

Lesson 10

Point 6

The author (Imaam al-Barbahaaree) *rahimahullaah* said:

So examine, may Allaah have mercy upon you, the speech of everyone you hear from, in your time in particular; so do not act in haste. And do not enter into anything from it, until you ask and see: Did any of the Companions of the Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* speak about it or anyone from the scholars? So if you find a narration about it from them, then cling onto it and do not go beyond it for anything and do not give preference to anything over it, and thus fall into the Fire.

The Explanation:

Do not be hasty regarding that which you hear from the people, particularly in later times, and the large number of people who speak and give rulings and who stand to give knowledge and speak. And particularly, with the new development in information media, that it is now the case that everyone talks foolishly and speaks in the name of knowledge and in the name of the Religion, even the people of misguidance and the deviated and the misguided sects. They now speak in the name of the Religion on satellite channels. So the danger is very great.

So it is upon you O Muslim, and O Student of Knowledge in particular, to verify and that you are not hasty in taking everything that you hear. It is upon you to verify and to be aware, who is the one who said this thing? And where did this idea come from? And then what is its basis, and its proofs from the Book and the Sunnah? Then where did this person study and who did he take knowledge from? So these matters require verification, particularly in this time. So we do not accept every saying that anyone is saying, even if he speaks well, and speaks eloquently, and speaks abundantly and attracts people's hearing, do not be taken in by it until you look and see the extent of their knowledge and understanding of the Religion that he has.

Or it may be the case that a person's speech may be little, but he is a person of understanding of the Religion. And it might also be the case that a person's speech may be plentiful, but he is an ignorant one who has nothing from knowledge and understanding of the Religion. Rather he just has magical/enchanting speech so that he fools the people, and gives the false impression that he is a scholar and that he is a person of understanding

and that he is a thinker and the likes of that, so that the people are taken in and he takes them away from the Truth. So what is counted is not the amount of speech and being able to ramble on, rather what is counted is what it contains with regard to knowledge and what it contains with regard to being based upon correct principles. And it may be the case with speech that is little but it is correctly based upon correct principles. This will be far more beneficial than abundant speech which is just lengthy, and from which no benefit can be taken except a little. And this is the situation in our time, where speech is abundant and knowledge is scarce; the recitors are many, and the people of knowledge and understanding (*fuqahaa*) are few in number. And *fiqh* (knowledge and understanding of the Religion) does not come about by being able to speak a great deal, or to recite a great deal, or being able to speak well or being able to word things well.

The Poet said:

*Embellished (falsely adorned) speech may make its falsehood seem attractive,
Whereas the Truth, may suffer as a result of being badly expressed.
So you may say, "This is the spittle of the bees" if you want to praise it;
but if you wanted you could say, "It is the vomit of flying insects which sting."*

If you wish to praise honey, you can say, "This is something put out from the mouth of the bee," but if you want to speak against it, then you can say, "This is vomit," instead of saying it is 'spittle' (something put out from the mouth); and instead of 'a bee' you can say 'a hornet' (a stinging insect that flies). So the eloquent person, he can turn the Truth into falsehood and falsehood look like the Truth by means of his eloquence, so beware of this. And therefore the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* he warned against the person who is very eloquent in speech, the person who moves his tongue around just as the cows move the tongue around.¹ He (*sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) warned against this one and he said,

¹ This narration is reported by Imaam Aḥmad in his Musnad and by Ibn Abee Shaybah and by Aboo Daawood and at-Tirmithi and others besides as a ḥadeeth of `Abdullaah ibn `Amr that Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* said,

"Allaah hates those men who are eloquent, the one who moves his tongue around, just as the cow moves its tongue around."

At-Tirmithi said about this narration that it is *ḥasan ghareeb* (singular chain of narration that is *ḥasan*) and it was declared authentic by Aboo Ḥaatim in al-`Ilal.

Translator's side point: Shaykh al-Albaanee, in as-Saḥeeḥah no.880, declared this ḥadeeth *saḥeeḥ* (authentic).

*"Some speech is like magic."*²

Meaning it enchants the people's hearing (acts like magic upon the hearing of the people).

His saying, **"So look and examine, may Allaah have mercy upon you, at the speech of everyone whom you hear from in your time in particular. Do not be hasty and do not enter into anything from it."** This was at the time of the author³ and the author was almost at the same time as Imaam Aḥmad, because he is one of the students of his students. He says: Do not be hasty in accepting the speech of the people in your time, until you verify it. So where is this in comparison to this time of ours now, the time of desires and the time of ignorance and the time when the different parts of the world are all mixed together? To the extent that trials and tribulations and evils and ideas arise and surge like waves and the enemy **now** wants to turn the Religion upon its head. He wants us to follow him and to impose his ideas upon us and to impose his politics upon us. Therefore it is upon us to check this affair carefully and to withhold from many affairs and to turn attention to seeking to understand the Speech of Allaah and the speech of His Messenger, and to acquire knowledge and understanding of the Religion of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic.

So *al-fiqh* (knowledge and understanding of the Religion) contains a protection from trials and tribulations. And *al-fiqh* means *al-fahm* (understanding of the Religion). And a person may have memorized a great deal, but he does not have understanding, so therefore he and the common person are just the same. Indeed the common person may be better than him because he withholds himself and he recognizes his own ignorance, while this one does not realise that he is actually an ignorant person. Therefore the matter is not just memorizing a great amount or speaking a great deal. The matter is a matter of *fiqh* (understanding) and therefore he *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* said,

*"Perhaps one who has something conveyed to him will be better comprehending than the one who heard it (originally)."*⁴

² This ḥadeeth is reported by al-Bukhaaree in his Saḥeeḥ (no. 5146 and no. 5767) as a ḥadeeth of `Abdullaah ibn `Umar; also reported by Muslim as a ḥadeeth of `Ammar ibn Yaasir *radīyAllaahu `anhumaa*.

³ Translator's side point: Imaam al-Barbahaaree who lived over 1000 years ago.

⁴ This ḥadeeth is reported by al-Bukhaaree in his Saḥeeḥ (no.67 and no.7447) and reported by Muslim (no.1679) as a ḥadeeth of Aboo Bakraa *radīyAllaahu `anhu* and the wording is that of al-Bukhaaree.

So a person may memorize something, and transmit and narrate, and yet there may be someone there who understands it better than he does. (Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* said)

*"There may be a person who conveys knowledge of the Religion but he is not one who comprehends it."*⁵

He is a carrier of the knowledge and a transmitter of it, however he is not one who has understanding of it. So *fiqh* (knowledge and understanding of the Religion) is a gift from Allaah which Allaah gives to whomever He wishes from His servants. However, if he utilizes it properly and advances it/causes it to grow then he will benefit from it. But if he neglects it, it will be lost.

His saying, **"So do not be hasty and do not enter into anything from it until you ask and look: Did anyone from the Companions of the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* speak with it?"** This is a tremendous piece of advice if some speech pleases you regarding the Religion. As for speech about the affairs of this world, then that is not the topic under discussion here. Rather if some speech with regard to the Religion seems pleasing to you then don't be hasty until you examine it: Is it founded upon something true and upon proof or is it just from the person's own head and his own thinking? For if it is, then it is just scum, like the scum which is carried on the top of flood water. Leave it (in that case). But otherwise if it is founded and based upon the Book and the Sunnah, then it is true. So therefore to do not be hasty in taking speech without restraint, even if it seems pleasing to you in its fine manner of speaking and it is eloquence and its forcefulness and in the style of address, do not be hasty about it until you examine and you test it against the Book and the Sunnah, and examine and see who said it. Is he a person of knowledge and understanding (a *faqeeh*) or not a person of knowledge and understanding? Until you ask the people of knowledge about it (this matter) and you look and see, did anyone from the *Salaf* (Predecessors) say it or did they not say it? And this is something I have warned against many times, that I say: Do not introduce personal deductions and opinions and sayings and wording which have not been preceded upon. Take as your example the *Salaf* and the speech of the *Salaf*, and if you bring something which you have no one who precedes you upon it, then it will be something odd and strange, and its danger will be far more than its benefit.

⁵ This ḥadeeth is reported by Aḥmad in his Musnad and Aboo Daawood and at-Tirmithī and ad-Daarimee and Ibn Hibbaan as a ḥadeeth of Zayd ibn Thaabit *radīyAllaahu `anhu*. At-Tirmithī said the ḥadeeth is *ḥasan* and al-Buṣayree said it is *ṣaḥeeḥ* (authentic).

Shaykh al-Albaanee declared this ḥadeeth *ṣaḥeeḥ* (authentic) likewise, in his checking of Aboo Daawood.

So the speech of the Companions is the balance because they were the students of the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*. Their sayings are looked to with regard to an *aayah*; how did they explain it? And with regard to a *hadeeth*, how did they explain it? So you take from their sayings and from their explanation because they will be closer to the Truth than anyone who came after them; because they were students of the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* and they heard the interpretation and the explanation from the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* and they took knowledge directly from him, so they will be the people who are closest to the Truth. And no weight is to be given, to the saying of those people who say, "The Companions are not to be counted, they were men and they had their own opinions, and we are men and we have our thoughts. Times change."

So the Religion remains and will remain until the Hour is established. And it does not change with the changing time; it covers every time and place. What changes is only human deductions, which may sometimes be wrong and sometimes correct. As for the Religion itself, it does not change because it is suitable for every time and every place because it was sent down from One who is all wise, deserving of all praise. And therefore they used to advise and say, "Adhere to the Book and the Sunnah with the understanding of the Pious Predecessors. Do not introduce an understanding from yourself or from the later people."

His saying, "**or anyone from the People of Knowledge (scholars)**" Meaning, did anyone from the scholars who are counted say it, from the Imaams who proceeded upon the way of the Companions of the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*? Because they were the ones who narrated from the Companions, and the Companions were the ones who narrated from the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*.

His saying, "**So if you find a narration from them about it, then cling onto it.**" If you find it being in agreement with their saying then cling onto it.

His saying, "**And do not go beyond it for anything.**" And do not go beyond the speech of the *Salaf* for the opinion of so and so, and so and so from those who came after them.

His saying, "**And do not prefer anything over and above it and thus fall into the Fire.**" And do not prefer over what came from the *Salaf* anything, from that which the later people brought such that you fall into the Fire. Because you have gone against the path leading to Paradise, and the path of Paradise is what (they) were upon, those who...

﴿الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ
وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا﴾

(Explanation)

Those whom Allah has bestowed favor upon, from the Prophets, and the true and truthful followers of the Prophet, and the martyrs, and the righteous people and what a fine companionship they are.

(Sooratun-Nisaa· (4), *aaayah* 69)

This is the path to Paradise, and whatever conflicts with it is a path leading to the Fire. And Allaah the Mighty and Majestic says,

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ
سَبِيلِهِ﴾

(Explanation)

"And this is My Straight Path so follow it, and do not follow the multiple paths, for they will cause you to split away from His path"

(Sooratul-An`aam (6), *aaayah* 153)

Allaah's path is one but as for other than it, then it is many paths. Every devil has a path and he has a path; on each path there will be devils from mankind and from the *jinn*. So they are many different paths which will throw the person who follows them into confusion. But as for the Straight Path, then it is one. It does not contain any

Explanation of Sharhus-Sunnah of Imaam al-Barbahaaree by Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzaan

disagreement and you will never become lost if you follow it.

Ithaaful-Qaaree bit-Ta`leeqaat `alaa Sharhis-Sunnah

by Shaykh Saalih ibn Fowzaan al-Fowzaan hafizahullaah

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Transcribed by Umm Abbas Zaynab Abdullah

Points discussed by Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzaan hafizahullaah in this excerpt include:

- concerning matters of the Religion, Muslims should verify:
 - who has said this thing?
 - where did it come from?
 - what is its basis in the Qur·aan and the Sunnah?
 - did any of the *Salaf* say it?
- if it is just from a person's own head and own thinking then leave it
- concerning the person who spoke about this matter, Muslims should verify:
 - where did he study?
 - whom did he take knowledge from?
 - the extent of his knowledge and understanding
- it may be that a person speaks little, yet he is a person of understanding of the Religion
- it may be that a person speaks plentifully yet he has no knowledge and understanding of the Religion
- in our time:

- speech is abundant and knowledge is scarce;
- the recitors are many and the people of knowledge and understanding are few
- the eloquent one can make the Truth look like falsehood and make falsehood look like the Truth
- *Allaah hates those men who are eloquent, the one who moves his tongue around, just as the cow moves its tongue around.* (ḥadeeth)
- he (ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam) warned against this one saying, *“Some speech is like magic.”*
- it is upon us to:
 - check affairs carefully,
 - withhold from many affairs
 - turn to seeking to understand the Qur’aan and the speech of the Messenger ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam
 - acquire knowledge and understanding of the Religion of Allaah
- knowledge and understanding of the Religion contains a protection from trials and tribulations
- a common person may be better than one who has memorized a lot because he recognizes his own ignorance
- *“There may be a person who conveys knowledge of the Religion but he is not one who comprehends it.”* (ḥadeeth)
- *fiqh*, knowledge and understanding of the Religion, is a gift from Allaah
 - if a person utilizes this gift properly and advances it he will benefit from it
 - if he neglects it, it will be lost
- do not introduce personal deductions, opinions, sayings and wording which have not been preceded upon
- the danger of bringing something which has not been preceded upon is more than its benefit.

- take as your example the *Salaf* and the speech of the *Salaf*
- the Companions took knowledge directly from the Messenger *ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*, so they will be the people who are closest to the Truth
- the Straight Path is one and you will never become lost if you follow it