

ARTICLE

A few differences between Money and Knowledge

KNOWLEDGE

From the first moments after birth, a child begins to learn. Some children speak at the age of two and some; well before. But how does a baby learn when it doesn't know the difference between right and wrong?

Knowledge is not only gained by mentally assigning yourself, it is also gained through features given by Allah Taa'la, i.e. the eyes and the ears etc. The correct use of these bounties that Allah Taa'la has bestowed upon us is another way of thanking Allah Taa'la for them.

Many people question the importance of knowledge. In a Hadith it states:

“It is compulsory on every Muslim to seek knowledge.”

This Hadith clarifies that to seek and obtain knowledge is compulsory for every Muslim, but what knowledge is regarded here?

Each human who can afford to study, complete their studies finishing with PhDs and Masters in particular subjects, the Hadith states, “On every Muslim.” What will be the difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim if we all acquire the same knowledge? The emphasis on, “On every Muslim” in this Hadith indicates knowledge specific to a Muslim, which infers the Deen (Religion) of Allah.

MONEY/WEALTH

Every human needs food, requires shelter, clothing etc. Each person must earn in order to fulfil their necessities.

It is clear that humans need to earn for their necessities, but what is the difference between a Muslims earnings and a non-Muslims earnings? Muslims know that they have to earn money the ‘Halaal Way’, i.e. that they have to work rightly for their living, they must not steal, deceive or work in such a manner wherein the rules of Islam are broken, i.e. in Pubs, nightclubs, or by gambling money etc.

Once the earner has earned enough money to match the requirements of Zakaah – the conditions for which are covered specifically elsewhere – then he must pay his Zakaah, which is also compulsory if the conditions are met.

THE DIFFERENCE

The differences – listed below – are mentioned by our pious predecessors and generally explain the difference between those who run after money and neglect the Deen (Religion) of Allah Taa'la and those who spend their lives in the path of Allah Taa'la, just for His pleasure.

Once a person came to Hadhrat Ali Radhiallahoh Anhu and questioned him, “What shall I gain; knowledge

or wealth?" Hadhrat Ali Radhiallaho Anhu answered "Gain knowledge because it is more beneficial than gaining wealth". The person then asked for some benefits of gaining Knowledge over wealth, Hadhrat Ali Radhiallaho Anhu replied:

- Knowledge is the inheritance of the Prophets (alayhisalaam), and wealth is the inheritance of Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and Qaroon,
- The more knowledge you gain, the more beloved you become in the eyes of people and the more wealth you gain, the more people hate you out of jealousy...
- As time passes, the value of money decreases and the value of knowledge increases,
- Wealth needs to be looked after, whereas knowledge protects you,
- You will always fear the theft of money, but knowledge cannot be stolen from the heart,
- On the Day of Judgement, Allah Taa'la will ask you two questions regarding your wealth; how it was earned and how it was spent. These are two separate questions regarding Wealth whereas one question regarding knowledge will be asked: How much you acted upon it,
- Knowledge helps you gain money but money cannot buy you knowledge,
- Excess money brings pride.

Once Hadhrat Mohammad Shafee questioned his students, "What is the meaning of knowledge?" One of them replied, "It is to know," Another said, "It is 'to recognise'." Like this the other students said the different things they thought knowledge meant. Hadhrat Mohammad Shafee remained in disappointment to the answers he received from his students. After some time, a student asked Hadhrat Mohammad Shafee, what he recalled the meaning of knowledge in which Hadhrat replied, "Knowledge is that light, which once it is gained; you cannot resist acting upon it, and until you don't act upon it; you are not content. This is the meaning of knowledge, or else knowledge is a burden."

The difference between people who run after money and those who go into the path of Allah Taa'la and gain his knowledge is briefly explained above.

The moral of this topic is not so that one stops earning so that he may gain knowledge, as to earn for one's family is equally as important. The main point is to recognise that excess money could ruin you in this world, and in the next. Also, if you can take some time out and study the Deen (Religion) of Allah Taa'la, Inshallah it will be of great benefit in both worlds.

What will we do with all that excess money earned? After we die, it is going to be inherited by others and the State in the form of Inheritance Tax. How will this benefit us and help us in the Hereafter? Whereas the knowledge we earn will help us to pass this life peacefully and help us in our afterlife whilst answering the Angels etc. Those who earn money can make their Hereafter good, by spending it in the correct manner; by helping the poor and giving it wherever it is needed most in the world through reputable Islamic Charities. You are part of the Ummah and people are in need.