

Seeking knowledge is an obligation

The Prophet (peace be upon him) made talab al-ilm a personal duty on every Muslim. What knowledge is fard ayn, what is fard kifayah, and where to start.

CENTREPIECE Ibn Majah 224, Surah az-Zumar 39:9

FIRST KHUTBAH

1. Fard ayn, personal obligation

Knowledge of how to perform wudu, salah, fasting, the conditions and pillars of each. Knowledge of what makes belief sound and what nullifies it. Knowledge of haram and halal in the situations you actually live. This is not optional, and it does not require a scholar's library.

2. Fard kifayah, collective obligation

Higher Islamic sciences: fiqh, hadith methodology, Arabic, tafsir. If enough of the ummah pursues these, the rest are excused. If none do, all are accountable.

3. The ascending scale

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: whoever takes a path seeking knowledge, Allah eases for him a path to Paradise (Muslim 2699). The angels lower their wings for the seeker. Fish in the sea ask forgiveness for him. The scholars are the heirs of the prophets.

SECOND KHUTBAH

Return to the centrepiece and gather the message around one honest change connected to seeking knowledge is an obligation.

Suggested closing: Spend one hour this week on a book of authentic Islamic knowledge. The next, two. Let this become a habit before the year ends.

PREPARATION NOTES

1. Read every cited verse or hadith in full before using it.
2. Add one example your own congregation will recognise.
3. Check questions of fiqh and recognised disagreement with a qualified local scholar.

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