Hazrat Ali on the few he can share his treasure of knowledge with

"Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, caught hold of my hand and took me to the graveyard. When he had passed through the graveyard and left the city behind, he breathed a deep sigh and said:

"O Kumayl these hearts are containers. The best of them is that which preserves (its contents). So, preserve what I say to you. People are of three types: One is the scholar and divine. Then, the seeker of knowledge who is also on the way to deliverance. Then (lastly) the common rot who run after every caller and bend in the direction of every wind. They seek not light from the effulgence of knowledge and do not take protection of any reliable support.

"O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you, while you have to guard the wealth. Wealth decreases by spending, while knowledge multiplies by spending, and the results of wealth die as wealth decays.

"O Kumayl, knowledge is belief which is acted upon. With it man acquires obedience during his life and a good name after his death. Knowledge is the ruler while wealth is ruled upon.

"O Kumayl, those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living while those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world lives. Their bodies are not available but their figures exist in the hearts. Look, here is a heap of knowledge (and Amir al-mu'minin pointed to his bosom). I wish I could get someone to bear it. Yes, I did find (such a one); but either he was one who could not be relied upon -- he would exploit the religion for worldly gains, and by virtue of Allah's favours on him he would domineer over the people and through Allah's pleas he
would lord over His devotees. Or he was one who was obedient to the hearers of truth but there was no intelligence in his bosom. At the first appearance of doubt he would entertain misgivings in his heart.

"So, neither this nor that was good enough. Either the man is eager for pleasures, easily led away by passions, or is covetous for collecting and hoarding wealth. Neither of them has any regard for religion in any matter. The nearest example of these is the loose cattle. This is the way that knowledge dies away with the death of its bearers.

"O my Allah! Yes; but the earth is never devoid of those who maintain Allah's plea either openly and reputedly or, being afraid, as hidden in order that Allah's pleas and proofs should not be rebutted. How many are they and where are they? By Allah, they are few in number, but they are great in esteem before Allah. Through them Allah guards His pleas and proofs till they entrust them to others like themselves and sow the seeds thereof in the hearts of those who are similar to them.

"Knowledge has led them to real understanding and so they have associated themselves with the spirit of conviction. They take easy what the easygoing regard as hard. They endear what the ignorant take as strange. They live in this world with their bodies here but their spirits resting in the high above. They are the vicegerents of Allah on His earth and callers to His religion. Oh, oh, how I yearn to see them! Go away now, O' Kumayl! wherever you wish."

Hazrat Ali
Nahj ul-Balagah, Saying 147, Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Elmhurst, New York, pp 600