

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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# **Lanterns in the Darkness: Brilliance and Knowledge**

Khutbah from al-Masjid al-Haraam  
delivered by ash-Shaykh ‘Abdur-Rahmaan as-Sudays  
22 Jumaadaa al-Oolaa, 1436h (13 March, 2015)

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Indeed, all praise is due to Allaah. We praise Him, seek His assistance, ask His forgiveness, and repent to Him. He allows some of His servants to excel over others, and He favours some over others in their livelihood and in the hereafter. I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, without any partner. He made knowledge enlighten our hearts, and used the scholars to avert much adversity. I further testify that Muhammad is Allaah's worshipping servant and Messenger. He personified the virtues most sought after and brought the best guidance. O Allaah, send salaah and abundant salaam upon him as well as his family, Companions, and all who follow their path until the Day of Reckoning.

I counsel you all as well as myself with the most wondrous counsel, infused with love and mercy. That counsel is to have taqwaa of Allaah, "People of eemaan, observe taqwaa of Allaah and be with the truthful." When someone observes taqwaa, Allaah gives him a way out of difficulty, and also multiplies his rewards greatly.

Dear Muslims, we are well aware and completely certain that Allaah's blessings upon His servants are tremendous and continuous. Among the most magnificent of those blessings is that Allaah sent His servants a Messenger from among themselves reciting His aayaat to them, purifying them, and teaching them the Qur'aan and Sunnah. That Messenger ﷺ delivered that message in the best way, fulfilled the responsibility entrusted to him, and loyally advised the Ummah. The scholars after him bore the torch of guidance, inheriting his knowledge and following his steps in conveying it. They hold a position in this Ummah which is like the light that provides guidance in the depths of darkness. They are the ones who uphold Islaam, defend the religion, and protect the correct 'aqeedah (beliefs). "Allaah raises the rank of those among you who have eemaan those who have been granted knowledge."

Dear people of eemaan, Allaah honoured scholars and granted them very elite status. The scholar amidst the Ummah is its full moon that shines at night and its sweet spring that smoothly flows. This is especially the case for the scholars of Islaam and its laws and teachings. No matter how beautifully their virtues are described, that still cannot do them full justice. How could it be otherwise when the Prophet ﷺ said, "Indeed, Allaah, the angels, and the inhabitants of the heavens and earth – even an ant in its burrow and even the fish – send salaah upon someone who teaches the people what is correct." Collected by at-Tirmitheh with a saheeh chain of narration.

In another saheeh narration collected by Ahmad in al-Musnad, Anas ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The scholars are like the stars which are used to find the way during the darkness, whether on land or at sea. When the stars fade away even guides would stray."

Al-Imaam Aboo Bakr al-Aajurree ؓ said, "Consider a path surrounded by many perils which a group of people must navigate during a dark night. However, Allaah places lamps which shine forth allowing them to traverse in safety and well-being. Then, another group comes along who must also inevitably navigate that path, but when they are doing so the lamps are extinguished and they are left in the darkness. What would you have to say about that example? Such is the role played by the scholars among the people."

Even the fish in the oceans where they dwell ask Allaah to forgive those who tread the path of the scholars. They have a role like the stars up in the sky, and they possess outstanding virtues like the splendour of the full moon at night. Thus, if someone seeks to follow some other path, he is misguided and will go astray out in the wilderness.

Dear people of eemaan, the scholars among this Ummah bear a tremendous responsibility. The most imperative obligation they have is to explain Islaam correctly according to how it was revealed to the Master of all Messengers ﷺ. "Remember and recount when Allaah took a covenant from those to whom He revealed the scripture, saying to them: You must clarify it to the people and not conceal it." Therefore, if the scholars do not fulfil their duty of conveying and clarifying, people

will remain confused wandering in the darkness of ignorance and misguidance. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said, “If someone is asked for knowledge but he conceals it, a bridle of fire will be placed upon him on the Day of Resurrection.” Collected by at-Tirmidhee who said it is a hasan hadeeth.

Also, Aboo Hurayrah ؓ used to say, “If it were not for an ayah in the Book of Allaah, I would not narrate hadeeth to you.” He then recited, “Indeed, those who conceal what We revealed of clear truth and guidance, after We explained it for people in the Scriptures – those individuals shall be distanced from Allaah’s mercy and all who pray against them shall pray for that as well.”

However, the responsibility of scholars is not confined to merely explaining. Rather, their role and status is even greater because they must also confront bid‘ah (invented beliefs and practices falsely ascribed to Islaam), various forms of misguidance, and wrongdoing. When this takes place, Allaah shows his servants the distinction between bad and good, truth and falsity, real and fake. Hence, their most crucial role is to present the correct Islaamic viewpoint concerning all essential matters and current developments. In this way, they utilize the Book of Allaah to bring the dead back to life, give sight to the blind, and guide those who have strayed.

Dear Ummah of knowledge and sound guidance, the scholars are an crucial central point of reference. They represent moderation and confront deviant ideologies. They combat outlandish, unacceptable views and confront them using definitive knowledge as their weapon. They serve as the Ummah’s line of defense and fortified fortress of protection. They are the source of safety especially during times of turmoil and confusion, as is the case in this time of ours. Many places have been engulfed by chaos, killing, famine, suffering, and outright bigotry that rips people apart. There have also been widespread vicious attacks against a people who have been demoralized. Those behind such hostile attacks have targeted young people and fed their ripe impressionable minds with corrupt theories and misguided ideologies. So many disasters have occurred between Muslims because of such deviant minds and thinking. The aforementioned individuals have ingrained into the young the spirit of hatred and conflict, and fanned the flames of bigotry and discord. They have done so by way of gatherings, discussion forums, and mass media. Their ideologies demolish established foundations and rupture the soaring landmarks of the religion. Problems have become even worse due to attacking scholars and spreading deliberate misinformation and rumours about them, particularly by way of new media and social networks.

However, the scholars of the Ummah are prepared to deal with such attacks. They collectively fight back that inferno with sound, thorough understanding of the Qur’aan and Sunnah. When someone has that correct comprehension, he rises above others, his virtue becomes well known, and he is able to avoid any detrimental consequences.

A person may find fault with a correct statement while the fault actually lies in his own lack of comprehension. People grasp what they hear according to their intelligence and knowledge.

Ibn al-Qayyim ؓ astutely commented, “Knowledge is a guide, and all sound circumstances follow its lead. Knowledge is the inheritance left behind by the Prophets, and the scholars are its inheritors.

Dear Muslims, in this era of worldwide media accessibility and influence in all its various forms, it is critical for scholars to expend further effort so as to achieve the best results in correcting misunderstandings and unsound views that have disastrous consequences. They must explain what is right as well as how to determine the correct course by properly understanding what has come to us from Allaah and His Messenger ﷺ. In order to achieve those objectives and support the scholars in their task, all effort and means available are to be utilized including those who educate people about Islaam, media personalities, and journalists. This is to be done in a way that ties the Ummah with the understanding embodied by our esteemed Salaf (early Muslim generations). This is because the Salaf are the people about whom al-Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee ؓ said, “Their views are better for us than our

own ideas.”

Dear Muslims, our Ummah cannot take any steps towards dignity and empowerment, or escape the chaos, fighting and adversities it faces, unless we follow the lead of people who possess far-sighted, intelligent, rightly-guided minds. Those are the most elite scholars of Islaam.

They are men who shine as lamps. It is as though they were made from brilliantly glowing stars. Their conduct reflects their intelligence, and you see the lustre of their minds regardless of the angle you view them from.

Servants of Allaah, it is imperative that any scholar protects his ‘aqedah (beliefs) and all elements of his religion. May Allaah forbid that any firmly grounded scholar relinquish the established foundations of his religion, seek to please anyone whatsoever by displeasing Allaah, or allow his mind to adopt any understanding contrary to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ.

I would not give knowledge its due if I used it anytime I had a personal interest to satisfy. Should I exhaust myself to plant its seeds and nurture it when all I harvest is humiliation? If I ever did that, it would be better for me to remain ignorant.

Our call to the scholars of Islaam is that you preserve the identity, unity, and moderation of the Muslim Ummah, and nurture it by education and correcting misconceptions. You also have the responsibility of exposing devious ideas which bear ulterior motives, and confronting chaotic ideologies of excommunicating Muslims or declaring them to be impious and then considering it permissible to fight or even kill them. The connection with the young people of this Ummah is to be strengthened in order to promote moderation among them and warn against division, bigotry, and sectarianism. You are to set the right example, remain united in all comprehensive matters and values, and maintain proper conduct in acceptable instances of differing. This is all to be done to protect the best interests and well-being of the Ummah.

In addition, our call to the young people of this Ummah is that you recognize the status held by scholars, and that you adhere to the Qur’aan, Sunnah, and guidance of the Salaf. Stay away from distortions of extremists, false ascriptions of liars, and misinterpretations of the ignorant. Adhere to the course followed by well-grounded scholars because they have the best knowledge about advantages, harms, and the means to accomplishing all that would be productive. Avoid causes of division, and do not be deceived by the flashy slogans used by certain ideological currents without any basis from the Qur’aan or Sunnah. Always beware of giving opportunities to the ignorant who pretend to have knowledge, or those who have not yet learned properly, and allowing them to remove the trust you have for your scholars.

We also call on journalists and media personalities to support the scholars, maintain journalistic integrity and objectivity, and spread useful information. Do not assist people who have misguided ideologies by circulating their writings and spreading their news. Rather, promote the values and ethics of Islaam and foster religious and national unity. Use the media to spread awareness about the sanctity of life and dangers of oppression. Media is also to be utilized for confronting those who spread rumours, incorrect edicts, calls to turmoil and sectarianism, or promote the diseases of violence and terrorism, whatever form they take. Such misguidance and its proponents are to be exposed, and its dangers to the present state of the Ummah as well as its future must be explained.

We implore Allaah to guide us all to truthful statements and righteous deeds, and to allow us to accomplish the best things we hope for. May He bless us all by the Qur’aan and Sunnah and allow us to glean benefit from the aayaat and wisdom they contain. I say this much and I ask Allaah, the Almighty and Most Majestic, to forgive me and you. Thus, seek His forgiveness and repent to Him. Indeed, He is Most Forbearing, Most Forgiving.

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All praise is due to Allaah who taught by then pen, and taught man what he had no knowledge of. May Allaah send salaah and salaam upon His most noble Prophet as well as his family who passed on much knowledge and virtue, and his Companions and all who follow their path until the Day of Reckoning.

Servants of Allaah, observe taqwaa and avoid false statements and incorrect, foolish ideas. If you do proper, righteous deeds, you will attain true goodness and success.

My brothers in Islaam, it is only fitting for our Ummah to give scholars their due, recognize their status, and raise their rank. This is done by having love for them, sincerely supporting them, respecting them and holding them in high esteem. Al-Imaam Ahmad and al-Haakim collected that ‘Ubaadah ibn Saamit ؓ said the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said, “A person is not one of us if he is not respectful to the elderly, merciful to the young, or does not give our scholars the rights they deserve.”

Al-Imaam at-Tahaawee ؓ said, “The scholars among the Salaf – the earliest and succeeding generations – were people of goodness who had knowledge of narrations and also examined and understood them thoroughly. They are only to be mentioned in a good way. If anyone speaks ill of them, he has strayed from the correct path.”

The scholars themselves held other scholars in high esteem. Al-Imaam ash-Shaafi‘ee ؓ said about al-Imaam Ahmad, who was younger than him, “I left Baghdad and I did not leave behind anyone who had more righteousness, taqwaa, and understanding than Ahmad ibn Hanbal.”

Also, al-Imaam Ahmad said, “Ash-Shaafi‘ee was like the sun for this world and like well-being for people. Is there any substitute for either of those?”

Allaahu Akbar! What incredible manners, love, and respect they observed between themselves!

It must also be emphasized that it is wrong to attack or find fault with them. Doing such things is, in fact, following the course of the misguided. This is because attacking a scholar is not just aimed at him. Rather, it undermines the Sharee‘ah, religion, and the knowledge that scholar carries. How can attacking scholars be justified when they are the ones who are like the deputies of the Lord of all creation? Ibn ‘Asaakir ؓ said, “The way Allaah exposes those who attack the scholars is well-known. Criticizing them for things they are innocent of is an extremely grave matter. Fabricating lies against their integrity is truly deplorable. When someone verbally attacks the scholars, Allaah will afflict that person by causing his heart to die before he actually passes away.”

One of the rights of scholars have is that we take them as our trusted point of reference, especially during strife, turmoil, or unprecedented developments. Al-Hasan al-Basree ؓ said, “When turmoil is approaching, every scholar realizes it. However, the ignorant only recognize it when it departs.” The scholars are the people fit to carefully examine situations, especially when realities may be obscure and distortions are many. In such times, the scholars are to be given the lead and the people are to follow.

Another right of scholars is that we excuse them whenever need be. The default is to excuse any Muslim in general if something objectionable emanates from him. Thus, what is to be said about the scholars?

In addition, searching for their mistakes and publicizing them are to be avoided. Scholars are human beings. They are not immune from making errors. Some of the Salaf said, “The mu’min seeks to excuse others while the munaafiq seeks out their errors.” Contention between them should also not be circulated.

So much more respect is to be given to individuals who cause a person to remember Allaah when he sees them. They protect the Ummah from misguidance. They are like the ark of the Prophet Nooh. If anyone does not embark – especially in times of turmoil – he will drown.

Scholars have revived so many victims of Iblees and guided so many who were astray. They have such a beautiful effect upon people, yet people are so insolent towards them. We ask Allaah for His assistance.

Servants of Allaah, when you – the people in general – observe taqwa by giving scholars the respect and status they deserve, and when you – the scholars – observe taqwa by fulfilling the responsibilities of conveying and explaining with which they have been entrusted, you shall all attain prosperity in this world and success in the hereafter.

Furthermore, among Allaah's favours is that He has granted us the blessed leadership we have which reveres the scholars and bearers of knowledge. Our souls were filled with happiness by the momentous speech given by the Custodian of the Two Sacred Mosques, may Allaah protect him and grant him every success. He emphasized holding the proper 'aqedah (beliefs), governing by the Sharee'ah (directives and laws of Islaam), working to foster Muslim unity, eliminating the causes of division, and giving support to the causes of Islaam and Muslims. May Allaah make place that among his righteous deeds and increase him in goodness, guidance, and success.

In conclusion, may Allaah have mercy upon you all, invoke salaah and salaam upon the one who brought us the most beneficial knowledge and explanation throughout the entire course of history. That was the Prophet chosen from the descendants of 'Adnaan. Our Lord commanded us to do so when He said, "Indeed, Allaah and His angels send salaah upon the Prophet. People of eemaan, invoke salaah and abundant salaam upon him." My Lord, send salaah and blessings upon Muhammad, his family, noble Companions, and all who continue to follow their path. O Allaah, be pleased with his four rightly guided successors – Aboo Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan, and 'Alee – as well as all of the Companions, and those who follow them until the Day of Reckoning. O Allaah, by Your Mercy, be pleased with us along with them.

O Allaah, grant strength to Islaam and the Muslims, humiliate shirk and those who perpetrate it, decimate enemies of the deen, and allow these and all other Muslim lands to be safe and tranquil.

O Allaah grant us safety in our lands, rectify and guide our authorities, and support our leader with the truth and all that is right. O Allaah direct him by Your guidance, allow him to proceed and do all that pleases You, and grant him sincere, loyal aides who assist him in accomplishing all that is good. O Allaah guide him, his two deputies, and his brothers and aides, and direct them to all channels that would produce good Islaam, Muslims, Your worshipping servants, and the lands of the Muslims.

O Allaah, guide the leaders of the Muslims to govern in accordance with Your Book and the Sunnah of Your Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and make them a source of mercy for Your believing worshipping servants.

O Allaah, forgive the men and women who have Islaam and eemaan, whether they are alive or deceased. Unite their hearts, guide them to the paths of righteousness and safety, and protect them from the paths of all apparent and inconspicuous turmoil.

O Allaah, Most Merciful of all who show mercy, relieve those Muslims in distress, alleviate their hardships, settle the accounts of those in debt, cure the ailing Muslims.

O Allaah rescue al-Masjid al-Aqsa from the yahood occupiers who have oppressively seized it. O Allaah make it a revered place until the Day of Reckoning. O Allaah assist and grant strength to our brothers in Palestine. Unite them as well as our brothers in Iraq and in all other places. O Allaah rectify the affairs of our brothers in Yemen and grant them the leadership of those who govern by Your Book and the Sunnah of Your Prophet ﷺ. O Allaah, Almighty and Most Majestic, come to the aid of our brothers in ash-Shaam, protect their blood from being shed and rectify their condition. O Allaah, Almighty and Most Majestic, come to the aid of our brothers in Burma, Central Africa, and

in every place. O Allaah, Ever-Living, Self-Sufficient Sustainer of all, we seek deliverance by Your mercy. Rectify all our affairs, and do not leave us to ourselves for even the blink of an eye.

Our Lord, grant us good in this world, good in the hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the hellfire. O Allaah, we have certainly wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will most surely be among those who lose everything. Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in eemaan, and do not place rancour in our hearts towards people who have eemaan. Our Lord, You are indeed Most Kind, Most Merciful.

Our Lord, accept from us, as You hear and know all things. Accept our repentance, as You are most merciful. Forgive us, our parents and all Muslims alive or deceased. You hear our call, are always near, and respond to our prayers.

Your Lord, the almighty is absolved from all wrong which is ascribed to Him; may He grant protection to the Messengers; and all praise is due to Allaah, Lord of all creation.