



## Synopsis of Friday Sermon

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IONA  
REPENTANCE  
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH  
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

### Synopsis of Friday Sermon

### Seekers of Knowledge

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it (the Qur’an) is indeed the truth.” [Fussilat, 41:53]

The journey of a believer is marked by a continuous quest to understand, learn, and grow. The very first word revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was *Iqra* — “Read.” Allah (SWT) chose this word as the opening command, highlighting the importance of knowledge and learning. This first revelation was a powerful message that the pursuit of knowledge should be of paramount importance in our lives.

“Read in the name of your Lord who created, created man from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the Most Bountiful. Who taught by the pen, taught man that which he knew not.”

[al-Alaq, 96:1-5]

These ayat remind us that it is Allah (SWT) who teaches us and that all knowledge ultimately flows from Him.

**Types of Knowledge: Revealed and Acquired** - Islam recognizes two main types of knowledge, *revealed knowledge* and *acquired knowledge*.

**Revealed Knowledge:** This refers to the divine guidance that comes from Allah (SWT) through His revelations, as seen in the Qur’an and the teachings of the Prophet (SAW).

It unveils metaphysical truths beyond the reach of natural sciences, such as the purpose of life, the reality of the Hereafter, and the existence of the unseen realms like angels, jinn, and Divine decree.

While acquired knowledge helps us understand the physical world through observation and reason, it is limited in addressing deeper existential questions like why we were created or what happens after death. Revealed knowledge complements this by providing answers that connect us to the Creator and guide us toward fulfilling our role as His servants. Through the Qur’an and Prophetic teachings, we learn about our ultimate purpose, moral obligations, and the nature of ultimate justice, helping us navigate life with clarity and direction.

Revealed knowledge helps us understand the wisdom of Allah’s commands, and our responsibilities in life. This knowledge shapes our morals, values, and beliefs. It is essential, for it connects us with our Creator, giving us insight into the unseen and guiding us to live righteous lives.

**Acquired Knowledge:** Acquired knowledge is the knowledge we gain through human exploration, learning, and discovery. It is the study of the physical world, the sciences, technology, mathematics, history, and every other field of human inquiry. Allah encourages us to study His creation as a means of understanding the greatness of His work. Reflecting on the universe and everything in it draws us closer to Allah (SWT), making us grateful and humble.

The Prophet (SAW) said, “Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.” This applies to both

types of knowledge. We are encouraged to seek revealed knowledge to strengthen our faith and acquired knowledge to serve humanity, solve problems, and bring about positive change.

**Acquired Knowledge: is A Path to Gratitude and Humility:** Reflecting on the universe and understanding how it functions leads us to appreciate the wisdom and creativity of the Creator. (SWT) invites us to ponder His creation: *"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding — who remember Allah while standing, sitting or (lying) on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying), 'Our Lord, You did not create this in vain; Glory be to You, save us from the punishment of the Fire.'"* [Aal Imran, 3:190-191]

Reflecting on the creation of Allah (SWT) brings us to a state of awe and gratitude. The more we understand about the universe, the more we appreciate the vastness of Allah's power, knowledge, and mercy.

The 20th century saw an explosion of acquired knowledge. Technology and scientific discovery transformed human life — from living by oil lamps to lighting up cities with electricity, to sending satellites into space, and communicating instantly across the globe. This acceleration of knowledge is amazing, yet it serves as a reminder of how knowledge builds upon knowledge, layer by layer. Even the great scientist Isaac Newton humbly remarked, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

However, as Muslims, we recognize that all knowledge ultimately goes back to Allah (SWT) for He taught Adam (AS) the names of everything: *"And He taught Adam the names of all things."* [al-Baqarah, 2:31]

From the first human being to each of us today, knowledge has been passed down and built upon by successive generations. We give credit to those who contribute to humanity's understanding, but all praise ultimately belongs to Allah (SWT), as it is He who gifted humanity the capacity for knowledge. As the Quran says, *"(It is) the Most Merciful who taught the Qur'an, created man, and taught him eloquence."* [al-Rahman, 55:1-4]

**The Importance of Seeking Knowledge in Islam:** Allah (SWT) emphasizes the value of knowledge and those who seek it. *"Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees."* [al-Mujadila, 58:11]

And the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "whoever treads a path in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to tread on one of the paths of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge. The inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion." (Abu Dawud)

Through seeking knowledge, we not only gain insight into the material world but also prepare ourselves for the Hereafter. Knowledge equips us to better serve humanity, to fulfill our duties with excellence, and to become sources of benefit to our communities.

**Humility in Seeking Knowledge:** Islam teaches us to approach knowledge with humility. Arrogance has no place in the life of a seeker of knowledge, as knowledge is a gift from Allah (SWT). It is through humility that one is able to continue learning, growing, and acknowledging the endless depth of Allah's wisdom.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, (1058–1111 CE), also known as Imam al-Ghazali, was one of the most prominent and influential scholars in Islamic history. He is well-known for his work, *Tahafut al-Falasifah (The Incoherence of the Philosophers)*. The book is a critique of Greek philosophy and its influence on Islamic thought.

In his introduction to his book, *Beginning of Guidance*, al-Ghazali wrote:

*"Know, O eager seeker of knowledge, embarking on the quest for knowledge revealing true desire and intense thirst for it that if your pursuit of knowledge is for competition, boasting, surpassing peers, attracting people's attention to yourself, and amassing the trivialities of the world then you are endeavoring to demolish your religion destroy yourself and trade your hereafter for your worldly life.*

*Such a transaction is losing and your trade is fruitless. Your teacher becomes an aid in your disobedience and a partner in your loss similar to a seller of a sword to a highway robber as the prophet (SAW) said whoever assists in a sin even with half a word becomes a partner in it.*

*And if your intention and purpose between you and God, the almighty, in seeking knowledge for guidance rather than mere narration then rejoice for the angels spread their wings for you as you walk, and the sea creatures seek forgiveness for you as you strive. However, you must know before everything that guidance which is the fruit of knowledge has a beginning and an end, an outward and an inward aspect and there is no reaching its end without perfecting its beginning nor finding its inward without understanding its outward and here I point out to you the beginning of guidance for you to test yourself and examine your heart. If you find your heart inclining to it yourself complying with it and accepting it, then you may look forward to the ends and delve into the oceans of sciences. But if you find your heart procrastinating upon facing it and delaying in acting according to its requirements, then know that yourself inclining towards seeking knowledge is the commanding self, risen obedient to the accursed Satan to mislead you with his deception drawing you into the depths of destruction. His aim is to promote evil in the guise of good to you until you join those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought they were acquiring good by their deeds. And at that point Satan will recite to you the virtue of knowledge and the rank of scholars and what has been mentioned about it in narrations and traditions. He will distract you from the saying of the Prophet (SAW).*

*Whoever increases in knowledge but does not increase in guidance only increases in distance from Allah (SWT) and from his saying, 'the most severely punished people on the day of judgment will be a scholar whom Allah did not benefit through his knowledge.' The Prophet (SAW) used to say, 'O Allah! I seek refuge in you from knowledge that does not benefit a heart, that does not humble an action, that is not elevated, and a supplication that is not heard.' And from his saying, 'I passed by people on the night I was taken up the Isra and Mi'raj whose lips were being cut with scissors of fire. I asked who are you, they replied we used to command good but not do it ourselves and forbid evil but do it.*

*Beware poor soul of yielding to his falsifications lest he leads you by the rope of deception, woe to the ignorant who does not seek to learn once and woe to the scholar who does not act according to his knowledge 1000 times."*

True knowledge makes us humble because we realize how vast Allah's creation is and how little we understand of it. The more we learn, the more we realize there is to learn, and this humility connects us with the beauty of faith and worship.

Seeking knowledge is a lifelong journey, one that should bring us closer to Allah, instill humility in our hearts, and motivate us to serve humanity. In an age of abundant information, let us prioritize knowledge that brings us closer to Allah (SWT), that benefits others, and that elevates our communities.

Let us commit ourselves to learning, to growing, and to being sincere seekers of truth. And let us never forget that all knowledge, all power, and all glory ultimately belong to Allah (SWT) alone.

May Allah grant us beneficial knowledge, make us grateful for His blessings, and help us use our knowledge for the betterment of ourselves and those around us. Ameen.

A Bedouin Arab, often cited in Islamic literature, illustrates how reflection on the natural world leads to an awareness of Allah's existence. The nomad says, "Camel droppings indicate a caravan, and footprints on the sand indicate a traveler. The sky with its constellations, the earth with its wide paths, and the seas with their waves, do they not all indicate the existence of the Most Kind, the All-Aware?"

This analogy is a profound example of using rational observation and natural signs to deduce the existence of a Creator. The Bedouin, through simple observation of his surroundings, recognizes the logical conclusion that every creation has a creator, and every order has a designer.

*"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it (the Qur'an) is indeed the truth." [Fussilat, 41:53]*

The nomad's words emphasize that, just as camel droppings indicate the presence of camels and footprints reveal travelers, the entire universe with its intricate systems, harmonious patterns, and immense beauty indeed points to the existence of a wise and powerful Creator. His reasoning reflects the Qur'anic message that signs of Allah (SWT) are evident throughout the natural world and within ourselves, guiding us to the truth of His existence.

Regardless of one's background, a sincere contemplation of the universe can lead one to recognize Allah

(SWT). It reminds us that faith can be strengthened through observing the signs around us just as the nomad did find evidence of Allah's existence in the simplicity and beauty of creation.

*"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it (the Qur'an) is indeed the truth."* [Fussilat, 41:53] This ayah reminds us that both the external world (*the horizons*) and our own existence (*within themselves*) are filled with signs of Allah's greatness. These signs, found in nature, in the cosmos, and even in the intricacies of the human mind and body, invite us to study, reflect, and realize the truth of Allah's existence, wisdom, and power.

The ayah is an encouragement to *seek knowledge*. It is an invitation from Allah (SWT) to study both the world around us and within us. The vastness of the universe, the beauty of nature, the precision of natural laws, and even the complexity of our own bodies, all of these contain *signs* of Allah (SWT). As we delve deeper into these areas, whether through science or introspection, we uncover insights that point us back to Allah (SWT).

Three observations can be made:

1. **Purpose of Knowledge:** When we pursue knowledge, our purpose as Muslims is not just intellectual satisfaction but to discover and affirm the signs that point to Allah (SWT). By exploring the "horizons," the world around us, and "within ourselves," we fulfill a divine purpose. This helps us to not only appreciate the natural world but also to grow in faith and understanding of the truth of Allah's message. Thus, the knowledge we acquire, whether it be scientific, spiritual, or personal, serves as a means to draw us closer to Allah, making knowledge a form of worship.

2. **Affirmation of the Truth:** As Allah (SWT) promises in this ayah, by studying these signs with an open heart, it will eventually *"become clear that it (the Quran) is indeed the Truth."* Which indicates that He (SWT) is the *Truth*. Knowledge brings us to the realization that the universe is not random but deliberately crafted. This revelation strengthens our iman (faith), for we see that both acquired and revealed knowledge testify to the same truth: Allah is the ultimate reality.

3. **Role of Knowledge in Building Humility and Gratitude:** The ayah also reminds us of the role of humility in our pursuit of knowledge. As we study the signs on the horizons and within ourselves, we realize our own limitations and are humbled by the immensity of Allah's creation. This humility fosters gratitude towards Allah, who has given us the tools (our intellect and senses) to explore and understand His signs.

In conclusion, all knowledge, whether acquired through study or revealed through revelation, ultimately points back to Allah (SWT). Allah's signs are embedded in the very fabric of existence. Each discovery, each piece of knowledge we gain, is a step closer to the realization that *"He is the Truth."*

In our journey as seekers of knowledge, we are invited to look beyond the surface, to see the divine wisdom in everything around us and within us. Let us approach the study of both the world and ourselves with the goal of recognizing these signs, which lead us to Allah (SWT).

Revealed knowledge serves as a beacon, shedding light on truths inaccessible through scientific inquiry. It answers life's most profound questions, connects us to our Creator, and prepares us for the eternal Hereafter. While acquired knowledge enables us to harness the world's resources and understand its mechanisms, it is through revealed knowledge that we learn how to live a purposeful life, guided by divine wisdom and geared toward ultimate success in this world and the next.

Without revealed knowledge, humanity would remain in spiritual darkness, unable to grasp the ultimate realities that give life meaning. Revelation provides clarity and direction, offering truths that science cannot. It also safeguards against the arrogance that can arise from acquired knowledge by reminding us of the Source of all knowledge, Allah (SWT).

Together, both forms of knowledge reflect Allah's mercy and wisdom, drawing us closer to Him. *"It is He who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts so that you may give thanks."* [al-Nahl, 16:78]

May our pursuit of knowledge strengthen our conviction that Allah (SWT) is the ultimate truth and guide us to live lives of faith, humility, and gratitude. Ameen.

END