students of knowledge and callers to the way of Allah on important issues of the *Shari'ah*.

While gathering the contents of this book, my intention was not to have it spread amongst the people. I did so only in response to a demand from some *da'wah* organisations, which have programmes for teaching Arabic language to non-Arabic speaking Muslims, so that this book may be useful in the Islamic studies part of the programme.

After some *du'at* (Preachers) browsed through the book, they suggested that I have it published, so that it could reach a wider audience. I sought the advice of some righteous brothers I trusted, and they supported the idea of publishing the book. So I presented it for publishing, hoping for reward that is with Allah and beseeching Him to let the Muslims benefit from it. It is also my hope that this book will be added to the list of books for *da'wah* that are beneficial, helping to spread Islamic knowledge and tradition.

I beseech Allah to bless this little effort and to reward all those who

assisted me in its compilation and arrangement. This booklet is very useful and should be translated in other languages.

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his household and companions.

Seeker of his Lord's forgiveness,

Abdur-Rahman bin Abdul-Lateef al-Mahmood

Islamabad.

28/3/1427

Prologue

Merit of Knowledge

There are many verses and many *hadiths* that extol the merit of knowledge.

From the Qur'an, we have the following examples:

﴿ أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَٰنِتٌ ءَانَآءَ ٱلَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَآئِمًا يَحْذَرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوا۟ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِۦ ۗ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِى ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴾

"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 (i.e. get a lesson from Allah's Signs and Verses)." (Az-Zumar 39:9)

Allah also says,

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا۟ فِى ٱلْمَجَٰلِسِ فَٱفْسَحُوا۟ يَفْسَحِ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا قِيلَ ٱنشُزُوا۟ فَٱنشُزُوا۟ يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَٰتٍ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴾

"O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allâh will give you (ample) room (from His Mercy). And when you are told to rise up (for prayers, *Jihad* (holy fighting in Allah's Cause), or for any other good deed), rise up. Allâh will exalt

He also says:

﴿ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ أَجَبْتُمُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴾

"And (remember) the Day (Allah) will call to them, and say: 'What answer gave you to the Messengers?'" (Al-Qasas 28:65)

The Sayings of Some Scholars on this:

1. Abu Hanifah, may Allah have mercy upon him: His students reported statements from him, the purport of which is the necessity of adhering to the *hadiths* and shunning blind imitation. Some of these statements are:

- "Whenever a *hadith* is proved to be authentic, then that *hadith* is my view."
- "It is not right for anyone to adopt our opinion as long as he does not know our source for that opinion."
- "It is inappropriate for someone who does not know my evidence to cite my statement as a religious decision."
- "If I say something that goes against the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger, then cast my saying aside."

2. Malik ibn Anas, may Allah have mercy upon him, is reported to have said:

- "I am only a human. I make mistakes and I am [sometimes] correct. So you should look at the opinions. Whatever of that corresponds with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, take it; and whatever contradicts the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, leave it."
- "There is no one after the Prophet (ﷺ), except that his saying is subject to acceptance or rejection."

From the Prophet's (ﷺ) Guidance

1- Religion is Well-Wishing

Tamim ad-Dari (ﷺ) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ، الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ، الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ؟ قَالُوا: لِمَنْ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: (للهِ، وَلِكِتَابِهِ، وَلِرَسُولِهِ، وَلأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَعَامَّتِهِمْ"

"Religion is well-wishing."–three times– The companions asked: "For whom, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "For Allah, for His Book, for His Messenger, and for the leaders of Muslims, and their general public." (Recorded by Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) repeated this word to underline its importance and let the Muslims know with certainty that the whole religion–inwardly and outwardly–is summed up in sincere well-wishing, which means perfect implementation of these five things.

Sincerity to Allah means acknowledging His *tawhid* and His exclusive possession of the attributes of perfection, in a manner in which none can be compared to Him in any way. It means worshiping Him alone, inwardly and outwardly, returning to Him at all times, seek-

ing His pleasure and fearing His retribution, while constantly repenting to Him and seeking His forgiveness. For, a servant will always be neglectful in some of his obligations to Allah, or he will commit some of the things He has forbidden. Hence, with constant repentance and seeking forgiveness, his errors will be amended and his righteous deeds and words will be accepted.

As for sincerity to the Book of Allah, it means memorizing and reflecting upon it; it means learning its words and meanings, and endeavoring to implement its injunctions upon oneself and others.

Sincerity to the Messenger (ﷺ) means to believe in him, and to love him more than one loves his wealth and children. It means to follow him in all fundamental and secondary matters of the religion, to give his sayings preference over those of others, to endeavor to follow his guidance and to give unqualified support to his religion.

Sincerity to the leaders of the Muslims–from the Muslim leader of the land, down to the regional governors and judges, and every Muslim who holds any position of authority, whatever that position may be–means to acknowledge their positions, to hear and obey them and to encourage people to do the same. Sincerity to them also necessitates exerting all efforts to provide them with guidance and to direct them to all that can benefit them and their people, and all that can help them carry out their responsibility in the best way.

Sincerity to the generality of the Muslims means to love for them what one loves for himself, and to dislike for them what one dislikes for himself, and to exert whatever efforts possible in the same. For, if a person loves something, he strives in its cause in order to achieve it.

The Prophet, (ﷺ) explains the meaning of sincere well-wishing through these five things, which include rights due to Allah, rights due to His Book, rights due to His Messenger (ﷺ), and rights due to

the Muslims of different positions and situations. It is a very comprehensive statement, and Allah knows best.

2- Pillars of Islam

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) narrated that a Bedouin man came to the Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) and said: "O Allah's Messenger! Direct me to a deed by which I may be entitled to enter Paradise." Upon this he remarked:

"تَعْبُدُ اللهَ وَلاَ تُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَتُقِيمُ الصَّلاَةَ الْمَكْتُوبَةَ، وَتُؤَتِي الزَّكَاةَ الْمَفْرُوضَةَ، وَتَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ"

"Worship Allah and never associate anything with Him, establish the obligatory prayer, and pay the *zakah* that is incumbent upon you, and observe the fast of Ramadan." He (the Bedouin) said: "By Him in Whose hand is my life, I will never add anything to it, nor will I diminish anything from it." When he (the Bedouin) turned his back, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ إِلَى هَذَا"

"He who is pleased to see a man from the dwellers of Paradise should catch a glimpse of him." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

There are many other *hadiths* that give the same message as the above great *hadith*. The meaning is: If a person performed all that is made obligatory upon him, both collective and individual obligations, and abstained from all the forbidden things, he deserves to be admitted to Paradise and saved from Hell. Anyone who adheres to this deserves to be called a Muslim and a believer; he is one of the pious and successful ones, and he is among those who follow the right path.