

# Where are You, O Ulema of Muslims?!

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(Translated)

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Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ﴾ **“It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah.”** [TMQ Surah Fatir 35:28]

The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (saw) said, «صنفان من الناس إذا صلحا صلح الناس وإذا فسدوا فسد الناس: «**There are two types of people. If they are righteous, the people will be righteous. If they are corrupt, the people will be corrupt. It is the ulema and the rulers.**” Narrated by Abu Nu`aym in Al-Hilya on the authority of Ibn Abbas, and mentioned by Al-Suyuti in Al-Jami` Al-Saghir with this wording.

‘Ulema are those whom Allah (swt) has blessed with understanding of the Deen, and the knowledge disciplines of Islam and has purified them with wisdom and knowledge. They are the most knowledgeable people about what is permissible (halal) and what is prohibited (haram). ‘Ulema are the most competent in recognizing the Qadr of Allah (swt). Therefore, we find that they should be the most pious of people, and they are the most deserving of bearing the banner of knowledge and then working to bring about change.

Whoever is like this will be keen to do what Allah (swt) has enjoined upon him of supporting and spreading the truth, advising everyone who needs advice, whether they are from the faction of rulers or from the ruled, informing people of the truth, commanding what is maroof (right) and forbidding what is munkar (evil), as this is one of the greatest obligations. The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) said, «والذي نفس محمد بيده، لتأمرن بالمعروف ولتنهون عن المنكر أو ليوشكن أن يبعث الله عليكم عقابا منه، ثم تدعونه فلا يستجاب لكم» **“By the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, you must command what is maroof (right) and forbid what is evil (munkar), or Allah (swt) will soon send a punishment upon you from Him, and then you make Dua to Him and He will not answer you.”**

The ‘ulema are the people most deserving of fighting the oppressor and supporting the oppressed. The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) said, «سيد الشهداء حمزة ورجل قام إلى حاكم ظالم فأمره «**The master of martyrs is Hamza and a man who stands up to an oppressive ruler, commands him to the right, and forbids him from evil, and he is killed for it.**”

The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) also said, «أفضل الجهاد كلمة حق عند سلطان جائر» **“The best jihad is a word of truth in the presence of an unjust ruler.”**

Who can differentiate between right and wrong, justice and injustice, as an ‘alim does?! Who can know the path of truth and the legitimate way to change, like as an ‘alim does?! Therefore, the Messenger Muhammad (saw) informed us in the previous hadith that the righteousness of societies comes from the righteousness of the rulers and ulema, and that their corruption comes from their corruption. So if a ruler intends to cause corruption, the ulema will repel him, if they are pious ulema. And they exist in every place and time.

It is noteworthy that the texts of revelation from the Book and Sunnah have come together to explain the virtue of knowledge and ulema and mention their status, including,

- Allah (swt) said, ﴿شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ﴾ **“Allah bears witness that La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice.”** [TMQ Surah Aali-Imran 3:18].

In the ayah, He (swt) began with Himself, then mentioned the angels and the people of knowledge. That is enough in terms of honor and action.

- Allah (swt) said, ﴿يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ﴾ **“Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Mujadila 58:11].

Abdullah Ibn Abbas (ra), may Allah be pleased with them both, said, «للعلماء درجات فوق المؤمنين سبعمائة درجة، ما بين الدرجتين خمسمائة عام distance between each of the two ranks is five hundred years.»

- And Allah (swt) said, «وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلْتَمُونَ أَثَرَهُمْ نَبَأٌ لَمْ يَأْتِ مِنْ عَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ» “And those who were given knowledge said, ‘Woe to you! The reward of Allah is better for those who believe and do righteous deeds.’” [TMQ Surah Al-Qasas:80].

- And the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) said, «من يرد الله به خيراً يفقهه في الدين ويلهمه رشده» “Whoever Allah wants good for, He gives him understanding of the Deen and guides him to the right path.”

- The Messenger of Allah Muhammad (saw) said, «العلماء ورثة الأنبياء» “Ulema are the heirs of the Prophets (as).” It is known that there is no rank above Prophethood, and no honor above inheriting that rank.

- The Messenger of Allah Muhammad (saw) said, «بِاسْتِغْفَارِ الْعَالَمِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ» “Whatever is in the heavens and the earth seeks forgiveness for a alim.” What position is greater than the position of one for whom the angels of the heavens and the earth are busy seeking forgiveness?!

- The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) said, «موت العالم مصيبة لا تجبر وثلمة لا تسد. وموت قبيلة أيسر من موت عالم، وهو نجم طمس» “The death of an alim is a calamity that cannot be repaired, and a gap that cannot be filled. The death of a tribe is easier than the death of an alim, which is a star that has been extinguished.” Narrated by Al-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Al-Darda’ and he conveyed.

- The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) said, «يوزن يوم القيامة مداد العلماء بدم الشهداء» “On the Day of Resurrection, the ink of ulema will be weighed as the blood of martyrs.”

- The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, «فضل العالم على العابد كفضلي على أدناكم» “The superiority of the ulema over the common worshipper is like my superiority over the lowest of you.” Then the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, (saw) said, «إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ وَأَهْلَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ حَتَّى النَّمْلَةِ فِي جُحْرِهَا وَحَتَّى الْحَوْتِ لِيُصَلِّتُنَّ عَلَى مَعْلَمٍ النَّاسِ الْخَيْرِ» “Allah, His angels, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, even the ant in its hole and even the fish, send blessings upon the one who teaches people good.”

- The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, «فضل العالم على العابد كفضل القمر ليلة البدر على سائر الكواكب» “The superiority of the alim over the common worshipper is like the superiority of the moon, on the night of the full moon over all the other planets.”

- And the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, «يشفع يوم القيامة ثلاث الأنبياء والعلماء والشهداء» “On the Day of Resurrection, three will intercede: the Prophets (saw), the ulema, and the martyrs.”

And on the authority of Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra) who said, «القلوب أوعية، فخبرها أوعاها، احفظ ما أقول لك: الناس ثلاثة: فعالم رباني، ومتعلم على سبيل نجاة، وهمج راع أتباع كل ناعق، يميلون مع كل ريح، لم يستضيئوا بنور العلم، ولم يلجؤوا إلى ركن وثيق. العلم خير من المال، العلم يحرسك وأنت تحرس المال. العلم يزكو على العمل والمال تنقصه النفقة. ومحبة العالم دين بدان بها. العلم يكسب العالم الطاعة في حياته، وجميل الأحدث بعد موته. وصناعة المال تزول بزواله، مات خزان الأموال وهم أحياء والعلم باقون ما بقي الدهر، أعيانهم مفقودة وأمثالهم في القلوب موجودة» “Hearts are vessels. The best of them are the most receptive. Remember what I say to you, People are of three types: an alim of Allah (godly scholar), a student on the path of salvation, and the ignorant who follow every cawing, are swayed by every wind, are not illuminated by the light of knowledge, and do not take refuge in a secure corner. Knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you while you guard wealth. Knowledge grows with deeds, whilst wealth decreases with spending. The love of an alim is a debt that is repaid. Knowledge earns the alim obedience during his life, and a beautiful story after his death. The work of wealth disappears, with its disappearance. The hoarders of wealth become dead, whilst they were alive. However, the ulema remain as long as time remains. Their bodies are lost, but their likes exist in the hearts.”

Abu Al-Aswad said, «ليس شيء أعز من العلم، الملوك حكام على الناس، والعلماء حكام على الملوك» “There is nothing more precious than knowledge. The rulers are rulers over people, whilst ulema are rulers over the rulers.”

Ibn Abbas (ra) (may Allah be pleased with him) said, «خبر سليمان بن داود (عليهما السلام) بين العلم والمال، والملك، فاختار العلم فأعطى المال والملك معه» “Suleiman (as), son of David (as) was given the choice between knowledge, money, and ruling. He chose knowledge, so he was given money and ruling with it.”

