20092 - What is the ruling on seeking Islamic knowledge?

the question

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Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Seeking Islamic knowledge is fard kifaayah: if enough people undertake this duty, it becomes Sunnah for the rest of them. Seeking knowledge may become obligatory on each individual, i.e. fard ‘ayn, in the case of knowledge of an act of worship he wants to do or interaction he wants to engage in. In this case he has to know how to worship Allah by this act of worship, or how to engage in this interaction. But knowledge other than this is fard kifaayah, so the seeker of knowledge should have the intention of undertaking something which is fard kifaayah, so that he may attain the reward for one who is doing something obligatory whilst he is seeking knowledge.

Undoubtedly seeking knowledge is one of the best of deeds; indeed it is a kind of jihaad for the sake of Allah, especially in these modern times when bid’ahs have begun to appear in Muslim societies and are becoming widespread, and ignorance is common among those who issue fatwas without knowledge, and people have started to argue a great deal. These three issues all make it essential that young people be keen to seek knowledge.

1 – Bid’ahs whose evil is apparent

2 – People who issue fatwas without knowledge

3 – Extensive arguing about issues which may be clear to the scholars but there are people who argue about them without knowledge.

For this reason we need scholars who have deep and extensive knowledge, who have an

understanding of Islam, who are wise in advising the slaves of Allah, because many people nowadays have theoretical knowledge, but they do not focus on finding the best means of reforming and educating people. They do not realize that if they issue a fatwa saying such and such, it becomes lead to greater evil, the extent of which no one knows except Allah.