

Position of Teacher and Teaching in Quran and Hadith

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Introduction

Islam has insisted that life is to be lived positive, gainful and effective manners and that an individual has deep obligation towards the collective welfare of the community. To achieve this objective it is essential to maintain a constant flow of fresh knowledge into the society, so that its members can be saved from ignorance and stagnation.

Al-Qur'an itself puts a great emphasis on acquisition of knowledge. The earliest revelations, the Qur'an in unmistakable terms points out Allah's desire to educate men in arts and sciences, is difficult to comprehend, the verses below are the proof of it:

○ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ○ اِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ○ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ○ اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ
(سورة العلق: 1-5) ○ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

Read in the name of the Allah who created. Created man out of a clot. Read and the Allah is the most Bounteous. Who taught by pen. Taught man that which he knew not.

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Obligation on Learning

Indeed, the acquisition of knowledge to the limit of one's abilities is incumbent upon every believer, as apart of his religious duties. The saying of the Prophet (SAW) was echoed through the later centuries as the most authoritative argument for teaching and propagation of knowledge. Such as:

المسند ج 4 ص 240), أطلب العلم من المهد إلى اللحد. (احمد بن حنبل

Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.

سنن -المقدمه- باب فضل العلماء والحث على طلب العلم , طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم. (ابن ماجه ح: 224)

Seeking knowledge is the obligatory of every.

تدارس العلم ساعة من الليل خير من أحيائها . (الدارمي-مقدمة 37)

Studying knowledge a while at night is better than wake up on it.

ومن سلك طريقا يطلب به علما سهل الله له طريقا إلى الجنة. (صحيح البخارى- باب العلم قبل القول والعمل)

Who is passing the way for seeking knowledge, Allah will give him the way to the paradise.

In the Qur'an such an important injunctions are also mentioned in many verses, such as:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ. (المجادلة : 11)

Allah will raise up in rank those of you who believe and have been given knowledge.

The Superiority of A'alim (Scholar)

Islam, as it is known, is the first religion which puts the work of seeking knowledge as superlative as the other works of worship such as Fasting, Hajj, Prayer etc. The rational background of this status is that worship, if it is done without knowledge, would be like building without foundation, and knowledge the sense of worship will be intense.

The superiority of A'alim from the worshipers is perceivable that the worshiper day and night gets the virtues and raises their rank, but the people around them do not get directly, something from his worship. But the scholar has largest benefit for the people from many ways, such as Books, Radio T.V, Magazines, and Newspapers etc. In unlimited number. This position is exactly like what was said by the Prophet (SAW), when visited by two persons, one was scholar and the other was worshiper, as said:

سنن -أبواب العلم- باب في فضل الفقه على , فضل العالم على العابد كفضلي على أدنكم . (الترمذى
العبادة ح: 2426)

The superiority of scholar from the worshiper is like my superiority from the lowest among you. In other saying also said:

فُضِّلَ الْعَالِمُ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفُضِّلَ الْقَمَرُ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ. (ابن ماجة , سنن -المقدمة - باب فُضِّلَ الْعُلَمَاءُ
وَالْحَتَّ عَلَى طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ ح: 223)

The superiority of the A'alim is the same as the superiority of moonlight among the stars.

So that the person, who says the prayer, or fasting, or going for hajj or others, will get reward from Allah, but this reward will give up when the deed is stopped or when the person is died. This condition is not like knowledge and scholar, which has long period of the reward with the passage of time, even after the death of the scholar. The Prophet said:

إذا مات الإنسان انقطع عنه عمله إلا من ثلاثة: إلا من صدقة جارية. أو علم ينتفع به. أو ولد صالح يدعو له. (صحيح المسلم - كتاب الوصية- باب ما يلحق الإنسان من الثواب بعد وفاته ح: 1631)

When the son of Adam dies, his deeds will give up except in three thing, the continues alms (charity) giving, the benefit knowledge, or the pious son who prays for him.

In an other Hadith also said with more clear description, as follows:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: أن مما يلحق المؤمن من عمله وحسناته بعد موته، علما علمه ونشره، وولدا صالحا تركه. ومصحفا ورثه، أو مسجدا بناه أو بيتا لابن السبيل بناه، أو نهرا أجراه أو صدقة أخرجها من ماله في صحته وحياته. يلحقه من بعد موته. (سنن ابن ماجة-المقدمة -باب ثواب معلم الناس الخير ح: 242)

Indeed, what a person will cultivate from his deeds and virtues after his death are: knowledge he taught and preached, the pious son he left or the copy he inherited or mosque he built or house for ibnu-s-sabil he built or river he made or alms (sadaqa) giving he has given from his wealth during his healthy condition and during his life, all will be cultivated after his death.

The Qur'an regarding with scholar exception said:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ. (الفاطر: 28)

Even so only those of His servant fear Allah who has knowledge.

Furthermore, many of the verses of the Qur'an that were to follow affirmed the sacred nature of knowledge, one of the Allah's names being al-A'alim (He, who knows).

Those sayings of prophet and the Quranic verses which were concerned about learning has given ample evidence that Islam is the only religion that emphasizes on the acquisition of knowledge.

Obligation on Teaching

Being a person who is already conversant about any knowledge, a Muslim, also incumbent to another person; this is the way how was Prophet (SAW) spread the teaching of Islam, as he said:

بلغوا عني ولو آية . (صحيح البخارى- كتاب الانبياء- باب ما ذكر عن بني اسرائيل ح: 3274)

Please convey about me, even in a single verse

The clearer picture of this obligation is mentioned in Qur'an:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ. (آل عمران:164)

Truly Allah was gracious to the believers when He raised up among them a messenger from themselves, to recite to them His signs (ayat) and to purify them and to teach them the Book and the wisdom, though before they were in manifest error.

The teaching of the Book, means the teaching of the Qur'an and all knowledge which are derived from it, but that lengthy work is not sufficient enough for executing the Muslim duty in this world, during the teaching of knowledge, he should also purify the soul, so that teaching in Islam means building the character of Muslim to avoid the manifest error.

Moreover, teaching and learning in Islam, have the highest rank of worship, and it has great role on preaching the tenets of Islam, preaching the morality and avoid the evil. There are ample evident, that due to the ignorance of the duty of teaching of the Islamic tenets, the Muslim Ummah deteriorated their power in all walk of life, as in politic, economics, science, culture etc. The ignorance of the duty of teaching make the ignorance of people toward Islam, the effect are greater than any enemy of Islam; the orientation of Muslim would be changed toward other ideologies, either on Secularism, Capitalism, Communism, Socialism, or on western way of life. When it is happen so, Islam will become strange thing among the Muslim Ummah and it is disastrous. The nowadays situation of Muslim Ummah can be regarded as the same as what described above. If we would like to find out, vigorously, the main reason of the decline of Muslim Ummah, we would come to conclusion that Muslim has ignored the duty of

transferring Islamic teaching, value & ideology through educational effort or through teaching activities. To emphasize the duty of transferring knowledge, the Prophet (SAW) said:

ولتفشوا العلم، ولتجلسوا حتى يعلم من لا يعلم، فإن العلم لا يهلك حتى يكون سرا. (فتح الباري- كتاب العلم- باب كيف يقبض العلم، ج 1 ص 194)

Circulate knowledge and teach the ignorant. Knowledge does not vanish except when it is kept secretly (to oneself).

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : إن مثل علم لا ينتفع كمثل كنز لا ينفق في سبيل الله . (احمد بن حنبل- مسند أبي هريرة ,جلد 2 ص 820)

Knowledge without use, is like wealth which is not spent on the way of Allah, or on the extreme statement who doesn't to another after knowledge is regarded as sinner.

Other wise, how impart the knowledge is equal as alms giving (sadaqah):

أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: أفضل الصدقة أن يتعلم المرء المسلم علما، ثم يعلمه أخاه المسلم. (سنن ابن ماجه-المقدمة- باب ثواب معلم ح: 243)

The prophet (PBUH) says: the best alms giving for someone is to learn knowledge, and then to impart it to his Muslim brother.

The superiority of teaching also described in al-Hadith below:

لا حسد إلا في اثنتين: رجل آتاه الله مالا فسلط على هلكته في الحق، ورجل آتاه الله الحكمة فهو يقضي بها ويعلمها . (صحيح البخارى- باب الاغتباط في العلم والحكمة ح: 73)

No (legal) envy except in two things: in a man who has given wealth by Allah and he protects it from destroy in right path; and a man who has given wisdom and he acts upon it and teaches it.

According to the "Salaf" the kind of that man who learns knowledge, teaches it and acts upon it, would be attributed with the name of "Rabbani" which means the man who has complete knowledge and pious in character, as it mentioned in the Qur'an .

كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ. (آل عمران:79)

Be you master (Rabbani) in that you know the Book and in that you study.

In short, the role of knowledge in the religious-political life of the Muslim community is decisive and all pervading. It is considered to be a source of strength for human character. So as far as the role of knowledge is concern, the teaching of knowledge, as teacher's duty, regarded as key-role of the development and preservation of human being.

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