

وَقَالَ الْبُخَارِيُّ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ: بَابُ: الْعِلْمُ قَبْلَ الْقَوْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ. وَالذَّلِيلُ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ﴾، فَبَدَأَ بِالْعِلْمِ قَبْلَ الْقَوْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ

And al-Bukhaaree *rahimabullaahuta'aalaa* said: “Chapter: Knowledge comes before speech and action; and the proof is:

Then know that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and seek forgiveness for your sin and for the believers. [47:19]

So He began with knowledge”, before speech and action.¹³

[13]:

Al-Bukhaaree: he was the Imaam Muḥammad ibn Ismaa‘eel ibn Ibraaheem al-Bukhaaree. Al-Bukhaaree is an ascription to Bukhaaraa, a town in the East. He was the Imaam of the people of Hadeeth, and a mountain of memorization, may Allaah have mercy upon him, he was the compiler of the *Saḥeeḥ*, which is the most authentic of books after the Book of Allaah.

His saying, “Knowledge comes before speech and action”: because action will not benefit unless it is built upon knowledge. As for action which is built upon ignorance, then it will not benefit the person rather it will be an affliction and misguidance for him on the Day of Resurrection, so precedence must be given to learning knowledge before action.

His saying, “And the proof”: meaning for this heading is His saying, He the Most High:

﴿فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ﴾

Then know that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and seek forgiveness for your sin [47:19]

Since He began with knowledge, and His saying, He the Most High:

﴿وَاسْتَغْفِرْ﴾

And seek forgiveness ... [47:19]

This is action. So He the Perfect began with knowledge before action, because action, if it is built upon ignorance then it will not benefit the person, so a person should begin with knowledge first and then act upon what he has learnt, this is the foundation.

The Second Treatise: Three Matters which it is Obligatory upon the Muslim to Learn and to Act upon

اعْلَم رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ:

Know! May Allaah have mercy upon you,¹

أَنَّهُ يَجِبُ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَمُسْلِمَةٍ تَعْلَمُ ثَلَاثَ هَذِهِ الْمَسَائِلِ وَالْعَمَلُ بِهِنَّ

That it is obligatory upon every male and female Muslim to learn these three matters and to act upon them²

[1]:

His saying, “Know!”: this saying we have said in what preceded that it is a saying which is brought so that importance is given to what follows it and its meaning is: learn and understand and be certain.

His saying, “May Allaah have mercy upon you”: this is a supplication for you for mercy, and this also as has preceded shows that the teacher should be kind with the student and that he should make supplication for him and encourage him, because this is one of the greatest means for teaching, and it is not befitting that he should treat the student with sternness and harshness and severity, because this will deter people from knowledge. Then this also indicates sincere good wishes from the Shaikh *rahimabullaah* and that he desires to give sincere advice and benefit and correct direction.

[2]:

His saying, “That it is obligatory”: *al-Wujoob*, obligation is well known with the scholars of *Usool-ul-Fiqh* and the obligation is that which is essential, and it has been defined by the scholars of *usool* as being that which a person who does it rewarded and one who abandons it is punished. And in origin *al-Wujoob* in the language is firmness and establishment, so it is said *wajaba* such and such, meaning it is something firm and established. He the Most High said with regard to *al-Budn* (large sacrificial animals which are sacrificed on Hajj such as camels and cows):

﴿فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا﴾

When their sides *wajabat* ... [22:36]

Meaning, when they fall upon the earth and their death is established after they have been slaughtered

﴿فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعَمُوا﴾

... then eat from them and feed (others). [22:36]

So his saying, “It is obligatory”: indicates that this matter is not a case of something recommended such that whoever wishes can do it and whoever wishes can leave it, rather the command is something made binding from Allaah the Perfect and Most High. This obligation is not from the Shaikh, rather it is from Allaah the Mighty and Majestic in that which He sent down in the Book and the Sunnah regarding obligating the servants with these matters.

His saying, “It is obligatory upon every male and female Muslim”: meaning it is obligatory upon every male and female from the Muslims, whether they be free people or slaves, males or females because the woman shares with the man in many of the obligations except for that which a proof makes something specific to the men, then that in that case is specific to the men - such as the obligation of congregational prayer in the mosques and the *jumu‘ah* prayer, and such as visiting the graves,¹ because it is specific to the men, and likewise fighting *jihaad* in Allaah’s cause for that is specific to the men.

So whatever there is a proof to indicate that it is something specific to the men, then that is made specific to them; otherwise the basic rule is that men and women are the same with regard to duties and with regard to avoiding forbidden things and the rest of the duties, and from that is that learning knowledge is obligatory upon the men and the women because it is not possible to establish the worship of Allaah the Majestic and Most High, which is the purpose behind our creation, except by learning knowledge, by which we can know how to worship our Lord. So this is obligatory upon the men and the women to learn the affairs of their religion, particularly the affairs of *al-‘aqeedah* (creed and belief).

His saying, “Three matters”: learning means to take knowledge from the scholars, and to memorize and to understand and to comprehend, this is true learning. Learning it does not mean merely reading or ‘free reading’ as they call it, this is not learning. Rather learning is to take knowledge from the people of knowledge along with memorization of that and understanding it and comprehending it completely – this is the correct learning. As for mere reading and looking at books, then this will not suffice with regard to learning, even though it is something desirable and contains benefit however it does not suffice, and it will not suffice for a person to restrict himself to it.

And it is not permissible to just become a student with the books as occurs in this time because becoming a student of the books is very dangerous, evils can occur from it and false pretence to knowledge, which is more harmful than ignorance, because the ignorant person knows that he is ignorant so therefore he stops at his limit. However a false claimant to knowledge, he thinks that he is a scholar so he declares lawful that which Allaah has forbidden, and declares forbidden that which Allaah has made lawful, and he talks and speaks about Allaah without knowledge, so the matter is very dangerous.

So knowledge is not taken from the books directly rather the books are a means. As for true and real knowledge, then that is taken from the *‘ulemaa* (scholars) generation after generation, and the books are a means to seek knowledge.

¹ [Refer to *Ahkaam-ul-Janaa’iz* of Sh Al-Albaanee]

