



In the Name of Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

The Importance Of Sitting Together In The Circles Of Knowledge Al-Imām Albānī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

Abū Tha'labah al-Khushanī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said:

“When the people stopped in a place to camp, they would scatter in the mountain paths and valleys. So the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: “Your scattering in these mountain passes and valleys is only from the Shayṭān.” After that, they never stopped to camp except they were close together, to the extent that it used to be said that if you spread a piece of cloth over them, it would cover them all.”¹

Shaykh, al-Imām, Nāṣir al-Dīn Al-Albānī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said:

“[According to Islamic etiquette] it is incorrect to sit scattered in the sittings of knowledge. For us to sit like this, where a person sits wherever he carelessly chooses or one of us sits how he pleases.

This is not from the etiquettes of knowledge whatsoever, at all. This is like the sittings at the coffee shops and recreation clubs. A person attends these sittings solely for amusement or entertainment – as they claim – or the like of this. He is free to sit where he pleases and how he pleases.

However, as for the sitting of knowledge, then verily it has etiquettes. I have mentioned to you more than once the ḥadīth narrated by Abū Tha'labah al-Khushanī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ)² where he mentioned that whenever they used to travel with the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and stop to set up camp, they would disperse in the mountain passes and valleys. One day, they travelled and encamped and dispersed as they used to do previously.

To disperse like this incites [a person to seek after] selfish and individual interests, as everyone person will pick for himself an appropriate location, one that has a large shade, for example.

¹ Sunan Abū Dāwūd (no. 2628). Shaykh Albānī declared the ḥadīth to be authentic in Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abū Dāwūd.

² The Shaykh points to the general meaning of the ḥadīth.

So they dispersed as was their habit, so when the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saw them, he said, “This splitting of yours is from the Devil.” Abū Tha‘labah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) said: “After this, whenever we encamped we kept close together, to the extent that if we sat on a piece of cloth it would suffice us.”

The sittings which are the most deserving for the like of these etiquettes to be preserved are the sittings of knowledge...

I will concisely discuss [the wisdom behind] this type of congregation. I say: Verily, what is external is an expression of what is internal. Thus, everything in which the Muslims split outwardly, then this splitting will have ill effects upon their inner selves. What is external is connected to what is internal [i.e. the heart] in the strongest of ways.

We have many, many proofs for this this, so I will suffice with this quick remark. Thus, splitting physically leads to splitting of the hearts. This is a legislated reality, and we have many proofs for this. For now, this passing observation is sufficient.”³

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³ A link for this audio is available at germantownmasjid.com