



أهمية التأهل في العلم قبل التصدر

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING QUALIFIED BEFORE PUTTING ONESELF FORWARD

الشيخ عبد الله بن صليق الظفيري حفظه الله تعالى  
Shaykh 'Abdullah ibn Sulfiq adh-Dhafiri

FROM THE LECTURE DELIVERED ON SUNDAY 2ND, OCTOBER, 2016



© Copyright Muwahhideen Publications 2016  
Tobago, Trinidad & Tobago

[www.Mpubs.org](http://www.Mpubs.org)  
[info@mpubs.org](mailto:info@mpubs.org)

This Ebook is a transcription of the summarized translation of a tele-lecture entitled, “**The Importance of Being Qualified Before Putting Oneself Forward**” by *Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṣulfiq al-Ẓafīrī* who is the *Imām* of *Masjid Mu‘āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān* in *Ḥafar al-Bāṭin*, K.S.A and is well known to the major scholars of our time, such as *Shaykh Rabī’ b. Hādī al-Madkhalī* and *Shaykh ‘Ubayd b. Sulaymān al-Jābirī* (حفظهم الله). This Ebook from *Muwahhideen Publications* is for the sole purpose of spreading its content by any and all means. Hence, we grant permission to anyone to distribute it for this express purpose, in its entirety without modifying it in any way. We do not allow anyone to sell or trade this document for profit of any sort. We take this as a trust between us and the distributor and **Allāh**, The Mighty and The Sublime is our witness.



أهمية التأهل في العلم قبل التصدر

**THE IMPORTANCE OF  
BEING QUALIFIED  
BEFORE PUTTING  
ONESELF FORWARD**

الشيخ عبد الله بن صليق الظفيري حفظه الله تعالى  
**Shaykh ‘Abdullah ibn Sulfiq adh-Dhafiri**

FROM THE LECTURE DELIVERED ON SUNDAY 2ND, OCTOBER, 2016

Translated by

*Abū Ḥāzim Ṣābir Crispin* (حفظه الله)





## Contents

I. Introduction .....	4
II. Knowledge Precedes Statements and Actions .....	6
III. Speaking About the Religion of Allāh Without Knowledge Is Greater Than Shirk .....	8
IV. The One Who Puts Himself Forward Before Being Qualified Will Corrupt the Dunyā....	11
V. Sitting With the Rabbānī Scholars Develops Fear of Allāh and Produces Fruits .....	12
VI. Putting Oneself Forward Before Being Qualified Leads to Humiliation and Disgrace ....	13
VII. Signs That a Person Who Has Put Himself Forward Is Not Qualified .....	15



# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## I. Introduction

**Allāh** has certainly drawn for His servants the path they are to thread in seeking their own success in calling to **Allāh**, such that in giving *da'wah* they would be of benefit to themselves and other than themselves.

There is textual proof in the Book of **Allāh** and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that shows that it is befitting—rather, obligatory—upon the *Muslim*, especially the Student of Knowledge to become qualified in knowledge and have his feet firmly planted in knowledge before he ever steps forward to teach because doing so before becoming qualified is dangerous not only for the person doing it but for the society at large and the *Muslim Ummah*.

For this reason the *Ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم) and those who follow in their footsteps up to our generation have always followed the path **Allāh** (عز وجل) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) drew for the people to follow. **Allāh** (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ

*“Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they (who are left behind) may get instructions in (Islāmic) religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware (of evil).”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *Sūrah al-Tawbah* 9:122





In this *āyah* **Allāh** was commanding every society of believers to let a group of people dedicate themselves to learning knowledge and traveling to the scholars to seek knowledge and sit and learn from them; they would learn from them not only knowledge but manners and character. After having done so for a great part of their lives, it is then and only then they will return to their people to warn, admonish and teach them.

This *āyah* is one of the greatest proofs of the prohibition of putting oneself forward to teach others before becoming qualified to do so.



## II. Knowledge Precedes Statements and Actions

Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

*“So know (O Muḥammad) that Lā ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh), and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women.”<sup>2</sup>*

In this āyah Allāh began with knowledge before ever commanding the believers to say or do anything or seek forgiveness for their sins; He first commanded them to have knowledge. Al-Imām al-Bukhārī (رحمه الله) included this in a chapter he titled, *Chapter: Knowledge Precedes Statements and Actions*.

Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Al-Wahhāb (رحمه الله) said: “Know, may Allāh have mercy upon you, that it is obligatory upon every Muslim male and female to learn four issues.” Meaning, to learn them before putting themselves forward to teach anything to others. They are to learn these issues for them to become well grounded within their souls and to know them thoroughly.

The first of these four issues is knowledge, which is knowing Allāh, His Prophet and the religion of Islām with proofs and evidences. The second is acting upon this knowledge; the third is inviting others to this knowledge and the fourth is being patience in the path of doing so. The evidence for this is the statement of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى):

<sup>2</sup> Sūrah Muḥammad 47:19



وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣)

*“By al-‘Aşr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe (in Islāmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (al-Ma’rūf), which Allāh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (al-Munkar), which Allāh has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allāh’s Cause during preaching His religion of Islāmic Monotheism or Jihād, etc.).”<sup>3</sup>*



---

<sup>3</sup> Sūrah al-‘Aşr 103:1-3



### III. Speaking About the Religion of Allāh Without Knowledge Is Greater Than Shirk

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: “Whoever Allāh wants good for, He gives him *fiqh* (a deep understanding) of the religion.”

So a sign of Allāh wanting good for one of His servants is giving him *Tawfiq* and opening the door for him to seek knowledge such that he gains this knowledge and becomes qualified in it before ever seeking a position of leadership or putting himself forward to teach others.

Allāh warned against a person speaking about the religion without knowledge. In fact, He made it one of the greatest sins; rather, *the* greatest sin, even greater than *shirk*. Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ وَالْإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَأَنْ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Say (O Muḥammad): ‘(But) the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are *al-Fawāḥish* (great evil sins, every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allāh for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allāh of which you have no knowledge.’”<sup>4</sup>

Here Allāh divided sins into categories, starting with the least and ending with the greatest of them, and the very last of them and therefore the greatest is speaking on behalf of Allāh and saying something about the religion of Allāh that one has no knowledge of. Namely, putting

<sup>4</sup> Sūrah al-A’rāf 7:33



oneself forward to teach the religion of **Allāh** before sitting with the scholars of the religion to become qualified to do so. **Allāh** (عز وجل) says:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

*“And follow not (O man i.e. say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g. one’s saying: ‘I have seen’, while in fact he has not seen, or ‘I have heard’, while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allāh).”<sup>5</sup>*

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلَالٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ

*“And say not concerning that which your tongues put forth falsely: ‘This is lawful and this is forbidden’, so as to invent lies against Allāh. Verily, those who invent lies against Allāh will never prosper.”<sup>6</sup>*

Furthermore, **Allāh** says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

*“It is He Who has sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book (this Qur’ān). In it are verses that are entirely clear; they are the foundations of the Book [and those are the verses of al-Aḥkām (commandments, etc.)*

<sup>5</sup> Sūrah al-Isrā` 17:36

<sup>6</sup> Sūrah al-Naḥl 16:116



*al-Farā'id (obligatory duties) and al-Ḥudūd (legal laws for the punishment of thieves, adulterers, etc.)]; and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials, etc.), and seeking for its hidden meanings, but none knows its hidden meanings save Allāh. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: 'We believe in it; the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord.' And none receive admonition except men of understanding."*<sup>7</sup>

'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said that after reciting this āyah the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: "If you see the people who are following the ambiguous verses, then know that they are the ones whom Allāh has mentioned, so beware of them."



---

<sup>7</sup> Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:7



#### IV. The One Who Puts Himself Forward Before Being Qualified Will Corrupt the Dunyā

Putting oneself forward to teach the religion and speak on behalf of the religion before being qualified is dangerous not only to the person doing so but to the entire society and everyone who comes in contact with him. Whoever has little knowledge yet puts himself forth to speak on behalf of the religion will corrupt this *dunyā* and the *Muslim Ummah*.

*Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah* (رحمه الله) said that there are four types of people who cause the most corruption: The one who is halfway qualified to speak, the one who is halfway qualified in *Fiqh*, the one who is a halfway doctor and the one who is a halfway *Naḥwī* (Scholar of Arabic Grammar). This is because the person who is halfway qualified in speaking corrupts the people's intellect, the one halfway qualified in *Fiqh* (i.e. his knowledge of the religion) corrupts the people's religion, the halfway doctor corrupts the people's bodies and the halfway Scholar of Grammar corrupts the people's tongues.



## V. Sitting With the Rabbānī Scholars Develops Fear of Allāh and Produces Fruits

It is essential to become qualified to speak on behalf of the religion before putting oneself forward to teach; and becoming qualified to do so is only by sitting with the scholars of the religion. By being in their presence and learning from them a person develops this *khashyah*. It is sitting with the scholars that develops this *khashyah*—this is the true knowledge that develops the fear of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى). It is not simply having information about a lot of issues that develops this fear of Allāh; it is knowing and acting upon it, which comes by sitting in person with the People of Knowledge.

*Ibn Taymiyyah* (رحمه الله) said that it is an obligation upon the Student of Knowledge to beware of putting himself forward before becoming qualified. The Students of Knowledge continue to practice this up to our day, sitting with the scholars for years and years before ever putting themselves forward to teach.

They are sitting with the *‘Ulamā’ al-Rabbāniyyīn*: the scholars who teach the people the minor issues of knowledge before they teach them the major issues; those who bring the *Muslims* up little by little, nurturing them in knowledge. It is the people who do this and spend years and years with the scholars before going out to give *da’wah* that actually bring about some good through their *da’wah*. It is their *da’wah* that brings about fruits because they became qualified before putting themselves forward.

The *Salaf* used to say: “If you see a young man sitting with *Ahl al-Sunnah*, have hope for him and if you see a young man sitting with *Ahl al-Bid’ah*, despair of him.”



## VI. Putting Oneself Forward Before Being Qualified Leads to Humiliation and Disgrace

*Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymīn* (رحمه الله) said in his explanation of the book *Ḥilyah Tālib al-‘Ilm*: “Beware of putting yourself forward before becoming qualified to do so because this is one of the downfalls of knowledge and acting upon that knowledge. And whoever does so has put himself in a position to be humiliated and disgraced.”

Whoever puts themselves forward to teach and speak about the religion before becoming qualified has exposed a number of things about themselves:

1. They are impressed with themselves and consider themselves to be a scholar.
2. The reality of their own ignorance.
3. They are willing to say on behalf of **Allāh** what they have no knowledge of because whoever is willing to step forward and take all the questions and not let those who are more knowledgeable than himself do so is going to answer every question that comes his way and will never say ‘I don’t know’. Therefore, he is putting himself in a position to answer questions he does not know about.
4. They are not ready to accept the truth because if the truth comes to them at the hands of someone they consider less knowledgeable than themselves they will not submit to it because they think this shows that that person is more knowledgeable than them and thus the people would no longer consider them to be a scholar. So they will remain upon the conclusion they have; even if a person brings the truth to them they would not accept it.

It is obligatory upon the Student of Knowledge especially to beware of this and to avoid claiming piety for himself, as **Allāh** (سبحانه وتعالى) said:



فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى

*“So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allâh and keep his duty to Him [i.e. those who are Al-Muttaqûn (pious)].”<sup>8</sup>*



---

<sup>8</sup> Sûrah al-Najm 53:32



## VII. Signs That a Person Who Has Put Himself Forward Is Not Qualified

It is sufficient of a danger to put oneself forward before becoming qualified that a person has been impressed with himself and considered himself ready for this and thus is exposing himself to destruction. There are a few signs which show that a person is not actually qualified when he has already stepped forward to teach.

From them is that he is pretending to have what he has not been given. He is proud, considers himself great and does not care if the consequences of him speaking are the *fitnah*, bloodshed and ruin of the honour and reputation of the *Muslims*. And this is exactly what is happening in our day and time; there are people stepping forward to speak about the religion of **Allāh** without any knowledge and thus they are those who are calling to evil and inviting others to *fitnah*. These people did not grow up amongst the scholars and so they were hasty in putting themselves forward to speak on behalf of the religion and the result of that is that they brought about corruption.

Also from the characteristics of those who have stepped forward to talk about the religion before being qualified to do so is that they are a nuisance to the scholars. They say other than what the scholars say and hold opinions contrary to those more knowledgeable than them. They go hunting for the mistakes of the scholars and then accuse them of being ignorant and making mistakes, as if to tell the people that they [i.e. the person putting himself forward] are the only alternative.

Moreover, putting oneself forward to speak on behalf of the religion before being qualified to do so is a sign of having little *taqwā* and shows that a person has not spent enough time with the scholars, because this is what produces *taqwā* in a person.





The *fitnah* currently taking place is largely because the youth did not spend sufficient time sitting with the People of Knowledge and have not truly tasted the sweetness of being in the presence of the scholars. Thus, they believe themselves to be scholars but the reality is that they are ignorant.

It is obligatory upon the Student of Knowledge to be patient and not be hasty and to take as much time as possible sitting with the People of Knowledge. If he does not have access to them in person he continually listens to their tapes, classes, *khuṭub* and lectures and whenever he gets the opportunity, he travels to them to benefit in person. This is what brings about *taqwā*.

*Wa Allāhu A'lam*

*Wa ṢallAllāhu wa Sallama wa Bārak 'alā Nabiyyinā Muḥammad wa 'alā Ālihi wa Ṣaḥbihi wa Sallam*

